

# OVERVIEW OF THE IEP PROCESS



The Community of Practice (CoP) series was developed through a partnership with IMPACT WV and the WV Home Visiting Program to help participants exchange technical information and share experiences about serving clients currently experiencing or who have past experiences with substance use and neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS).

The information in this IMPACT WV product was taken from a CoP presentation by Cara Price, a Family Engagement Specialist and virtual trainer for the West Virginia Parent Training and Information program.

## AIM

The purpose of this CoP is to:

- Determine what an IEP is
- Identify the parts of the IEP process

## GENERAL INFORMATION

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written statement of the educational program designed to meet a child's individual needs. This program is designed for children ages 3 and above who qualify for special education services within the school system. All schools must provide eligible children who have a disability with an individualized instruction plan that meets the child's needs at no cost to families or parents. This entitlement of "free and appropriate public education", or FAPE came from the passing of the federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). For children ages birth to three, these plans are referred to as Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP). This plan is for children who will qualify for special education services up to age 3. After the child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, the child may or may not graduate to an IEP.

## PURPOSE

An IEP has two main purposes:

- Get individual learning goals for the child
- State the services the child will be receiving from the school at no cost to the families



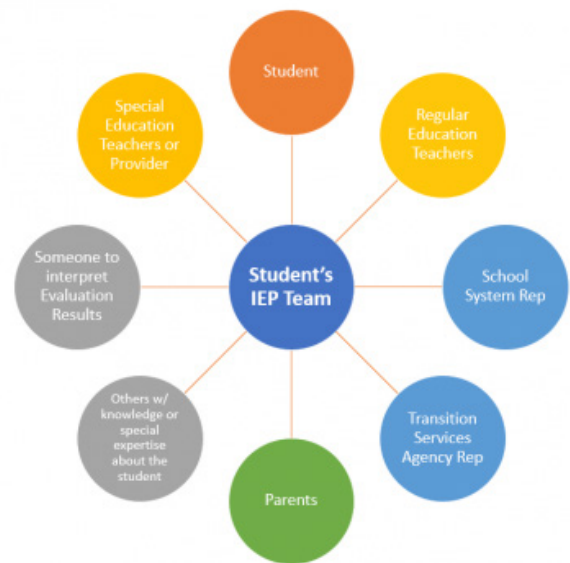
# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: OVERVIEW OF THE IEP PROCESS



## OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT

The IEP is developed by a team of individuals including school staff and parents. Those on the IEP not only look at how the child is thinking, but their overall development as well. Typically, teachers and other professionals write the IEP, but parent input is crucial to the IEP process. Parents know their child best, providing valuable information to their child's instructional plan. School districts, teachers and parents may request evaluations that can lead to the development of IEP's; however, it is the involvement of the following team members input that forms the IEP:

- Parent(s)
- General education teacher/head start teacher
- Special education teacher
- Special education service provider
- Representative of the district
- Individuals who can determine instructional implementations of the results
- The student (when appropriate)
- Part C Coordinator (if necessary)
- Private school representative
- Representative of any participating agency



## OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT

1. Parents/teachers request an evaluation based on the child's current skills and development.
2. Once the evaluation is requested, those performing the assessments (PT, OT, SLP, SE, etc.) have 80 days to complete the evaluation.
3. Once the individual evaluation is complete, and the service providers determine the child has special needs to be addressed, they have 30 days to hold an IEP meeting.
  - a. In order to qualify, children must have one of the 13 disabilities captured under IDEA.
4. During the meeting, the above-mentioned team members are present, and the IEP is formed based on the child's present level of performance, strengths, needs and the types of special education services/related services they will receive. Here the team will establish the goals for the child for the school year.
  - a. This may include transportation to and from school, special education services or related services (occupational therapy, speech therapy, etc.).
  - b. Accommodations (access to the general education curriculum) or modifications (how much a student is expected to learn) may also be implemented for the child's needs within the classroom.
  - c. Determine the least restrictive environment (LRE) for the child (i.e., the supports they need to succeed in the general education classroom).

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## HOW DO I KNOW MY CHILD HAS MADE PROGRESS?

Individualized Education Programs required that teachers, services providers or special educators monitor the child's progress at certain time periods throughout their services. Teachers or providers consistently gather information regarding the child's progress towards the goals established in the IEP. Teachers/providers may have students perform a skill and check in at weekly, monthly or every nine weeks (typically in the school system) and send a parent report home detailing the child's progress.



## TIPS

- Ask to see the IEP report 5 days prior to the initial IEP meeting
- Using this report, write down any questions you may have regarding the report or the services your child will receive. Include your child, when appropriate, in the IEP process. IDEA requires that children be present in IEP meeting where transition services are discussed

## RESOURCES

- West Virginia Parent Training and Information site: [www.wvpti-inc.org](http://www.wvpti-inc.org)
- WV Office of Special Education: [wvde.state.wv.us/osp/](http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/)
- Family Voices: [familyvoices.org](http://familyvoices.org)