“Special Needs” is a broad term under which many different conditions and diagnoses can fall. The designation can range from fairly mild learning disorders to severe impairments, serious illnesses, and physical disabilities. A “Special Needs” classification can be helpful in finding specific services and assistance and, ultimately, in meeting the needs of both the child and his or her family.

On the following pages we provide information to help our military families adjust to new communities, promote the acceptance of students with different abilities, and develop plans for the future.
The transition from high school to young adulthood is a critical stage for all adolescents, including children of military families and those with disabilities. Leaving home for the first time, starting a job, going to college, and becoming an independent adult is something that most teenagers anticipate and fear. For a student with a disability, a Vocational Transition Plan must be included as part of the Individual’s Educational Program (IEP) and needs to be developed when the student turns 16 years of age (or earlier).
When it comes to transition requirements, the disabled student’s IEP team must think and plan several years ahead of graduation to assist in designing a meaningful vocational transition plan. Transition planning involves the partnership of families, students, school-age service providers, post-secondary programs and local communities. The result is a comprehensive Vocational Transition Plan which includes a plan for post-secondary education, employment, independent living and community participation for students with disabilities.

Definition of Transition Services
The term “transition services” under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) means a “coordinated set of activities” for the student with a disability that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student to facilitate movement from school to post-school activities. These activities include:

- Post-secondary education
- Vocational education
- Integrated employment
- Adult services
- Independent living
- Community participation
An IEP is provided for all students who receive special education programs and services through their schools, and preparation of the vocational transition plan is a careful process which determines where the student needs to live, work, and play as an adult.

The transition plan is based upon the student’s needs and takes into account his/her strengths, preferences, and vocational interests. It contains specific details regarding the training and services that will be required for the student to make a smooth transition from school to work or post-secondary education and provides the bridge between the student’s IEP and adult life.

The transition plan must include all of the specially designed instruction, related services, community experiences, and development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives that the student requires as well as the plan for the student’s acquisition of all functional daily living skills. It must be established as part of the student’s IEP no later than the age of 16 years, and it must be updated annually thereafter.

When planning for a special education student’s transition to life after high school, educators should make sure that all transition planning team members know the interests, aptitudes, and abilities of the student by his/her early years of high school (or before). This information should be included in the “Present Levels of Academic Achievement” and “Functional Performance” sections of the student’s IEP.

The development of a meaningful Vocational Transition Plan for a disabled student needs to begin with a good assessment. Vocational transition planning assessments should include vocational interest inventories, vocational assessments, career planning tests, aptitude testing, achievement tests, and opportunities for students to participate in job shadowing or mentoring to assess their interests, aptitudes, and abilities.

As part of the IEP process, transition planning must be addressed in either late middle school or early high school so the student can receive the rigorous academic classes, activities, and services that will support his/her post-school outcomes in the areas of education, training, employment and independent living.

School administrators need to ensure that all staff have the expertise, programmatic resources, and time to properly assess students, plan with families and outside agencies, and implement individualized educational programs that support students in achieving their desired post-school outcomes.

The transition planning team should be made up of individuals who can assist the student in achieving post-high school goals. This includes family members, special education teachers, regular education teachers, career and technology personnel, a transition coordinator, the student’s guidance counselor, agency and community representatives, and the student.

A note from MCEC: We encourage families to work together to encourage young adults to assume roles and responsibilities in the planning process.
Parents need to learn about the community agencies that provide services to support disabled students, including counseling, job coaching, and job training agencies. Guidance counselors, school principals, and families of other students with disabilities can be good resources for this information.

Parents should check their procedural safeguards notices for the names of organizations and phone numbers that can provide support for vocational transition planning. Following graduation, available supports for students will probably be very different from those the student experienced during middle school and high school years.

Parents are critical members of the vocational transition planning team because no one knows a son or daughter better than the parent.

Parents need to remember that they have the right to invite others to vocational transition planning meetings who have a special knowledge of their sons and daughters since these individuals can help the IEP team develop the annual goals that will be necessary to lead towards desired post-secondary outcomes.

Parents should talk with their sons/daughters about their futures and help them identify their strengths and needs.

Information about the student’s interests and abilities is important, so parents need to make sure that all IEP team members have this information when the Vocational Transition Plan is developed.

Students need to have opportunities to plan for themselves, even if it means that they will sometimes choose incorrectly. They will be making many choices after graduation and need practice in weighing the options available to them, both socially and educationally.

Parents can help their children learn job-related skills such as being punctual, dressing appropriately, and being interested in doing a good job. Parents can also teach their children social skills such as how to accept constructive criticism, how to be courteous, and how to respond appropriately to authority figures as they create occasions for their children to be socially active in the community.

Parents can provide their children with opportunities to make purchases, use public transportation, and do their own banking.

Parents can help their children learn about their disabilities and how to ask for the services and supports they need.

Parents need to provide opportunities for their children to express their desires, learn about their strengths, and advocate for their needs. These skills will become increasingly important both in employment and post-secondary education settings.

Finally, parents need to make copies of all school records and medical information and keep a list of all contacts they make with other agencies, such as the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Office of Vocational and Adult Education
OVVE administers Career & Technical Education, commonly known as vocational education, in the U.S. Thousands of comprehensive high schools, vocational/technical high schools, vocational centers, and community colleges offer vocational education programs.

The Office of Disability Employment Policy
Provides national leadership by developing and influencing disability-related employment policies and practices affecting the employment of people with disabilities.

Social Security Administration
Offers employment support for people with disabilities by providing Social Security benefits.

Youth at Work
The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s website for Youth provides detailed information in English and Spanish about the responsibilities and rights of minors in the workforce.
Moving overseas with a special needs child

Military families with special needs children face unique challenges and opportunities. This is particularly true when the active duty member is being considered for overseas or isolated duty. In the United States there exists a model of support for special needs families. The responsibility is divided by the private, medical, social/community (i.e local and federal community professionals and programs), and educational services. This combination provides families with the needed support to minimize stress and optimize outcomes for children with special health care needs. For the majority of families that travel overseas, the existing support systems established by the Outside of the Continental US (OCONUS) bases are sufficient to help them cope with the added stresses of moving abroad. Families who have a special needs child can quickly realize that some of the services they relied on in the states are not as readily available overseas.

Germany is often viewed as a location that can support all ranges of children with a developmental delay. Prior to my move here, as a developmental pediatrician and special needs coordinator, I had that perception that Lundsthal Medical Center as a tertiary care facility could provide all the services that are available at larger bases in the Continental United States (CONUS). Despite being able to accommodate more special needs families than some of the smaller bases in the region, here are some additional factors that need to be considered prior to moving overseas with a special needs child.

1. Medical Services. With the promotion of the medical home, children are now more than ever able to see their primary care physician and less likely to be referred downtown for general medical needs. However, when children need to be seen by specialty care professionals, this often requires that the family receive medical support from host nation medical physicians. Families frequently become frustrated as they navigate the foreign medical system due to language barriers and different treatment philosophies. Civilians who work overseas understand these challenges as they strive to find a physician on the economy who can meet even their general medical needs, since many military medical facilities do not have the space available to treat non-active duty dependents (Tricare prime).

2. Respite Care. Families of special needs children have often cited securing financial support for respite care as one of the biggest challenges to overcome in obtaining family services. The respite care system for the US Army is limited due to the overwhelming demand of English speaking care providers and Child Development Centers at maximum capacity. There currently is not an equivalent Air Force Overseas Respite Program. As a result, many families are unable to utilize this valuable service now more commonly available at CONUS bases.

3. Community Support. Most CONUS bases are surrounded by a host of local, state, or federal agencies for special needs families that a military family with a special need child can utilize. This allows the family to simultaneously utilize both military and community support as they care for their child. When living overseas, families rely solely upon base support which is often established for all children. Few families are able to successfully utilize the limited host nation community supports, thus restricting the options for services, which can leave the families to feel isolated. System navigators or family support positions have been established solely to help families connect to the available resources.

4. Child Care / Preschool Services. Finding child care is challenging for the majority of families needing this service when they arrive overseas. This is reported to be even more difficult for families with a special needs child. Children with developmental delays benefit from interacting with same age peers in preschool educational settings. With language barriers and the challenges of having limited regular day care, these experiences are difficult to be established.

5. Early Intervention Early Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS). Early Intervention EDIS is a program established to mirror the state run early intervention program for children 0-3 years of life. The programs help find and support families who are eligible for intervention. This is an excellent service for families who have children that meet eligibility requirements for services. This parent education direct service is intended to complement and not be a substitute for children who benefit from weekly community/hospital based physical, occupational, and/or speech therapy.

Continued after the insert >>
Autism Services. Autism is a specific disorder that requires additional attention. Tricare offers additional services (up to $36,000/year) through enrollment in Extended Care Health Options (ECHO) to provide critical standard of care behavioral intervention for children with autism. Applied Behavioral Analysis therapy is very limited overseas. Furthermore, the Autism Demonstration project, which allows families on average 15-20 hours per week of direct behavioral intervention, is not available overseas. As a result, very few families with a child diagnosed with autism are able to take advantage of this tremendous service. (Given the evidenced based medicine supporting behavioral intervention in autism, it is the author’s opinion that any child under the age of 6 with a diagnosis of autism or suspicion of autism should not go overseas, and that parent is encouraged to seek these services within the United States).

Mental Health Services. Many of the larger medical treatment facilities maintain basic child behavior health services. However, the staffing is such that they are not designed to manage complex chronic disorders. The overseas child mental health services have been put in place to work through short term challenges which may come up during an overseas tour of duty. As a result, upon reaching treatment capacity, the limited base mental health services then direct families to rely on host nation mental health services.

Additional challenges that need to be considered include long waiting times for base housing (up to 2 years), discomfort of driving in a foreign country, and overall additional stressors that come from living in a foreign country.

As an advocate for children with special needs, I feel that it is the responsibility of all those that support families of children to provide them with the best services available and educate families so that they are empowered to advocate for their child. I am finding that families overseas who have a special needs child are required to make choices and at times sacrifice receiving recommended interventions for their child. The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) is designed to identify families who will likely have a positive overseas experience by being able to meet their medical and educational needs. Items such as childcare, respite care, community services, and need for using host nation services typically are not utilized to determine how a family will fit into their new overseas location. All these items have a tremendous impact on family well-being and should be considered as a family looks into overseas assignments.

Assistive Technology Defined

Assistive Technology (AT) is a term used to describe tools or devices and services that enable a student to engage more fully in typical activities and routines at home, school, or in the community. These tools provide support the student needs to overcome or work around limitations. Common AT accommodations at a postsecondary institution could include:

- Computer access such as an alternative mouse or keyboard, text-to-speech application, or speech recognition software;
- Lecture assistance to include a sign language interpreter, note taking assistance, a digital recorder, or a computer for taking notes;
- Personal organization tools;
- Studying or learning tools such as graphic organizer software or computer files provided by the instructor;
- Test-taking modifications to include extended time, change in testing environment, oral testing, and use of a computer;
- Subject-specific tools such as accessible math software, talking calculator, audio books, scan-and-read software and pen, screen magnifier, or a scribe.
(Hess, Gutierrez, & Smith, 2009)
Attending College?

SOME IMPORTANT FINDINGS FOR FAMILIES

**TODAY** a student with disabilities may be enrolled in various types of programs or courses: a regular academic program alongside students without disabilities; a special program designed strictly for students with disabilities; a program in which students attend a large number of courses with students without disabilities; or an individual plan which includes continuing education classes or audit courses.

Prior to The Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008), unless a college or university offered a local program designed specifically for students with disabilities, students were limited to academic programs. This legislation included provisions to provide financial aid for students with intellectual disabilities (SWID) to enroll in special programs which included academic courses with non-disabled students, but also focused on socialization, independent living skills, self-advocacy skills, integrated work experiences, and career skills that would lead to employment. In an effort coordinated by The Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, 27 two- and four-year colleges/universities located in 23 states received comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) grants. [http://studentaid.ed.gov/eligibility/intellectual-disabilities#ctp-programs](http://studentaid.ed.gov/eligibility/intellectual-disabilities#ctp-programs)

A great resource, the Think College – College Search database currently lists 200 programs for students with disabilities at two-year and four-year colleges and universities or technical schools. Select the state, enter the type of school to consider (2 year, 4 year, or career/trade school), living arrangements (at home or on campus), whether or not the student has graduated from high school, and then review the available programs. Please note: Colleges list their programs in the database so not all programs are listed. For example, our search yielded 7 programs offered in Texas, one specifically for autistic students (Mid-Western), and several for either high school graduates or exited students offering courses in vocational, independent living, life skills, and/or social skills.

It is important for parents to understand that when a student with disabilities graduates from high school and enrolls in a college program along with other students without disabilities, the student:

1. Needs for accommodations are no longer covered by IDEA “special education requirements.” There is no special education in college.

2. Is responsible for managing his/her records. Organizational skills and tools are imperative, and the student must develop them as early as possible.

3. Must be able to self-advocate for supports. Again, this skill must be developed while the student is still in high school.

4. Must register with the college’s disability services office and provide current documentation of the disability and the accommodations needed before scheduled placement tests.

5. Can ask for accommodations that ensure access, not success. These support services are available at no cost to the student with disabilities.

6. Is responsible for paying for personal services.
“Most SWID will not go to college primarily for a degree or certificate. However, model programs of CTP are expected to ‘create and provide students with intellectual disabilities with meaningful credentials upon completion of the program.’”

Thompson, Weir, & Ashmore, 2011

This is especially interesting for our families with special education students (aged 18-22) who exit high school (do not graduate with a diploma). The financial value of the transition plan becomes apparent when parents realize who may pay the college or career school bills for the student until the school year of the student’s 22nd birthday.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO MAY PAY</th>
<th>WHICH BILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local School District</td>
<td>Transportation if needed, educational coaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Technology or tuition, may get waiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Support Offices</td>
<td>Tutoring or other academic accommodations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Services Agencies</td>
<td>May pay for fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Stop Career Centers</td>
<td>Career preparation services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FAQs about Post-Secondary Options

There are two more important resources for families with students attending college:

The Association for Higher Education and Disability
http://ahead.org
AHEAD is a professional membership organization for individuals involved in the development of policy and in the provision of quality services to meet the needs of persons with disabilities involved in all areas of higher education.

The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC)
http://www.nsttac.org
Provides toolkits and links for transition planning and other valuable resources.

The MCEC also has links on the State Education Resources feature in SchoolQuest for parents to obtain transition information for their state and DoDEA.

http://www.ahead.org/resources
Military families move three times more frequently than their civilian counterparts, and those who have children with special needs face amplified challenges each time they change schools. A March 2011 Government Accountability Office report stated that 58% of school districts report challenges in meeting the needs of military-connected students with disabilities. Our goal is to provide relevant and timely information to parents and educators to encourage collaboration that ensures our students’ success.

Other resources include...

- National Center for Special Education Research
- National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators (NCITE)
- National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC)
- Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)
- National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth (NCFY)
- National Council on Disability (NCD)
- The Federal Resource Center for Special Education
- Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice
- Americans with Disabilities Act Document Center
- The HSC Foundation
- The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- HEATH Resource Center
- WCD Foundation for Education
- Cornucopia of Disability Information (CODI)
- LD Online
- American Association of People with Disabilities
- Easter Seals
- Federation for Children with Special Needs
- Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)
- American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR)
- The Arc of the United States
- National Down Syndrome Congress
- National Down Syndrome Society
- TASH
- Autism Society of America
• Autism Resources
• Center for the Study of Autism
• Division TEACCH – Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children
• Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)
• American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)
• Organizations Supporting Students with Visual Impairment
• National Association of Parents of Children with Visual Impairments
• Deaf Magazine
• American Society for Deaf Children
• American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
• United Cerebral Palsy Association
• Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health
• National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
• National School Board Association
• Family Village: A Global Community of Disability-Related Resources
• Family Voices
• National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments
• National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education
• Alliance for Technology Access (ATA)
• Discover Technology
• Equal Access to Software and Information (EASI)
• American Association of School Administrators
• American Federation of Teachers
• American Occupational Therapy Association
• American School Counselor Association
• American School Health Association
• Association for Career and Technical Education
• Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
• Center on Disabilities Studies
• Council for State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
• Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI)
• Institute on Community Integration
• National Association of Pupil Services Administrators
• National Association of School Psychologists
• National Association of Secondary School Principals
• National Association of State Boards of Education
• National Association of State Directors of Special Education
• National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
• National Community of Practice on Transition
• National Council on Independent Living
• National Mental Health Association
• On-Campus Outreach
• School Social Work Association of America
• The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
• Transition Coalition
• Transition Solutions

Publications and Products

*Early Career Awareness and Development for Students with Disabilities in Elementary and Middle School: An Overview of Early Career and Transition Programs.* (2002). Shanley, J. & Gerver, M. Elementary and Middle Schools Technical Assistance Center (EMSTAC) at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) in Washington, DC. Microsoft Word version. (PDF)

Routines are Important

BY AMANDA HULSEY
Special Education Teacher, Military Spouse,
MCEC Specialist

Regaining control of homework, schedules, and potential new teachers can be frustrating for a child with special needs. Getting back on schedule after an extended break from school that includes many family gatherings and holiday parties can be especially challenging. Straying from the hustle and bustle of life while sleeping in and allowing children to stay up past their bedtimes are some of the benefits of school holidays, but having a strategy for resuming routines before the school break ends is also important. Below you will find tips and tricks from parents and professionals on how to make the transition to a new semester or a new school year a smooth and successful one.

1. Prep time is crucial.
Don’t let the new routine slip up on you. Talk about the change in routine before it happens. It can be a great dinner table topic or a way to start conversation while in the car. Students with developmental disorders such as autism need time to prepare for the change, so don’t be afraid to talk, talk, talk!

2. Give it time.
Just as adults need time to transition, children need time to adjust. Start practicing the new aspect of the routine before you actually have to perform it. If the routine is bedtime related, increase the bedtime in small increments for the first week.

3. Give your child a calendar.
Children can understand calendars at a very young age. Even if you just help them count the days in between events, they will create a mental picture of the calendar and will learn to rely on the calendar to plan for events. Having a family calendar is great, but you can teach children to be independent and proactive by teaching them how to record family activities, school assignments, and upcoming holidays on their personal calendar.

4. Use a checklist.
Posting the “must-do’s” each day will keep children organized and will prevent the frustration of forgetting certain things. Checklists can come in various forms, so check out a website like www.schoolfamily.com for a checklist that suits you!

5. Don’t stop the learning.
Breaks from school are a good way for children to relax and enjoy activities with the family. However, research has proven that students take at least a week to get back into thinking like a “student” once school resumes. Make a point over long breaks (Christmas, spring break, and especially summer) to do at least one academic activity per day. It can be as simple as completing a word find, putting puzzles together, reading a book, or working just a few easy math problems to keep your child on track. As a result, they will go back to school with a revived sense of confidence!

Artwork by Alanda, Grade 5 | Netzaberg Elementary School, Netzaberg, Germany | U.S. Army
The following six pages are part of the Special Needs Special Insert that is a fold out piece.
# Moving a Child with Special Needs

Below are suggested items to locate, collect and/or update prior to your move.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Parents/Guardians</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify portfolio favorites</td>
<td>Portfolio of sample work, projects</td>
<td>School contact information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pictures of textbooks (title pages and table of contents)</td>
<td>Current grades/enrollment data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pictures of student using successful assistive technology</td>
<td>Student performance on state assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transcript request information</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Student handbook (grading policies)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary curriculum or course offerings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Letter of introduction from teacher for the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current grades/performance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary sponsors, coaches, counselors that work closely with the student may also write letters</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Special project, service/volunteer projects or hours</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assistive technology/special programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Currently used</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Previously used, with success noted</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Letter of introduction from the teacher for the student</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Currently IEP or develop new IEP for end of year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment/evaluation results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary transition planning (may begin at age 14, ends at age 16)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Updated medical records</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Contact information at new installation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contact information for new installation - School districts, housing, zoning, transportation, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Contact information for new installation for services and registration</td>
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</table>

- Families with children who qualify for Section 504 services should follow a similar checklist

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### Legend

- Youth
- Parents/Guardians
- Parents/Guardians
- School
- General Education Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- School Liaison Officer
- Medical Services/Hospital
- SE
- EFM
- SLO
- Medical
- Military

As a military family, moving to a new place can be exciting and adventurous. However, families who have a child with special learning needs can often find this process frustrating and cumbersome.

We would like to ease the transition by offering tips and resources on navigating the Special Education process in a new state and/or school district. Since all states govern their school policies differently, please keep in mind that the following pages are recommendations and should be used to further understand the special education process as a whole. Parents should seek information from their local resources; School Liaison Officers, Military Support Transition Consultants, School District leaders and others specific to each location. The Military Child Education Coalition stands by to further explain this process or answer any questions you may have about transitioning your child within a military move.
Response to Intervention: Sample Intervention Process

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a process by which educators use to judge the effectiveness of intervention and to determine if the learning gaps are caused by remediation or a learning disability. Not all states use a RTI process; some use parts mentioned in this diagram and others treat intervention on a case-by-case basis due to the resources available.

If you find your child struggling with a certain concept or subject in school, it is always a good idea to contact the teacher to see what type of intervention plan the school has in place. Be proactive and remember that being your child’s best advocate will assist everyone in finding the keys to success!
Response to Intervention: Sample Intervention Process

School or teacher must review all students to determine their best path of learning at an optimal level.

Provide research-based intervention
Continuously monitor student progress
Adjust the intensity and type of intervention and continuously monitor
Increase intensity or focus on an intervention and continuously monitor
Consider special education referral

Response to Intervention: Special Education Process K-12

Special Education Process K-12

- Referral May be Made by:
  - Other Professionals
  - School Professional
  - Student (18+)
  - Teacher
  - Parent/Guardian

- Referral Identified*:
  - Bullying
  - Parental Concern
  - Teacher Concern
  - Social/Emotional Need
  - Other Professionals

- Considers What May be Needed by:
  - Parent/Guardian
  - Teacher
  - Social/Emotional Need
  - Physical or Mental Health
  - Developmental Delay
  - Other Professionals

- Considers What is Being Taught at:
  - Grade Level
  - Subject Matter
  - General Education Curriculum
  - Support or services provided to help a student fully access the curriculum or other material being taught. The teaching strategies are different.

- Other Pr ofessionals
  - School Pr ofessional
  - Student (18+)
  - Teacher
  - Parent/Guardian

- Referral Date
  - May Appeal
  - Educational Requirements
  - Individual Eligibility

- Educational Planning Meeting
  - IEP
  - IPP
  - IFSP

- May Appeal
  - Educational Team
  - Related Services
  - Considers the student's future
  - Development of employment goals and objects
  - Transition planning by students
  - Transition planning by families
  - Transition planning by educators

- Progress Monitoring
  - Monitoring student performance
  - Adjustment of intervention and skills

- IEP meeting
  - Determined Eligible
  - Advances to next level

- Individual Education Plan (IEP) may require additional services to achieve
  - Academic
  - Social
  - Behavioral
  - Emotional
  - Physical

- Referral Date
  - May Appeal
  - Educational Requirements
  - Individual Eligibility

- Educational Planning Meeting
  - IEP
  - IPP
  - IFSP

- May Appeal
  - Educational Team
  - Related Services
  - Considers the student's future
  - Development of employment goals and objects
  - Transition planning by students
  - Transition planning by families
  - Transition planning by educators

- Progress Monitoring
  - Monitoring student performance
  - Adjustment of intervention and skills

- IEP meeting
  - Determined Eligible
  - Advances to next level

- Categories of Disabilities***

- Examples of the difference between accommodations and modifications:

- Related Services***

- Transition Planning

- Exit School Services

- Age of Majority (18)

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*IDEA permits states to utilize a Response to Intervention system as an alternate means of diagnosing some disabilities. Contact your district to find out if your state utilizes Response to Intervention.

*** As defined by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal special education law. IDEA guarantees the right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment to children with disabilities.
Response to Intervention: Sample Intervention Process

School or teacher must screen all students to determine their best path of learning at an optimal level.

Provide research-based intervention Continuously monitor student progress

Adjust the intensity and/or type of intervention and continuously monitor

Increase intensity or focus on an intervention and continuously monitor

Consider special education referral

Response to Intervention: Response to Intervention (RTI) is a process by which educators use to judge the effectiveness of intervention and to determine if the learning gaps are caused by remediation or a learning disability. Not all states use a RTI process; some use parts mentioned in this diagram and others treat intervention on a case-by-case basis due to the resources available.

If you find your child struggling with a certain concept or subject in school, it is always a good idea to contact the teacher to see what type of intervention plan the school has in place. Be proactive and remember that being your child’s best advocate will assist everyone in finding the best educational fit for your child.

Special Education Process K-12

Categories of Disabilities***

Modifications

A student may be dismissed as a result of an annual or three-year review. This student may still qualify for services under Section 504 of the American Disabilities Act, a civil rights law.

************************** As defined by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal special education law. IDEA guarantees the right to free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment to children with disabilities.

Example of the difference between accommodations and modifications:

On any given day a teacher may need to accommodate students by using alternative materials, tools, and activities. Modifications are changes to the general education curriculum or other material being taught. The teaching strategies are different.

Modifications

- Reduced expectations
- Reduced assignment addressing specific subject or topic
- Content taught at a lower level
- Shortened assignments but only selected grade-level standards
- Same expectations
- Same complexity of activity
- Accommodations

Some of the related services your child may receive:

- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Speech-language therapy
- Counseling
- Orientation and mobility
- Medical
- Psychological
- Audio

*IDEA permits states to utilize a Response to Intervention system as an alternate means of diagnosing some disabilities. Contact your district to find out if your state utilizes Response to Intervention.

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Examples of the difference between accommodations and modifications:

- Reduced expectation
- Reduced assignment addressing specific subject or topic
- Content taught at a lower level
- Shortened assignments but only selected grade-level standards
- Same expectations
- Same complexity of activity

- Accommodations
- Alternate assessments
- Extended time
- Assisted testing
- Special computer
- Note-takers
- Reading, writing, or speaking assistance
- Extended or shortened tests
- Reader
- Scribe
- Answer sheets
- Others

- Modifications
- Extended or shortened tests
- Reading, writing, or speaking assistance
- Extended or shortened tests
- Reader
- Scribe
- Answer sheets
- Others
Moving a Child with Special Needs*

Below are suggested items to locate, collect and/or update prior to your move.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Parents/Guardians</th>
<th>School</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Portfolio of sample work, projects</td>
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Assessment/evaluation results

As a military family, moving to a new place can be exciting and adventurous. However, families who have a child with special learning needs can often find this process frustrating and cumbersome.

We would like to ease the transition by offering tips and resources on navigating the Special Education process in a new state and/or school district. Since all states govern their school policies differently, please keep in mind that the following pages are recommendations and should be used to further understand the special education process as a whole.

Parents should seek information from their local resources; School Liaison Officers, Military Support Transition Consultants, School District leaders and others specific to each location. The Military Child Education Coalition stands by to further explain this process or answer any questions you may have about transitioning your child within a military move.

*Families with children who qualify for Section 504 services should follow a similar checklist.
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- General Education Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Special Education Department
- Medical Services/Hospital
- School Liaison Officer
- Exceptional Family Member

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