



SUPPORTING THE HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

A Navigation
Guide for Parents





What are Learning Disabilities? How Might they Impact your Child?

Learning disabilities (LDs) affect one or more of the ways that someone takes in, stores, or uses information, and they occur despite average or above average thinking and reasoning abilities. LDs come in many forms, and their effects vary from person to person.

LDs can interfere with learning basic skills such as reading, writing, and math. They can also interfere with higher-level skills such as organization, time management, and social communication skills.

LDs are lifelong and affect people differently depending on the demands of their environment.

It is important to remember that each person is unique, with their own combination of strengths and difficulties. They may struggle in some areas but have little or no difficulty in others.

Many students with LDs experience frustration, low confidence, and self-esteem issues. Some may **seem** unmotivated or like they aren't trying hard enough, when in reality, they've become discouraged after struggling so much, despite their best efforts.

Individuals with LDs **can** be successful when they have access to specific skill instruction, helpful tools and strategies (e.g., assistive technology like speech-to-text), self-advocacy skills, and accommodations.



Let's Get Started!



What about ADHD?

ADHD, or Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, is a common neurobiological condition that typically becomes noticeable during preschool or early school years. It affects between 5-12% of the population, making it one of the most frequently co-occurring disorders with learning disabilities. However, it is not considered a learning disability itself. ADHD symptoms are categorized into two main types: **hyperactive-impulsive** and **inattentive**, and individuals may have one of these subtypes or a combination of both.

LDs and ADHD are distinct conditions, but many individuals are diagnosed with both. When this happens, health professionals often refer to it as “co-morbidity,” meaning the two conditions exist together.

A common challenge of those with LDs or ADHD is difficulty with executive functions. Students rely on executive functions to perform activities such as planning, organizing, strategizing, paying attention to and remembering details, managing time and space, and self-regulation.

ADHD has nothing to do with “intelligence” or how smart someone is. While deficits in certain areas can feel overwhelming, research shows that explicit instruction in helpful strategies (i.e., compensatory strategies) can have a positive impact. Individuals can develop the skills necessary to be successful both in school and beyond.

Medication is an additional option to consider. Parents are encouraged to work closely with health care professionals to determine how best to meet their child's needs.





What are some work-arounds to help?

Although living with an LD and/or ADHD can feel challenging at first, things become easier once a person establishes strategies that work for them. Supporting your child to build routines around these strategies early on will help them to be more successful.



Recording instructions so they can be relistened to

Using checklists to help remember all tasks



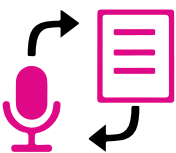
Setting timers, alarms, and calendar reminders

Using fidgets or other similar tools



Taking movement breaks (when appropriate)

Use visuals to support learning (e.g., number line, anchor charts, visual schedule, etc.)



Using Assistive Technology (e.g., Speech to Text or Text to Speech)

There are many strategies and accommodations teachers (and parents) can implement to support a child with ADHD or executive functioning challenges, such as:

Keeping instructions short and simple

Allowing for specific seat selection to minimize distractions

Providing choice to demonstrate understanding

Breaking tasks into smaller chunks

Intentional checking in to make sure your child is on the right track

Remember, every student is unique and will require different supports to be successful. It takes time and patience to figure out what is best for your child's learning. Developing self-advocacy skills is key - encourage your child to recognize when they need help and to ask for it!

Working with Your Child's School



Parents are key partners in their children's education. Research shows that increased family involvement leads to better outcomes in academics, attendance, and overall mindset. Many organizations are dedicated to helping parents engage in their child's education and school community. Additionally, there are community organizations that assist parents in collaborating with schools, and some offer materials or services in multiple languages.

To support your child's education, it's important to collaborate with teachers and other school personnel. Start building a relationship early by having informal conversations about your child, rather than waiting until there is a problem. This way, you will already have a connection when issues arise.

You can stay in touch with the teacher and other school staff by:

- Sending notes back and forth
- Writing in your child's agenda book
- Using email
- Calling by phone

Since you know your child best, your insights are invaluable.

You can share information about:	The teacher(s) can share information about:	When communicating with you, ask the teacher(s) to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your child's talents, interests, and strengths • What your child needs help with • What strategies work for your child at home • What motivates your child • Your child's friends • Issues that could affect your child's learning, attention, or feelings, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in your child's health or behaviour • Your family's cultural traditions and customs • Any family issues or changes • Family history related to education (e.g., if you or another member of the family has a learning disability) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is expected of your child • How your child is progressing in school work • Where your child is in relation to a grade expectations and/or benchmarks • How your child is developing socially and emotionally • How your child behaves in class and the discipline that is used • About any difficulties your child is having 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use plain words, not jargon, so that you can understand what is being discussed • Schedule appointments so that you can have someone come with you—a spouse, family member, friend, or interpreter • Suggest what you can do at home to help your child (the more specific the better) • Listen to what works at home • Provide copies of any written reports

PARENT TIP: Keep notes of all your conversations with the school about your child. If taking notes is difficult, ask if you can bring someone to take notes for you. Organizing the information in a binder or creating a special folder within your electronic records (on your email or computer) will make it easier to access when needed.

First Steps in Seeking Help for Your Child



Parents are often the first to notice that their child learns differently. Trust your instincts and consult your pediatrician or family doctor to rule out the more obvious issues like vision or hearing problems. Remember, children develop at their own pace, reaching milestones like speech, walking, and fine-motor tasks at different times. This doesn't mean that all late bloomers will need special education. Working with your pediatrician or family doctor to understand typical development can help you monitor progress and start early conversations between home and school.

This section outlines steps parents can take if concerned about their child's progress. (*Note: Step 1 and 2 also apply if your child has a learning disability diagnosis and you're concerned about their success).

STEP 1: Meet with the Teacher

If you have concerns about your child's social or academic progress, request a meeting with their teacher to review their performance in detail. The teacher will offer valuable insights into your child's strengths and learning needs. In turn, you can share your understanding, and together, develop a plan to support your child. Some targeted interventions and/or strategies at home and school may help your child. Together you can monitor the impact of the plan and readjust as needed. Remember, you are partners in your child's success!



First Steps in Seeking Help for Your Child



STEP 2: Meet with In-School Team

If your child continues to struggle despite efforts from both parent(s) and teacher(s), or if a specific issue has been identified by a professional, it is important to move to Step 2 - meeting with the In-School Team. Remember, you are a key member of the team. To initiate this step, request a meeting with your child's teacher, the school's special education teacher, and any other staff who support your child. These meetings are sometimes called case conferences. Each school board has a Parent's Guide outlining the special education programs and services available. You may want to consult this resource prior to the meeting or ask about it during the meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is to reflect on your child's progress, review what has worked and what has not, and develop a plan moving forward. As a parent, coming prepared with specific concerns, actions taken at home, and questions helps to streamline the conversation. The In-School Team identifies goals, roles and personnel, services and supports available, and establishes timelines for monitoring. This process is on-going with additional meetings to reflect on the goals, evaluate outcomes, and adjust as needed. Monitoring and documenting are essential for determining next steps, such as considering a psychoeducational assessment.

This part of the process can be messy, as you are finding the balance between giving enough time to measure the impact of strategies and interventions, while never losing sight of your role as your child's advocate. Monitoring progress closely helps guide when to move forward.



First Steps in Seeking Help for Your Child



STEP 3: Assessment

Schools and educators have various assessment tools to identify your child's specific strengths and needs, often focusing on literacy and numeracy. The results help guide next steps and inform the plan developed by the School Team. When educators target specific areas, based on these assessments, your child's progress will be regularly monitored to ensure they're making gains. If you are interested in learning more about school based assessments, ask your In-School team for a list of board recommended assessments and what they measure.

If your child's achievement has not improved, despite the efforts of the In-School team, and sufficient time to measure the impact of the interventions, you may want to consider a psychoeducational assessment (referred to in Ministry of Education Regulation 181 as a "psychological" assessment). There are several ways to explore this option.

Psychoeducational assessments can be done privately (for a fee) or through the school board. The school must obtain your written consent before a psychological assessment can be done. In some cases, assessments may be available in a hospital setting and are covered under OHIP, or through a children's mental health centre, if there are emotional/behavioral concerns. Unfortunately, there are often long waiting lists associated with publicly funded assessments. If you have a group medical plan, check if assessments by a psychologist are included and to what amount. A doctor's referral is usually required for coverage under the group plan, but you can refer your child directly to most psychologists/psychological associates. If using a private psychologist/psychological associate, ensure they are familiar with writing a report in the format required by the school board.

A good psychological (psychoeducational) assessment should provide insights into overall intellectual ability, but more importantly, about an individual's strengths and weaknesses. It should include recommendations for specific teaching interventions and strategies that leverage strengths to address areas of difficulty. For older children, it should also suggest accommodations and use of technology to help overcome challenges. Often, it is recommended to wait until at least Grade 3 for such assessments to account for developmental and environmental variability.

STEP 4: Diagnosis, Identification and IPRC Referral

Psychologists use the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V) to diagnose various conditions. For your child, the assessment will likely result in a diagnosis of a "specific learning disorder". Once the assessment report is complete, it is reviewed by an educational psychologist to determine if your child's assessment aligns with the Ministry of Education criteria for a Learning Disability. Some reports may directly recommend the Ministry of Education identification, others will need to be reviewed by the school board's psychological services. There is no fee associated with this part of the process. After identification, the next step is an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) referral. If the assessment was completed privately, it will need to be shared with the In-School team to initiate the IPRC process, as the report will include academic and social recommendations for your child.

A Parent's Guide to the IPRC and IEP



Understanding the IPRC

In Ontario, the Education Act requires that school boards provide special education programs and services for students identified as “exceptional”. Exceptional students are those whose “behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are such that they are considered to need placement in a special education program.” The IPRC (Identification, Placement, and Review Committee) is the process that determines if your child is identified as an “exceptional” student.



The role of the IPRC is to:

- 1) Decide whether your child should be identified as exceptional
- 2) Identify your child's areas of exceptionality
- 3) Determine your child's strengths and needs, which will be included in the Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- 4) Decide on an appropriate placement for your child
- 5) Review the identification and placement at least once each school year

If your child meets the criteria for a Ministry of Education exceptionality (e.g., learning disability), the IPRC process can begin in one of two ways: either the school team may initiate it, or you can submit a written request to your child's principal, asking for a refer to the IPRC. Within 15 school days of making the request, the principal must provide written notification, including an approximate date of the IPRC meeting and a parent's guide explaining the IPRC process. The in-school team may also ask you to bring any relevant psychological or health assessments that haven't been shared yet, which may affect your child's identification or placement.

At least 10 school days before the IPRC meeting, you (and your child, if 16 or over) will receive written notice with the date, time, and location of the meeting, along with an invitation to attend. The letter will ask you to indicate if you can attend.

If you cannot attend this meeting, contact the school principal or special education teacher immediately to reschedule or inform them of your absence. The meeting can proceed without your presence, provided you've received the invitation. If you are unable to attend, the IPRC's written decision will be sent to you.

Both you and the principal may invite others to attend the IPRC meeting. You are also entitled to have a representative or advocate to speak on your behalf.

A Parent's Guide to the IPRC and IEP



What Happens at the IPRC Meeting?

After introductions, the IPRC will review all available information about your child. This includes educational assessments as well as health or psychological assessments, if applicable. If they believe it would be helpful, they may also interview your child (with your permission, if your child is under 16 years of age). The IPRC will also consider any information that you submit about your child or that the child, if over the ages of 16, submits on their own behalf. You are encouraged to ask questions and actively participate in the discussion during this meeting.

Once all the information has been presented and discussed, the committee will make its decision, which includes:

- Whether or not your child is identified as exceptional
- If exceptional, the category and definition of the exceptionality
- Your child's strengths and needs
- A placement recommendation for your child.

Typically, students will remain in the regular classroom with additional supports and services. However, some students may be referred to a self-contained special education classroom, where they can receive even more intensive support. Note that while the IPRC will take the parent's preferences into account, these are not binding, and the final decision about placement rests with the IPRC.

Other placement options the IPRC may consider include:

- **Regular Class with Resource Assistance**
 - **Partial Integration**
 - **Withdrawal Assistance**
- **Full-Time Special Education Class**

To learn more about these options, speak to your child's special education teacher or visit the Ontario Ministry of Education's webpage "Identifying students with special education needs" (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/identifying-students-special-education-needs>)

A Parent's Guide to the IPRC and IEP



What Happens Next?

You will receive a written statement of the IPRC's decision. If you did not attend the meeting, this will be mailed to you. You will be asked to sign this document to indicate that you agree with the IPRC's decisions and recommendations. If you attended the meeting, you may be asked to sign at that time, but have the option to take more time to decide. You have 30 school days to return the signed document to the IPRC. Once the document is signed and returned, the school team will then begin developing or updating your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

What If I Disagree with the Decision?

If you disagree with the IPRC's decision, don't sign the Statement of Decision. You have 15 school days to request a second IPRC meeting. If you are still dissatisfied after your second meeting, you have 15 school days from the second decision to file an appeal. Your appeal request must be made in writing to the school board's Special Education department (the contact name and address can be obtained from your child's principal). In your appeal, you must specify the decision(s) you disagree with and your reasons for disagreement.

If you do not request a second meeting or file an appeal, the IPRC's original decision will automatically be implemented after 30 school days.

The Annual Review – Or Sooner

A review IPRC meeting will be held each year to assess your child's progress and update their education plan if needed. This review can only be waived with your written consent, though it is recommended that you do not waive this review. The annual IPRC is an opportunity to ensure your child starts each new school year in the most appropriate environment with the best possible accommodations.

You may also request a review IPRC any time after your child has been in a special education program for three months.

A Parent's Guide to the IPRC and IEP



The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

The Individual Education Plan, or commonly known as the IEP, is the school's written **plan of action** for a student receiving special education services.

According to the Ministry of Education, the IEP "is a working document which describes the strengths and needs of an individual exceptional pupil, the special education program and services established to meet that pupil's needs, and how the program and services will be delivered. It also describes the student's progress."

(Ontario's Individual Education Plans, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/individual-education-plans>)

An IEP must be developed for all students identified through the IPRC process, and a copy must be provided to the parents (and the student, if 16 or over). IEPs can also be created without going through the IPRC process to ensure that appropriate supports are in place in a timely manner for the student. These supports may include assistance in achieving curriculum expectations, demonstrating learning, or improving attendance. If your child isn't formally identified and you believe they need an IEP, you can speak to their teacher or special education teacher about developing one.

Once the IEP is signed by both parties, it becomes a contract that parents and educators are responsible for implementing and supporting.

Within 30 school days of the student's placement in the special education program through an IPRC decision, the principal must ensure that the IEP is completed, and a copy sent to the parents (and student, if 16 or over). The IEP team should also ensure that everyone involved with the student is familiar with the IEP's contents and requirements.

Reviewing and Updating the Plan

A formal review and update of the IEP should occur at least once every reporting period. Team members should continuously monitor the plan and make adjustments as needed to ensure it remains responsive to the student's current needs and outlines clear next steps.

A Parent's Guide to the IPRC and IEP



What Role do Parents/Guardians Play in IEP Development?

“The support of parents/guardians has positive and pervasive effects on the student’s success in school, and parents should be encouraged to feel that their contribution is a valuable part of the team process.”

([Special Education in Ontario, C23](#))

Parental participation is invaluable in the education of any child, especially a child with special needs. As a parent, you have unique insight into your child’s strengths and interests, how they learn best, and successful strategies used at home. **Most importantly, the school team should seek your input on both short- and long-term goals for your child, as well as your child’s own aspirations.** This input can significantly impact decisions about programming, pathways, and educational or social goals.

By sharing knowledge, resources, and time, parents can help ensure their child is placed in the best learning environment to meet their needs. Together, parents and teachers of students with learning disabilities can create effective pathways to school success.

The school team must consult with you during the development of your child’s IEP.

This consultation can happen in several ways:

- Face-to-face conference
- Phone call
- Email or other written communication

Your input will help shape several areas of the IEP, such as Accommodations and the Transition Plan. Accommodations are supports and strategies that help your child to access the curriculum.

There are three types of Accommodations:

- Instructional (e.g., Check-ins for understanding)
- Environmental (e.g., Preferential seating)
- Assessment (e.g., Extra time on tests)

Your observations and insights into strategies that have been successful in supporting your child are valuable in helping the team develop this section of the IEP.

Additionally, the Transition Plan is a part of the IEP that outlines how the school will assist your child with daily or upcoming changes in their education, such as transitioning from recess to class or moving from elementary to secondary school. Many students with special needs struggle with transitions because they may be uncertain about what to expect or what is expected of them. If you have found strategies that work well at home, be sure to share with the school team.

A Parent's Guide to the IPRC and IEP



You are an expert on your child, and your input is essential in creating a plan that best meets their needs.

Another area to consider in an IEP is whether or not your child receives **modifications**. Modifications involve changes to the grade-level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet your child's learning needs. These changes could include developing expectations that align with different grade level and/or adjusting the number and/or complexity of regular grade-level curriculum expectations.

It is crucial to have a conversation with your In-School team about whether your child is receiving modifications. Ideally, your child should work on grade-level content with appropriate accommodations. If modifications are necessary, ask the team about the possibility of reducing the number of expectations AT grade level, rather than working below grade level. Gap-closing interventions can be used alongside grade level content to help your child catch up.

The IEP and IPRC process can feel intimidating, especially if this is your first experience with it. The idea of having your child diagnosed may feel overwhelming, and school staff may use unfamiliar or complex terminology. It's perfectly okay to ask for clarification or further explanation if you're unsure about anything being discussed.

The [LD@home Glossary of Terms](#) is a helpful resource to review before meeting the school team and throughout your child's education. It simplifies educational terms in language that is easy to understand, even if you're not familiar with the education field.

In the end, experience shows that when educators and parents collaborate on developing the IEP, they create a common understanding, reducing the potential for future conflict.



Opportunities for Home-School Communication

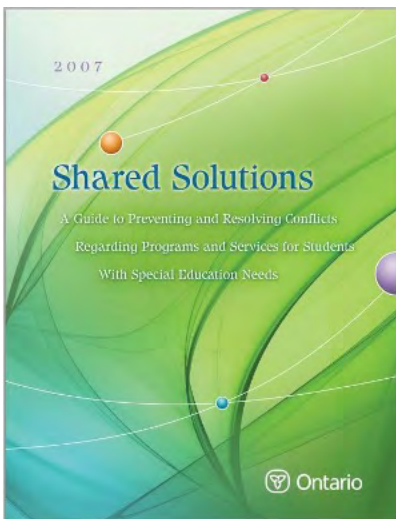


Maintaining a Positive Relationship with the School

Establishing a positive relationship with the school team is essential for your child's continued success. Here are some important things to keep in mind:

- Choose a communication method that works best for everyone (e.g., email, planner, phone call).
- Take time to meet and listen carefully to each other.
- Treat everyone as equal partners in the planning and decision-making process.
- Ensure all involved have the opportunity to express their opinions and offer suggestions.
- Approach disagreements in a way that encourages positive problem solving.
- Seek a second opinion when disagreements remain unresolved.

Getting help for your child can be a complex and emotional process, and misunderstandings or communication breakdowns may occur between you and the teacher(s). As frustrating as this can be, remember that finding a solution is crucial, with the most important reason being the well-being of your child.



The Ontario Ministry of Education has developed a handbook for parents and teachers called ***Shared Solutions: A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs***. This guide offers strategies and techniques to help prevent conflicts and work toward a 'shared solution' when conflicts arise. You can access the guide here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/shared-solutions-guide-preventing-and-resolving-conflicts-regarding-programs-and-services>

PARENT TIP:

If you have a concern, start by speaking with your child's classroom teacher. If the issue remains unresolved after some time, consider reaching out to the special education teacher and/or the school administrator. If it still cannot be resolved at the school level, as a last resort, you may contact the school superintendent.

Opportunities for Home-School Communication



School Event	Purpose of Event	Your Opportunity as a Parent
School Open House (Meet the Teacher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the principal and staff • Become familiar with the school building and community • Meet your child’s teacher and see the classroom • Learn more about general start up items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a connection with the principal • Learn about school programs (e.g., School Council, Breakfast Club, extra-curriculars) • Request a meeting with the homeroom teacher and/or principal to share information about your child (e.g., learning profile, new health concerns)
Parent-Teacher Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the first report card • Celebrate successes and address concerns • Plan next steps to support your child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and discuss concerns about learning or behavioral difficulties • Develop shared strategies with the teacher to support your child • Request a written report of topics discussed and suggestions made
Parent-Requested Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address specific concerns about your child’s progress or other school-related issues • Opportunity to meet with the teacher to review your child’s continued progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a list of points to discuss and questions to ask • Share your concerns with the teacher • Decide on steps and strategies to help your child • Request a written report of the conference, including topics, suggestions, and decisions made

Supporting School Work at Home



Children with LDs/ADHD often struggle with completing school work at home. It's important to address these challenges early, as they can impact school performance. Common issues for children with LDs/ADHD include:

- Forgetting to write down assignments.
- Forgetting to bring home needed books and materials.
- Procrastinating and putting off starting work.
- Getting distracted and not completing assignments.
- Completing work carelessly and making many mistakes.
- Forgetting to hand in assignments when they return to school.



To help your child with their schoolwork, try the following strategies:

- **Establish home-school communication:** Talk with your child's teacher to ensure you know what homework is assigned (e.g., planner, class website).
- **Discuss accommodations:** Work with the teacher to determine appropriate accommodations for assignments (e.g., fewer questions, extended deadlines, assistive technology use).
- **Create a schedule and routine:** Develop a regular homework routine with your child to promote consistency.
- **Designate a workspace:** Set up a dedicated workplace that is separate from play or eating space.
- **Organize the work area:** Help your child to organize their desk or workspace to minimize distractions.
- **Use visual reminders:** Use visual reminders to help your child stay on track (e.g., checklists, to-do lists, homework diary and a calendar).
- **Start work together:** Sit with your child at the beginning, ask them to explain what they have to do, and ensure they understand the first steps. Give them space to work independently, but remain available if they need help.
- **Break down lengthy tasks:** Divide long assignments into smaller time-chunks. Use a count-down timer for short intervals (e.g., 10 minutes), with brief mini-breaks in between (e.g., one minute).
- **Reward system:** Implement a reward system to provide positive reinforcement for completing homework.
- **Bright organization:** Use a brightly coloured binder or envelope for items that need to go between home and school (e.g., school work, permission slips, notes).
- **Rhyming routines for younger children:** Use rhymes to help your child remember routines, such as "Unpack the backpack; work on the table, not on the floor! Pack up the backpack; put backpack back by the door."

How to be a Successful Advocate for Your Child



General Guidelines

- **Attend every meeting.** Go to all meetings where your child's progress, needs, and future are to be discussed. Show interest, and be willing to both learn and share insights. Ask for suggestions on how to help your child at home. Actively participate in developing plans to support your child both academically and socially. Follow through on any promises you make. A parent who is caring, concerned, reliable, and involved earns the respect of school professionals. Remember, you are a part of the team, and a good working relationship benefits your child.
- **Keep organized records.** Maintain a file of all documentation related to your child, including communication with the school team, notes on telephone conversations, and letters confirming important parts from conversations. Save report cards, assessment reports, and review documents. You may never need them, but if you do, such as for an appeal or tribunal, you will be prepared. Many of these documents are also stored in your child's Ontario Student Record, and you can request copies if needed.
- **Collaborate with your child's teacher.** Share information on your child's needs and strategies that have worked at home. It's important to set realistic expectations: children should not be excused from tasks they can do, even if they are challenging. Discomfort doesn't always mean inability. If you support the teacher's reasonable requests, they are more likely to listen when you make suggestions or ask for changes.
- **Know your rights and responsibilities.** Be well informed about your child's rights within the education system. Be assertive, persistent, and clear in your communication, but also courteous and respectful toward school board representatives.
- **Involve your child.** Engage your child in the process as early as possible. By the time they are 16, they are expected to participate more independently. By 18, the IPRC process becomes the student's sole responsibility. Prepare your child to become an effective self-advocate well before these milestone ages.

Be Informed

Understand the Education Act and Regulations, your school board's policies and resources, and have a good grasp of what learning disabilities are.



Advocate Consistently

Be an advocate for your child at all times, not just when it feels comfortable or convenient.



Communicate Assertively

Maintain clear, respectful, and assertive communication with the educational system.

Stay Persistent

Don't give up at the first sign of difficulty; persistence is key.



Be Realistic

Have a clear understanding of your child's strengths and needs, as well as realistic expectations for their present and future prospects.

Join An Advocacy Group:

Recognize the power of collective advocacy by joining groups like the LDAO, which can provide support and may eventually give you the opportunity to help others.

Balance Advocacy With Support

Understand that while advocacy is important, there will be times when you must apply respectful pressure and times when it's appropriate to support school decisions.



Encourage Self-Advocacy

Help your child develop self-advocacy skills and learn to gradually step back, allowing them to take ownership of their advocacy journey.



What it Means to be Assertive



Knowing Your Rights

Understanding and accepting your and your child's rights, along with the accompanying responsibilities.

Seeking Clarity

Asking questions until you fully understand, and requesting information to be rephrased if needed.

Participating Actively

Attending and fully participating in all school meetings where your child's educational progress is being discussed.

Maintaining Records

Keeping thorough documentation of all communications related to your child, including knowing who provided what information, when, and to whom.

Understanding The Plan

Ensuring you are familiar with the school's plan for your child's education, including goals, objectives, and activities. Be prepared to discuss these at any time during reviews

Communicating Courteously But Firmly

Letting people know, politely but firmly, that you intend to resolve issues to ensure that your child is learning. If necessary, be willing to pursue appeal procedures, making it clear that your child's success is your top priority.

Building A Support Network

Learning who the key people are, both inside and outside the school, who can help ensure your child is learning to the best of their ability.

Expressing Appreciation

Knowing when to thank and praise people who have helped your child.

Believing In Your Role:

Never saying "Oh, I'm just a parent, so what do I know?"
You know your child best!

Important Resources



LDAO

<https://www.ldao.ca/home/>

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) is a registered charity dedicated to improving the lives of children, youth, and adults with learning disabilities. LDAO offers many resources, services, information, venues, and products designed to help people with LDs and ADHD, as well as parents, teachers, and other professionals.

LDAO Chapters

<https://www.ldathome.ca/in-your-community/>

Local chapters of the LDAO exist in many of Ontario's cities, and each offers services centered around education and advocacy for people of all ages. To locate your local chapter and learn about what they offer, visit the community page, and contact the one nearest you.

LD@home

<http://www.ldathome.ca>

LD@home is a resource designed to support parents, students, and families who are living with learning disabilities. At LD@home, we understand that living with LDs can present unique challenges, that's why we're here to assist you on this journey.

