



Family Engagement Newsletter

Educational Considerations for Children with Other Health Impairments Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

By Wendy Overturf

All parents are wondering what school will look like this fall. It is recognized that for most children, physically being in school, is important for not only academic learning but social-emotional growth as well. Wisconsin districts are in the process of developing plans on when and how to reopen their schools. Parents of children who have been identified as having a disability and qualifying for special education under Other Health Impaired (OHI) may also have a heightened concern about their child attending school due to underlying medical conditions.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) recently released "[Education Forward](#)" to support school districts as they make decisions about educational services this fall. The DPI collaborated with many professional education organizations and leaders to create the guidance. Districts have been encouraged to consider this document alongside the Department of Health Services' risk assessment checklist as they make plans in their communities.

In "Education Forward," the DPI suggests schools consider smaller class sizes, a shift in schedules to reduce the number of children in a building at one time, and an increased focus on mental health supports if students return to classrooms in the fall. The guidance goes over possible schedule setups, cleaning and staff considerations and school building layouts and modifications that could minimize the risk of spreading the coronavirus. Guidance on face coverings, the potential for physical distancing in buildings, health checks, ready access to hygiene products and cleaning supplies, and considerations for school lunch are also covered. Information under instructional models for district consideration includes in-person, physically distanced, and virtual learning options with various scheduling scenarios for each. The DPI is also telling schools to be prepared to swiftly change plans— switching between in-person, physically distanced, and online learning depending on the status of the pandemic.

A Department of Education document, [Questions and Answers on Providing Services to Children with Disabilities During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak](#) (March 2020) specifically responds to the following question:

Question: If a child with a disability at high risk of severe medical complications is excluded from school during an outbreak of COVID-19 and the child's school remains open, is the exclusion considered a change in educational placement subject to the protections of 34 CFR §§ 300.115 and 300.116 and 34 CFR §§ 104.35 and 104.36? (Note that these CFR references are related to regulations on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.)

Answer (summarized): If the exclusion is a temporary emergency measure (generally 10 consecutive school days or less), the provision of services such as online or virtual instruction, instructional telephone calls, and other curriculum-based instructional activities, to the extent available, is not considered a change in placement. During this time period, a child's parent or other IEP team member may request an IEP meeting to discuss the potential need for services if the exclusion is likely to be of long duration (generally more than 10 consecutive school days). For long-term exclusions, an LEA (school district) must consider placement decisions under the IDEA's procedural protections regarding the continuum of alternative placements and the determination of placements. A change in placement decision must be made by a group of persons, including the parents and other persons knowledgeable about the child and the placement options. If the placement group determines that the child meets established high-risk criteria and, due to safety and health concerns, the child's needs could be met through homebound instruction, then the school district must issue a prior written notice proposing the change in placement. A parent who disagrees with this prior written notice retains all the due process rights. Also see recently [released guidance from DPI, page 8.](#)



While the DPI has established guidance for reopening schools, each school district in Wisconsin is responsible for determining their own reopening plan. It is important that parents keep informed of their local school district's plans as well as guidance issued by the [DPI](#), [U.S. Department of Education](#), and [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC). It is with this knowledge that parents of a student with a disability with underlying medical concerns can make an informed decision on what they feel is best for their child.

Statewide Events



Virtual Conference
August 7, 2020

[Endless Possibilities Conference 2020 - A Closer Look at Invisible Disabilities](#)

Keynote: Navigating Unfamiliar Spaces with an Invisible Disability.

Presenter Christina Irene, author of "Talking Splat: Communicating About Our Hidden Disabilities."

Sessions Include:

- Communicating About Hidden Disabilities: Tips and Tools
- NAMI Mental Health & Verbal De-escalation
- Compassion Resilience
- Breaking the Phonics Code for Struggling Readers
- Basics of Autism within Special Education
- Making Sure Your 504 Plan is Not Invisible
- Supporting Neurodiversity
- Success Stories Panel
- Mental Illness and Support
- A Comprehensive Approach to Bullying Prevention: Creating Supportive and Responsive Environments to Address Bullying

Registration Deadline Extended!

Register by noon on 8/6/20

[Information & Registration](#)

Registration Fee: \$20

Parent scholarships are available. Contact via email [Lori Karcher](#), at WI FACETS or call (414) 374-4645.

Learning
Opportunities



At Home Learning Strategies

Great!
SCHOOLS.org

Summer Learning Activities

Since schools shut early this year and summer programs are limited, [GreatSchools.org](#) designed four weeks of fun, easy-to-implement summer learning activities to help kindergartners through fifth graders practice important skills and get ready for next year. Print these worksheets and projects out a week or two at a time and schedule some quiet work time throughout the summer. An adult's help may be needed for some of the science activities. Keep the sessions low-pressure and fun and reward your child's work with enthusiasm. Remember, kids this age respond much better to positive feedback — and the main point is for your child to enjoy learning and taking on new challenges, not to get everything "right".

GreatSchools.org also developed [grade-based toolkits](#) for preschool children through grade 12. These toolkits include such things as vocabulary words, daily schedules, suggested reading lists, plus much more.

[Early Literacy Activity Calendar: August 2020](#)

The August calendar is packed with simple early literacy activities that parents can do at home to help their children become kindergarten ready. Children and caregivers can have fun celebrating S'mores Day, taking a story walk through family photo albums, and spending some rhyming time together!



[Story Online](#) features actors — including Lily Tomlin, Oprah Winfrey, Chris Pine and more — reading children's books alongside colorful illustrated videos. Activity guides with follow up learning activities also accompany most of the books.

["Read & Learn with Simon Kids"](#) is a new video series hosted on the Simon Kids YouTube channel. Parents and educators can find self-shot videos by Simon & Schuster authors and illustrators, including read-alouds, drawing tutorials and more.

[Into the Book](#), from PBS Wisconsin, is offering activities in English and Spanish for early readers to explore literacy concepts such as visualizing and inferring. You must register for a free account to access the activities.

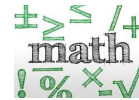
The [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) is offering learning activities for older children, including games, scripts and more, related to William Shakespeare's plays.

[Harper Collins](#) has organized content and programs to help with reading, including daily live-streamed story times, a podcast about classic literature, and more.

Practice Math Skills

[Math Game Time](#) offers a variety of games, videos, and worksheets for Pre-K through seventh grade.

[Cool Math 4 Kids](#) offers games and lessons to make math fun for kids.



[NASA](#) is offering chances for kids in grades 1 through 12 to chat with scientists, watch videos, find directions for STEM projects, solve puzzles, play games, read books, color sheets and watch lectures.

[Ways to Help Older Children Build Motor Skills](#)

Children develop gross and fine motor skills at different rates. While there are many activities to help younger kids work on fine and gross motor skills, they are not generally aimed at older kids.



There are certain learning and thinking differences that can affect motor skills. These include dyspraxia, visual processing issues, and sensory processing issues. Tweens and teens with these issues may still need to work on strengthening their motor development. This website has some fun activities suited for older kids to help them build gross and fine motor skills without making it seem like more work. Many of them can still be done within COVID-19 guidelines.

Online Resources: Other Health Impairment

[Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

This website has links to information related to incidence, characteristics, diagnosis and treatment, and school services related to children who have other health impairments. The website also includes links to many other resources related to specific disorders.

[Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#)

The website has information related to eligibility criteria for Other Health Impairment.

[FINDING YOUR WAY– A Navigation Guide for Wisconsin Families Who Have Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs and Disabilities](#)

This website provides brief descriptions of programs, services and systems of support and gives contact information to learn more about these and other resources.

[Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs](#)

The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program collaborates with national, state and community-based partners to link children to appropriate services, close service gaps, reduce duplication and develop policies to better serve families.

[Epilepsy Foundation](#)

This website has information for parents and professionals related to epilepsy disorders. It also has a link to a “[toolbox](#)” and provides information on forms and information parents may want to have available in case of an emergency. Information about other support groups and services is also on this site.

[Living with Spina Bifida](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has programs and research which may help improve the quality of life and encourage full participation at every age for those living with spina bifida.

[Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder \(CHADD\)](#)

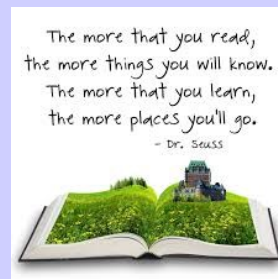
CHADD is a national nonprofit organization that improves the lives of people affected by ADHD through education, advocacy, and support. CHADD is in the forefront in creating and implementing programs and services in response to the needs of adults and families affected by ADHD through collaborative partnerships and advocacy, including training for parents and K-12 teachers, hosting educational webinars and workshops, being an informative clearinghouse for the latest evidence-based ADHD information, and providing information specialists to support the ADHD community.

[Family Voices](#)

Family Voices aims to achieve family-centered care for all children and youth with special health care needs and/or disabilities. Throughout their national grassroots network, they provide families resources and support to make informed decisions, advocate for improved public and private policies, build partnerships among families and professionals, and serve as a trusted resource on health care. The website has a link to individual state resources.

[Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program \(Wisconsin Department of Health Services\)](#)

The first three years are the most important building blocks of a child’s future. The Birth to 3 Program is a federally mandated Early Intervention program to support families of children with developmental delays or disabilities under the age of three.



One benefit of Summer was that each day we had more light to read by.

- Jeannette Walls

WI FACETS

Webinars
Trainings
Workshops

Event title links to information & registration for WI FACETS FREE workshops & webinars:

By phone, Sandra: 877-374-0511

All webinars 12:00—1:00 PM
(unless otherwise noted)

[Special Education and COVID-19- An Update](#)

Date: August 11, 2020

Presenter: Jeff Spitzer-Resnick,
Systems Change Consulting

Updates as to how the state and federal government have responded to school closures and virtual learning with regard to implementation of special education. Attendees will also learn strategies to help them monitor their children's progress towards IEP goals and document services provided. This will be critical information for IEP teams to consider for the upcoming school year. As we expect there to be many participant questions, we are asking that participants submit their questions as part of the registration process.

[Early Childhood Special Education Inclusive Practices & Related Services](#)

Presenter: Michelle Ogorek, Statewide
Early Childhood Coordinator

Date: August 12, 2020

Focus on what high quality inclusive practices look like in preschool, exploring access, participation and appropriate supports needed in preschool inclusion.

[Wisconsin Promising Practices and Resources](#)

Presenter: Ellie Hartman, Wisconsin
PROMISE Project Manager

Date: August 19, 2020

Resources for teenagers, young adults and family members (<https://beforeage18.org/>) and practitioners (<https://promising-practices.com/>). These resources were developed with youth, family, and practitioner input as part of the PROMISE grant, a youth and family centered federal grant that assisted youth and family members meet their school, work, and financial goals.



U.S. Department of Education Issues New Guidance on Dispute Resolution Options During Pandemic

The U.S. Department of Education is offering details about how states and schools can address special education disputes considering the COVID-19 pandemic. The federal agency issued two question-and-answer documents — one outlining considerations for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act dispute resolution procedures for services for children ages [3 to 21](#) and [another for younger children](#). The guidance comes in response to inquiries about how procedures should be handled in the COVID-19 environment. The U.S. Department of Education said, “Timely communication between parents and public agency staff can often help resolve disagreements that may arise regarding the educational services provided to a child with a disability during the pandemic,” according to the Q&A. “However, when those informal efforts prove unsuccessful, IDEA’s three dispute resolution mechanisms — mediation, state complaint and due process complaint procedures — are available.” The Department of Education indicated that like other guidance, the Q&A documents do not establish any new rights or policies, but merely serve as the department’s interpretation of existing laws.



Transition Improvement Grant (TIG) has a New Look

The Transition Improvement Grant (TIG) is excited to announce the launch of their redesigned website! Users can access the site with the same URL witig.org. However, the new design will enhance the user experience and use of TIG’s many tools and resources. Check out new features of TIG’s mission and vision, Self-Advocacy Suite, and the newest resources on the home page. Users with a TIG account will need to reset their passwords to ensure proper security.

[Seclusion and Restraint Fact Sheet](#)

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has released a fact sheet that compares and contrasts how the current law differs from the previous one. These key changes took effect on March 4, 2020 and were made pursuant to [2019 Wisconsin Act 118](#).

Research to Read

Training and Preparedness to Meet the Needs of Students with a Chronic Health Condition in the School Setting: An Examination of Teacher Preparation Programming in the United States

Irwin, Mary Kay; Elam, Megan; Merianos, Ashley; Nabors, Laura; Murphy, Christel, *Physical Disabilities: Education and Related Services*, v37 n2 p34-59 2018.

[Article Link](#)

Despite the increasing prevalence of chronic health conditions among youth in schools, teachers report little exposure to specific coursework focusing on how to best support students with these conditions in the classroom. This study examined how teacher preparation programs prepare educators to meet the needs of this growing student population; findings also include survey results describing level of preparation to support students with a chronic health condition from the perspective of preservice and practicing educators enrolled in the nation's leading colleges of education. Results suggest that dedicated curriculum to prepare teachers to work with students with chronic health conditions is largely absent from teacher preparation programming, and that teachers feel they lack knowledge to adequately support students with a chronic health condition in the classroom setting.

This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. *If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, contact: Wendy Overturf at woverturf@wifacets.org.*



Contributions to the Newsletter

Upcoming newsletter topics: September: Assistive Technology

October: Learning Disabilities

November: Emotional Behavioral Disabilities

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources, you may use the attached word document. Send submissions to woverturf@wifacets.org. If unable to access form, you may send information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

***The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter
can be found online at:***

<https://servingongroups.org/resources>



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