

Helpful Tips for Monitoring Your Child's 504 Plan

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Monitoring your child's 504 Plan can be tricky especially if there isn't consistent communication from those who are responsible for implementing the plan. So how do you know if it is being followed properly and how do you know if the plan is helping? Below are some tips for monitoring your child's 504 Plan that may help you answer these questions.

- 1. Review the Plan with Your Child:** Make sure your child understands what supports are in place through the 504 plan and what the supports should look like. For younger children the explanation should be simple and to the point. Make sure your child understands that these supports are important and how they will be helpful.
- 2. Ask Your Child the Right Questions:** When you talk to your child about school ask them about the supports they are getting. Make sure your child is comfortable accessing the supports and listen to them as they talk about their day. This will tell you a lot. You could ask questions like:
 - ***Did you like that activity? What did you like or dislike?*** This can open the door to a discussion.
 - ***Was it difficult?*** This can provide insight to how much your child may have struggled or how they may need to be challenged more.
 - ***Did you need more time?*** This question can lead to information about extended time.
 - ***Who worked with you on that activity?*** This can help you understand what support was given and if your child worked in a group or individually.
- 3. Look for Patterns:** If your child never seems to be getting supports in the Math class you may need to address your concerns with the Math teacher. If tests seem to be the problem then maybe the correct supports are missing in this area.
- 4. Keep Track of Grades:** Are grades dropping? Is there a gap between the grade and your child's ability to demonstrate the targeted skills? These are red flags that something is wrong and should prompt you to further investigate.

- 5. Maintain Communication:** Set up a communication plan that works for everyone. It could be a simple check sheet, and email, or a message in a notebook. The method of communication should be consistent and should allow you to ask questions and provide feedback.

What do you do when there is a problem?

- Call us for support and information; we are here to help.
- Call a 504 meeting to discuss your concerns. Adjustments may need to be made to the 504 plan. If there is a problem with implementation that can also be addressed in the meeting.
- Reach out to the Principal for help if you are still having problems after addressing the team. A principal can be very helpful in some situations.
- You can reach out to the Office of Special Education for your county and speak to the supervisor who oversees Section 504. Ask them for help you resolve the problem.
- As a last resort if you have tried everything and are unable to resolve your problem, you can speak to the Office of Civil Rights. In some cases you may want to file a complaint with them (OCR Complaint).

These hints can help you keep track of your child's 504 plan and recognize when there might be a problem. At The Parents' Place of Maryland we are able to provide information and support if you have questions or problems with your child's 504 plan.