

INTEGRATED HEALTH HOME

844-225-7444



School and Illness: Should your child stay home?

For parents, it can be a challenge to decide whether to send their child to school when they wake up with early symptoms of an illness or complaints they are not feeling well. In general, during cold and flu season, unless your child is significantly ill, the best place for them is at school. The following guidelines will help determine if your child is too ill to go to school.

Child is too ill. Your child is too ill to attend school if he or she has any of these signs

- Seems very tired and needs bed rest (this is common with the flu).
- Has diarrhea or is vomiting
- Becomes short of breath or is wheezing
- Has a cough that disrupts normal activity
- Has distracting pain from earache, headache, sore throat, or recent injury.
- Has yellow or green drainage from eye(s)
- Breaks out in a rash; not all rashes require that a child stay home from school so check with your primary care provider.



Fever. Your child should not go to school if their temperature is above 100.5 degrees F.

Contagious disease. Your child should stay home from school if they have a contagious disease. A contagious disease is one that can be spread by close contact with a person or object. Examples include: chickenpox, flu, vomiting, diarrhea, strep throat, and pink eye. A disease may become contagious before your child shows signs of illness. It is very hard to prevent the spread of some germs, especially in a school classroom. Good handwashing will help prevent the spread of germs.

If your child has chickenpox or strep throat, ask your doctor when your child can return to school. Children with active chickenpox should not return to school until all the lesions are dried and crusted. Children with strep throat should be on antibiotics for 24 hours and feeling well enough to concentrate.

Remember. School is a child's work. It is important for normal development. If your child is absent often, it may be harder to keep up with the class. It is important your child does not miss more than a few days of school a year due to illness. Ask your doctor if you are not sure about keeping your child home.

Individualized Education Programs (IEP)

What's an IEP?

Kids with delayed skills or other disabilities might be eligible for special services that provide individualized education programs in public schools, free of charge to families. Understanding how to access these services can help parents be effective advocates for their kids.

The passage of the updated version of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) made parents of kids with special needs even more crucial members of their child's education team.

Parents can now work with educators to develop a plan – the individualized education program (IEP) – to help kids succeed in school. The IEP describes goals the team sets for a child during the school year, as well as any special support needed to help achieve them.

Who Needs an IEP?

A child who has difficulty learning and functioning and has been identified as a special needs student is the perfect candidate for an IEP.

Kids struggling in school may qualify for support services, allowing them to be taught in a special way, for reasons such as:

- Learning disabilities
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Emotional disorders
- Cognitive challenges
- Autism
- Hearing impairments
- Visual impairments
- Speech or language impairment
- Developmental delay
- Physical disabilities



How are services delivered?

In most cases, the services and goals outlined in an IEP can be provided in a standard school environment. This can be done in the regular classroom (for examples, a reading teacher helping a small group of children who need extra assistance while the other kids in the class work on reading with the regular teacher) or in a special resource room in the regular school. The resource room can serve a group of kids with similar needs who are brought together for help.

However, kids who need intense intervention may be taught in a special school environment. These classes have fewer students per teacher, allowing for more individualized attention.

In addition, the teacher usually has specific training in helping kids with special needs. The children spend most of their day in a special classroom and join the regular classes for nonacademic activities (like music and gym) or in academic activities in which they don't need extra help.

Because the goal of IDEA is to ensure that each child is educated in the least restrictive environment possible effort is made to help kids stay in a regular classroom. However, when needs are not met in a special class, then kids might be placed in one.

The Referral and Evaluation Process

The referral process generally begins when a teacher, parent, or doctor is concerned that a child may be having trouble in the classroom, and the teacher notifies the school counselor or psychologist

The first step is to gather specific data regarding the student's progress or academic problems. This may be done through:

- A conference with the parents
- A conference with the student
- Observation of the student
- Analysis of the student's performance

This information helps school personnel determine the next step. At this point, strategies specific to the student could be used to help the child become more successful in school. If this doesn't work, the child would be tested for a specific learning disability or other impairment to help determine qualification for special services

It's important to note, though, that the presence of a disability doesn't automatically guarantee a child will receive services. To be eligible, the disability must affect functioning at school.

To determine eligibility, a multidisciplinary team of professional will evaluate the child based on their observations; the child's performance on standardized tests; and daily work such as tests, quizzes, classwork, and homework.

Who's on the Team?

The professional on the evaluation team can include:

- A psychologist
- A physical therapist
- An occupational therapist
- A speech therapist
- A special educator
- A vision or hearing specialist
- Other, depending on the child's specific needs



As a parent, you can decide whether to have your child assessed. If you choose to do so, you'll be asked to sign a permission for that will detail who is involved in the process and the types of tests they use. These skills might include measures of specific school skills, such as reading or math as well as more general developmental skills, such as speech and language. Testing does not necessarily mean that a child will receive services.

Once the team members complete their individual assessments, they develop a comprehensive evaluation report (CER) that compiles their findings, offers an educational classification, and outlines the skills and support the child will need.

The parents then have a chance to review the report before the IEP is developed. Some parents will disagree with the report, and they will have the opportunity to work together with the school to come up with a plan that best meets the child's needs.

Developing the IEP

The next step is an IEP meeting at which team and parents decide what will go into the plan. In addition to the evaluation team, a regular teacher should be present to offer suggestions about how the plan can help the child's progress in the standard education curriculum.

At the meeting, the team will discuss your child's educational needs – as described in the CER- and come up with specific, measurable short-term annual goals for each of those needs. If you attend this meeting, you can take an active role in developing the goals and determining which skills or areas will receive the most attention.

The cover page of the IEP outlines the support services your child will receive and how often they will be provided (for example, occupational therapy twice a week). Support services might include special education, speech therapy, occupational or physical therapy, counseling, audiology, medical services, nursing, and vision or hearing therapy. They might also include transportation; the extent of participation in programs for students without disabilities; what, if any, modifications are needed in the administration of statewide assessment of student achievement; and, beginning at age 14, the inclusion of transition as part of the process.

If the team recommends several services, the amount of time they take in the child's school schedule can seem overwhelming. To ease that load, some services may be provided on a consultative basis. In these cases, the professional consults with the teacher to come up with strategies to help the child but doesn't offer any hands-on instruction. For instance, an occupational therapist may suggest accommodations for a child with fine-motor problems that affect handwriting, and the classroom teacher would incorporate these suggestions into the handwriting lessons taught to the entire class.

Other services can be delivered right in the classroom, so the child's day isn't interrupted by therapy. The child who has difficulty with handwriting might work one on one with an occupational therapist while everyone else practices their handwriting skills. When deciding how and where services are offered, the child's comfort and dignity should be a top priority.

The IEP should be reviewed annually to update the goals and make sure the levels of service meet your child's needs. However, IEPs can be changed at any time on an as-needed basis. If you think your child needs more, fewer, or different services, you can request a meeting and bring the team together to discuss your concerns.



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Your Legal Rights

Specific timelines ensure that the development of an IEP moves from referral to providing services as quickly as possible. Be sure to ask about this timeframe and get a copy of your parents' rights when your child is referred. These guidelines (sometimes called procedural safeguards) outline your rights as a parent to control what happens to your child during each step of the process.

The parents' rights also describe how you can proceed if you disagree with any part of the CER or the IEP — mediation and hearings both are options. You can get information about low-cost or free legal representation from the school district or, if your child is in Early Intervention (for kids up to age 3), through that program.

Attorneys and paid advocates familiar with the IEP process will provide representation if you need it. You also may invite anyone who knows or works with your child whose input you feel would be helpful to join the IEP team. Federally supported programs in each state support parent-to-parent information and training activities for parents of children with special needs. The Parent Training and Information Projects conduct workshops, publish newsletters, and answer questions by phone or by mail about parent-to-parent activities.

A Final Word

Parents have the right to choose where their kids will be educated. This choice includes public or private elementary schools and secondary schools, including religious schools. It also includes charter schools and home schools.

However, it is important to understand that the rights of children with disabilities who are placed by their parents in private elementary schools and secondary schools are not the same as those of kids with disabilities who are enrolled in public schools or placed by public agencies in private schools when the public school is unable to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

Two major differences that parents, teachers, other school staff, private school representatives, and the kids need to know about are:

Children with disabilities who are placed by their parents in private schools may not get the same services they would receive in a public school. Not all kids with disabilities placed by their parents in private schools will receive services.

The IEP process is complex, but it's also an effective way to address how your child learns and functions. If you have concerns, don't hesitate to ask questions about the evaluation findings or the goals recommended by the team. You know your child best and should play a central role in creating a learning plan tailored to his or her specific needs.

Food Banks and Family Meals



Buchanan and Delaware Resources

- Second Helpings, Manchester United Methodist church, free family meal every Monday at 5:30 pm 413 E Butler Street, Manchester
- Hopkinton Community Church Food Bank, Hopkinton, Iowa, call Kay at 563-920-4804 for assistance
- Be Our Guest, American Luther Church, free family meal the last two Wednesdays of the month from 5 -6 pm at 552 Purdy Street, Jesup, Iowa
- Hot Dog Fridays Meal, St James Episcopal Church of Independence, Free community meal every Friday 11-1 pm at 202 2nd avenue, Independence, Iowa
- Independence Food Bank, Independence, Wednesday 1-7 pm, Thursday & Friday 9-3 pm
- Manchester Food Bank, call Operation New View in Manchester for referrals, food pick up Monday and Thursday with referral
- Mobile food banks: Independence, 4th Saturday of the month, 9:30-11:30 am at West Elementary School, 1301 1st St. Manchester, 1st Thursday of each month, 5-6:30 pm at the New Life Assembly church, Lamont, 4th Saturday of the month 1-2:00 pm at Grace Methodist Church
- Brandon Food Bank, 4th Saturday of the month from 9:15 - 10:30 at the old Township Hall
- Brandon Food Bank, Kwik Stop in Brandon, open during regular business hours. After hours are possible, contact Cindy Clark at 319-474-2497

Clayton and Allamakee Resources

- Mobile Food Pantry in Guttenberg at the St. John's Lutheran Church the 3rd Sat of each month
- Food Pantry in Postville at 133 W. Greene St. Every Tuesday 2-5pm ID required
- Clayton County Food Shelf at 100 W. Hill Street St. Olaf (4x per year requires a referral)
- Allamakee County Food Shelf at 1125 W. Main St. Lot 39 in Waukon Every Thursday 9-1pm
- Lansing Iowa Food Trust (LIFT) 220 South Third St, Lansing, Wednesday 4:8 p.m.

Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek Resources

- Howard County Community Action Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 8-12 pm
- Decorah Lutheran Tuesday and Thursday 1-3 pm
- Riceville Food Pantry 1st and 3rd Friday of the month 9:30-11:30 am
- His Hands Food, Oran Iowa, Fridays 9-12 pm
- Northeast Iowa Food Bank, Oelwein & Decorah locations





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Medicaid, MCO, and IHH Contact Information



Iowa Medicaid Member Services

Monday through Friday

8 am—5 pm

1-800-338-8366 (toll free)

Each of the MCOs have selected a transportation vendor. Contact your MCO's NEMT broker at the numbers below to schedule a ride:

Amerigroup, Iowa Inc.
Logisticare: 1-844-544-1389

United Healthcare Plan of the River Valley, Inc.
MTM: 1-888-513-1613

Remember to call at least 48 hours in advance.

Member Contact Information

Amerigroup Iowa Inc.

Ph 1-800-600-4441

8 am-8 pm Monday through Friday

United Healthcare Plan of the River Valley, Inc.

Ph 1-800-464-9848

7:30 am-6pm Monday through Friday

Bethany, IHH Program Director, ph. 319-505-3812

Heidi, IHH Nurse Manager, ph. 319-505-3814

24 hours IHH Referral & Crisis Line ph. 844-225-7444

Kristy, IHH Care Coordinator, ph. 319-505-3710

Shannon, IHH Family Support Specialist, ph. 319-505-7802

Nicole, IHH Care Coordinator, ph. 319-505-3815

Heather, IHH Family Support Specialist, ph. 319-505-3813