

A Parent's Guide to Inclusive Education



**Community Living Manitoba
2008**

Dedication

This guide is dedicated to the many parents who have worked tirelessly to secure the inclusive education of their children with special needs. Without you to guide us along our paths, we would be constantly re-inventing how to work effectively and collaboratively with the systems that are responsible for the education of our children. This guide is also dedicated to the many individuals and organizations that came together to work towards the amendment to The Public Schools Act: The Appropriate Education Act.

Many teachers, school administrators, school division and government personnel have been strong leaders in promoting inclusive education for all Manitoba children. You are an inspiration and superb example of how wonderful our world can be when we embrace all of its diversity.

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To all the many parents who have shared their stories and achievements on behalf of their children, know that your experiences are an inspiration to many others, especially parents of young children with special needs who are just beginning their journey through the education system.

I would also like to send personal, heartfelt thanks to my husband, Petr, and children, Peter, Michael and Katherine for their encouragement and support as we work together as a family to secure inclusive communities for all.

Anne Kresta

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Chapter 1

Inclusive School Practices

Chapter at a Glance

Whose Child is This?

Promoting Inclusion in the Education System

- Manitoba's Philosophy of Inclusion?
- What does inclusion mean to a student with special needs in Manitoba schools?

Ways of Teaching that Promote Inclusion

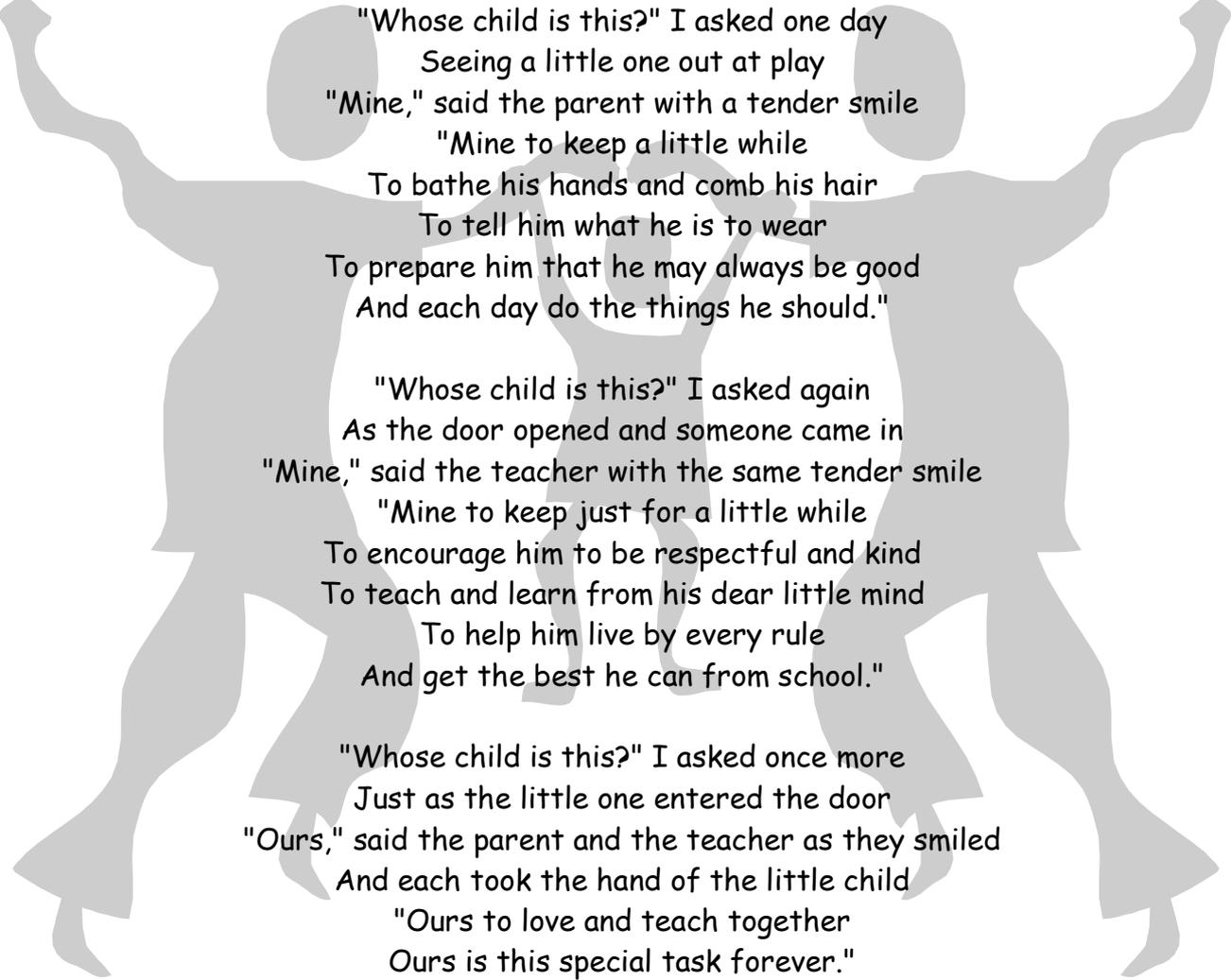
Best Practices in Inclusive Education

1. School Learning Environment
2. Collaborative Planning
3. Administration
4. Social Responsibility
5. Curriculum Planning and Implementation
6. Support Programs and Services
7. Classroom Practices
8. Planning for Transition
9. Partnerships: School, Family and Community
10. Innovation: System and Staff Growth
11. Accountability

One Family's Journey Towards Inclusion

Worksheet: Your Family's Journey Towards Inclusion

Whose Child Is This?



"Whose child is this?" I asked one day
Seeing a little one out at play
"Mine," said the parent with a tender smile
"Mine to keep a little while
To bathe his hands and comb his hair
To tell him what he is to wear
To prepare him that he may always be good
And each day do the things he should."

"Whose child is this?" I asked again
As the door opened and someone came in
"Mine," said the teacher with the same tender smile
"Mine to keep just for a little while
To encourage him to be respectful and kind
To teach and learn from his dear little mind
To help him live by every rule
And get the best he can from school."

"Whose child is this?" I asked once more
Just as the little one entered the door
"Ours," said the parent and the teacher as they smiled
And each took the hand of the little child
"Ours to love and teach together
Ours is this special task forever."

-Author Unknown

Introduction



What does inclusion mean to you, your family and your child? What is "inclusive education?"

Presented below are some examples of definitions of inclusive education from many different sources. You may agree or disagree with them, or may find parts or all of them to be in keeping with your value system. When planning for your child's education and your family life, it is important to affirm your own definition of inclusion so that you can more easily create a vision of your family and your child's future.

✓ "The fundamental principle of inclusive education is the valuing of diversity within the human community. When inclusive education is fully embraced, we abandon the idea that children have to become normal in order to contribute to the world....We begin to look beyond typical ways of becoming valued members of the community, and in doing so, begin to realize the achievable goal of providing all children with an authentic sense of belonging.¹"

✓ "Full inclusion means that all students, regardless of handicapping condition or severity, will be in a regular classroom/program full time. All

services must be taken to the child in that setting.²"

✓ "We believe in inclusive schools and classrooms where all students:

- attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood schools;
- are educated together in age-appropriate, regular classes;
- are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school.³"

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth has adopted a philosophy of inclusion⁴ presented below...

"Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued, and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members.

Through recognition and support, an inclusive community provides meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship.

In Manitoba, we embrace inclusion as a means of enhancing the well-being of every member of the community. By working together, we strengthen our capacity to provide the foundation for a richer future for all of us."

The philosophy of inclusion goes beyond the idea of physical location and incorporates basic values and a belief system that promotes participation, belonging and interaction.

¹ Kunc, Norman *The Need to Belong: Rediscovering Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* Paul H. Brookes Publishers 1992

² *Special Education Inclusion* Wisconsin Education Association Council, updated March 2007

³ Canadian Association for Community Living (www.inclusiveeducation.ca)

⁴ *School Partnerships: A Guide for Parents, Schools and Communities*, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2005 p 1.

What does "inclusion" mean to students with special needs in Manitoba schools?

Students with special needs should experience school as much as possible like their peers without special needs.

To make inclusion a reality in Manitoba schools, parents and educators need to work together to:

1. Build school and classroom communities where all students, including those with diverse needs and abilities, have a sense of personal belonging and achievement;
2. Support practices that encourage students with a wide range of learning needs to be effectively taught together;
3. Encourage all students, educators, and parents to understand the diversity of learners in a school community.

Ways of Teaching that Promote Inclusion:

Inclusion can be a difficult goal to achieve in any environment, especially in a school where so many people of different backgrounds, experiences and abilities are brought together to pursue their education. Promoting this goal and making it a reality takes a

thoughtful approach and a lot of creativity.

It is important to understand that while there may be in place a belief system that supports inclusive education, on a day-to-day basis you may see teaching practices that use alternate learning environments to educate students. These alternate learning environments could include pull-outs for remedial literacy, numeracy or other learning purposes, but should be kept to a minimum and be carefully used to lessen the impact of proposed pull-out time on the inclusion of the student in the life of the classroom with their same-aged peers.

In Manitoba, School Divisions have policies and practices that reflect what they believe is the best learning environment for students.

Some parents may agree that a learning environment outside of the classroom is best for some activities. This does not mean that they want their child to be segregated for all of their academic subjects, for recess, or never to go to a school dance. Inclusive education is all about maximizing the time that students spend together with their peers, while allowing all students to engage in school community life to their fullest potential.

For most students, accommodations can be made in the classroom so that the majority of their school day is spent there with their peers. Here are some examples of how that can happen:

- ✓ **Classroom Layout.** Instead of rows of desks, the classroom is designed to promote student interaction and cooperation (for example, desks are organized in a circle).
- ✓ **Cooperative Learning Groups.** Children are divided into small groups for learning activities which have goals that require cooperation. Each child has a specific role which is equally valued. Children rely upon one another to achieve their goal.
- ✓ **Experience-Based Activities.** This method uses activities such as role-playing, storytelling, building models, drawing, acting, and using computers to promote the learning of specific lessons or concepts.
- ✓ **Major Projects.** The classroom can be involved in different major projects throughout the school year. The projects can be designed to include a child with a disability who has different learning goals. The preparation of the project could allow the child to work on specific skills while participating with other children.
- ✓ **Peer Tutoring and Mentorships.** Peer tutoring involves children of the same age teaching each other,

while mentorships can pair up older children with younger ones. Some schools have organized school-wide tutoring or mentorship programs. The children helped through these programs do not all have disabilities thereby making this program inclusive.

- ✓ **Using Different Ways of Testing.** Methods such as oral reports, demonstrations, exhibits, are usually better ways for all children to show what they have learned.

Best Practices in Inclusive Education

Some men see things as they are and ask why. Others dream things that never were and ask why not.

-George Bernard Shaw

This section looks at a series of "indicators" of an inclusive culture within the school setting and these indicators are things that may be present within your child's school or may be things that are being worked towards by the school and school division staff. An "inclusive culture" within a school setting embraces all members of the school community, from the gifted to the struggling learner, from the student, to the teacher, to the many support staff that make the school environment a welcoming and safe place for all.

On the following pages are checklists of good practices in inclusive

education. When reviewing these checklists, keep in mind that there needs to be a strong voice or a series of strong voices within the school community actively promoting these inclusive school practices. *Yours could be one of them.* Think about the school where your child will be or currently is attending. Can you see any or all of these indicators within their environment? Think about potential allies within the school community who are working towards a more inclusive school. Is there anything you or anyone else can do to help them out? Take the time to check off indicators that you see, and spend some time considering what you would like to see happening in your child's school.

1. School Learning Environment

- Teachers hold high expectations for all students. Teachers provide to students opportunities to participate actively in classroom learning activities.
- Teachers provide all students with appropriate learning opportunities.
- Teachers expect all students to behave with respect for the learning of others.
- Teachers provide safe and orderly classrooms.

- Schools place children in age-appropriate regular classrooms.
- Schools are inviting, pleasant and clean places, easily accessible to all students.
- Schools provide a positive inclusive climate through policies, programs and practices that are equitable for students.

Points to Ponder:

This section deals with how you and your child feel when entering and being a part of the school community.

- Do teachers expect and explore ways for all of their students, including your child, to reach their potential, with their dignity intact?
- Is your child included in classroom activities so that they are truly a part of the class, and not confined to one area of the classroom with an educational assistant?
- Are there school rules and policies in place that provide firm guidelines for staff and students about acceptable behaviour?

2. Collaborative Planning

Collaboration is the cooperative working together of different individuals or groups of people. When looking at collaborative planning within the school setting, a cooperative and respectful environment would be a good indication that this practice is in use and is being promoted.

- School divisions routinely use clear processes for planning and monitoring programs and services, and include students, parents, teachers, administrators and community partners in these processes.
- School divisions hold regular public consultations to promote community involvement and support.
- School divisions consult and collaborate with schools to ensure that programs and support services are based on teacher and student needs and distributed equitably.
- Schools have support teams which meet regularly to assess and prioritize needs, and allocate appropriate resources.
- Schools have clear processes to ensure collaboration among methods and resource teachers, guidance counsellors, other school resource personnel, teachers,

parents and students on issues related to program, instruction and service issues.

- Schools use various models of peer collaboration to ensure mutual assistance, professional support, and problem solving.

Points to Ponder:

This section addresses how school divisions and the school itself works with all the different groups of people who are part of their community to advance inclusive education practices.

- Are there opportunities for you to participate in the planning process at the school and/or school division level?
- Is there a committee or parent group where parents can participate with the division staff in developing programming and policy to support inclusive schools.
- Is there a way that teachers in your school share their professional learning?

3. Administration

- School division administrators work in partnership with school boards and the community to ensure that equitable, inclusive policies govern the programs and services.
- School division administrators hold high expectations for educational personnel and promote innovative, inclusive practices.
- School administrators develop support teams and work collaboratively as members of these teams.
- School administrators are advocates for all students.
- School administrators hold high expectations for staff and students.
- School administrators promote and model collaborative and inclusive processes.
- School administrators celebrate innovative teaching practices and student accomplishments.

Points to Ponder:

- Are there "champions" of inclusion present within the school division staff?
- Are there examples of school division or school policy that promote inclusion?
- Is there a staff member in the division who is responsible for policy and leadership in the area of student services?
- What is the process for communication between the school and the administration of the school division?



4. Social Responsibility

- Schools promote students' participation in community volunteer organizations, student government and decision-making on school and community issues.
- Schools provide learning opportunities which help students to learn about, appreciate and celebrate differences among people.
- Schools provide opportunities for students to participate fully in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to enhance their overall development.
- Schools promote social responsibility among students by providing meaningful experiences in a variety of settings.

Points to Ponder:

- Do students have a voice and are their contributions honoured within the school?
- Is there a student council?
- Are students with special needs included on the student council?
- Are students with special needs able to participate in extra-curricular sports, or other clubs?
- Are there specific activities that encourage the student body to take ownership of and promote the inclusive climate within the school?
- Are there school programs in place which help to cultivate these values such as "The Virtues Project" (www.virtuesproject.com), "The Seven Sacred Teachings" (www.thesharingcircle.com), or "Together We Light the Way?" (www.canadajustice.ca)



5. Curriculum Planning and Implementation

- Teachers plan and deliver the curriculum with attention to the cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth of all students.
- Teachers accommodate for individual strengths, needs and differences within program planning, implementation and monitoring (evaluation) processes.
- Teachers use age-appropriate activities, materials and settings.

Points to Ponder:

- Does your child have an individual education plan (IEP)?
- How are you involved in the planning for your child's IEP?
- Do you know what the provincial curriculum expects of your child for the grade level that they are in?
- Do the teachers discuss with you the ways that they propose to adapt the classroom setting and/or their delivery of subject material in a way that is age-appropriate and respectful of your child's needs?



6. Support Programs and Services

- Schools share ideas, strategies and resources with various groups to promote the planned curriculum.
- There is a divisional or school-based support team to assist teachers in the programming for students with special needs.
- Specialist teachers are available to assist classroom teachers in programming for a student with special needs. With strong interpersonal skills, these teachers provide primarily collaborative consultative support to classroom teachers about programs, strategies and alternatives in meeting student needs.
- Guidance counsellors/resource teachers promote and facilitate programs and services to meet the needs of students with special needs.
- School divisions and schools ensure through collaboration that external support services meet the specific needs of students with special needs.
- School divisions provide programs and services to all students who are at risk of dropping out of school.

Points to Ponder:

- How can the school resource staff learn about the special needs that your child brings with them to school each day?
- Are you involved in the parent advisory group for the school?
- Does the school administration have a policy that supports teachers in their efforts to provide an inclusive education to all of their students?
- Is their collaboration among school staff in learning appropriate practices that facilitate the learning of all of their students? How would a parent know this? Does staff in the school work collaboratively on projects or initiatives such as an early literacy initiative.
- Is there a program in place (e.g. an alternative learning program) that provides struggling students with assistance to achieve their potential at school?

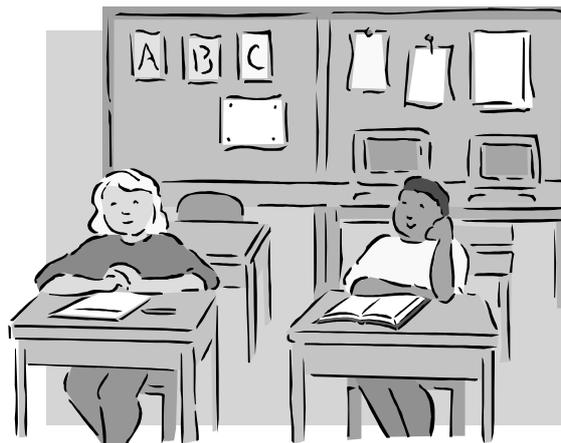


7. Classroom Practices

- Classroom teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and assessment techniques to accommodate various learning preferences.
- Classroom teachers use a variety of inclusive teaching practices to ensure that students with special needs are involved in the life of the classroom.
- Classroom teachers ensure student learning is assessed regularly and offer frequent feedback as part of an ongoing evaluation process.

Points to Ponder:

- What is the role of the Educational Assistant in the programming for your child? Is he or she expected to pre-teach lessons or be supportive in the classroom while the teacher is instructing the students.
- Are there additional times (aside from the regular reporting times throughout the school year) set up for you to talk to the school team about the progress that your child is making in their educational program?



8. Planning for Transition

- Schools facilitate the transition of children with special needs prior to their entry into the public school system by consulting with parents, Department of Family Services and Housing, Department of Health and other community agencies.
- Teachers, administrators, parents and students work together to ensure transition from class to class or from one school to another is effectively and sensitively handled in the best interest of students with special needs.
- Schools provide and coordinate a systematic transition for students with special needs entering high school and work closely with Family Services and Housing and other government departments, post-secondary learning instructors, prospective employers and community groups to coordinate effective high school leaving and ensure that high school leaving holds new opportunities for these students.
- Schools coordinate a variety of work experiences for students with special needs to facilitate their transition to employment.

Points to Ponder:

- Do you know what the transition planning process for your child's school is when your child first enrolls in the school, from grade to grade, and upon graduation from the school?
- Do you anticipate any difficulties with transitions for your child? Does your child tend to transition into new environments with new people easily or with difficulty? How and when will you discuss this with the school team?
- Is the transition planning process inclusive of all students so that when there is a need to transition into another school environment, students can work together to facilitate the transition process for each other?



9. Partnerships:
School, Family and Community

- Schools provide opportunities for family members to participate in school-based teams, which plan programs and services, offer opportunities for input into decisions and implementation procedures and ensure equity for children with special needs.
- Schools communicate effectively and regularly with students, parents, volunteers, support agency personnel, district office staff, trustees and community members.

Points to Ponder:

- What do you feel would be the level of involvement that you want to ensure that you are an active member of your child's IEP team?
- How will you ensure that your contributions are heard by the other members of the IEP team?
- Who can explain the process for IEP development in your child's school to you?
- How do you as a parent plan to maintain a connection to the day-to-day life of the school?



**10. Innovation:
System and Staff Growth**

- School divisions have a plan for the ongoing improvement of programs and services for children with special needs, including a staff development plan for division and school-based personnel. For example some school divisions have formal professional development opportunities in place that allow for the certification of their educational assistants.
- School divisions promote and support innovative practices to ensure the ongoing development of programs and services for children with special needs.
- Schools promote and support innovations in instructional practices and services and celebrate successful strategies.
- Teachers seek opportunities to learn more about using inclusive practices in teaching children with special needs.
- Support personnel seek opportunities to advance their personal qualifications.

Points to Ponder:

- Do you see ways that your child's school or school division is a leader in promoting inclusive school practices?
- Are there opportunities for parents and educators to discuss ideas and strategies to promote inclusive practices throughout the school community?
- Are there examples of school division and school staff showing their appreciation for the value of all children within the school community?
- Building an inclusive school and community is a collaboration among staff, students and parents; is there a way to promote the sharing of ideas from one school to another and one school division and another.
- How can you as a parent support educators in implementing new ideas?



11. Accountability

- ✓ Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth has provided Standards for Appropriate Education that guide school divisions in the development of programming and policy.
- ✓ School divisions are obligated to develop a plan and submit a report on Student Services. This plan is shared with the community and submitted to Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth as part of a regular planning and reporting cycle.
- ✓ In the Student Services Report schools may review progress toward such divisional goals as student performance, individual education planning process, transition planning processes and professional learning opportunities for staff.
- Schools prepare and disseminate to parents, division office staff and the community information on progress toward best practices on a regular basis.
- Schools periodically engage parents, students and community members (every 3 to 5 years) in a planning process to determine whether new needs have emerged, or whether priorities or emphasis needs to be revised as part of the Student Services Plan.



Points to Ponder:

- Does the school team discuss how they are planning for inclusion in the larger school community as part of the IEP process?
- Are there objectives within your child's IEP that deal with their being part of a larger school community?
- How do you know that your child's IEP is a working document that is used widely within the school to promote your child's learning? Do the other specialist teachers, such as the music and physical education teacher participate?
- How does the staff report on your child's progress toward his or her individualized goals?
- How do you receive information on his progress toward learning outcomes expected of all the students in his grade?
- Do you get interim reports related to the IEP that outlines your child's progress towards their IEP goals?

Sometimes, when there are policies or practices that need to change or be added into the current school culture, it can be difficult for parents to start a conversation with school and school division staff. It is often helpful to do some research to understand what supports must be in place to aid in the needed changes. Even with the will to change, however, there is often fear and you may need to answer questions such as:

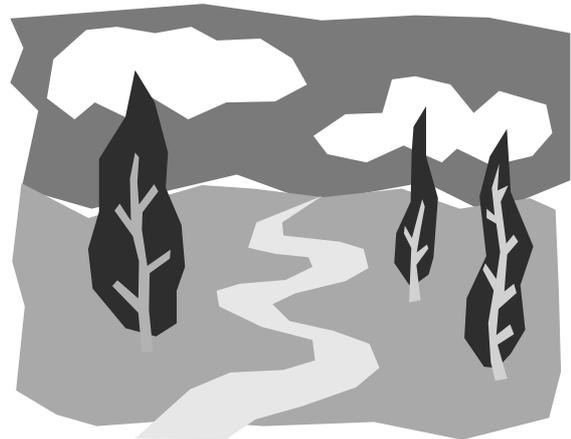
- Will "inclusion" compromise the education of other students?
- Doesn't inclusion cause an increased work load for the staff and administration?
- How can required adaptations to the school's physical environment be made?

First and foremost, it is important to remember that parents and teachers are in partnership and if there is a change that you would like to suggest, you should approach the teacher or the principal to discuss your idea. Often school staff will appreciate the opportunity to talk to you about the challenges that they may face day-to-day and to hear how you, as a parent, plan inclusive activities with family and friends.

You may know another parent of a child with special needs who has seen similar changes happen in their child's school community and they can attest to the success of these changes. Formal advocacy group like Community Living Manitoba or you local chapter of the

Association of Community Living may be able to provide you and the school with some ideas on how to proceed in the journey towards more inclusive school practices. More resources that you or your school may be interested in considering are listed in the last chapter of this book, "Achieving Balance."

Featured on the following page is a story of how inclusion has worked for one family in Manitoba. This example really shows how all stakeholders within the school community have to work together in a collaborative manner to make inclusion a reality for everyone. It is hoped that this book will provide inspiration and some practical tips on how you too can work to make your child's school community more inclusive and understanding of the richness that diversity brings to any environment.



One Family's Journey towards Inclusion

Susan and Alan are active in the elementary school with their two youngest sons, Jonathan and Nicholas. Susan recalls the start of school for the boys and the amount of time she spent there before the right supports were in place, especially for Jon, whose diabetes requires very close monitoring. With her time freed up, Susan has been able to return to work.

"Everyone is working hard to ensure that the food carbohydrate values are matched with his insulin needs," she explains. "Jonathan has also been funded for a half-time aide who is there to help him test his blood sugar and evaluate what action is required based on the results. The aide has also been able to support Jonathan since he was diagnosed with ADHD two years ago."

Susan and Alan's youngest son, Nicholas, is considered twice exceptional. He is gifted academically and has been diagnosed with autism. "Nicholas requires constant supervision, because his bright mind can sometimes get him into challenging and dangerous situations," Susan says. "He too has been diagnosed with ADHD. He pushes his limits on a daily basis and is a very exhausting person to parent, but he is also a very fascinating person to spend time with. His uniqueness keeps us all on our toes, as well as teaching us new things on a daily basis. Nicholas has a full-time aide, although this will be cut to half-time next year, in grade two. We will see then if this makes a big difference."

Though Susan and Alan recall the many challenges they have experienced along the way, the support of good teaching assistants and the willing spirit of many school staff has contributed to an inclusive environment. Susan thought back to a time with Nicholas and Jon were segregated during lunch hour.

"The reasons that the school gave were valid from a safety perspective but they did not understand the situation from an inclusion perspective," she points out. "We suggested a plan that would address the school's concerns and also be inclusive. We were able to ensure that both boys share meal time with their peers in their classrooms. This has also created a positive change for other kids who used to be segregated at lunch.

It takes communication to raise awareness. Our family is active in the community, and I am a member of the parent advisory council. It really makes a difference to be present and active and to speak up."

Worksheet: **Your Family's Journey towards Inclusion**

Now that you have read about how Susan and Alan worked with the school to advance the interests of the two sons, let's take a look at your family.

Describing your family, its members, and their ages...

Next, take a moment to *describe that special needs that each of you may have...* (You can list disabilities, but also reflect on how the disabilities challenge daily living.)

In the past, *how has your family has overcome some form of adversity and felt stronger for the experience?* (This could include anything from getting all family members to sleep through the night, to watching a physically challenged family member learn to walk, talk or perform any other previously thought of as impossible task.)

Describe a time when you felt that your family and your child was supported and respected as an equal member of the community. How do you think that this came about? Who was involved? Were they easy to talk to and understanding of the challenges that you faced?

**Chapter 2:
Getting to Know Your School**

Chapter at a Glance

Introduction

Introducing Yourself and Your Child

Getting to Know your School Community
More Helpful Tips...

The People that You Need to Know in the School System

"What I Want My Teacher to Know"
(Joe's Story)

Worksheet: The People in the School System

Worksheet: Positive Student Profile

How Special Education Funding Works

- More Things to Know about Special Education Funding

Introduction

We don't know who we are until we see what we can do.

-Martha Grimes

Getting to know the staff and the way that things work within the school community can be a daunting experience for many parents. Whether your child is just beginning kindergarten or entering into high school, there will be a lot to learn. You will need to find out who makes decisions and what the overall and individual staff approaches are regarding inclusive education. Even before enrolling your child in a school, it is a good idea to talk to the principal and your child's proposed teacher(s) about inclusion and how you can work together with the staff to promote your child's inclusive education.

In this chapter, you will see an example of how to introduce your child to the new teacher and other school staff. Later, there are tips on working with the school. There is a worksheet to fill in as you find out who the key people are in your school division and local school. Also included is important information about how funding and educational supports work for students with special needs.



Introducing Yourself and Your Child

The principal, the resource teacher(s), the classroom teachers and the educational assistants are people who may be directly working with your child. It can make a big difference if you introduce yourself and your child ahead of time. If you let the staff know, before school begins, what your child's strengths are, they can focus on those strengths. It also gives the school an opportunity to ensure that the necessary programs, services and supports are in place for your child when they begin attending school.

You may wish to provide the school team with additional information about your child and ask that the information be kept in his/her cumulative file (pupil file) so that all teachers have access to the information. The Positive Student Profile, seen later in this chapter, can be copied and used as is or to serve as a guideline for you in developing a personal profile for your child.

Getting to Know Your School Community

When you are getting ready to send your child to school, it is important for you to do your homework.

Each school division within Manitoba has its own policy on services for children with special needs. You can phone the school division office to ask for a copy of their policies and guidelines for inclusion. Knowing the structure of the school system is also important. If you have questions about it, the staff at your school should be able to answer them.

Another consideration when visiting the neighbourhood school is its physical layout. Where are the washrooms? Where is the gym? Is it universally accessible? Is it noisy? What kind of lighting is used? Are the classrooms crowded or cluttered? Is the atmosphere happy and friendly? Depending upon the needs of your child, all of these factors can have an affect on their ability to function. Is staff approachable and willing to take into consideration the needs of your child in order to appropriately accommodate them?

More Helpful Tips...

✓ Be informed about the school division's policy regarding children with special needs.

- ✓ Meet with the principal of the school and any resource staff and classroom teachers that will be involved with your child. Share with them your vision for your child's education. Let them know that you want to be involved.
- ✓ Be informed about services that the school usually provides to students with special needs.
- ✓ Tour the school ahead of time to observe how students and staff treat each other. Get a feel for the school climate.
- ✓ Ask if you may volunteer within your child's class.
- ✓ Know what your child is learning.
- ✓ Keep informed. Meet with your child's teacher and support staff as often as possible. Writing notes is a good way to communicate between meetings. Keep a copy of any written communication.
- ✓ Plan ahead of time what you want to ask for in your child's individual education plan (IEP) meeting. Write things down ahead of time to help you to remember the information that you want to share. If you run out of time, the school officials can put your notes with the meeting minutes so that there is a record of this information.
- ✓ Know the roles of individuals in the school division and the school so that you can ask if you want a

certain person to be present at the IEP meeting.

- ✓ Work with the IEP team and participate in any updates of your child's IEP.
- ✓ Make sure that you know the date that the school will give you any results of decisions affecting your child's education that they may have to make.
- ✓ Know your child's rights and what the school has to provide under the appropriate education amendment to The Public School Act (see Chapter 3).
- ✓ Be firm. If your child is not being appropriately supported in school, use the proper procedures to appeal any decisions made in that regard (see Chapter 3).
- ✓ Keep in touch with other parents for moral support.
- ✓ If you are unsure or need more time to think about things, avoid making important decisions at school meetings, even if there is pressure to do so.
- ✓ Follow your instincts and what you know. Let your knowledge and experience guide you.

The People that You Need to Know in the School System

There are many people in the school system who make decisions about school and classroom placements and educational programming for students

with special needs. You need know who these people are and what their role is. Try to meet with them personally and let them know what your goals are for your child's education. The chance to meet you and your child will give them first hand knowledge of your situation before they meet you in a formal planning meeting.

The school division's trustees are elected by the community and are in charge of the school division. The trustees are board members and they make decisions about division funding, staffing and policies. They may or may not have a background in education. It is a good idea to get to know your school trustees and share with them your dreams and ideas about inclusion for your child and your child's school.

The school division staff, including school superintendents, is hired by the school board. School superintendents are responsible for overseeing the schools in the division. They make decisions to provide services and materials for your child. You can call the division office and make an appointment to meet with them and let them know about your desire to work with them in providing an appropriate education for your child.

Later in this chapter there is a worksheet that will help you to compile a list of the people in your school division who you may need to know. As you find out who each person is, fill in the information and

note what was discussed with that person, when and if you have met with them. Make sure that you find out who makes the final decision on services and supports for your child at the school division level. Find out who has influence. You may not meet everyone on the list. The people who you really need to meet are those who work with or make decisions about your child. For a fuller listing of the roles and responsibilities of people in the school system, see **Appendix 1**.



"What I Want My Teacher to Know"

The following is a presentation that Joe, a student with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, created to help his teachers better understand his learning needs. This is what works for Joe and this is a great way for Joe to introduce himself to his teachers!

Joe's Story

"There are all kinds of minds...
Some minds learn best by looking...
Some minds learn best by doing...
Some minds learn best by listening and talking...
Some minds learn best when you do several things at once (listen, do, see...)
This is my kind of mind:

Some things are easy and some things are tricky. What's easy for me is reading, math, phys. ed., and making and keeping friends. What's tricky for me is writing, keyboarding, and getting my ideas down on paper.

What my brain really likes is figuring things out by looking. I am excellent at designing and making, building or drawing things. I am also excellent at understanding what I see (puzzles, maps, pictures, games, knowing where things are). This means that showing me things is a good way to teach me.

My brain is also excellent at understanding what I hear. If it is interesting, if I am tuned in before you start talking, and if you keep talking in short sentences.

My brain is also good at learning by doing. I am good at working with my hands. I like to keep busy and am good at some sports. I am good at making things and drawing or designing with a pencil.

I am an amazing visual hands-on learner!

What is tricky for my brain is paying attention and staying tuned in during class time, especially when people are talking lots. I have trouble remembering what I see and hear...sometimes when you don't tune in long and strong enough it is hard to remember new things.

My ideas for school:

Let me use a computer for writing unless I feel like handwriting. Sometimes letting me talk while someone else writes it down works (let me try this with key words written down or a drawing, diagram, or chart). Talk less and show me more about what I am supposed to do. Give me things to look at when you are teaching or to help me to remember (pictures, maps, drawings, charts, notes, write it on the boards, lists, computer programs...). Make sure that I am tuned into you before you give important directions or information. You can use my name or say "this is important", you can sit me up close, you can give me a good work space without lots of junk or clutter, you can ask me if I understood it, but always make sure that I am looking at you before you start talking."

Joe's introduction starts with his gifts, proceeds through his challenges and then provides some tips for how to effectively teach him at school. Joe's introduction can take the form of a presentation to the school staff or his class, or he can present a written version to help his teachers understand his needs for successful learning. Other ideas for facilitating the introduction of your child into a new school setting include the preparation of a scrapbook. This scrapbook could present your child as a person with likes and dislikes first and then provide information on learning styles and successful strategies that have been used in the past, both at home and at school. Don't forget to involve your child in introductions to new teachers, support staff or a new school placement.

Worksheet: The People in the School System

This worksheet, adapted from a similar worksheet developed by the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living, can be used to record conversations that you have had with the various people whom you may meet and work with in the school system. You may not meet everyone involved with your child's education, but you should try to meet those who are directly involved in making decisions about how the needs of your child will be met within the school setting. Often, you may find great allies in your child's school team and it is important for you to be able to recognize them and work collaboratively with them while your child navigates the educational system.

1. School Principal

Name: _____

Date of meeting: _____

What information did you provide about your child?

Questions for the School Principal:

What is his or her experience in working with children with disabilities/special needs?

How does he/she promote inclusive education of children with special needs in the school?

Are there other children with similar needs enrolled in the school?

Meeting Notes:

5. Board of Trustees

List the names of the school trustees from your area below:

Date of meetings: _____

Question for Trustees

How is the school division promoting inclusion in its schools?

Meeting notes:

6. Director of Education or Superintendent for the school division or for your district of the school division:

Name of Superintendent: _____

Date of meeting: _____

Questions for Superintendent:

How does he or she see the school division supporting inclusive education?

Meeting Notes:

7. Superintendent of Student Services/Student Services Administrator for the school division

Name of Superintendent of Student Services: _____

Date of meeting: _____

Question for Superintendent of Student Services:

How are student services provided so that inclusive education of children with special needs is facilitated within the school and the school division?

Meeting Notes:

8. Special Education Consultant (there may or may not be one in your school division)

Name: _____

Date of meeting: _____

Question for Special Education Consultant:

What is their role in promoting the inclusive education of children with special needs within the school division?

Meeting Notes:

How Special Education Funding Works

Parents of students with special needs should make themselves aware of any additional supports that are available to assist in programming. There are a number of places where you can access information but because public and funded independent schools receive funding from government and from local resources, the most accurate information is usually available through the Student Services Administrator in the public schools and the principal in a funded Independent School.

The funding to Manitoba schools is announced annually by the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth and that information can be found on the web at www.edu.gov.mb.ca. In Manitoba there has been a long history of providing funding for students with special needs. There are guidelines for eligibility for student-specific funding that supports students with severe to profound needs. There is also formula-based funding available to all eligible schools to assist in supporting students with mild to moderate needs.

All public and funded independent schools in Manitoba receive Base Support Funding to cover the cost of staff and provincial curriculum delivery. In addition, there is funding available to assist schools in providing appropriate educational programming for students with special needs. A list of available

grants can be accessed via the web at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/categorical.html or you can contact your school division to receive a copy of the document *Funding to Schools in Manitoba*, which outlines the purpose of funding and provides contact information.

It is important that you are an active participant in the planning for educational programming and are knowledgeable about the financial support available but it is also important to understand that supporting educational programming is the primary responsibility of the school division and that the division staff are responsible for the application process. Your role as the parent is to ensure that the division has all the necessary information and that you have indicated by your signature that you have participated in the planning process and understand that the information is being sent to Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth in accordance with the funding guidelines.

You are required to sign the acknowledgement on the Special Needs Funding Application before it can be submitted to the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. When reviewing it prior to signing, make sure that it accurately reflects the challenges that your child faces on a day-to-day basis and that you discuss any concerns you may have with the school team.

More Things to Know about Special Education Funding

- ✓ You should never feel pressured to agree to put in writing things that are not accurate or true about your child.
- ✓ You should call your Student Services Administrator if you are unsure about the application process or funding guidelines.
- ✓ The use of funding is not restricted to the hiring educational assistants. School divisions may want to explore other ways to support programming including smaller class sizes, specialist support, or direct or specialized therapy.
- ✓ The school division can contact Department of Education, Citizenship and Youth personnel to help determine the appropriate level of funding for a child.
- ✓ If school staff feel that your child might be eligible for additional support, they must complete the application that is sent to the Student Services Administrator for consideration. The Student Services Administrator, who is the most knowledgeable about the guidelines, will do a further review to ensure that documentation and signatures are in place so that the application meets the eligibility guidelines. The applications are then sent on to the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth.
- ✓ The agreement for funding is between Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth and the school division (or independent school) and any inquiries that you may have should be directed to your school division Student Services Administrator.
- ✓ To ensure confidentiality, staff from Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth staff will not discuss individual student applications with you over the phone. Phone calls do not provide a way for Department staff to confirm guardianship, and it is important that sensitive health information be protected.
- ✓ Funding may be approved for multiple years, especially for students with severe lifelong disabilities.
- ✓ Funding, once approved, moves with your child if they move to another eligible school.
- ✓ Only the school division can initiate an appeal/re-read to the Funding Review Team. You may ask them to do so if you are concerned about the support that your child is getting.

**Chapter 3:
Laws and Policies You Should Know**

Chapter at a Glance

Introduction

A Brief History of Education in Manitoba

Know Your Rights

- Human Rights Considerations
- The Supreme Court Decision on Emily Eaton
- Principles of Full Citizenship: A Manitoba Strategy on Disability

Manitoba's Amendment to the Public Education Act:

What It Means to You and Your Child

- Appropriate Education Programming (Bill 13)
- Dispute Resolution
- Determining the Need for a Review
- Advice When Going to An Appeal
- Taking Differences into Account

Introduction

Education is not filling a bucket but lighting a fire.

-William B. Yeats, poet

It is important to know about the laws and policies that affect you and your child as you strive for an inclusive education in Manitoba. This chapter outlines relevant documents that can assist you in attaining educational goals for your child and describes your legal rights. The Public Schools Act has been amended to specifically address educational programming for all children, particularly those with special needs. This piece of legislation is more commonly known as Bill 13 (Appropriate Education Legislation) and is described in this chapter. The actual language used in the standards developed to support the amendment can be found on Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth's website: www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/aep/regulations.

The amendment addresses placement and educational programming of all children in funded schools within Manitoba. It also provides a formal appeal process known as the Formal Dispute Resolution Process that allows parents to voice their concerns regarding decisions made that affect their child's placement within a particular classroom or school or affecting the educational programming of their child. The appeal process is explained towards the end of this chapter.

A Brief History of Special Education in Manitoba

Education legislation is one of many kinds of legislation that have been affected by human rights laws and codes.

Community Living Manitoba began as a network of parents who were concerned about the lack of education available for their sons and daughters who had developmental disabilities. Over the past 50 years, children with developmental disabilities have moved from being denied access to public education to being included in the classroom. The journey into the classroom began over a decade ago when Community Living Manitoba, along with the Manitoba Teachers' Society, The Children's Coalition, the Manitoba Council for Exceptional Children and many other advocates of inclusive education, began to press the Manitoba government to change the way students with developmental disabilities and other special needs received services. This prompted Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth to launch a Special Education Review to examine and report on current practices and recommendations for future practices within the public education sector.

The Special Education Review Initiative was created in April 2000 to coordinate the implementation of 44 recommendations made in The Special Education Review. Inclusive education became a goal, not only for children with developmental

disabilities, but for all children in Manitoba.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth regularly met with many stakeholders, including service providers, advocacy groups and parents, and they discussed the issues that they and their children faced in receiving adequate, standardized, appropriate and respectful education. There were many jurisdictional differences in these discussions, but the consultations resulted in the creation of Bill 13, which deals with the responsibilities of the school board to ensure appropriate public education for all school-aged children in Manitoba.

Bill 13 was given Royal Assent in 2004, and the development of its supporting regulations led to its proclamation in early November 2005. It is hoped that these changes to Section 41 of the Manitoba Public Schools Act will create a climate where all children can participate, with supports if necessary, in order to reach their full potential within the educational system.



Know Your Rights: Human Rights Considerations

The following are examples of Human Rights Charters that address people with disabilities and their right to not be discriminated against because they have a disability.

- ✓ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child⁶
- ✓ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁷
- ✓ Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms⁸
- ✓ Manitoba Human Rights Code⁹
- ✓ Principles of Full Citizenship: A Manitoba Strategy on Disability¹⁰
- ✓ Manitoba Public Education Act (with the proclamation of Bill 13)¹¹

Knowing your rights is a powerful advocacy tool. The United Nations

⁶ *The Convention on the Rights of the Child* was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989. It entered into force 2 September 1990

⁷ *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* Annex 1, Final report of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities Department of Public Information © United Nations 2006

⁸ Enacted as Schedule B to the *Canada Act 1982* (U.K.) 1982, c. 11, which came into force on April 17, 1982

⁹ This Act (CHAPTER H175) was proclaimed in force December 10, 1987.

¹⁰ *Full Citizenship: A Manitoba Provincial Strategy on Disability*. Copyright © 2001 Manitoba Family Services and Housing. Available online at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/dio/english/citz/>.

¹¹ Continuing Consolidation of the Statutes of Manitoba RSM 1987, c. P250 *The Public Schools Act*

Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Canada was a signatory in 1992, has been taken very seriously by Canadian courts. It is used to determine domestic content in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms and any provincial or territorial Human Rights Codes.¹² Article 23 of the U.N. Convention states that a child with disabilities shall have "effective access to and receive education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development." Article 24 of the U.N. Convention states that signatories to the convention "shall take measures to ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed and have access to education..", while Article 28 states that signatories shall "recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity."

The recently declared U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) further states in its Article 24 that signatories to the convention are to "ensure equal access to primary and secondary education,

¹² R.V. Sharpe[2001] S.C.R. 45 at para 171 (S.C.C.); Quebec (Minister of Justice) 175 C.C.C. (3d) 321 (Que. C.A.); Including its impact on the s. 1 Charter analysis with application to provincial spheres of jurisdiction. Auton (Guardian ad litem) v British Columbia (A.G.) [2002] B.C.J.

vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning. Education is to employ the appropriate materials, techniques and forms of communication. Pupils with support needs are to receive support measures, and pupils who are blind, deaf and deaf-blind are to receive their education in the most appropriate modes of communication from teachers who are fluent in sign language and Braille. Education of persons with disabilities must foster their participation in society, their sense of dignity and self worth and the development of their personality, abilities and creativity."¹³

Discrimination is as any act that is biased towards a person or group based on assumptions of group characteristics, rather than on individual judgment. It is the denial of justice prompted by preconceived judgment or opinion.

In Canada, we have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms that states that "every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour,

¹³ The Convention in Brief, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* Annex 1, Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities Department of Public Information © United Nations 2006

religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability." Based on Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Human Rights, we all have the right to live free from discrimination. All children (and all people) have equal protection and equal benefits under the law. Under the Charter, children cannot be denied the opportunities other children have because of a disability. Your child cannot be denied the same opportunities in school as other children have. Children with disabilities are protected from discrimination that would put them at a disadvantage from other children. Section 15(2) allows laws and programs that support and favour disadvantaged people so that they can experience equal opportunities. This concept of "substantive equality" means that support given to your child to aid in his or her participation in and benefit from academic and social programming at school does not give your child more rights. Rather, it ensures that your child will have the same chances for success in reaching his or her potential as do other children.

The Supreme Court Decision on Emily Eaton (Segregation versus Integration in the School Setting)¹⁴

On February 6, 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada handed down reasons for its decision in a case involving a girl with multiple disabilities and the Brant County Board of Education. The

Eaton family had challenged their local school board's decision to place their daughter in a segregated setting and this challenge went through a series of appeals at the local, provincial, and finally, the Supreme Court level. Emily Eaton was a young woman with cerebral palsy who was unable to communicate through speech, sign language, or other alternative systems. She was also visually impaired and required the use of a wheelchair because her mobility was restricted. At the request of her parents, she was placed in her neighbourhood school on a trial basis. She was assigned a full-time assistant to attend to her various needs. After three years in her neighbourhood school, the teachers and assistants concluded that the placement was not to Emily's benefit. In fact, they believed that continued placement in the neighbourhood school might actually be harmful to her.

An Ontario Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) decided Emily should be placed in a special education class. Emily's parents disagreed with this decision and appealed it to a Special Education Appeal Board. The appeal board unanimously confirmed the decision of the IPRC. Emily's parents appealed again to the Ontario Special Education Tribunal. The tribunal also unanimously confirmed the decision of the IPRC. Emily's parents applied for judicial review to the Divisional Court of Ontario. The court dismissed the application. The Eatons then took the case to the Court of Appeal. It not

¹⁴ *Equality in the Classroom: The Educational Placement of Children with Disabilities* Canadian Council on Learning, May 1, 2007.

only allowed the appeal, but subsequently set aside the tribunal's decision.

In the end, the Attorney General of Ontario appealed the decision of the Court of Appeals to the Supreme Court of Canada. The Supreme Court decided that the Court of Appeal erred in finding that the decision of the tribunal contravened section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Supreme Court decision was to deny Emily an inclusive education, stating that integration was not in her best interest. Some school officials have used this case to continue segregating students and stop parents from asking for inclusion. However, this explanation does not express the true meaning of the Supreme Court decision.

The Supreme Court stated that *"integration should be the norm of general application because of the benefits it generally provides."* The Court acknowledged the *"great psychological benefit that integration offers."* Because segregation is an exception to the norm, the Court gave reasons for why it is okay in this case to recommend segregation for Emily.

The Court's reasons should be seen as ***conditions that need to be met in order to place a child in a segregated setting.***

These conditions are:

- Integration in the regular classroom is the norm because of the psychological benefits.
- The school board must see if the regular class can be adapted to meet the child's needs.
- Segregation can only happen when the regular class cannot be adapted and if it interferes with the child's special needs.
- The child has a right to reasonable accommodations that do not lead to undue hardship.
- Reasonable accommodations are provided to the child including a special desk, physical assistance and support from educational assistants.
- The school makes "extensive and significant effort to meet the child's needs in a regular class with appropriate modifications and support." This means the effort needs to be serious and over a long period of time (three years in Emily's case).
- The advantages in a segregated setting must be greater than the psychological loss that comes from segregation.
- It is demonstrated that the child's equal rights and wellbeing are better met in a segregated setting if the child chooses a segregated setting.

Knowing the Supreme Court decision on the Emily Eaton case can give you a legal argument if the school

board tries to segregate your child. The main points that parents need to know are:

- The school board cannot recommend segregation without a serious effort to integrate your child over a long period of time.
- The school board is responsible for making accommodations.
- Modifications and support can include teacher training, resources, modified curriculum, modified teaching strategies and special equipment.
- The school board is responsible for proving that the regular class cannot be adapted if they want to segregate the child; parents are not responsible for proving that it can be adapted.
- The Supreme Court declared that the failure to make reasonable accommodations is discriminatory against children with disabilities.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms takes precedence over all provincial and territorial Human Rights Codes, including Manitoba's. Manitoba's Code, in turn, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in a number of areas including education, whether it is offered in a public or private, funded school. This Code takes precedence over all legislation in Manitoba, and The Public Schools Act must comply with the provision of the Manitoba Human Rights Code (and ultimately the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms).

Students with special needs have had the right to educational programming in Manitoba since the 1960's and that educational programming as it stood for all students was interpreted as appropriate. Because the The Public Schools Act did not speak specifically about students with special needs many felt it allowed for both direct and indirect acts of discrimination to occur. For example, some children with special needs were excluded from field trips, segregated in classrooms away from their peers, or disciplined using school policies that did not take into account the needs and abilities of the individuals involved.

With the advent of Bill 13, and the subsequent amendment to The Public Schools Act, a climate of substantive equality can be created in all schools that will promote the Philosophy of Inclusion that has been adopted by Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (see Chapter 1). This Philosophy of Inclusion goes beyond the idea of physical location and incorporates base values and a belief system that promotes the participation, sense of belonging and interaction of all students within the public education system.

Substantive equality recognizes that equal treatment is not about treating all people the same; it is about treating people differently in order to take into account their different needs.

Principles of Full Citizenship: A Manitoba Strategy on Disability¹⁵

These principles are helpful in evaluating current policies and programs as well as new policies and programs. They apply to all Manitobans with disabilities:

- ✓ **The Principle of Rights and Responsibilities:** Manitobans with disabilities have the same rights and the same responsibilities as other Canadians as outlined in the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, provincial and federal human rights legislation and international human rights covenants.
- ✓ **The Equality Principle:** The right to goods and services for equality of opportunity and outcome.
- ✓ **The Respect Principle:** The right to have abilities, right of choice and dignity respected at all stages of their lives.
- ✓ **The Inclusion Principle:** Meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship.
- ✓ **The Access Principle:** The right to access places, events, services and functions that are generally available to the community.
- ✓ **The Empowerment Principle:** The right to the means to maximize independence and enhance wellbeing.
- ✓ **The Universal Design Principle:** The right to environments that meet the needs of the range of populations to the greatest extent possible.
- ✓ **The Principle of Self-Determination:** The right to participate in decision making regarding the design, organization and operation of the programs providing goods and services that affect them.
- ✓ **The Freedom Principle:** The right to the least restrictive environment possible.
- ✓ **The Principle of Social and Economic Integration:** The right to services and programs that support integration into existing social and economic structures.
- ✓ **The Participation Principle:** The right to participate and be invited to participate in all aspects of economic, social and cultural life of Manitoba.
- ✓ **The Principle of Early Integration into Family and Home Community:** The right to programs and services that ensure early and lasting integration into society and avoid forcing individuals to leave their families and home community.
- ✓ **The Principle of Flexible Service Delivery:** The right to programs and services that are flexible enough to accommodate individualized service delivery.

¹⁵ *Full Citizenship: A Manitoba Provincial Strategy on Disability* Copyright © 2001 Manitoba Family Services and Housing. Available online at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/dio/english/citz/>.

- ✓ **The Systemic Responsibility Principle:**
The responsibility of public and private organizations to include and ensure accessibility for Manitobans with disabilities (including education, employment, housing, transportation, market and infrastructure, communications systems of society).
- ✓ **The Awareness Principle:**
Commitment on the part of the provincial government to raise public awareness to minimize discrimination due to ignorance, indifference and fear.
- ✓ **The Prevention Principle:** The responsibility to ensure that effective measures will be developed to prevent the occurrence of impairments, the disabilities that may result from impairments and handicaps that result when environments fail to accommodate impairments and disabilities.

Manitoba's Amendment to The Public Education Act: What It Means to You and Your Child

While the Amendment to The Public Education Act was the first step in the process of ensuring the rights of children with special needs to have access to an appropriate education, it was the development of a series of standards relating to this right that really provided the "teeth" to the amended act.

"Standards have been created to ensure that school divisions, school administrations and teachers are aware of the expectations specific to the obligation to "provide all learners with appropriate learning opportunities that will meet their needs and improve their success in school."¹⁶

The introduction to the standards document also states the following:

"In an inclusive school, all students are provided with the supports and opportunities they need to become participating students and members of their school communities. Collaboration among home, school and community is imperative. Core values and beliefs include:

- All students can learn, in different ways and at different rates.
- All students have individual abilities and needs.
- All students want to feel they belong and are valued.
- All students have the right to benefit from their education.
- All students come from diverse backgrounds and want their differences to be respected.
- Students learn in different places and locations.
- All students have the right to appropriate educational programming.

¹⁶ *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services* Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth 2006

- The provincial curriculum should be the starting point for educational planning and processes.
- Parents and students must be involved in the individual education planning process.
- The IEP is the basis for decision-making for students with exceptional learning needs.
- The number of individuals involved in a student's planning will increase as the complexity of needs increases.¹⁷

"School divisions should ensure that inclusive and appropriate educational principles are considered when creating new policies and that the policies:

1. Are inclusive of all persons.
2. Respect the rights and needs of all persons.
3. Avoid unintended negative outcomes.
4. Reflect the goals of equity and fairness for all."¹⁸

On the following pages, in plain language, are the regulations that were created to support The Appropriate Education Act (2005). Different government departments and other agencies are available to help you navigate The Public Education Act and how it affects the educational

¹⁷ *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services* Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth 2006

¹⁸ *Full Citizenship: A Manitoba Provincial Strategy on Disability*. Copyright © 2001 Manitoba Family Services and Housing. Available online at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/dio/english/citz/>.

programming for your child. These include your school division office, the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils, your local Community Living Association and Community Living Manitoba.

The General Obligation of the School Division

"The first and foremost consideration in the placement of all students is the right to attend the designated catchment school for their residence in a regular classroom with their peers..."¹⁹

Attending school includes more than just physical access to the school. It involves removing barriers and obstacles to ensure equality for all individuals. It provides opportunities for all students to participate in the educational and social life of the school.

In everyday language the provincial curriculum provides appropriate educational programming for the majority of students. The provincial curriculum contains the government-mandated goals for education at each grade level for all publicly funded schools. Copies of the provincial curriculum are available online at the Government of Manitoba website (www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/) or should be available in school libraries.

The first consideration for all students is for them to attend, with their peers, the school that is designated for their residence's

¹⁹ *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services* Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth 2006

catchment area (their local neighbourhood school).

There are four recognized programs in Manitoba schools: English, Français, French Immersion and Technical Vocational.

If your local school cannot meet the needs of your child, then the individual planning team will work together with you and your child to decide where your child will attend school.

If the local school cannot accommodate your child due to physical access issues, the school division will arrange transportation to the nearest accessible school.

School-Related Activities

When a school plans activities such as field trips, sports days or assemblies they need to plan for all the students in the school.

The school team needs to plan so that students can participate as much as they are able. This section is not intended to restrict the activities provided by schools. It is intended to ensure that the needs of all students are *considered* in planning.

Assessment

The school division needs to determine why a student is not succeeding in school or why the student continues to have difficulty meeting the expected curricular learning outcomes. A principal is not required to do the assessment but rather to ensure assessment occurs.

Assessment begins in the classroom.

Teachers use a variety of assessment tools in order to determine those students who are meeting the learning outcomes of the curriculum and those students who are having difficulty.

If a student is having difficulties, a teacher will try other approaches and techniques, but if the concerns continue, the teacher will request the assistance of other in-school personnel to assist them.

Parents will be contacted if their child is experiencing difficulties and if an assessment is recommended.

School divisions have an obligation to conduct regular assessments of student learning and report to parents at regular reporting periods. Assessment methods should be appropriate for and compatible with the purpose and context of the assessment.

Specialized Assessments

A specialized assessment is an assessment conducted by someone with specialized training (e.g. the special education resource teacher, resource teacher, guidance counsellor, speech-language pathologist, psychologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, etc), to determine why the student is having difficulty meeting the learning needs of the provincial curriculum.

Prior to this type of assessment, the classroom teacher will have looked for solutions by reviewing existing reports in the pupil file, consulting with other teachers or the school clinicians and talking to the parents.

Parents or guardians are asked to sign a referral form before a specialized assessment is done. Parents have the right to have the assessment explained to them before it takes place. After the assessment is completed, parents will have the results of the assessment explained to them and they should receive a copy of the assessment report. The assessment report usually includes information on the student's strengths and needs as well as suggestions for learning.

In most schools, a member of the school team coordinates specialized assessments. This is often the Resource Teacher, but may be other staff members from the school.

A "qualified practitioner" is a professional who has specialized training to do certain testing. This could be a resource teacher, speech-language pathologist, psychologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physiotherapist or counsellor.

Specialized assessments often include reviewing files and talking to parents. It is important to share as much information as possible. A specialized assessment is different than the classroom-based assessment that teachers routinely do.

When the assessment is done, the information is used to help teachers adjust how they teach (instructions) and how they know a student is learning (evaluation). In some cases, the assessment identifies specific adaptations, such as using non-print media or providing access to a calculator.

For a few students, the assessment process may inform the school team that the student is unable to meet expected learning outcomes even with differentiated instruction or adaptations. These students will always need an IEP.

Individual Education Plans

"Students with exceptional learning needs are those who require specialized services or programming when deemed necessary by the in-school team because of exceptional learning, social/emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical, cognitive/intellectual, communication, academic or special health care needs that affect their ability to meet learning outcomes."

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth requires an IEP when:

1. It is not reasonable to expect the student to meet or approximate the expected learning outcomes (Note: this can include students without student-specific funding, in which case the IEP may be termed an Adapted Learning Program).
2. A student receives student-specific/special needs funding.
3. A student in Grades 9 to 12 is determined to be eligible for the English as a Second Language (E) designation, the Modified (M) course designation or the Individualized Programming (I) designation."²⁰

²⁰*Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services* Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth 2006

For students who are unable to meet the expected learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum, even with differentiated instruction within the classroom, an IEP will be developed. The plan may contain adaptations to the way in which the curriculum is delivered or evaluated for that child, or the curriculum itself may be modified to allow the child to progress at her or his own pace through their educational experience. An IEP is a global term referring to the written documentation of a special plan to support a student with exceptional learning needs. The plan is developed and implemented by a team. The IEP varies in length. The individual education planning team will involve parents and teachers and, where necessary, the resource, clinician and other supports required to develop appropriate educational programming. The principal is not usually involved in the development of an IEP, but the principal is responsible to ensure that the plan is developed.

Student-specific outcomes differ from curricular outcomes.

If a teacher identifies that a student is not able to meet the expected learning outcomes for the student's class or grade placement, then the teacher must document or record the support that may be required to enable the child to meet the expected learning outcomes. If

the student cannot meet the expected learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum, then the school individual education planning team must identify other expected learning outcomes that are student-specific.

As stated previously, appropriate education legislation specifies that the IEP will be prepared by a team that involves the classroom teacher, parents and student; the school may include others as needed. The team will take into account the student's behaviour and healthcare needs in the planning and documentation process. One member of the team will be appointed case coordinator and will be responsible for setting meeting times and inviting team members to the IEP planning and review meetings.

School divisions must review IEPs every year. For some students, the team may decide to review more often. The IEP, as any plan, needs to be revised as the student's needs change. Parents and students (if appropriate) should be asked to participate in developing and updating a student's IEP.

Parents and students should be encouraged to bring another person to the meeting if they feel that would be helpful (e.g. this could be a translator or interpreter or it could be a trusted friend or advocate for support).

For the parent and the student to be involved in the meeting, the school might want to give the parents some material to help them understand the IEP process. The parents, in turn, should

share any information that might have an impact upon their child's educational experience.

An appropriate education for most students is the curriculum and the school division must provide curriculum instruction, but if the student needs an IEP and the IEP identifies goals that differ from the curriculum goals, **the IEP goals take precedence over the curriculum goals** (see section 5(4) of appropriate education legislation).

Transitioning

Manitoba schools are using transition protocols developed collaboratively by the departments of Education, Citizenship and Youth, Family Services and Housing, Justice and Health. These protocols outline the ways transition planning can occur and there are four protocols that affect transitions:

1. Guidelines for Early Childhood - Transition to School for Children with Special Needs;
2. Guidelines for School Registration of Students in Care of Child Welfare Agencies;
3. Information Sharing Protocol under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (Canada) for the Sharing of Youth Criminal Justice Information; and,
4. Bridging to Adulthood: A Protocol for Transitioning Students with Exceptional Needs from School to Community.

These protocols are available directly from the Manitoba Education,

Citizenship and Youth as well as on its website.²¹

Preparations for the Transition into School

In any classroom, teachers use a number of teaching strategies which can vary from teacher to teacher and school to school. When planning for a student who is entering or transferring into school, and the parents or professionals believe that the student will not meet the expected learning outcomes even with the commonly used differentiated instruction or adaptations, the principal, as the educational leader of the school, is responsible for making sure that an assessment and an IEP, if necessary, are done.

Other Provisions of Appropriate Education Legislation

Students who live in the school division (and are not suspended or expelled) have the right to attend school within that school division. Students have the right to attend within 14 days of their parent or legal guardian going to the school and completing a registration form (seeking to be enrolled). A foster parent is not a legal guardian and if a child is in care, the agency is the legal guardian. The student can be enrolled even if her or his pupil file has not been transferred, if there needs to be an assessment, or if an IEP is under development.

²¹ www.edu.gov.mb.ca

A new provision in Manitoba Regulation 468/88 29(3) requires that the principal must provide the pupil file of a pupil who has transferred to another school within a week of the school requesting it.

If a school division has reason to believe that the safety of the student, other students, or the staff would be at significant risk, the school division has the right to put in place a plan before the student begins to attend school.

Other Assessments and Reports

When school staff members decide that more information is needed to plan appropriately for a student, they can and should arrange for assessments by school staff such as a resource teacher or clinician (e.g. a qualified professional providing occupational therapy, speech/ language pathology, physiotherapy, psychology or psychiatric services or other healthcare-related services to your child). While waiting for the special assessment, the school should continue to assess the student's progress and report to parents just as with any other student.

Dispute Resolution

Manitoba school divisions and school boards, in collaboration with parents, should make every reasonable (that is, without undue financial or other hardship) effort at the school and division levels to resolve concerns. If there is a dispute about the education of students with special needs, the parties involved have several options

to resolve issues in the best interest of the student. These include:

- Resolution at the school level (working with the teacher or other in-school personnel and administrators)
- Resolution at the school division level (this takes the form of a formal appeal to the school board and may involve divisional staff, the superintendent and the school board)
- Resolution at the departmental level (this involves a formal review of the school board decision about appropriate educational programming and/or placement, which is conducted by a review coordinator and his/her committee as appointed by the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth)

Informal approaches to problem-solving and dispute resolution are usually the best way to approach a problem. Further suggestions on informal approaches can be found in *"Working Together: A Guide to Positive Problem Solving for Schools, Families and Communities"* (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2005).

Remember: School divisions must give parents a written guide to their appeal process. The guide for each school division will be different. Generally, there is a short time frame that you have to make an appeal, approximately 10 days from the date of an incident that affected your child. The appeal you make must be in writing.

Appointment of Review Coordinator

As part of the Formal Dispute Resolution Process, the Minister has hired a Review Coordinator who is responsible for making sure that when an issue is brought to the attention of the Minister, the Formal Dispute Resolution Process is followed.

An issue can be brought to the attention of the Minister by either the parent or the student if the student has an IEP and the issue is about:

1. How the student's programming is being addressed.
2. Where the programming is occurring (placement).

The Formal Dispute Resolution Process can be found in the document, *"Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: A Formal Dispute Resolution Process"* (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2005).

Determining the Need for a Review

To determine whether a Minister's review is appropriate, the review coordinator considers such questions as:

- ✓ Does the matter concern appropriate educational programming or placement within the context of individual education planning?
- ✓ Is there a documented decision by the school board on the matter?
- ✓ What are the issues? Are there other, more appropriate processes for resolving the dispute?

- ✓ Has a review committee previously considered the matter?
- ✓ Has the timeline for filing a complaint been met?
- ✓ Have local dispute resolution processes, outlined in school board policy, been followed by parents and school division staff? Have all parties made a reasonable effort to resolve the issues in a fair, timely and open way?
- ✓ Are there investigations (e.g. police investigations), actions or decisions related to this issue that affects the process?²²

Advice When Appealing a Decision Made by the School or School Division

The results of an appeal can be very important to your child's education and social life. The Manitoba Association of Parent Council's Advocacy Project (MAPCAP) can provide guidance for local dispute resolution cases. Having people on your side can be comforting, even if they do not participate. A friend or advocate can help you stay calm, which will help you make your points clearly. When using the formal dispute resolution process, it is advisable to hire a lawyer or ask an advocate to be present with you at any meetings. Be sure you are aware of the process for bringing legal council with you when making a presentation to the dispute

²² *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: A Formal Dispute Resolution Process*, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2006

resolution committee. In either case, at the local, informal level or at the provincial, formal level, you should let the appeal/dispute resolution committee know that someone will be coming with you prior to the hearing and you are obliged to inform the committee if you are bringing legal counsel.

You will want to prepare notes ahead of time, including evidence about your child's abilities and information about inclusion. It may help to write out exactly what you want to say. You should also know the school division policies that are relevant to your child's case and may want to invite others who support your position in your child's case. Do not be intimidated by the formal dispute resolution process. The people on the dispute resolution committee will have fresh ears (i.e. be an impartial body).

Taking Differences into Account

In addition to the changes to public education legislation that have been described above, there are a few other places in The Public Education Act where changes have been made to take into account the special needs that a student may have when considering discipline issues such as suspension and expulsion of a student from school. These are described as follows:

This amendment adds four new sections to an existing regulation 468/88R (The Education Administration Miscellaneous Provisions Regulation).

The new sections focus on behaviour, discipline, suspension and expulsion.

Schools are now expected to track the students who are being suspended from school. The data collected will include:

1. The reasons for the suspensions.
2. The amount of time and number of suspensions.
3. The total number of students suspended.

Each year, schools and school divisions will review the data to ensure that no student(s) are being unfairly suspended.

When a Suspension Exceeds Five Days

A suspension is when a student is removed from the classroom or dismissed from a school for a finite period of time.

When a school suspends a student for five days or more, the school must provide educational programming for the student. For example, the school could send work or assignments home to the student based on the student's needs and length of suspension.

The school, parents, and the student should work together to ensure that the student's education is continued during the period of suspension.

Expulsion and Educational Programming

An expulsion occurs when a school board has ordered that a student may not attend any school operated by it.

Where students under 16 years of age are expelled from a school division, the school division must make sure that

educational programming is made available. This programming might include placement in another school or program outside of the division, or other programming such as distance education. Note: Current regulations allow a parent to appeal a student's expulsion to the school board.

The exceptional learning needs of a student must be considered by

teachers, principals, superintendents and school boards when disciplining students. Students with special needs may not understand why they are being suspended or expelled, and in some cases, the behaviour may be directly related to their special needs. These factors and other alternative forms of discipline should be considered.

**Chapter 4:
Planning Your Child's Inclusive Education**

Chapter at a Glance

Introduction

What Should My Child Be Learning At School?

Developing an Assessment Plan for Your Child

The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

The IEP Team Members

IEP Step Plan

1. Gathering and Sharing Information
2. Developing and Writing a Plan
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"An IEP...is and is not"

Seven Essential Components of an IEP

What Makes an IEP *Effective*?

Writing Student-Specific Outcomes

- Evaluating Student-Specific Outcomes
- How to Write Performance Objectives
- Evaluating Performance Objectives

A Parent's Checklist for Inclusive Education

Introduction

Without leaps of imagination, or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.

-Gloria Steinem

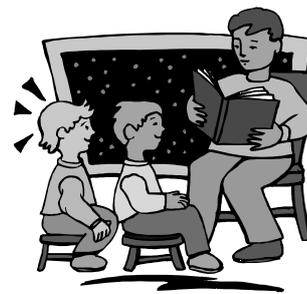
The prospect of sending your child to school for the first time or to a new school is often fraught with worry for most parents. For parents of children with special needs, this can be especially so. It is always good to be prepared. If you can, have assessments by your child's psychologists, paediatricians, occupational therapists, speech/language pathologists, physiotherapists etc. done ahead of time. Just presenting a letter from a doctor specifying a diagnosis may not be enough. Ideas on strategies to use in establishing an optimal environment for your child's education can be very helpful. Early identification and intervention for young children with special needs often leads to better school adjustment and performance.

Assessments in the areas of social or behavioural skills, communication skills, cognitive/learning skills and physical (gross and fine motor planning) or sensory skills will help determine your child's individual learning needs.

You have an important role in the school system in advocating for your child's inclusive education. Inclusion is the vision that everyone, regardless of his

or her abilities, will be accepted and contributing members of society. Promoting this vision within the school system is everyone's job. As a parent, you can work with the school community to understand not just what you and your child want from their education, but also what kind of life you expect your son or daughter to have in the future. Share your dreams and focus on your goals. Having specific goals helps others to believe in the possibilities for your child. Make a plan for the types of supports that need to be in place to reach those goals. The more that you have thought about the details, the better defence you will have if someone says that your goals are unreasonable. Goals do need to be flexible, but aim high!

What Should My Child Be Learning at School?



For the majority of students, the **provincial curriculum** is the starting point and overall plan for their education. Copies of the provincial curriculum can be found online at the Manitoba of Education, Citizenship and Youth's website (www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12), or you can visit the school library where a

copy for each grade level should be stored. For children with special needs, teachers will adapt the way they teach, the materials that they use, and their methods of assessment. This is done to help students meet the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum.

For some students it may be difficult to meet all of the curricular outcomes so teachers will make modifications by requiring the students to meet fewer outcomes or to meet the outcomes at a lower level than the grade placement. For some students both adaptations to teaching and assessment styles will be made and the outcomes modified. The goal is to have students learn as much as they can by using a variety of strategies. For a very small number of students with special needs, their educational program may not reflect curricular goals at all and they will receive individualized educational programming because their cognitive skills make it difficult for them to benefit from the provincial curriculum. All of these accommodations should be documented in your child's IEP that has been developed by the school team.

For many years, Manitoba has involved parents in process of planning the educational programming for their children with special needs, but this process has been affirmed in The Public Schools Act with the advent of Bill 13. Further to this, "parents are valued partners in education in Manitoba. As parents, you know your child best. You know your child's strengths, abilities,

needs, and challenges, and, as a result, you have a vital role in the education of your child. It is important that you and your child participate in decisions that affect your child's education. Your participation in planning for education and your ongoing involvement and support will make a positive and meaningful contribution to your child's education."²³

Adaptations are changes to the teaching process, materials or student products that help students to achieve the expected curricular outcomes. These adaptations are one of the ways that teachers accommodate the learning needs and styles of all students in the classroom.

Modification refers to altering the number, essence or content of the curricular goals that the student is expected to meet. Teachers will often modify the goals for students who are not able to attain the provincial curricular goals, usually because the child has a cognitive disability. The focus may be more on skills that a student needs to enhance the quality of his or her life, now and in the future. This might include basic math skills that prepare the student to live within a budget, or basic literacy skills that allow the student to function in the community.

Developing an Assessment Plan for Your Child

Upon registration or sometime after the beginning of your child's school journey, you may be asked to give your consent to the school to refer your child to a resource teacher or clinician.

²³ *Working Together: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs in School*, Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth, 2004

At this time an assessment plan will be developed by the school.

A number of specialists may be involved in the assessment plan and can include the school resource staff, reading clinician, speech-language pathologist, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, or others. A variety of assessment tools may be used to determine how your child functions in the social, emotional, learning/cognitive, communication, and/or behavioural realms. You may be involved in the necessary gathering of information for some of these assessments.

Make sure that you understand:

- ✓ The specific reason for the assessment.
- ✓ What the assessment will be used for.
- ✓ Who will see the assessment results.
- ✓ When you will get a copy of the results.
- ✓ What the recommendations are.

Assessments should be done to determine whether your child has a special learning need, to identify your child's current learning capabilities, to find out how those learning needs may affect your child's ability to learn at school, and to identify appropriate programming and services to meet your child's needs.

Your child's needs may change, depending on changes in the learning environment, your child's development of coping strategies, or your child's age. Assessments are not done just once in a child's academic life,

but should be done whenever significant changes in their ability to function in any of the areas mentioned above are observed.

The school will contact you and arrange a meeting with you and the staff to review the assessment results. Any recommendations will be discussed and you should be involved in any related decisions. You may be given a written copy of the report, but always remember to take notes or ask that a note-taker be present so that you can refer back to the meeting in the future.



The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

"I once told a farmer that it was my professional judgment that his son had significant intellectual disabilities and would learn fewer skills during his school career than 98-99% of his schoolmates. I then asked if he had anything to say. "First," he said, "please do not teach my son dumb stuff." "Then," he said, "please do not waste my son's time." "Finally," he said, "if my son will learn less than all the other kids, please teach him the most important things he needs to know to have a decent life in the community."²⁴

²⁴from *The Stories of Lou Brown* at www.education.wisc.edu/rpse/faculty/lbrown

Soon after enrolling your child in school and at least once yearly afterwards, (as mandated by Appropriate Education legislation) you will have a meeting with school staff and other involved professionals to set up a plan for your child's education. This section addresses that planning meeting and described the function of an IEP.

"The purpose of an IEP is to help your child meet goals or outcomes beyond her or his current skill level and, whenever possible, in keeping with the provincial curriculum. All IEPs, regardless of the individual needs of a student, contain certain essential components:

- Student identification and background information.
- Current levels of performance.
- Student-specific outcomes.
- Performance objectives.
- Teaching methods, materials and strategies.
- The names of team members who will implement the IEP and the setting where it will be implemented.
- Plans and timelines for evaluation and review."²⁵

Children with special needs often cannot be active participants in their own IEPs. You, as their parent, are their voice and can make sure that your child's own input is heard. It is important to make sure that all planning

for your child is person-centred - that is, that your child's interests are kept first and foremost in mind.

If a student is likely to learn relatively few skills, or if those skills are limited in scope, then those skills selected for instruction must be the most important. How does one determine if a particular skill is important? The following are offered as good reasons that you may encounter that a specific skill or set of skills are selected for instructional purposes:

- It is chronologically age appropriate.
- It is functional - it will reduce demands made on others.
- It is a student preference - the student asked for help to learn it.
- It is a clearly expressed parent/guardian preference.
- It is a justifiable professional preference.
- It will increase the number of environments and activities experienced.
- It will increase his or her ability to interact with other peers.
- It will enhance physical status, appearance, and stamina.
- There is a reasonable chance that he or she can learn it.

²⁵ Working Together: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs in School, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2004

- It will help generate curricular balance.
- It is important vocationally.
- It enhances privacy, choices, respect, pride and status.
- It will reduce government involvement in his/her life.
- It will enhance feelings of belonging and connectedness.
- It is logistically feasible.
- Research results of acceptable quality support teaching it.
- When the parents see the child do it, tears will run down their cheeks.

An IEP is a written document, developed and implemented by a team, outlining a plan to address the individual learning needs of students. In Manitoba, the IEP is a document that holds accountable all stakeholders involved in its creation, implementation and reporting. It is a plan devised for one student that describes, in detail, how her or his educational programming has been adapted or modified. An IEP also identifies the support services that will be made available to the student to help him or her achieve the goals that are set out in the IEP.

Transition planning is very important and provisions for the transitioning of students with special needs into

different environments within the school day, between grade levels and into and out of different schools are important considerations during the development of a student's IEP. In one Manitoba school division, "as part of individual education planning, the student is prepared for grade changes. In particular, major moves from elementary to junior high, or junior to senior high, are anticipated by the family and school. If appropriate, options to aid in smoothing out these transitions can be investigated. There should be plans put in place for introducing the student to new environments and preparing teachers within the new environment to support the student."²⁶ Check with your child's school division to see what kind of provisions they make to aid your child in the many transitions that he or she will face in school.

There will also, ultimately, be a transition out of school and into either post-secondary schooling or a work/living placement within the community. A person-centred planning process, like "PATH - Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope" (see Appendix 5) should be put into place by the time your child turns 16 years of age, to begin pulling in the needed resources and providing your child with the appropriate educational opportunities to work towards realizing her or his dreams for the future.

²⁶ *A Parent's Guide to Special Education* The Winnipeg School Division, January 2004. p.57

Each student's IEP will be different, reflecting the student's individuality regarding his or her strengths and challenges when navigating the provincial curriculum.

The IEP Team Members



Certain individuals must be involved in writing a child's IEP. An IEP team member may fill more than one of the team positions if properly qualified and designated. For example, the school system representative may also be the person who can interpret the child's evaluation results. These people must work together as a team to write the child's IEP. Each team member brings important information to the IEP meeting. Members share their information and work together to write the child's IEP. Each person's information adds to the team's understanding of the child and what services the child needs.

Parents are key members of the IEP team. You know your child very well

and can talk about his or her strengths and needs as well as your ideas for enhancing your child's education. You can offer insight into how your child learns, what his or her interests are, and other aspects of your child that only you, as a parent, can know. You can listen to what the other team members think your child needs to work on at school and share your suggestions. You can also report on whether the skills your child is learning at school are being used at home.

Teachers are vital participants in the IEP meeting. At least one of your child's **regular education teachers** should be on the IEP team if your child is participating in the regular education environment. The regular education teacher has a great deal to share with the team. For example, he or she might talk about:

- The general curriculum in the regular classroom.
- The aids, services or changes to the educational program that would help your child learn and achieve.
- Strategies to help your child with problem behaviours, if behaviour is an issue.

The regular education teacher may also discuss with the IEP team the supports for school staff that are needed so that your child can:

- Advance toward his or her annual goals.

- Be involved and progress in the general curriculum.
- Participate in extracurricular and other activities.
- Be educated with other children, both with and without special needs.

Supports for school staff may include professional development or more training. Professional development or additional training are important for teachers, administrators, educational assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and others who provide services for children with disabilities.

Inclusion without resources, without support, without teacher preparation time, without commitment, without a vision statement, without restructuring, without staff development won't work.

- Mara Sapon-Shevin

Your child's **special education resource teacher (SERT)** or the school **resource teacher** contributes important information and experience about how to educate children with special needs. Because of their training in special education, resource teachers can talk about such issues as:

- How to adapt teacher or learning strategies or how to modify the general curriculum to help your child learn.
- The extra aids and services (e.g. the use of keyboarding, the use of occupational therapy or the use of speech/language therapy) that your

child may need to be successful in the regular classroom and elsewhere.

- How to adapt testing so that your child can show what he or she has learned.
- Other aspects of individualizing instruction to meet your child's unique needs.

Beyond helping to write the IEP, the special educator is responsible for working with your child to carry out the IEP. He or she may:

- Work with your child in a resource room or special class devoted to students receiving special education services.
- Team-teach with the regular education teacher.
- Work with other school staff, particularly the regular education teacher, to provide expertise about addressing your child's unique needs.

Another important member of the IEP team is the **individual who can interpret what the child's assessment results mean** in terms of designing appropriate instruction. This can include the school psychologist, speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist etc. The evaluation results are very useful in determining how your child is currently doing in school and what areas of need your child has. This IEP team member must be able to talk about the instructional implications of your child's evaluation results, which will help the team plan appropriate instruction to address your child's needs.

The **individual who represents the school division**, such as the school division's student services representative, administrator or consultant, may also be a valuable team member. Although these individuals don't usually attend IEP meetings, they do know a great deal about special education services and educating children with special needs. If such a representative is able to attend the meeting, he or she may be able to talk about the necessary school resources. It is important that this individual have the authority to commit resources and be able to ensure that whatever services are set out in the IEP are provided.

The IEP team may also include additional **individuals with knowledge or special expertise about the child**. This may include private clinicians who have worked with your child, or healthcare professionals who have been involved with your child. You or the school team may invite these individuals to participate on the team either as team members or in a consultative role. You may also invite an advocate who knows your child, a professional with special expertise about your child and his or her disability, or others (such as a vocational educator who has been working with your child) who can talk about your child's strengths and/or needs. The school team may invite one or more individuals who can offer additional information about your child, such as an educational assistant. Because an important part of developing an IEP is considering a child's need for

school-related services, other service professionals are often included as IEP team members or participants to provide ongoing feedback and advice. They share their special expertise about your child's needs and how their own professional services can address those needs. Depending on your child's needs, some related service professionals attending the IEP meeting or otherwise helping to develop the IEP might include occupational or physical therapists, psychologists, or speech/language pathologists.

Beginning on or before your child's 16th birthday, **representatives from transition service agencies** can be important participants in the IEP planning process.

As your child begins the move from child to adult services, the school must invite representatives of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services. These individuals, like the Children's Special Services-appointed social worker, a representative from Vocational Rehabilitation and/or a representative from Supportive Living can help the team plan any transition services that your child may need. He or she can also commit the resources of the agency to pay for or provide needed transition services. If he or she does not attend the meeting, then the school must take alternative steps to obtain the agency's participation in the planning of the student's transition services.

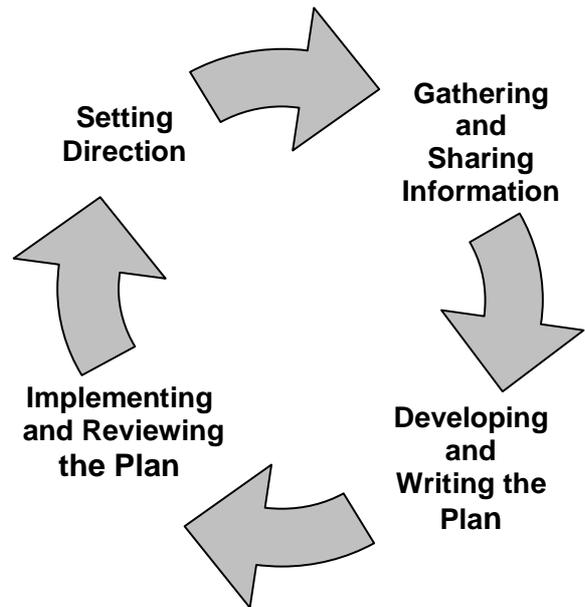
Your child (the **student**) may also be a member of the IEP team. If transition service needs or available transition services are going to be discussed at the meeting your child should be invited to attend. More and more students are participating in and even leading their own IEP meetings. This allows them to have a strong voice in their own education and can teach them a great deal about self-advocacy and self-determination.

Sometimes, the planning team changes or refines the IEP goals to reflect changes in the performance or needs of your child. In this way, the IEP is an evolving, working document that reflects the student's development in the journey through his or her school career.



The IEP Step Plan²⁷

The following four-step plan for creating an effective IEP provides a comprehensive framework. Any of the four steps can serve as a starting point for IEP development, as long as the IEP team is working together in a collaborative and cooperative manner.



Each of the four steps is described in more detail as follows:

1. **Gathering and Sharing Information**

There are some important considerations for your child's IEP.

- ✓ Keep in mind how your child is presently functioning in all aspects of his or her life. Look at an inventory of interests, observations of how your child is doing, formal and informal assessments (diagnostic

²⁷ Adapted from *Individual Education Planning: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing IEP's Early to Senior Years* Manitoba Education and Training 1998

assessments to determine strengths and needs), and your child's academic performance.

✓ Keep in mind the specific areas (domains) that might be targeted in the IEP. These include the following:

- Communication skills
- Social skills
- Academic skills
- Motor skills (both gross and fine)
- Cognitive skills
- Self-management (or self-help) skills
- Community involvement
- Vocational skills
- Recreation/leisure activities

2. Developing and Writing a Plan

The case coordinator is someone appointed by the IEP team to lead the process. This person is instrumental in setting the time of the meeting and inviting IEP team members to attend. There are three main kinds of goals that all team members need to keep in mind in the development and writing of an IEP. They are:

a. Student-specific outcomes: These are concise descriptions of what an individual student will know and be able to do by the end of the school year.

b. Performance objectives: These are student-specific outcomes broken down into small, manageable components or steps.

c. Task analysis: This involves breaking a task down into its component parts or a series of responses for training.

Curricular programming in an IEP can be established as either **adapted programming** which maintains the curricular goals but alters the way in which they are attained or measured; **modified programming** which alters the curricular goals that the student is expected to meet; or **individualized programming** where no participation in the curriculum occurs and the programming is highly individualized to learning experiences that are functionally appropriate.

3. Implementing and Reviewing the IEP

You can take part in IEP implementation by:

- ✓ Having regular contact with the school.
- ✓ Taking an active role in the decisions made for your child.
- ✓ Working on the goals of the IEP at home.
- ✓ Telling the teacher of any change in the home that may affect your child's ability to work at school.

4. Setting Direction



Individualized planning should be carried out in a collaborative manner by the school team keeping the student's best interests of paramount importance. It is important to always consider contributions from the student in the plan. An IEP planning meeting should include the following:

- ✓ Establishing roles and responsibilities (e.g. who is the case manager?), and developing a common understanding of priorities to be addressed.
- ✓ Reviewing background information.
- ✓ Gathering information about the student.
- ✓ Developing a student profile.
- ✓ Prioritizing student needs.
- ✓ Describing current levels of performance.
- ✓ Identifying student-specific Outcomes and performance objectives.
- ✓ Writing the IEP.
- ✓ Approving the IEP.

What Is an IEP?

An IEP is...

1. A summary of the student-specific outcomes and performance objectives that have highest priority for a student's learning during a school year, with concrete plans for how these outcomes and performance objectives can be reached.
2. Able to address social or cultural adjustments, adaptive behaviours, and transitions from one environment to another.
3. Used to plan for students whose needs are not being met through the provincial curriculum.
4. Able to incorporate other goals (speech/language, occupational therapy, etc.)

An IEP is not...

1. A description of everything that will be taught to the student.
2. Restricted to curricular/curriculum issues and concerns.
3. Just for students with severe disabilities.
4. Restricted to the use of classroom resources.

Seven Essential Components of an IEP

1. Student identification and background information.
2. Current levels of performance, reflecting team consensus on the student's abilities and needs.
3. Student-specific outcomes.
4. Performance objectives.
5. Methods, materials, and strategies.
6. Names of team members who will implement the IEP and the location where it will be implemented.
7. Plans for evaluation and review, including dates for meetings to examine student progress and the IEP.



What makes an IEP effective

- They are working documents that are linked to daily instruction.
- They involve all members of the team in assessing student performance within their area of expertise.
- They identify clearly who is responsible for student instruction.
- They are living documents (revised along with changes in the student's circumstances and progress).
- They link clinician and consultant reports and programming to daily instruction.
- They involve parents as active and equal team members in planning and implementation.

Writing Student-Specific Outcomes

Student-specific outcomes (SSOs) are concise descriptors of what an individual student will know and be able to do by the end of the school year. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth has an IEP guidebook²⁸ that covers this topic in more detail, but it is helpful to have a basic understanding of how the writing of SSOs is facilitated in the development and writing of an IEP.

Effective SSOs are:

- S** specific: written in clear language.
- M** measurable: allows students achievement to be described, assessed and evaluated.
- A** achievable: realistic for the student.
- R** relevant: meaningful for the student.
- T** time related: can be accomplished within a specific time period, typically one school year.

Using this template,

***[Student] will [action] [what/how]
[By what criteria][Where]
[By what date],***

SSOs are very effective in describing goals on an IEP.

Example #1: "Robbie will learn to talk more clearly."

Although we understand its relevance, this SSO lacks specificity, is not measurable, we don't know how achievable it is, and there is no time period mentioned. Compare it to the following...

"Robbie will produce the 's' sound with 90% accuracy in connected speech with a variety of people in school and community settings by June."

This SSO is much more specific, detailing the accuracy that is needed, so that it is measurable. We can see the relevance in its referral to both school and community settings, and we can see the time frame in which the student will be working.

Example #2: "Simon will know his colours, and demonstrate this knowledge to his teacher by the end of the school year."

This SSO is not specific (e.g. which colours will Simon know?) and it is not measurable (e.g. how will Simon indicate that he knows his colours?). We don't know if it is achievable or relevant to Simon. "By the end of the school year," does set a time frame for the acquisition of this skill.

Example #3: "By June, within the structure of the Math classroom, the student will use a calculator to determine the total cost of three identified items of groceries from a flyer with 90% accuracy."

²⁸ Adapted from *Individual Education Planning: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing IEPs: Early to Senior Years* Manitoba Education and Youth - 1998

This SSO is specific, measurable, relevant and time-related. Its ability to be achieved depends upon whether the student knows how to operate a calculator, and whether the student can identify food items in a flyer. These skills can be addressed in the performance objectives associated with this SSO.

Evaluating Student-Specific Outcomes

- Does the outcome reflect the priorities identified for the student?
- Is the outcome congruent with the current level of performance?
- Does the outcome reflect the values and goals of team members?
- Is the outcome written in clear, concise, jargon-free language?
- Are there SSOs for all domains that have been identified as priority areas to be addressed in the IEP (e.g. motor, academic, social etc.)?

See **Appendix 3** for examples of more effective language to use in SSOs.

How to Write Performance Objectives

Performance objectives are SSOs broken down into small, manageable components or steps. **Task analysis** is a way of determining skill sequences that have definite steps to meet a larger outcome. Effective performance objectives must:

- Identify the essential components involved in achieving the SSOs.
- Organize the tasks into sequences.

- Describe how the student can demonstrate that the performance objective has been achieved.
- Determine the date when achievement is expected.
- Specify the conditions under which the student will perform the task.
- Determine the criteria for the attainment of the performance objective.
- Be reviewed and revised regularly.

Let's look at a specific example:

"By June, within the structure of the Math classroom, Mary will use a calculator to determine the total cost of three identified items of groceries from a flyer with 90% accuracy."

From this SSO, we can break the larger goal into smaller, easier to achieve and observe goals. These are the performance objectives:

By June, the student will be able to:

- Find the cost of a first identified item in the flyer and input this cost into the calculator.
- Locate and push the "+" sign on the calculator.
- Find the cost of a second identified item in the flyer and input this cost into the calculator correctly.
- Locate and push the "+" sign on the calculator.
- Find the cost of a third identified item in the flyer and input this cost into the calculator.

- Locate and push the equals "=" sign on the calculator with 90% accuracy.

Evaluating Performance Objectives

- Are the performance objectives attainable in a reasonable period of time?
- Taken together, do the performance objectives represent the essential components of the SSO?
- Are the performance objectives measurable?
- Does the performance objectives used in the IEP include how the skill is to be learned, how progress towards mastery will be assessed, and what the time frame for skill mastery will be?

As a parent, you may or may not have the expertise to identify and establish SSOs and performance objectives for your child, and you also may find task analysis to be quite challenging. However, the good thing about having a team working to develop your child's IEP is that people who are better skilled in these areas (resource teachers, occupational therapists, etc) can be included on the team and can help to take a indistinct IEP goal and break it down into achievable objectives with workable step plans. Your responsibility as the parent is to read over the IEP and make sure that you understand how the IEP goals will be reached and what the progress towards those goals will look like. By better understanding what is going on at school, you can work with your child to follow-up on the learning

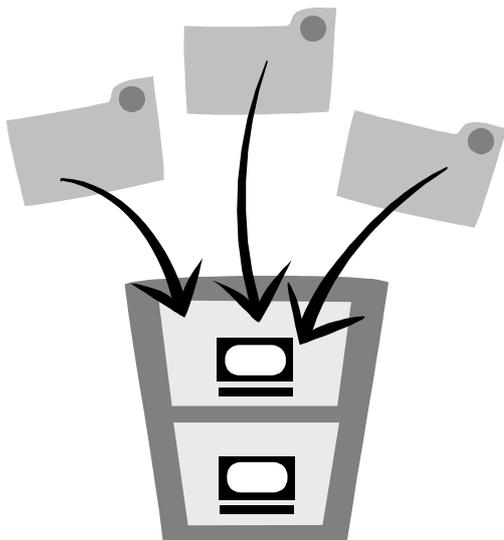
experiences and to reinforce the steps outlined in the task analysis, the performance objectives and ultimately the SSOs at home.

Other important points to remember regarding IEPs include the following:

1. **Come prepared** when you attend an IEP meeting. Know what you want to say and bring a written report with you. Your written report can include your assessment of your child's strengths, as well as what you think that your child needs to be successful in school. You may also include any other concerns that you have regarding your child's education. If you don't have time during the IEP meeting to talk about all the points that you would like addressed, provide your written report as an attachment to the IEP. Make sure that your input is recorded in the meeting minutes so there is an accurate and official record of your involvement in the creation of the IEP document.
2. **Be an active participant.** You will be asked to sign the IEP document upon its completion. If you are not in agreement with the IEP, or if you need more time to consider the IEP, you should be allowed to *voice your concerns*. If you do not sign the IEP, then none of the IEP can be implemented. If you are mainly in agreement with the IEP, sign it so that what you agree with will be implemented. Then document your concerns by writing them in the

comments section of the IEP document.

- 3. Maintain a paper trail** for IEP meetings and the completed document (you should be given a copy for your records). Keep all communication with the school/school division, etc, organized in a file or binder for quick reference when needed. You should also keep a log of phone calls and other meetings regarding your child's education.



- 4. Pre-Teaching** is very important. By taking time before the school day begins, or just prior to the return to school after a weekend or other break, by reinforcing expected behaviours and the school routine, and by reviewing key concepts being taught in various subjects, you can lessen your child's anxiety and help to ease the transition into school. Ask your child's school teacher for extra copies of current and upcoming class lessons so that you can help your child to perform to the best of his or her ability.

A Parent's Checklist for Inclusive Education

This checklist has been reproduced from *A Parent's Guide to Inclusive Education* by the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living (2003). These questions will guide you in evaluating your child's education, their IEP and in determining how inclusive their school experience really is.

The IEP

- Was the IEP developed with a team approach? Was your input respected and included in the plan?
- Was your child an active participant in the IEP meeting whenever and however possible?
- Does the IEP focus on inclusive education?
- Is your child placed in a regular classroom?
- Does the IEP make it clear that the child will be included in social activities?
- Does the IEP say who is responsible for teaching your child?
- Does the IEP have goals and strategies to measure progress?
- Will you be included in the evaluation process and future meetings?
- Does the IEP identify specific adaptations and supports?
- Will the supports and adaptations in the IEP prepare your child to contribute to the class?
- Does the child have opportunities for inclusion outside of classroom time (during lunch hour or extracurricular activities)? Will the school provide the needed support for your child to be included?
- Is there a plan in place to make sure that there is ongoing communication?

The Classroom

- Is the teacher taking responsibility for teaching your child and using support staff to include and assist your child?
- Is your child doing things independently and working with other children (instead of only with the educational assistant)?
- Is the educational assistant shadowing everything that your child does? (This can reduce the chance of your child building relationships with other children in the classroom.)
- Is the teacher communicating with you regularly (e.g., using a communication book, by email, or with regular phone calls and meetings)?
- Does the majority (greater than 50%) of programming for your child take place in the regular classroom?
- Is your child being pulled out only to work on specific goals for a short period of time?
- Is your child usually participating in the same (but sometimes adapted or modified) activities as the rest of the class or is your child working at the back of the classroom with the educational assistant?
- Are the materials your child is using age-appropriate? (i.e., if your child is learning to read, is the book content interesting to other children of the same age)?
- Are the desks arranged so that your child is included as a regular member of the class, not isolated at the back of the classroom?
- Is your child often overlooked as if she or he were not there?
- Does the teacher talk about changing the placement as soon as problems occur?
- Are differences celebrated and valued in the classroom?
- Do students use the words "work with" or "help" whenever they spend time with your child?
- Does your child get homework assignments, just like the other children?

Chapter 5:

Advocacy

(or What to Do When You Don't Like What is Happening)

Chapter at a Glance

Snapshot on Advocacy

Introduction

Developing a Vision of Advocacy

Advocacy Skills and Information

Processes for Resolving Differences

Advocacy and the Challenging of Authority

How Do I Know When I Have an Issue?

How Do I Proceed In The Role of an Advocate?

Effective Advocacy Strategies and Skills

Beliefs and Expectations

How to Solve Problems

Developing Effective Collaboration Skills

The Collaborative Team

Resolving Issues within the School System

Conflict Resolution

Checklist for Effective Parent/Professional Collaboration

- For Parents
- For Professionals

Snapshot on Advocacy



Mark is 17 years old and attends Grade 11. He experiences life as a quadriplegic with a tracheostomy and requires the presence of a registered nurse 24 hours a day. Mark gets around by driving his power chair and operates a portable computer using a head control. He loves music more than anything. Although Mark faces many challenges in his life, his mother, Debbie, explains, "The biggest challenge for him has been getting to school to learn and be with his peer group."

"The main obstacle is that there are so few nurses available in Manitoba that he is lucky if he can attend class even part-time," she says. "Mark is not able to participate in any extra-curricular activities unless we take him because we have very limited access to respite."

In spite of this, Mark has successfully integrated into his courses and is respected by his friends. Debbie credits Mark's junior high school for much of the success.

"They were very dedicated to the notion of inclusion and set the tone for the rest of his school career," she explains. "Whatever activity the other kids were doing, they found an adaptation so that Mark could participate. The high school has followed this precedent."

Like many other parents, Debbie is a strong advocate for her son.

"Just trying to survive has made us stronger," she points out. "I get very little rest and that seems to motivate me to ask for help every chance I get. And of course, seeing Mark do well as a result of our efforts keeps us motivated."

"We believe that inclusion is the only way. We know it can be done. But we know we will continue to face challenges until society learns the true value of diversity. Right now, many people have a difficult time seeing the benefits of including people who aren't totally independent and "pulling their weight". When everyone is included and respected for their contribution, the rewards and satisfaction are enormous. Mark's peers are always so proud and supportive of him when he accomplishes anything. They give me hope because today's youngsters are the key to the future of successful inclusion."

Introduction

One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar.

- Helen Keller

What exactly is advocacy and how do you develop the skills that you as a parent need to effectively advocate for your child? Advocacy is defined as the act of earnestly supporting something or someone, and of being active in this support. This means that you have to find your voice and speak up for what you believe is best for your child. You also have to be an active listener to those around you so that you can learn how to work more effectively with them. Most of all, you need a vision for the future that allows your child to achieve as much as possible to become a contributing citizen in the community. This vision can be clarified by asking yourself a few basic questions and keeping the answers to those questions in mind whenever you are faced with making decisions for your child's education. These questions include:

How you view your expertise regarding your child?

How you view your role in your child's life?

How would you like your child's community to view your child?

How you view your child's gifts and talents?

What are your child's contributions to your family, the community and society as a whole?

What your expectations are for your child when it comes to learning?

An affirmative vision of advocacy that can be used to guide you within the education system and society as a whole is shown below.

Developing a Vision of Advocacy

- ✓ I believe that I am the expert regarding my child.
- ✓ I recognize that I am the constant in my child's life.
- ✓ I perceive myself as an active agent responsible for change.
- ✓ I expect people to view my child with a disability as a child first with the same basic needs as any other child.
- ✓ I recognize and promote my child's abilities, talents and interests.
- ✓ I believe a person with a disability is a valued and contributing member of the family, the community and society.
- ✓ I have high expectations for my child and believe my child has the capacity to learn and achieve inclusive services and full membership in society.

Advocacy Skills and Information

"Different opinions are a natural part of working relationships. Sometimes these differences can lead to disagreements or even disputes. If you or your child is having a problem with school, it is important that everyone involved work together to solve it as quickly and fairly as possible...Each division will have a policy that describes what educators and parents should do to solve problems and resolve disputes at the school and school division level."²⁹

In making decisions about educational programming and placement for students, school teams, including parents, should be working together. In some situations, you, as a parent, may not agree with the recommendations of the rest of the school team. Typically, these differences can be resolved informally by the people directly involved. However, some differences may require resolution through a more formal process.

Your advocacy is about making sure that your child receives the services and education to which they are entitled.

Processes for Resolving Differences

Manitoba school divisions and school boards, in collaboration with parents, are required to make every reasonable effort at the school and school division

²⁹ from *Working Together: A Guide to Positive Problem Solving* Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth 2005 p 3

levels to resolve concerns that parents may raise about their child's education. These concerns can range from how the child is treated at the school (e.g. Is there bullying happening between peers or between the child and teachers at the school?), how programming is planned for the child (e.g. Is there a disagreement about what is recorded on the child's IEP?), where the child is placed for schooling (Does the neighbourhood school provide appropriate educational programming? Is the child placed in a school other than their neighbourhood school?), and the supports that have been put in place to aid their child in pursuing an appropriate education (e.g. Is there too much or too little support?). Parents should also work with school division staff to arrive at reasonable solutions. If there is a dispute about the education of a student with exceptional learning needs, the parties involved have several options:

- **Resolution at the school level:** An attempt to resolve the difference at the local school level is typically the best approach. It offers the possibility of a solution that is acceptable to everyone in a reasonable period of time. This would involve the teacher, other in-school personnel, and administrators.
- **Resolution at the school division/board level:** This process involves a formal appeal to the school board that results in a board decision. This may

involve divisional staff, the superintendent, and the school board.

- **Resolution at the departmental level:** This level of dispute resolution involves a formal review of the school board decision about appropriate educational programming by a Review Committee appointed by the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth upon the recommendation of the Review Co-ordinator.

Advocacy and the Challenging of Authority

"Perhaps one of the most challenging elements of advocacy for many persons is the very real prospect that at some point they may have to confront authority. This can cause anxiety, dread, insecurity and many other emotions to be felt depending on the make-up of the advocate. In many cases, it can lead to the advocate, both consciously and not so consciously, avoiding situations that hold the promise of conflict with people in authority. For an advocate hoping to be effective such an outcome is highly undesirable though not uncommon. For those being advocated for, it may well mean that their needs and interests can be compromised if not otherwise damaged. Given these kinds of possibly weighty consequences it becomes all that more important to strengthen advocates so that their chances of being successful in their role are heightened." ³⁰

³⁰ Kendrick, Michael (2000) *Advocacy and the Challenging of Authority*, Citizen Advocacy Forum, 2000

Recognize how your past experiences within the education system can colour how you think and feel about advocating for your child. You may have to overcome some of your own fears and discomfort at approaching teachers, school administration, etc., in order to better serve your child. If you think that your emotions may run too high to permit you to engage in productive collaboration with the school team, consider asking a trained advocate or friend to work with you. Sometimes having a third party to bounce ideas and frustrations off of can help you to clarify the problem that you are facing and determine what kind of resolution you would like to see. The following sections explore in more detail the different kinds of advocacy that exist, and the skills and strategies that are important to develop in becoming an effective advocate for your child.

How Do I Know When I Have an Issue?

- What is bothering me?
- Why is it bothering me? Does it compromise my belief/value system?
- How does it make me or my child feel?
- When did it start?
- How long has it been going on?
- Who is involved?
- Do I have the time to pursue a solution to it?
- What will happen if I don't solve this problem?

Deciding whether to take an issue forward requires thoughtful consideration. To help with this process, here are some issues to consider:

Not all problems that you encounter may require you to resort to some sort of dispute resolution. Just as in learning how to effectively discipline and guide your child's behaviour, you have to pick your battles. Think about the potential harm versus the potential benefit of maintaining the status quo versus putting your foot down and asking for a change in circumstances.

If you do choose to proceed with dispute resolution, now is the time to identify the type of advocacy that best suits you. There are four basic types of advocacy and while the processes for each are very similar, what separates them is who does the actual advocating. Based upon your strengths, skills, and time available, which type works best for you?

1. *Student Advocacy*: When the student speaks on his/her own behalf.
2. *Natural Advocacy*: When a parent speaks up on behalf of their child.
3. *Individual Advocacy*: When a parent asks a friend, family member, or a trained advocate to assist.
4. *Systems Advocacy*: When an individual or group speaks on behalf of the people that they represent.³¹

³¹ *Resolving Issues in the Public School System: A Guide to Student/Parent Advocacy*, The Manitoba Association of Parent Councils 2004

Keep in mind that an advocate should always have a solution in mind prior to proceeding with a complaint. Resolutions should focus on positive outcomes that will benefit the student without harming any of the other parties that are involved in the complaint.

How Do I Proceed In The Role of an Advocate?

When you act as an advocate for your child, or opt to have someone else act on your behalf in that role, you must keep two things foremost in mind:

1. You want to ensure that the school is providing your child with an "appropriate education;"
2. You want to build and maintain a healthy working relationship with the school.

Effective Advocacy Strategies and Skills

Allan Simpson, a founder of the Independent Living movement in Canada, and an internationally recognized leader in the disability rights movement, has worked closely with Rod Lauder of Community Living Winnipeg to promote effective advocacy strategies for parents of children with special needs. They both stress the importance of *identifying allies* and the informal sources of power within a system of bureaucracy. For example, never assume that if one or two people in the school or administration are resistant to change, everyone else is as well. There

may be people in the school, the division, a neighbouring division or the provincial department of education who would be very willing to provide help, information and advice, but may need to do so quietly. It is worth cultivating relationships with people who share your interests but may need to try to effect change "behind the scenes."

Sometimes the person who appears to be in charge is not actually the most important one. They may depend upon an assistant or deputy to provide them with choices or policy options. It may be more important to develop a strong relationship with the assistant or deputy.

The secret to advocacy is persistence. This includes using creative ways to connect with decision makers. If you have an interest in common with a key person in your child's education, get to know that person through your common interest. Volunteer in the school whenever you can so that you can get a better sense of who holds the power that you need to move your child's issues forward and who could potentially be called upon to help you out in your role as advocate.

Whenever possible, you should consider trying to effect change through discussions, persuasion and meetings with the people directly involved with the situation you are addressing: if this fails, then move on to more formal and potentially conflict-creating strategies. Your degree of input, influence or personal control becomes more and more limited with the increasing formality of

the procedure that you use to advocate for change in your child's education.

Both Alan Simpson and Rod Lauder agree that in preparing to address problems at whatever level, there are three "**keys**" to being an effective advocate. These are:

1. Positive beliefs, expectations and attitudes.
2. Knowledge of how to solve problems, identify interests and solutions.
3. Knowledge of how schools and bureaucracies work (or don't work).

Beliefs, Expectations and Attitudes

The fundamental belief that you, as a parent, need to have is that "*My child deserves as good an education as any other child.*" In order to receive this equitable learning opportunity, your child may require additional supports and resources. It is important to see your child as a capable, developing human being. The ultimate goal of an inclusive education should be to see your child living as independently as possible in an inclusive society. To help your child to become a capable individual, look for ways to involve him or her in making decisions and choices. As he or she matures, encourage your child to become increasingly involved in establishing education plans and in goal setting.

We all have personal experiences of school that affect the way that we view school today. You need to address your

feelings about school so that they do not interfere with your role as an advocate for your child. You may need to enlist the help of an ally to accompany you when you attend meetings at school. You may need to share your anxious feelings with the school team, or suggest a meeting place within the school that reduces your discomfort (e.g., the school library versus the classroom).

You are your child's best advocate. You will meet school personnel who will be important allies at different points in your child's educational experience, but you will be there through the whole experience. Building solid relationships with the school and school personnel will keep you better informed about what is happening in the school and identify potential allies when it comes to a discussion of your child's interests.

You may want to consider expanding your role to include one or more of the following:

- helping with extracurricular activities
- volunteering in the school or class
- helping to organize special events (e.g., a school-wide day on diversity)
- involvement with the school parent council
- running for the school board

How to Solve Problems

When thinking about a problem that has led to strong disagreement, it is helpful to clarify your position and

interests and the school's position and interests. In disagreements, we may get locked into our stated positions and this can create a win-lose scenario. If we look at the underlying interests, we may find a win-win scenario where both the parents and the school can have their interests satisfied.

A **position** is what you say you want or must have. It may be seen as a demand or a proposal or a preferred course of action.

An **interest** is the motivation or reason behind the position. It is the reason why you want what you say that you want. An interest may indicate a need, a desire, or a concern.

Let's look at an example:

John's parents tell the resource teacher they want their son to be a school patrol.

The resource teacher responds by saying that isn't possible.

Those are their positions.

Underlying the parents' position are a number of **interests**, theirs and their son's. These might include; elevating John's status within the school, strengthening or building friendships with other students, learning new skills and learning to be responsible for others.

The **teacher's interests** may include; ensuring John's safety and the safety of other students. Perhaps the teacher is concerned about who will be supervising John and if it will be necessary for a staff person to give up their lunch hour. The teacher may also

be concerned that if John acts as a patrol in the morning, noon and after school, he may not have the stamina to sit through and perform in his usual fashion in class.

Both the parents and the teacher may share *common interests* in helping John to develop self-esteem, friendships and learning new skills. Both the parents and the teacher are concerned about John's safety and performance in class. The challenge to both parties is to figure out ways to meet most, if not all, of the interests. Perhaps it may be that John is a patrol only on certain days or at a certain time. Maybe John shares the job with a mentor or age peer who can model and reinforce the role and responsibilities.

There are a range of strategies that can be used to effect change or resolve differences. These include:

- **Collaborative problem solving:** This involves people working together to come up with a solution to the outstanding issue. Everyone's needs and expectations must be taken into account and no third parties are involved.
- **Negotiation:** This involves people exploring the issues and trying to find common ground that may be the basis for a successful resolution.
- **Conciliation:** This is a process that involves a third party to help guide the process. The conciliator usually meets with the parties, one at a time, and functions as a go-between.

- **Mediation:** This is a voluntary process involving a third party that has been agreed upon by both sides. It is a more formal process than conciliation.
- **Arbitration/Adjudication:** An outside third party is used and that third party makes the decision upon which the problem will be resolved.
- **Legal Recourse:** This is the most formal process. The two parties are represented by lawyers who present the cases for each side at a public hearing and a binding decision is made by a judge or jury.³²

These strategies vary in the amount of personal control they provide to the parties involved, with collaboration being the best and legal recourse delivering the least personal control to the process.

The interaction style that is chosen to resolve differences can also vary from discussion and persuasion to competition or conflict. When you get into a competition with the school on an issue, one side is likely to wind up the winner and the other the loser. If you win, you may have achieved your goal, but, you may have irreparably damaged any relationship that you had with the school.

Clearly, the most desirable way to work towards a resolution is to engage in a collaborative approach that allows for a healthy discussion of an issue.

³² from *Working Together: A Guide to Positive Problem Solving* Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth 2005 p. 13

Developing Effective Collaboration Skills³³

Collaboration is a learned ability. For some, it comes easily; and for others, it requires great effort. Given the commitment, the opportunity and support, all people are capable of effective collaboration. There are five skill areas that have been identified as being key to effective collaboration. By working to further enhance your abilities in each of these areas, your overall ability to effectively collaborate with others should improve. The five skill areas include:

1. *The ability to facilitate effective meetings;*
2. *The ability to exchange information and skills;*
3. *The ability to address and solving problems;*
4. *The ability to make decisions by consensus;*
5. *The ability to employing conflict resolution techniques.*

Facilitating effective meetings includes setting the time and place of the meeting, inviting all stakeholders involved with your child's education, coming prepared for the discussion, maintaining the focus of the meeting (your child), conducting the meeting in a systematic manner and bringing closure

³³ Adapted from: Rainforth, B. & J. York-Barr *Collaboration Teams for Students with Severe Disabilities: Integrating Therapy and Educational Services* (2nd Ed.) Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. 1977

to the meeting when issues have been resolved.

It is important to communicate clearly and concisely with the other people present at the meeting. All members are responsible to ensure that any information presented is clearly understood by everyone present. When in doubt about something, ask for clarification. It is important to plan ahead and think about the topic that will be discussed as well as the ways that communication will be facilitated (written communication, person-to-person communication).

The following is a five-step process to solving problems in a collaborative manner.

1. ***Define the problem*** All present must agree upon the seriousness of the problem in order to properly address it. If there is not agreement upon the seriousness of the problem, the problem may need to be reconsidered or another level of school personnel may need to be brought into the meeting.
2. ***Identify the causes.***
3. ***Generate and consider alternatives*** At this point, one of the greatest barriers is the resistance from team members to changes that might be necessary.
4. ***Decide and implement strategies*** Attempt to form decisions by consensus.
5. ***Monitor for success*** Evaluate.

The Collaborative Team³⁴

As with the development of effective IEPs, which was described in Chapter 4, the collaborative team in problem solving works together and shares the labour involved in coming up with a suitable resolution. Two or more individuals, representing a variety of disciplines, come together to problem solve and action plan. Cooperation, clear communication, joint decision-making and consensus are essential. The collaborative teamwork necessary for planning and delivering education to students with special needs should use a combination of the integrated and transdisciplinary instructional approaches to education.

Integrated instruction occurs when functional motor, communication, social competence and other skills are learned as part of natural routines in regularly scheduled school and community environments.

Transdisciplinary instruction occurs when information and skills among team members are shared across traditional discipline domains (e.g., the occupational therapist sharing with the teacher).

This results in the creation of a program that all team members endorse. Team members work in support of each other to develop an integrated approach to instruction.

³⁴ Adapted from: Rainforth, B. & J. York-Barr, *Collaboration Teams for Students with Severe Disabilities: Integrating Therapy and Educational Services* (2nd Ed.) Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. 1977

Agreement upon a common belief system that will guide all planning and decision-making can be very helpful. An example of a belief system that would endorse inclusive education might include the following:

- All students are capable of learning if given appropriate support and sufficient opportunity.
- It is the educational team's responsibility to assist students in achieving desired educational outcomes.
- It is each team member's responsibility to contribute in a positive manner.
- Expertise is freely shared among team members in a transdisciplinary fashion.
- The collaborative team remains flexible and open to innovation and change.



Resolving Issues within the School System

Most problems that arise during your child's educational experiences will be confined to and should be resolved at the local school level. *Always begin at*

the local level. It is always important to *document your concerns* and how you have worked with the teacher to resolve any problems that have arisen. On occasion, you may encounter a problem that cannot be resolved at the local level, either because it involves a change in the funding required to appropriately support your child's education, or it may require a change in the position of the school regarding aspects of your child's education.

When issues are encountered that cannot be resolved at the local level, it is necessary to proceed through an appropriate chain of command and work within the established system. In most cases you begin with the school classroom teacher, proceeds through the principal, student services administrator, superintendent, board of trustees and then on to the Department of Education, Citizenship and Youth. Always begin at the local level with the teacher. The higher up in the hierarchy you go, the less control over the situation you will have and the more likely you are to cause hard feelings among those working at the local level. For more information on how to approach the school division and the Department of Education, Citizenship and Youth when it comes to resolving an outstanding issue with your child's education, please refer to Chapter 3.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution involves working with and through differences in perspective. Skills in conflict resolution include being an active listener (paying

attention to what is being said without preoccupation with what you want to say), reflective listening (summarizing what you think has been said and asking for confirmation), questioning (asking for clarification), and assertive communication (using "I" statements).

Effective conflict resolution separates people from problems and stays away from assigning blame. Focus on interests and not on positions. Find common interests (e.g., inclusive education, school safety) and work on finding paths towards that end that are appealing to both you and the school. Always keep in mind that your ultimate goal is to find workable solutions for your child and that it is not a matter of winning or losing but of finding out how your child can best be served in their education.

Applying your Advocacy Skills

Anyone can become angry - that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, and in the right way - that is not easy.

-Aristotle

Now that you have read over the theory behind the development of good advocacy skills, how to work collaboratively with the school team, and how to work towards a resolution to issues that may arise during your child's education, let's look at some real-life situations that have occurred with other families and some suggested strategies that might be used to resolve the problems they have

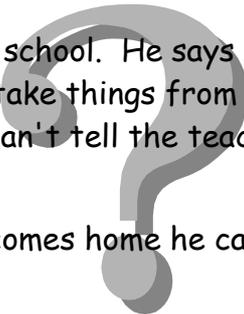
encountered. On the following pages are three scenarios presenting challenges that families are experiencing with the education of their children and some ideas on how to approach these challenges.

Afterwards, there is an opportunity for you to think of a challenge that you are experiencing and brainstorm solutions that you could try out.

At the beginning of the school year, Sarah's teacher told us she would be sending home daily messages about Sarah's progress through a Student Communication Book. It sounded good at the time but it has turned out to be a disaster! Everyday, there is a message about something that went wrong during that day. We dread reading it.

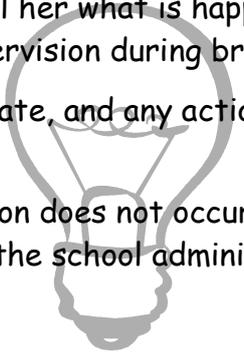
The teacher never seems to have anything positive to say about Sarah's behaviour or academic progress. Instead, it's turned into a daily complaint journal. What can we do?

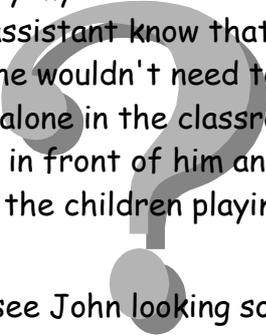
1. Meet with the teacher. Explain to her that the purpose for a Student Communication Book is to help the family and educator better communicate with the child about daily happenings both at home and at school.
2. Ensure, as a parent, that you role-model the way to use the Communication Book.
3. If you are not satisfied with progress, meet with the school administrator and then the local school division office.



James is afraid to go to school. He says the other children call him "stupid" and some of them take things from his lunch at recess and noon hour. James says he can't tell the teacher because the children will hit him.

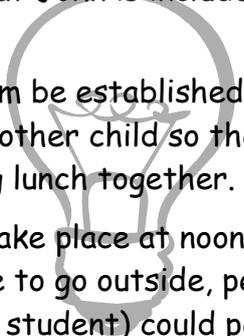
He is so upset when he comes home he can barely eat his dinner. What can we do?

- 
1. Talk to the teacher. Tell her what is happening and ask for her help. Ask for extra supervision during break times.
 2. Document incidents by date, and any actions/consequences that occur.
 3. If improvement/resolution does not occur, outline the situation in writing and submit it to the school administration or school division office if necessary.



Last week, I stopped by my son's school at lunch time to let his teacher and educational assistant know that I would be picking John up after school and that he wouldn't need to go on the bus. When I arrived, John was sitting alone in the classroom. His half-eaten sandwich was on the desk in front of him and he was sitting in a chair by the window, staring at the children playing outside. There wasn't even an adult around!

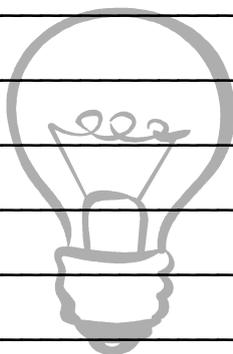
It broke my heart to see John looking so sad. What can I do?

- 
1. Talk to the teacher and educational assistant. Ask them to develop a plan that would ensure that John is included in break time/lunch activities.
 2. Suggest a "buddy" program be established in the school where each child is partnered with another child so they can participate in activities, including eating lunch together.
 3. Check on activities that take place at noon both indoors and outside. If the children are unable to go outside, perhaps a reader or storyteller (even an older student) could periodically entertain some of the children in the library at these times.

Name a problem that your child is having at school....



What are some ideas that you have for solutions (at a person-to-person level, at a classroom level, at a school level)?



Checklist for Effective Parent/Professional Collaboration

For Parents:

- Do I believe that I am an equal partner with professionals, accepting my share of the responsibility for solving problems and making plans on behalf of my child?
- Am I able to see the professional as a person who is working with me for the well-being of my child?
- Do I strive for the mutual understanding of problems so that we can take action as a team to address them?
- Am I an active participant in the decision-making process concerning services for my child and do I seek mutual agreement on the means to insure my involvement?
- Do I take an active, assertive role in planning and implementing the IEP for my child?
- Do I come to appointments having thought through the information I want to give and the questions I want answered?
- Do I accept the fact that a professional often has responsibility for service coordination?
- Do I treat each professional as an individual and avoid letting past experiences or attitudes get in the way of establishing good working relationships?
- Do I communicate quickly with professionals who are serving the needs of my child when there are significant changes or when notable situations occur?
- Do I encourage the professionals involved with my child to communicate with each other and to keep me informed as well?
- When I have a positive relationship with a professional or an agency, do I express support for that professional or agency in the community?
- When I make a commitment to a professional for a plan of action, do I follow through and complete that commitment?

Checklist for Effective Parent/Professional Collaboration

For Professionals:

- Have I put myself in the parent's place and mentally reversed roles to consider how I would feel as the parent of a child with a disability?
- Am I able to keep in mind the child/adolescent is a person whom the parent loves?
- Do I really believe that parents are equal members of the team and that they are experts on their child?
- Do I focus on the child/adolescent in terms of his/her progress and communicate hope to the parent by doing so?
- Do I consistently value comments and insights of the child's parents and make use of their reservoir of knowledge about the child's total needs and activities?
- Do I listen to the child/adolescent's parents, communicating in words, eye contact and posture that I respect and value their insights?
- Do I ask questions of the parents, listen to their answers, and respond to them?
- Do I work to create an environment in which parents are comfortable enough to speak and interact?
- Am I informed about the individual child's file before the appointment or group session, placing equal value on the parents' time with my own time?
- Do I treat each parent I come in contact with as an adult who can understand a subject of vital concern?
- Do I speak plainly, avoiding jargon of medicine, sociology, psychology, social work or education?
- Do I make a consistent effort to consider the child as part of a family, consulting parents about the important people in the child's life and how their attitudes and reactions affect the child?

**Chapter 6:
Communicating Through Behaviour**

Chapter at a Glance

- Introduction**
- Behaviour Intervention Plans**
- School Discipline Policies**
- Solution Circles and their Use in
Resolving Problems at School**

Introduction

One needs something to believe in, something for which one can have whole-hearted enthusiasm. One needs to feel that one's life has meaning, that one is needed in this world.

-Hannah Senesh

"All students need a safe place where they can be themselves, learn to know themselves, and to take important steps toward an OK life position. They need to learn that they are important, listened to, and cared for, and in learning this, they are able to extend themselves in responsible and loving ways. A safe classroom atmosphere in which, with peer and teacher support, a student can relate more realistically, responsibly, and constructively with the environment, nurturing healthy self respect, should be one of our primary goals as educators."³⁵

Children with disabilities sometimes react differently than other children to certain situations. People often misunderstand and judge their behaviour without looking more deeply into the reasons behind it. Strong reactions can affect a child's self-esteem and can make inclusion difficult. Some of the basic assumptions about behaviour include:

- Behaviour often has a purpose.
- Behaviour is the response of an individual to his or her environment.
- Much behaviour is learned and can be changed.
- Behaviour difficulties can be viewed as learning opportunities for us (about the child) and for the student (about the community).
- Problem behaviour may be maintained by an environment.
- Behaviour is a way of communicating.
- Survival strategies learned early in life may not be functional later in life.

"One way of looking at crisis is to see it as the product of a student's stress, kept alive by the reactions of others. When a student's feelings are aroused by stress, the student will behave in ways that buffer against the painful feelings. This behaviour usually is viewed as negative by others (adults and peers), causing them to react negatively to the student. This reaction from others causes additional stress for the student. We call this the Conflict Cycle. It is a way of looking at crisis by analyzing the interactions among a student's feelings, behaviour, and the reactions of others in the environment. If this cycle, produced by these actions

³⁵ Coloroso, B. *Discipline: Winning at Teaching*, Boulder, CO, Media for Kids 1983

and reactions, is not broken it will inevitably explode into a crisis."³⁶

With a better understanding of the reasons behind problem behaviour, better programming for your child within the school environment will happen. If any child has behaviours that are challenging to some people, a respectful support plan is needed. This plan should lead to positive rather than punitive approaches to dealing with behaviour challenges.

Both school divisions and schools themselves have to play a key role in the process of planning for behavioural challenges. "The division sets the philosophy, policies, and procedures that a school will use in addressing behavioural issues in partnership or consultation with the residents of the division...A planning process must be in place that involves the community, parents, staff, and students in developing appropriate responses to challenging behaviour."³⁷ Although there is no one solution that will work for all students who express themselves in challenging ways, with good teamwork among the school, parents, resource staff and behavioural consultants or other support personnel, the reasons for problem behaviour can be understood and successful strategies

that will work as interventions for that behaviour can be put in place.

Good assessment practices should identify factors that contribute to challenging behaviour. It is important, however, to keep in mind that the trigger for certain behaviour may not be something that anyone else can observe. For example, if a student is given a worksheet and reacts with undesirable behaviour, it may not be the worksheet itself that is the trigger for his or her behaviour. It may be the fact that the student does not know how to complete the worksheet and fears ridicule or failure. It may be completely unrelated to the worksheet. It is best to examine problem behaviour from as many angles as possible. Some questions to keep in mind when trying to determine the cause of undesirable or inappropriate behaviour are:

- Is the problem behaviour linked to a skill deficit?
- Does the student have the skill, but for some reason, does not have the desire or understanding of the need to modify his or her behaviour? (Think of an example of a child who learns to behave a certain way in one classroom, but has trouble generalizing his or her behaviour to other environments.)

³⁶ Wood, Mary M., and J. Nicolas. *Long Life Space Intervention: Talking with Children and Youth in Crisis*. Austin, TX: Pro-ED, Inc., 1991.

³⁷ *Towards Inclusion: From Challenges to Possibilities - Planning for Behaviour*. Manitoba Department of Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2001

Behaviour Intervention Plans

A behaviour intervention plan can be a part of an existing IEP or it can make up an IEP on its own. The development of a behaviour intervention plan requires detailed assessment of skill deficits and an understanding of potential triggers for the student in question.

Intervention plans emphasizing the acquisition and demonstration of practical skills that students need in order to behave in an appropriate manner are more effective than plans that are put in place to simply control the behaviour. Factors to keep in mind when you are involved in your child's assessment and in the development of behaviour intervention plans or IEPs include:

1. **Identifying specific problem behaviours** (e.g., Johnny cries when music is played during music period),
2. **Determining what the consequences will be for the problem behaviour** (e.g., removal from classroom during music period with gradual reintroduction as coping strategies are learned),
3. **Teaching more acceptable replacement behaviours** by addressing any skill deficits or lack of motivation in using appropriate skill sets (e.g., putting on a pair of headphones to block the sounds and/or taking activity breaks from the classroom during music class),

4. **Implement changes in curriculum** (e.g., Johnny does not have to participate in the music program, or Johnny will gradually increase the amount of time that he can remain in the classroom during music using the headphones and activity breaks to help him to manage his needs.),
5. **Modifying the physical environment** (e.g., changing the volume of the music being played, changing the type of music played etc).

Dixie Jordan in her article on functional behavioural assessment⁴ lists some examples of behavioural intervention strategies for students as follows:

- ✓ **Stop, relax and think.** This teaches children how to think about the problem they are having and find a solution. Children learn the steps:
- a. Define the problem
 - b. Decide who "owns" the problem
 - c. Think of some solutions to solve the problem
 - d. Select a solution to try
 - e. Use the solution
 - f. Evaluate its success.

⁴Jordan, Dixie *Functional Behavioral Assessment and Positive Interventions: What Parents Need to Know* PHP-79 Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE) PACER Center Minneapolis, MN 1997

- ✓ **Planned ignoring** (If the purpose of the behaviour is to gain attention, then do not provide the attention.)
- ✓ **Preventive cueing** (e.g., Teacher or parents frown, shake their heads, make eye contact etc)
- ✓ **Proximity control** (e.g., Teacher or adult moves closer to the child in a gentle way)
- ✓ **Touch control** (Nonverbal guided intervention that does not threaten the student. For example, gently placing a hand on the student's shoulder)
- ✓ **Humour** (Humour should never be directed at the child, rather, it should be directed at the situation)
- ✓ **Nonverbal warnings** (e.g., Using coloured cue cards)
- ✓ **Discipline privately**
- ✓ **"I" messages** (e.g., "I'm upset when"...and not "You are bad when...")
- ✓ **Behaviour shaping** (Rewarding small gains so that the student learns how to stick with a task and improve the skills)
- ✓ **Clear routines and expectations** (This reduces anxiety and fear)

Some or all of these strategies may be needed to help to address problem behaviour so that your child and the other children at your child's school can thrive in a safe, secure school environment.

Behaviour intervention plans, like the IEPs, need to be reviewed at least annually and revised whenever there is a change in your child's behaviour, their environment, medication, home life, or any other factor that affects your child's behaviour patterns.

School Discipline Policies

With the proclamation of Bill 13, and the development of The Appropriate Education Act, it is now necessary for school administrators to take into consideration a child's disability or special needs when determining appropriate discipline for problem behaviours. Many Manitoba schools had and may continue to have zero tolerance policies that provide immediate negative consequences for certain behaviours (e.g., the "no weapons" policy a school may hold, or a "no instruments that may be used as a weapon" that a school lunch program may hold).

However, consequences for violating a zero tolerance policy must not discriminate against a child based on his or her special need. Instructional goals may need to be included in the student's IEP that address the child's difficulties in following school discipline policies. Some students who are unable to conform to school expectations may also need to have individualized consequences that will be more effective in supporting positive behaviours.

"One of the most useful questions parents can ask when they have concerns about the discipline recommendations for their child is "Where are the data that support the recommendations?" If school staff want to use a specific discipline procedure, they should check for data that support the use of the procedure.

For instance, if your child has been repeatedly suspended from school for problem behaviour, has suspension taught your child the skills he or she needs to learn?"³⁸

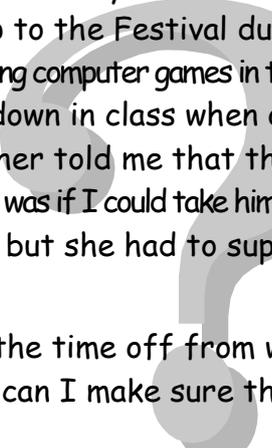
Let's look at a few more situations and suggested solutions as they relate to specific examples where behaviour is a contributing factor to the issue...

Our son, Jeremy, has limited cognitive ability but is otherwise very physically healthy. His Grade 5 class recently decided to organize students into two soccer teams so they can compete and learn about the game during a physical education class at school. Jeremy was not selected for either team and had to sit on a bench and watch the game from the sidelines all by himself. After only a few minutes, he became angry and was quickly sent to the principal's office for the remainder of the period.

We are very upset by this. What can we do?

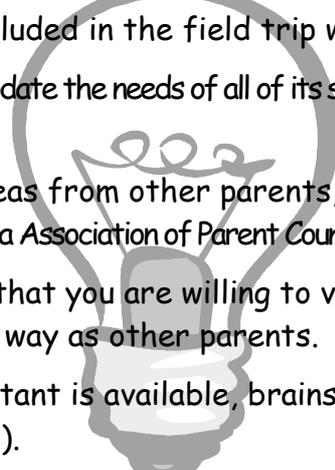
1. Talk to the coach and the principal. Let them know that this is not acceptable, nor appropriate, treatment of your son.
2. Request that Jeremy be part of a team and brainstorm ways that Jeremy can contribute.
3. Focus on his capabilities, not on his limitations.
4. If you are not satisfied by the outcomes, figure out why and look for alternative approaches to developing relationships between Jeremy and his peers (e.g. Circle of Friends programming).

³⁸ Jordan, Dixie *Functional Behavioral Assessment and Positive Interventions: What Parents Need to Know* PHP-79 Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE) PACER Center Minneapolis, MN 1997



I am a single mother of a 13 year-old boy. Recently, Jacob's Grade 8 class went on a field trip to the Festival du Voyageur. Jacob stayed behind and spent the afternoon playing computer games in the resource room at school. Jacob had recently had a meltdown in class when other students in the class were teasing him and his teacher told me that the only way that Jacob would be allowed to go on the field trip was if I could take him. There was an educational assistant along for the afternoon, but she had to supervise two other students with special needs.

Since I couldn't get the time off from work that day, I couldn't take him and he missed out. How can I make sure that this doesn't happen again?

- 
1. Voice your concerns to the teacher and school administration. Clarify Jacob's need to be included in the field trip with his peers.
 2. Ask the school to accommodate the needs of all of its students when planning field trips.
 3. Gather support and ideas from other parents, your local Community Living Association or the Manitoba Association of Parent Council's Advocacy Project.
 4. Let the teacher know that you are willing to volunteer as a parent chaperone in the same way as other parents.
 5. If no educational assistant is available, brainstorm ways to fill in that gap (e.g. another volunteer).

If you are not satisfied with the results, contact your school division office.

Solution Circles and Their Use in Resolving Problems at School

Here is another problem-solving tool that you as a parent may wish to use when working with the school team to come up with some new solutions to persistent problems. This tool requires the use of an outside facilitator and a team of willing participants who will listen to the problem presenter and brainstorm ideas that could help to solve the problem. What follows is a brief description of the process. If you are interested in pursuing the use of Solution Circles when tackling difficult issues at school, make sure that someone is on hand who knows of the process and can work as a good facilitator for the group. For more information on Solution Circles, visit www.inclusionpress.com.

Step 1: (6 minutes) The "problem presenter" will have six uninterrupted minutes to outline the problem. The job of the process facilitator is to keep time and make sure no one interrupts. The recorder takes notes. Everyone else (the brainstormers) listens. If the problem presenter stops talking before the six minutes elapse, everyone else stays silent until the six minutes pass.

This is key!

Step 2: (6 minutes) This is a brainstorm. Everyone chimes in with ideas about creative solutions to what they just heard. It is not a time to clarify the

problem or to ask questions. It is not a time to give speeches, lectures or advice. The process facilitator must make sure this is a brainstorm. Everyone gets a chance to give their brilliant ideas. No one must be allowed to dominate. The problem presenter listens - without interrupting. He/she must not talk or respond.

Step 3: (6 minutes) Now the group can have a dialogue led by the problem presenter. This is time to explore and clarify the problem. Focus on the positive points only and not on what can't be done.

Step 4: (6 minutes) The First Step.

The focus person and the group decide on first steps that are doable within the next three days. At least ONE step should be initiated within 24 hours. This is critical. Research shows that unless a first step is taken almost immediately, people do not get out of their ruts. A coach from the group volunteers to phone or see the person within three days and check if they took their first step.

Finally the group just does a round of words to describe the experience and the recorder gives the record to the focus person. People often love this exercise and find that it generates action. It does not guarantee a solution, but it usually gets people "unstuck" and at least points to the next logical step.



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Chapter 7: Achieving Balance

Chapter at a Glance

Welcome to Holland

Introduction

The Journey from Struggle to Strength

**Strategies to Enhance Relationships among Siblings and
Within Your Family**

Some Resources for You and Your Family

Welcome to Holland

I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this.....

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans: the Coliseum, the Michelangelo David, the gondolas in Venice. You may even learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."

"Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around.... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills....and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very, very significant loss.

But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland.

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Introduction



Families can be complex, multi-dimensional groups of individuals who have different needs, wants and desires. When a family includes a person with a disability or special need, the fine balancing act that is required to keep family members healthy and happy can be very difficult to achieve. This chapter not only addresses the relationships among siblings in your family, but also your relationship as parents of a child with special needs and as unique individuals yourselves.

Often, when things feel unbalanced in the family, it is time to ask for support, either from your extended family and friends, or from outside agencies that are there to help. Join a local support group for parents of children with disabilities or special needs. If there isn't one in your area, look at starting one on an informal basis. Children's Special Services, a division of Child and Family Services can offer respite services to allow you some time away from the home for recreational

purposes, or to have another set of hands to care for your child. Your local Association for Community Living can provide guidance in how to access supports that you may need to achieve a better balance in your family life. A fuller listing of resources that may be of use to you and your family is presented at the end of this chapter.

It is important to realize that when we speak of inclusion within the education system, we are not only addressing the needs of our children, but the needs of you, the parents, to feel that you belong and your voices will be heard.

Parents experience a plethora of feelings and thoughts when parenting and advocating for their children. To be a more effective advocate, acknowledge those feelings, get help in understanding them if needed, and pay attention to your health and fitness, both physical and emotional. Just as with your children, you need to spend time recognizing your own short- and long-term goals. Take the time to step out of parent-mode and to understand that the skills you are developing to help your child realize his or her dreams can also help you attain some of your own. You might consider having your own PATH done or having one done for your family. An example of a PATH can be found in **Appendix 5**.

Some tips for maintaining your perspective and your self-identity while

parenting your child with special needs include:

- Limiting the family extra-curricular activities to maintain your energy level.
 - Find the humour in everyday life. Laughter is still and will always be the best medicine.
 - Ask your Children's Special Services worker or your family doctor about respite that you might be entitled to.
 - Keep information about each of your children and information about your own health, education, etc. organized for easy access. Keep a special file for more urgent matters so that you know to attend to those first.
 - Remember your family situation when considering any financial or estate planning. Consult a lawyer about the more appropriate way of maintaining support for your family in the event that you become ill or disabled.
 - Maintain your relationships with spouses or significant others by spending time together without your child. Don't lose sight of your identities, skills, and ability to support each other.
- Keep friends and family informed about what you need, do not try to do everything yourself.
 - Get connected with other families who are going through similar struggles.
 - Surround yourself with people (especially professionals like the paediatrician, support worker etc) who understand.
 - Never go to an important meeting without a support person at your side.
 - Talk. Do not keep all of your feelings inside. Let friends and family support you by listening, especially when things are going wrong.
 - Make sure that your take well-deserved breaks when someone else can take care of the children.
 - Celebrate success...big and little.
 - Find something positive about each day.
 - Keep a journal. You can look back on how you made it through the hard times and read about times when things went really well.

Here are some more tips, adapted from the *Saskatchewan Parent Guide to Inclusive Education*³⁹, on how to support yourself in your journey towards inclusion:



³⁹ www.sacl.ca

The Journey from Struggle to Strength⁴⁰

"After surveying 500 mothers and combing through mounds of research, we can say with confidence: special needs mothering adds growth, change, richness, and meaning to your life. Of course, when coping with a particularly tough day, you may yearn for a more mundane (and less enriching) mothering experience! When we spoke to one exhausted mother, she told us, "I've just come back from the hospital from my son's 64th brain shunt revision." Some days you've just got to get through.

It helps to keep a long-term perspective. In time you will emerge stronger, wiser and more compassionate from your mothering experience. Only so much is under your control. You can't always change the course of your child's condition or disability. You can't necessarily find the cure, therapy or education that will improve your child. But there is much you can do to maintain the quality of your own life and that of your loved ones.

Make time to keep yourself strong - mentally, spiritually, socially and physically. Keep trying new experiences and meeting new people. If you are in the workforce, talk openly with coworkers and management to make them aware of your strengths and your

⁴⁰Reprinted with permission of Amy Baskin and Heather Fawcett, co-authors of "More Than a Mom--Living a Full and Balanced Life When Your Child Has Special Needs" (Woodbine House). See www.morethanamom.net.

family needs. Each of us can transform the workplace one company and organization at a time. If you are at home, maintain skills and contacts so that you can support yourself financially, should you need to.

Enjoy the time with people you love. Cherish and enjoy your partner, your children, and your friends. Celebrate the unique connection you have with your child with special needs. But try not to let your family life revolve solely around that child's needs.

Stay optimistic. As we know, and recent research proves, optimism is related to better physical and mental health. Balance out planning for the future with living one day at a time. Seek out and enjoy activities that give you joy. Fortified with love, happiness, and optimism, you will survive and thrive through the tough times.

Most of all, remember that you are not alone in this mothering journey. Ask for the help, caring and services that you need. And reach out to others to share your own well-earned strength, wisdom, compassion and love of life."



Welcome to Holland!

Strategies to Enhance Relationships among Siblings and within Your Family:

When your family includes both your child with special needs and your "typical" child or children, it is important to recognize and respond to the attachment needs of all. In every family, one-on-one time for each child can have huge benefits in feelings of safety, connectedness, being heard and ultimately understanding the needs of each family member. Here are some ideas on how to include all your children in the journey towards inclusion.

1. Encourage open and honest communication among all family members. Listen to each of your children.
2. Let your children know that their feelings are natural. They are not bad. Give them permission to feel sad, angry, and embarrassed.
3. Your children are children first. Allow them to enjoy their childhood.
4. Accept the disability. When parents accept the disability, the family can begin to make plans to deal with the problems. When a disability is denied, siblings will be confused.
5. Provide children with accurate information at a level that they can understand.
6. Recognize that you are the most important and powerful teacher of your children - Modelling is important and effective.
7. Remember that each sibling is an individual first with unique needs, experiences, and contributions to make.
8. Acknowledge all family members for their strengths, gifts and contributions. Focus on these positives, and you will probably see more of them.
9. The quality of time you spend with each child is essential. Give each child special individual time just for them with one or both parents
10. Encourage your children to make choices in life, particularly about the nature of their involvement with the family and their sibling. Limit the care giving responsibilities of siblings.
11. Require that the child with special needs do as much for him/herself as possible.
12. Be fair in terms of discipline, attention and resources. When inequities must exist, discuss them.
13. Welcome and encourage the sibling's friends into your home.
14. Where possible, let siblings settle their own differences.

Some Resources for You and Your Family

Provincial and Regional Associations and Agencies:

Department Of Education, Citizenship & Youth
156-450 Broadway Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8
Tel: (204) 945-4338 Fax: (204) 945-1291
Toll free: 1-866-626-4862
Email: mbedu@merlin.mb.ca
www.edu.gov.mb.ca

Department of Family Services & Housing
305-114 Garry Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 4V7
Tel: (204) 945-6131 Fax: (204) 945-5668

**Department of Family Services and Housing
Service Delivery Support Branch**
265B-391 York Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0P4
Tel: (204) 945-1922 Fax: (204) 948-3048

**Department of Family Services and Housing
Children Special Services**
www.gov.mb.ca/fs/pow/index.html

**Department of Family Services and Housing
Vocational Rehabilitation Program**
Unit 3-139 Tuxedo Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3N 0H6
Tel: (204) 945-1335 Fax: (204) 945-1735
www.gov.mb.ca/fs

Disability & Community Support Program
A109 - 2055 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0J9
Tel: (204) 632-2573 Fax: (204) 632-4859
Email: dodonnell@rrc.mb.ca

Division Scolaire Franco-Manitobaine
C.P. 204 - 1263 chemin Dawson
Lorette, MB R0A 0Y0
Tel : (204) 878-9399 Fax: (204) 878-9407
Toll-free: (800) 699-3736
Email: dsfm@atrium.ca
www.dsfm.mc.ca

Mennonite Central Committee (Manitoba) Inc.
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
Tel: (204) 261-6381 Fax: (204) 269-9875

SpecialLink-the National Centre for Child Care Inclusion
University of Winnipeg
2E22-515 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg MB R3B 2E9
Tel: (204) 258-2901 Fax: (204) 786-7803
Toll free: 1-866-902-6333
Email: info@speciallinkcanada.org
www.speciallinkcanada.org

Advocacy Services

Brandon Citizen Advocacy
1610 Pacific Avenue
Brandon, MB R7A 7L9

Manitoba Association of Parent Councils
1005-401 York Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0P8
Tel: (204) 956-1770 Fax: (204) 948-2855
Email: mapc1@mts.net

Manitoba Foster Family Network Inc.
Email: manfost@mts.net
www.mffn.ca

Swan Valley Advocacy Services
Box 1824, Swan River, MB R0L 1Z0

Teulon and Area Advocates for Active Living
Box 568, Teulon, MB R0C 3B0
Tel: (204) 886-3707

Winnipeg Citizen Advocacy Inc.
120 Maryland Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1L1

Disability/Family Support Services

Addictions Foundation of Manitoba

1031 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0R8
Toll-Free: 1-866-638-2568
Tel: (204) 944-6233 Fax: (204) 772-0225
Email: library@afm.mb.ca
www.afm.mb.ca

Asperger Manitoba Inc.

Tel: (204) 947-9449
Email: info@asperger-manitoba.ca
www.asperger-manitoba.ca

Autism Society Manitoba

825 Sherbrooke Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 783-9563
Email: asm1@mts.net
www.autismmanitoba.com

Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba

105-500 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 3X1
Tel: (204) 982-4842
Email: lauras@cerebralpalsy.mb.ca

Community Respite Service

710-3rd Street
Brandon, MB R7A 3C8
Tel: (204) 727-4910
www.communityrespiteservice.ca/

Community Respite Service - Brandon

710-3rd Street
Brandon, MB R7A 3C8
Tel: (204) 727-4910 Fax: (204) 728-3305
Email: crbdn@mts.net

Continuity Care

2-120 Maryland Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1L1
Tel: (204) 779-1679 Fax: (204) 779-1679
Email: contcare@mts.net

First Nations Disability Association of Manitoba Inc.

305-B 260 St. Mary's Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0M6
Tel: (204) 953-0319 Fax: (204) 953-0318

Fetal Alcohol Family Association of Manitoba (FAFAM)

3rd Floor - 555 Broadway Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0W4
Tel: (204) 786-1847
Toll-free: 1-866-890-1402
Email: fafam@mts.net
www.fafam.ca

Haldisse Community Service Inc.

Box 3679, The Pas, MB R9A 1S3

Independent Living Resource Centre

311A-393 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3H6
Tel (TTY): (204) 947-0194 Fax: (204) 943-6625
Toll-Free (TTY): 1-800-663-3043
Email: listylist@hotmail.com
www.ilrc.mb.ca/

Intervention Manitoba Inc.

201-1100 Concordia Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2K 4B8
Tel: (204) 949-3730 Fax: (204) 949-3732
Email: intermb@mts.net

Learning Disabilities Association of Manitoba

617 Erin Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 2W1
Tel: (204) 774-1821 Fax: (204) 788-4090.
Email: ldamb@mts.net

Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre

120 Tecumseh Street
Winnipeg, MB R3E 2A9
Tel: (204) 958-9660 Fax: (204) 783-8948

Manitoba Brain Injury Association

204-825 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 953-5353 Fax: (204) 975-3027
Email: mbia@mts.net
www.mbia.ca/

Manitoba Down Syndrome Society

204 - 825 Sherbrook Street,
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 992-2731
www.manitobadownsyndromesociety.com
Email: mdss@mts.net

Manitoba Families for Effective Autism Treatment

162-2025 Corydon Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0N5
Tel: (204) 487-1685
<http://www.mfeat.ca/>

Manitoba First Nations Educational Resource Centre

Head Office
Long Plain First Nation
5000 Crescent Road West
Portage La Prairie, MB R1N 3B5
Tel: (204) 953-0310 Fax: (204) 857-4576
Toll Free: (866) 331-9561
Email: louellashannacappo@mailcity.com
www.mfnerc.org

Manitoba Schizophrenia Society

100-4 Fort Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1C4
Tel: (204) 786-1616 Fax: (204) 783-4898
Email: info@mss.mb.ca

Mental Health Education Resource Centre of Manitoba (MHERC)

4 Fort Street
Winnipeg MB R3C 1C4
Tel: (204) 953-2355 Fax: (204) 772-4969
info@mherc.mb.ca
www.mherc.mb.ca

Mood Disorder Association of Manitoba

100-4 Fort Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1C4
Tel: (204) 786-0987 Fax: (204) 786-1906
Toll free: 1-800-263-1460
Email: sdmdm@depression.mb.ca
www.depresssion.mb.ca

Obsessive-Compulsive Information and Support Centre

100-4 Fort Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1C4
Tel: (204) 943-3331
Email: occmnitoba@shaw.ca
www.members.shaw.ca/manitoba

Open Access

3-120 Maryland Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1L1
Tel: (204) 949-2430 Fax: (204) 775-2385
Email: oarc@oarc.ca

Rehab Centre for Children

633 Wellington Crescent
Winnipeg, MB R3M 0A8
Tel: (204) 452-4311 Fax: (204) 477-5547
Email: info@rccinc.ca
www.rccinc.ca/rehab

Resource Centre for Manitobans Who Are Deaf-Blind

228-285 Pembina Hwy,
Winnipeg, MB R3L 2E1
Tel: (204) 284-2531
Email: jsayer@rcmdb.net

Society of Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD)

825 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 975-3010
Toll free: 1-866-282-8041
Email: info@smd.mb.ca
www.smd.mb.ca

Special Olympics Manitoba

4th Floor 200 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 4M2
Email: stel@mts.net

The Arthritis Self-Help Group

825 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 783-4227
Toll free: 1-877-668-2333

The Fibromyalgia Support Group of Winnipeg
825 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 975-3037 Fax: (204) 975-3037

The Hepatitis C Resource Centre
825 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 975-3279 Fax: (204) 975-3027
Email: hecsc@smd.mb.ca
www.hepatitisc-mb.ca

The MS Society of Canada - MB Division
400-141 Bannatyne Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0R3
Tel: (204) 943-9595 Fax: (204) 943-8444
Email: info@mssociety.ca
www.mssociety.ca/manitoba

Winnipeg League for the Hard of Hearing
825 Sherbrook Street,
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 975-3037

Winnipeg Ostomy Association
Tel: (204) 237-2022
Email: woa@mts.net
www.ostomy-winnipeg.ca

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)
1800-155 Carlton Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4Y1
Tel: (204) 926.7000 Fax: (204) 926.7007

Child and Adolescent Mental Health
Centralized Intake
Tel: (204) 958-9660

Autism Service Site
771 Bannatyne Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3N4
Email: jkneisz@hsc.mb.ca
www.hsc.mb.ca/autismprogram

Associations for Community Living

ACL-Beausejour
Box 1015, Beausejour, MB ROE 0C0
Tel: (204) 268-1803
Email: aclbb@sympatico.ca

ACL-Brandon
710-3rd Street
Brandon, MB R7A 3C8
Tel: (204) 726-3480

ACL-Flin Flon
Box 820, Flin Flon, MB R8A 1N6
Tel: (204) 687-7050

ACL-Gimli
Box 980, Gimli, MB ROC 1B0
Tel: (204) 642-8698

ACL-Interlake
Box 1222, Stonewall, MB ROC 2Z0
Tel: (204) 467-9169

ACL-Portage La Prairie
Box 743, Portage La Prairie, MB R1N 3C2
Tel: (204) 857-9242

ACL-Red River
Box 280, St. Malo, MB ROA 1T0
Tel: (204) 347-5418

ACL-Steinbach
Box 730, Steinbach, MB ROA 2A0
Tel: (204) 326-7539

ACL-Swan River
Box 1282, Swan River, MB ROL 1Z0
Tel: (204) 734-9114

ACL-Virden
Box 1957, Virden, MB ROM 2C0
Tel.: (204) 748-1444
E-mail: aclvirden@westman.wave.ca

Community Living Manitoba

6-120 Maryland Street
 Winnipeg, MB R3G 1L1
 Tel: (204) 786-1607 Fax: (204) 789-9850
 Email: aclmb@mts.net

Community Living Selkirk

306A Jemima Street
 Selkirk, MB R1A 1X2
 Tel: (204) 482-5435 Fax: (204) 785-8161
 Email: arcind@mts.com

Community Living Winnipeg

1-120 Maryland Street
 Winnipeg, MB R3G 1L1
 Tel: (204) 786-1414 Fax: (204) 774-4402
 Email: acl@aclwpg.ca

Day Programs**Access Point West**

Unit A-2381 Ness Avenue
 Winnipeg, MB R3J 1A5
 Email: apwadmin@gatewest.net

Cambridge Residence

65 McGill Place
 Thompson, MB R4N 0H9
 Tel: (204) 778-7582

Community Venture - Salvation Army

324 Logan Avenue
 Winnipeg, MB R3A 0L5
 Tel: (204) 946-9418 Fax: (204) 943-9070
 Email: comvent@mts.com

Comspan

19 St. Anne's Road
 Winnipeg, MB R2M 2Y1
 Tel: (204) 237-1804 Fax: (204) 233-3106

COR Enterprises

364 Park Avenue East
 Brandon, MB R7A 7A8
 Tel: (204) 728-2932 Fax: (204) 729-9028
 Email: cor@mts.net

Cornerstone Enterprises

Box 1799, Gimli, MB R0C 1B0
 Tel: (204) 642-5028 Fax: (204) 642-9668
 Email: cornerstnent@mts.net

Dawson Trail Opportunities

Unit 10-41 Arena Road
 Ste. Anne, MB R5H 1J1
 Tel: (204) 422-5015 Fax: (204) 422-5759
 Email: dtou@mts.net

Doray Enterprises

3rd Floor - 1270 Notre Dame Avenue
 Winnipeg, MB R3E 0P3
 Tel: (204) 942-3675 Fax: (204) 949-1919
 Email: doraymh@escape.ca

Eastside Thames

6431 Thames Avenue
 Winnipeg, MB R2L 0V4
 Tel: (204) 982-4674 Fax: (204) 667-2747
 Email: dannah@hopecentreinc.ca

Gateway Resources

Box 1448, Winkler, MB R6Z 4B4
 Tel: (204) 325-7304 Fax: (204) 325-1958
 Email: grceo@mts.net

Hope Centre Inc.

Unit A-2381 Ness Avenue
 Winnipeg, MB R3J 1A5
 Tel: (204) 982-4682 Fax: (204) 982-4686
 Email: jeanettetd@hopecentreinc.ca

Juniper Centre

108 Nelson Street
 Thompson, MB R8N 0B6
 Tel: (204) 677-2970 Fax: (204) 677-4213
 Email: jcinc@mts.net

Mountain Industries

Box 297, Notre Dame de Lourdes, MB R0G 1M0
 Tel: (204) 248-2154 Fax: (204) 248-2154
 Email: mountind@yahoo.ca

Norshel

24-5 Scurfield Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3T 1Y3
Tel: (204) 452-2543

Portage ARC Industries Inc.

1675 Saskatchewan Avenue West
Portage la Prairie, MB R1N 0R4
Tel: (204) 857-7665 Fax: (204) 857-7752
Email: sbeam@mts.net

Riverdale Place Workshop Inc.

Box 609, Arborg, MB ROC 0A0
Tel: (204) 376-5584

Rollingdale Enterprises

Box 327, Rivers, MB R0K 1X0
Tel: (204) 328-6300 Fax: (204) 328-7047
Email: rdale@mts.net

Sprucedale Enterprises

Box 225, Austin, MB R0H 0C0
Tel: (204) 637-2313 Fax: (204) 637-2313
Email: spr46@mts.net

Valley Rehabilitation Centre Inc.

Box 1448, Winkler, MB R6W 4B4
Tel: (204) 325-7304 Fax: (204) 325-1958

Versatech Industries

436 William Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3A 0J4
Tel: (204) 956-9700 Fax: (204) 943-1893

Westwood Vocational Centre

266A Linwood Street
Winnipeg, MB R3J 1M9
Tel: (204) 885-4748 Fax: (204) 885-4748

Day Programs/Residential Programs**Altona and District Association for the Mentally Handicapped**

Box 330 122 - 10th Ave. NW
Altona, MB R0G 0B0
Tel: (204) 324-5401
Email: otc@mts.net

AMBA Homes Inc.

1171 Paterson Street
Winnipeg, MB R2J 1G8
Tel: (204) 255-2367 Fax: (204) 255-2668

Boissevain Association for the Handicapped

Box 1116, Boissevain, MB R0K 0E0
Tel: (204) 534-2956
The Hand Crafter Office: (204) 534-2449
Fax: (204) 534-7093

D.A.S.C.H. Inc.

117 Victor Lewis Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3P 1J6
Tel: (204) 987-1550 Fax: (204) 987-1552
Email: info@dasch.mb.ca

Parkland Regional Community Linc Inc.

Box 1142, Russell, MB R0J 1W0
Tel: (204) 773-3852 Fax: (204) 773-3895
Email: prclrsl@mts.net

PRVSI

424-1st Avenue
Dauphin, MB R7N 1A9
Tel: (204) 638-8901 Fax: (204) 638-1548
Email: prvsi@mts.net

Pulford Community Living Services

Unit 24-62 Scurfield Boulevard
Winnipeg, MB R3Y 1M5
Tel: (204) 284-2255 Fax: (204) 453-5657
Email: pulford@mts.net

Southwest Community Options

Box 46, Ninette, MB R0K 1R0
Tel: (204) 528-5060 Fax: (204) 528-5065
Email: estruth@swconinette.ca

Winnipegosis and District Residential Services

Box 278, Winnipegosis, MB R0L 2G0
Tel: (204) 656-4833 Fax: (204) 656-4833

FASD Life's Journey

17-794 Sargent Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3E 0B7
Tel: (204) 772-1591 Fax: (204) 772-1784

Mennonite Central Committee FASD Program
302-583 Ellice Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1Z7
Tel: (204) 783-0897 Fax: (204) 774-2345
Email: mccmfasd@mts.net

Residential Programs

Altona and District Association for the Mentally Retarded
Box 330, Altona, MB R0G 0B0
Tel: (204) 324-5401 Fax: (204) 324-5094
Email: otc@mts.net

Arcane Horizon Inc.
62-1313 Border Street
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0X4
Tel: (204) 897-5482 Fax: (204) 831-0094
Email: arcane@shawcable.com

Baldur Group Homes
RR #2, Pilot Mound, MB R0G 1P0

Brandon Community Options Inc.
136-11th Street
Brandon, MB R7A 4J4
Tel: (204) 571-5770 Fax: (204) 725-2074
Email: belmes.bdnc@mts.net

Brandon Support Services
Suite 304-1011 Rosser Avenue
Brandon, MB R7A 0L5

Changes Supported Living Services Inc.
2 Cuthbertson Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0N7

Columbian Apartment Program
55 Willow Place
Brandon, MB R7B 3V1
Tel: (204) 724-3060 Fax: (204) 728-0176
Email: pgolding@westman.ca

Damm Home
RR #2, Pilot Mound, MB R0G 1P0

DOVE
49 Brewster Bay
Winnipeg, MB R2C 2X2
Tel: (204) 222-2200

El'Dad Ranch
Box 9, Grp 3, RR #1
Steinbach, MB R5G 1L9
Tel: (204) 326-1050 Fax: (204) 346-9602
Email: eldad@mts.net

Family Visions
820-9th Street
Brandon, MB R7A 4B8
Tel: (204) 726-5602

Grandview Residential Services Incorporated
Box 307
Grandview, MB R0L 0Y0
Tel: (204) 546-2890 Fax: (204) 546-3071
Email: gvrinc@mts.net

Growing Roots
183 Arlington Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1Y6

Haldisse CS Fischer Place
Box 3679, The Pas, MB R9A 1K3
Tel: (204) 623-3178

Hearthstone
Box 321, Selkirk, MB R1A 2B3
Tel: (204) 482-1296

Heima Er Best Inc.
Box 1949, Gimli, MB R0C 1B0
Tel: (204) 642-9707 Fax: (204) 642-9670
Email: heima@mts.net

Hope Centre Residential
567 Henry Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 0T8
Tel: (204) 982-4676 Fax: (204) 982-4683
Email: adelineb@hopecentreinc.ca

Kel-Chris Inc.
Box 2133, Virden, MB R0M 2C0
Tel: (204) 748-3726 Fax: (204) 748-2059
Email: kelchris@mts.net

Kin Glen Community Residence
104-3rd Street NW
Portage la Prairie, MB R2N 2C2

L.I.F.E. Inc.
4-120 Maryland Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1L1
Tel: (204) 772-3557 Fax: (204) 789-9850
Email: life2@mts.net

La Residence de Lourdes
Box 58, Notre Dame de Lourdes, MB R0G 1M0

La Residence de St. Malo Inc.
Box 337, St. Malo, MB R0A 1T0
Tel: (204) 347-5418 Fax: (204) 347-5378
Email: rrws@mts.net

L'Arche
118 Regent Avenue East
Winnipeg, MB R2C 0C1
Tel: (204) 237-0300 Fax: (204) 237-0316
Email: office@larchewinnipeg.ca

L'Avenir Cooperative Inc.
101A-2621 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3J 0P7
Tel: (204) 789-9777 Fax: (204) 837-8614
Email: stla@mts.net

Luther Homes Inc.
1081 Andrews Street
Winnipeg, MB R2V 2G9
Tel: (204) 338-4641 Fax: (204) 338-4643
Email: rkoop@lutherhome.ca

MBS Residence
Unit 9-213 St. Mary's Road
Winnipeg, MB R2H 1J2
Tel: (204) 233-5363 Fax: (204) 948-2066

New Directions for Children, Youth and Families
400-491 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E4
Tel: (204) 786-7051 Fax: (204) 774-6468

Norman Community Services Inc.
Box 565, Flin Flon, MB
Tel: (204) 687-6890
Email: normserv@mts.net

Norshel Residential Inc.
1258 Chancellor Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 4H9
Tel: (204) 269-8522
Email: lheber@shaw.ca

Oberlin House
19 Oberlin Road
Winnipeg, MB R3T 3G9
Tel: (204) 261-8716

Open Arms
43 Harding Crescent
Winnipeg, MB R2N 4N7
Tel: (204) 254-5323

Opportunities for Independence
1070 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0S3
Tel: (204) 786-0100 Fax: (204) 786-0109
Email: rrennpferd@mts.net

P.K. Apartments
324 Saskatchewan Avenue East
Portage la Prairie, MB R1N 0K8

Pine Creek Community Residence
Box 241, Austin, MB R0H 0C0

Prairie Places
220-500 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 3X1
Tel: (204) 783-8682 Fax: (204) 789-9850
Email: ppi@mts.net

Quest Homes
228 Sherburn Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 2K6

R.O.S.E. Inc.

Box 28, Ste. Rose du Lac, MB R0L 1S0
Tel: (204) 447-3224 Fax: (204) 447-2965
Email: one@mts.net

Rainbow Residence

Box 202, Carman, MB R0G 0J0
Tel: (204) 745-6063 Fax: (204) 745-6063
Email: rrinc@mts.net

Residence St. Claude Ltee.

Box 368, St. Claude, MB R0G 1Z0
Tel: (204) 379-2763
Email: stcres@mts.net

Riverdale Place Homes Inc.

Box 968, Arborg, MB R0C 0A0
Tel: (204) 376-2940 Fax: (204) 376-5051
Email: riverdale@mts.net

Riverside Community Residence

Box 588, Gladstone, MB R0J 0T0

Riverton Care Services Inc.

Box 453, Riverton, MB R0C 2R0
Tel: (204) 378-5226 Fax: (204) 378-5226

S.P.I.K.E.

Box 28029-1795 Henderson Hwy
Winnipeg, MB R2T 4E9
Tel: (204) 339-2990 Fax: (204) 338-1129
Email: pcourt@mts.net

Samtake Co-op Inc.

Box 1654, Swan River, MB R0L 1Z0
Tel: (204) 734-7101 Fax: (204) 238-4996
Email: carol.tripp@rbc.com

Shalom Residences Inc.

100- 1010 Sinclair Street
Winnipeg, MB R2V 3H7
Tel: (204) 582-7064
E-mail: shalom@mts.net

Simaril Inc.

402-321 McDermot Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3A 0A3
Tel: (204) 788-4366 Fax: (204) 256-5076
Email: simaril@mts.net

Somerset Villa Inc.

Box 203, Somerset, MB R0G 2L0
Tel: (204) 744-2167
Email: Somvilla@mts.net

St. Amant

440 River Road
Winnipeg, MB R2M 3Z9
Community Respite Program
Tel: (204) 984-9639
Email: soltis@stamant.mb.ca
Group Tel: (204) 256-4301
Fax: (204) 255-1176
Email: stephens@stamant.mb.ca

Stradbrook Residential Services

174B Scott Street
Winnipeg, MB R3L 0L3
Tel: (204) 453-0892 Fax: (204) 452-9992
Email: srsl@mts.net

Tayside Community Service

221 Sutherland Avenue
Selkirk, MB R1A 0N2
Tel: (204) 482-4329 Fax: (204) 785-9708
Email: tayside@msn.com

Touchwood Park Association

Box 1149, Neepawa, MB R0L 1H0
Tel: (204) 476-2223 Fax: (204) 476-8849

Visions of Independence

190 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 2B6
Tel: (204) 453-5982 Fax: (204) 452-0714

Walske Residence

18 Park Road
Selkirk, MB R1A 0B3

Winnserv Inc.

101-960 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0R4
Tel: (204) 783-8654 Fax: (204) 786-8770
Email: winnserv@shawcable.com

Supported Employment Services**Career Connections Inc.**

710 - 3rd Street
PO Box 1900
Brandon, MB R7A 6N8
Tel: (204) 728-9594
www.gov.mb.ca/fs/bird/PreEmploy/careerconnections

Connect Employment Services

188 Goulet Street
Winnipeg, MB R2H 0R8
Tel: (204) 474-1959 Fax: (204) 284-7262
Email: KBissett@networksouth.ca

Doray Enterprises Inc.

3rd Floor - 1270 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3E 0P3
Tel: (204) 942-3675 Fax: (204) 949-1919

Eastman Employment

395 Main Street
Steinbach, MB R5G 1Z4
Tel: (204) 326-4099 Fax: (204) 326-4522
Email: eesinfo@mts.net

Employment Dimensions - CMHA

432 Ellice Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1Y4
Tel: (204) 982-6117 Fax: (204) 982-6128
Email: office@cmhawpg.mb.ca

Focus on Employment

Box 2478, Swan River, MB R0L 1Z0
Tel: (204) 734-9675 Fax: (204) 734-9486
Email: focus@mts.net

Frontier Trading Company Inc.

Box 1467, Minnedosa, MB R0J 1E0
Tel: (204) 867-5551 Fax: (204) 867-5679
Email: frontiel@mts.net

Gateway Resources

Box 1448, Winkler, MB R8A 4B4
Tel: (204) 325-7304 Fax: (204) 325-1958

Interlake Employment Services

Box 1222, Stonewall, MB R0C 2Z0
Tel: (204) 467-2061 Fax: (204) 467-7125
Email: ies@mts.net

Juniper Centre

108 Nelson Road
Thompson, MB R8N 0B6
Tel: (204) 677-2970 Fax: (204) 677-4213
Email: jcinc@mts.net

Network of Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Manitoba

748 Broadway Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0X3
Tel: (204) 774-6633
Email: nedmb@mts.net

Network South Enterprises Inc.

326 Wardlaw Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3L 0L6
Tel: (204) 474-1959 Fax: (204) 284-7262
Email: sfllegal@networksouth.mb.ca

Opportunities for Independence Inc.

1070 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0S3
Tel: (204) 957-5113
Fax: 786-0190

Parkland Regional Community Linc Inc.

Box 1142, Russell, MB R0J 1W0
Tel: (204) 773-3852 Fax: (204) 773-3895
Email: prclrs1@mts.net

Premier Choix

614 Rue DesMeurons - 23 étage
Winnipeg, MB R2H 2P9
Tel: (204) 237-9788 Fax: (204) 925-8380
Email: premierchoix@hotmail.com

Proactive Employment & Community Connections
1745 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3J 0E6
Tel: (204) 982-4688 Fax: (204) 982-4686
Email: kola@mts.net

Pulford Community Living Services
300-283 Bannatyne Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3B2
Tel: (204) 285-2255 Fax: (204) 453-5657
Email: pulford@mts.net

Reaching E-Quality Employment Services
305-1200 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0T5
Tel: (204) 947-1609 Fax: (204) 947-2932
Email: tandreychuk@re-es.org

S. A. M. Inc.
75-4th Avenue North West
Portage la Prairie, MB R1N 3J5
Tel: (204) 857-6560 Fax: (204) 857-3325
Email: twisam@mts.net

Sair Centre of Learning
Box 1737 - 201 Scott Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 2Z9
Tel: (204) 474-2303 Fax: (204) 435-3959
Email: sbyiers-sair@mts.net

Sara Riel
210 Kenny Street
Winnipeg, MB R2H 2E4
Tel: (204) 237-9559 Fax: (204) 231-2871
Email hmackenzie@sararielinc.mb.ca

SCE Lifeworks
227- 530 Century Street
Winnipeg, MB R3M 1H8
Tel: (204) 775-9402 Fax: (204) 783-2555
Email: obackstrom@lifeworks.mb.ca
www.lifeworks.mb.ca/homepage

Society for Manitobans with Disabilities - Thompson Support Employment
303-83 Churchill Drive
Thompson, MB R5W 0L6
Tel: (204) 677-8322 Fax: (204) 778-4461
Email: kgeiger@smd.mb.ca

Society for Manitobans with Disabilities
825 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Tel: (204) 975-3010 Fax: (204) 975-3073
Toll-free: 1-800-282-8040
TTY: 1-800-225-9108

St. James Assiniboia Industries
Lower Level - 2015 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3J 0K3
Tel: (204) 888-5422 Fax: (204) 888-6709
Email: sji@mts.net

Southwest Community Options Inc.
P.O. Box 46, 210 Queen Street,
Ninette, MB R0K 1R0
Tel: (204) 528-5060
Activity centre

Spirit Sands Support Services Inc.
Box 208, Carberry, MB R0K 0H0
Tel: (204) 834-3668
Non-profit support service

St. Amant Centre
440 River Road
Winnipeg, MB R2M 3Z9
Tel: (204) 256-4301 Fax: (204) 257-4349
Email: inquiries@stamant.mb.ca
www.stamant.mb.ca

The Centre for Aboriginal Human Resources Development Inc.
304-181 Higgins Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 2G1
Tel: (204) 989-7110 Fax: (204) 989-7113
Email: rodi@abcentre.org; caarhrd@abcentre.org

The Pas Association for Human Development
Box 32, The Pas, MB R9A 1K3
Tel: (204) 623-6815 Fax: (204) 623-7211
Email: tpahd@mts.net

Thompson Supported Employment Program
303-83 Churchill Drive
Thompson, MB R8N 0L6
Tel: (204) 677-8322 Fax: (204) 778-4461
Email: kgregoire@smd.mb.ca

Trailblazers Life Choices
Unit 10, 1325 Markham Road
Winnipeg, MB R3T 4J6

Trainex
Box 435, Winkler, MB R6S 4A6
Tel: (204) 325-8988 Fax: (204) 325-6307
Email: nichols@mts.net

TSEN
Unit 1 - 1599 Dugald Road
Winnipeg, MB R2J 0H3
Tel: (204) 990-1242 Fax: (204) 222-4348
Email: ed.tsenadmin@shawcable.com

WASO Inc.
840 McLeod Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2G 2T7
Tel: (204) 667-9494 Fax: (204) 942-2648
Email: kmckintyre@waso.ca

Westman Coalition
333-340 9th Street
Brandon, MB R7A 6C2
Tel: (204) 726-6178 Fax: (204) 726-6539
Email: wceo@mts.net

National Associations and Agencies

Autism Central
www.autismcentral.ca

Autism Society of Canada
www.autismsocietycanada.ca

Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL)
Kinsmen Building, York University
4700 Keele Street
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3
Tel: (416) 661-9611 Fax: (416) 661-5701
Email: info@cacl.ca
www.cacl.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Manitoba Division
4 Fort Street, Suite 100
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1C4
Tel: (204) 953-2350 Fax: (204) 775-3497
Email: info@cmhamanitoba.ca
www.manitoba.cmha.ca

Canadian National Institute for the Blind
1080 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 3M3
Tel: (204) 774-5421
Toll Free: 1-800-552-4893

Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA)
Tel: (204) 975-3278
Email: djoanisse@canparaplegic.org

Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Canada
www.cdlsCanada.ca/

Canadian Down Syndrome Society
www.cdss.ca/

Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada
www.fragile-x.ca/default2.htm

Hyperlexia
American Hyperlexia Association
www.hyperlexia.org/

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
www.ldac-taac.ca/

Inclusive Education Website

Email: info@inclusiveeducation.ca
www.inclusiveeducation.ca

Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada

1 Morley Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3L 2P4
Tel: (204) 233-0022 Fax: (204) 233-6367
www.mdac.ca

Non-verbal Learning Disorders

<http://www.nlda.org/>

Prader-Willi Syndrome

Prader-Willi Syndrome Association (USA)
www.pwsausa.org/index.html

Rett Syndrome

International Rett Syndrome Organization
www.rettsyndrome.org/

The African Canadian Disability Association Inc.

1174 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2A4
Tel: (204) 453-0391 Fax: (204) 453-8153
Email: acdca@tacd.ca.com

Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada

www.tourette.ca/index.shtml

Glossary

Accommodation: Providing what is needed or desired to achieve goals; a means of identifying, preventing and removing barriers that impede students with disabilities from participating fully in the educational environment in a way that is responsive to their own unique circumstances.

Accountability: An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions.

Adaptation: Adjustment to environmental conditions to accommodate differing needs; a change made in teaching practices, materials, assignments or pupil products to help achieve the expected learning outcomes.

Advocacy: The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal.

Appropriate: Especially suitable or compatible (i.e., fitting).

Appropriate Educational Programming: A collaborative school-family-community process where school communities create learning environments and provide resources and services that are responsive to the lifelong learning, social and emotional needs of all students.

Assessment: The systematic process of gathering information about what a student knows, is able to do and is learning to do.

Behaviour Intervention Plan: An intervention plan developed by a team to meet a student's social/emotional and behavioural needs.

Best Practices: A technique, method, process, activity, incentive or reward that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc.

Collaboration: To work jointly with others or together to develop a plan or program.

Cooperation: The association of individuals for a common benefit.

Curriculum: The curriculum prescribed by the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth. It is a statement of intended outcomes, products or competencies that are to be achieved for each grade level in the provincial public education system.

Differentiated Instruction: A method of instruction or assessment that alters the presentation of the curriculum for the purpose of responding to the diversity of learning, interests and strengths of pupils.

Discrimination: Prejudiced or prejudicial outlook, action or treatment directed to an individual or group of individuals based upon their differences from others.

Expected Learning Outcomes: The learning outcomes consistent with the curriculum.

Individualized Programming: Programming designed to meet the needs of students with severe cognitive disabilities who need programming outside the regular curriculum in areas of exceptional learning, social/emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical, cognitive/intellectual, communication, academic or special healthcare needs.

Integration: To end the segregation of and bring into equal membership in society or an organization.

Modification: Changes in the number or the content of the learning outcomes a student is expected to meet in the provincial curriculum, made by the teacher or the school team.

Performance Objective: Statements that identify the specific knowledge, skill or attitude the learner should gain and display as a result of the training or instructional activity.

Pupil File: A collection of written information about a student's education stored in a file in the school or school division office in paper, electronic or other form.

Reasonable Accommodation: The school's obligation to address the special needs of students where these needs stem from the protected characteristics specified in The Human Rights Code of Manitoba, such as physical or mental disability, etc., and affect the individual's ability to access educational/school services of facilities; the measures to accommodate special needs will be reasonable and required unless they cause undue hardship due to cost, risk to safety, impact on others, or other factors.

Resolution: To deal with successfully; to find an answer to.

Resource Teacher: A teacher whose principal duties are to diagnose individual educational programs, to prescribe special remedial measures for use by teaching staff, to give direct assistance to teachers and students in need of special help and to provide school personnel and parents with consultative services.

Special Education Resource Teacher: A teacher who holds specialist qualifications in special education and is qualified/experienced in student assessment.

Student-Specific Outcome: A goal for an individual education plan for a student; it states what the student will learn, when this will be accomplished, and how the goal will be met.

Substantive Equality: Substantive equality requires challenging common stereotypes about group characteristics that may underlie law or government action as well as ensuring that important differences in life experience, as viewed by the equality seeker, are taken into account.⁴¹

Task Analysis: The process of breaking a complex behaviour (a chain of simple behaviours that follow one another) down into its component parts.

Transition: Moving a student from one environment to another at key points in his or her development from childhood to adulthood (e.g., entry into kindergarten or nursery school years, transition from Early to Middle Years, from one grade to the next, or from school to post-secondary education or employment).

Vocational Training: Prepares learners for careers that are based in manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic and totally related to a specific trade.

⁴¹ *Rights: Our Equality Rights in the Charter: The Court Challenges Program of Canada.*
www.ccpej.ca/e/rights/rights-charter.shtml

Appendix 1:

Roles and Responsibilities in the School System⁴²

Students are entitled to:

- Receive regular testing and evaluation of their performance.
- Have access to their pupil file if they are 18 years or older.
- Have a parent or other adult with them to present information to the school board if they have been notified of the intention to expel them.

Students are responsible for:

- Attending classes regularly and on time.
- Following discipline and behaviour management policy.
- Completing assignments.
- Treating school property and the property of others with respect.

Parents are entitled to:

- Be informed regularly about their child's attendance, behaviour, and academic achievement.
- Have access to their child's pupil file.
- Receive information about the discipline policy of the school or school division.
- Be a member of the parent council.
- Accompany their child and assist them to present information to the school board before a decision is made to expel their child.

Parents are responsible for:

- Cooperating with their child's teacher and other school staff to ensure that their child follows school and division discipline and behaviour management policy.
- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly.

Educational Assistants can:⁴³

- Carry out the daily implementation of student-specific IEP outcomes or goals, as directed by teacher.
- Reinforce a concept or skill that the teacher has taught with a small group of students.
- Provide personal care in areas such as personal hygiene, dressing or helping a child use adaptive equipment (such as computer technology).
- Help prepare materials for an individual student, classroom or school.
- Provide teacher with information and/or written documentation about a student's performance, behaviour, growth and needs.

⁴²**Resolving Issues in the Public School System: A Guide for Student/Parent Advocacy** The Manitoba Association of Parent Councils 2004

⁴³ from **Working Together: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs in School: Planning and Programming**, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth 2004

Teachers can:

- Teach the curriculum prescribed by the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth.
- Provide an effective classroom learning environment.
- Maintain order/discipline, inside/outside school when students are participating in school-sponsored activities.
- Let students know what is expected of them, review assessments, evaluate progress, and report that progress to parents.
- Participate in professional development.

Teachers may:

- Suspend a student for not more than two days for behaviour that contravenes the school code of conduct.

Regarding conflict resolution between a parent and the school, the principal can and should:

- Agree to meet with you to talk about a classroom issue involving your child.
- Treat you with respect and dignity
- Communicate the reasons for decisions made, within the limits of confidentiality.
- Request the principal or union representative be present for meetings.

Do not expect the teacher to:

- Discuss another student with you.
- Discuss an issue during class time.
- Deal with abusive or harassing conduct.

Principals can:

- Be in charge of all matters relating to organization, instruction and discipline.
- Supervise staff, students, buildings and grounds during school hours.
- Decide which classes students will be placed in.
- Provide pertinent and meaningful information about the school to parents and community.
- Ensure parents are provided with information about their child's achievements.
- Participate in hiring, assignment, and evaluation of teachers.
- Have disciplinary authority over the conduct of each student from the time the student arrives until they leave, except when the student is absent from school at the request of the parent.
- Have disciplinary authority over all students on their way to and from school including students being transported by school bus (the bus driver reports disciplinary problems to the principal).
- Ensure parents are promptly informed of a suspension and the reasons for it.
- Provide a written report (name, period of suspension, description of conduct) to the Board within 24 hours of a student being suspended.
- Inspect school premises and report any required repairs to the Board.

Principals may:

- Request that the superintendent or other senior administration staff be present for a meeting.
- Receive advice from parents and community regarding the hiring, assignment and evaluation of teachers when making recommendations to the Board about those matters.
- Suspend a student for a period of up to six weeks depending on the direction of the Board.

Regarding conflict resolution between a parent and the school, the principal can and should:

- Agree to meet with you about a classroom issue, if you have been unable to resolve the problem by talking to the teacher.
- Treat you with respect and dignity.
- Investigate your concerns and report the result of that investigation in a timely manner.
- Advise on the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken if required.
- Communicate the reasons for decisions made, within the limits of confidentiality.

Do not expect the Principal to:

- Meet with you without an appointment.
- Report specific disciplinary action taken against a staff member.
- Deal with abusive language or behaviour.
- Deal with a classroom issue if you have not spoken to the teacher.

Superintendents can:

- Report promptly to parents if a student is suspended and the reasons for it.
- Provide a written report (name, period of suspension, description of conduct) to the Board within 24 hours of a student being suspended.

Superintendents may:

- Hire necessary staff, within limits set by the Board.
- Accept staff resignation.
- Grant, alter, or cancel leave for teachers.
- Suspend a student for a period of no more than six weeks when authorized by a resolution of the Board.

Regarding conflict resolution between a parent and the school, the superintendent can and should:

- Agree to meet with you about an issue, if you have been unable to resolve the problem by talking to the principal.
- Treat you with respect and dignity.
- Investigate your concerns and report the results of that investigation in a timely manner.
- Advise on the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken if required.

Do not expect the superintendent to:

- Investigate a classroom issue if you have not spoken with the teacher or principal.
- Discuss specific disciplinary measures taken against a staff member.
- Deal with abusive language or behaviour from parents or others.

A Board of Trustees can:

- Hold its meeting openly, so that no one is excluded or removed from any meeting except for improper conduct.
- Appoint a superintendent and define his/her duties.
- Provide transportation for students who would have more than 1.6 km to walk.
- Attach to a student's file any written objection by the parents or students to, or explanation of, any matter contained in the file.

- Allow the parent of a suspended student and/or student to provide information, and may confirm or modify that suspension, or may reinstate the student.

Regarding conflict resolution between a parent and the school, the superintendent can and should:

- Encourage your elected trustee to meet with you, upon request, regarding unresolved issues.
- Provide time on their agenda for a formal presentation if you have been unable to resolve the problem following Division protocol.
- Treat you with respect and dignity.
- Communicate the reasons for decisions made, within the limits of confidentiality.

A Board of Trustees may:

- Provide equipment for school sports and games.
- Buy books and other instructional materials.
- Decide who shall be school visitors.
- Suspend or expel a student, after conducting an investigation.
- Limit a teacher's right to suspend.

Do not expect a Board of Trustees to:

- Provide access to a student's file if that access would be detrimental to the student or another person.

The Department/Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth can:

- Make regulations regarding the duties of teachers and principals.
- Make regulations regarding the establishment of advisory councils for schools.
- Determine standards for teacher certification and qualifications.
- Follow up on concerns about the actions of a Board of Trustees if those actions contravene their legislated duties.

The Department/Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth may:

- Make regulations respecting the circumstances under which students are suspended, how long the suspension lasts and other matters related to suspensions.
- Refer parents to appropriate outside agencies for assistance (such as The Manitoba Association of Parent Council's Advocacy Project).

Appendix 2: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

Article 24 - Education

This section of the Convention deals with the obligations that nations who have signed the convention have to their citizens. This convention in particular addresses those obligations that relate specifically to citizens with disabilities. Canada was a signatory to this convention in December 2006. "States Parties," refers to countries that have signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and life long learning directed to:
 - a. The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
 - b. The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
 - c. Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.

2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:
 - a. Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
 - b. Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
 - c. Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
 - d. Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
 - e. Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:
 - a. Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;
 - b. Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;

- c. Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deaf blind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.
4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.
5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

Appendix 3: Student-Specific Outcome Template and Some Suggested Language

Template: [Student] will [action] [what/how] [by what criteria] [where [by what date]

Examples of verbs that may be used in writing student-specific outcomes:

Verbal/Linguistic Verbs

Answer	Elaborate	Predict	Retell
Articulate	Enunciate	Present	Revise
Compose	Expand	Question	Specify
Convince	Express	Read	State
Create	Generalize	Recall	Suggest
Defend	Give	Recite	Summarize
Define	Introduce	Recognize	Teach
Describe	Listen	Repeat	Tell
Discuss	Memorize	Report	Translate
Display	Name	Respond	Write

Interpersonal Verbs

Articulate	Emphasize	Listen	Seek
Assign	Evaluate	Organize	Share
Compose	Explain	Plan	Show
Contribute	Identify	Play	Solve
Create	Interpret	Project	Teach
Demonstrate	Interview	Record	Translate
Educate	Instruct	Relate	Write

Intrapersonal Verbs

Advocate	Contribute	Imagine	Review
Analyze	Create	Interpret	Revise
Assess	Decide	Make	Select
Choose	Describe	Practise	Share
Communicate	Determine	Prepare	Show
Compare	Discriminate	Rank	Tell
Contrast	Evaluate	Rate	Track
Concentrate	Explain	Recognize	Use
Conclude	Explore	Report	Write

Logical/Mathematical Verbs

Analyze	Count	Extrapolate	Prove
Apply	Decide	Formulate	Puzzle
Arrange	Derive	Grasp	Rank
Breakdown	Determine	Hypothesize	Resolve
Calculate	Develop	Integrate	Select
Check	Differentiate	Interpret	Separate
Classify	Discriminate	Link	Sequence
Combine	Distinguish	Measure	Simplify
Compare	Estimate	Observe	Solve
Conclude	Evaluate	Order	Test
Contrast	Examine	Plot	Track
Convert	Exercise	Predict	Verify

Visual/Spatial Verbs

Build	Demonstrate	Illustrate	Produce
Cast	Design	Improve	Rearrange
Change	Draw	Invent	Recognize
Chart	Elaborate	Label	Render
Convert	Enlarge	Make	Reorder
Compose	Expand	Mark	Represent
Copy	Form	Model	Reproduce
Create	Graph	Organize	Show
Decorate	Identify	Outline	Transform

Body/Kinaesthetic Verbs

Apply	Design	Imitate	Operate
Arrange	Determine	Invent	Order
Blend	Develop	Investigate	Organize
Build	Discover	Jump	Pick
Choose	Divide	Leap	Plan
Classify	Examine	Make	Point
Combine	Exercise	Manipulate	Prepare
Complete	Experiment	Match	Present
Conduct	Find	Measure	Produce
Construct	Fold	Model	Put
Count	Form	Modify	Record
Demonstrate	Group	Move	Reorganize

Rotate	Show	Stretch	Uncover
Select	Sort	Touch	Underline
Separate	Spin	Trace	Use
Shake	Stand	Turn	Write

Musical/Rhythmic Verbs

Amplify	Create	Illustrate	Play
Arrange	Demonstrate	Interpret	Practice
Blend	Enhance	Listen	Present
Classify	Express	Make up	Produce
Compare	Harmonize	Modify	Sing
Contrast	Hear	Orchestrate	Stage
Compose	Hum	Perform	Train

Some Verbs to Avoid:

(these verbs are not specific enough to provide for SMART Student-specific outcomes, performance objectives or task analysis)

Acquire
Appreciate
Believe
Be aware of
Consider
Feel
Learn
Know
Remember
Think
Understand
Value

Appendix 4:

Inclusive Education Adaptation Checklist

This checklist provides you with a way to evaluate the needs of your child and how these needs may be effectively supported in school. It describes ways to adapt the time that may be needed for effective learning of new concepts, what the optimal classroom environment might be, how subject matter could be presented, testing adaptations, social interaction support, motivation and reinforcement. Keeping these things in mind when introducing your child to the school, when considering needed assessments for your child and when preparing for their individual education plan can result in a much more effective, supportive and inclusive experience for both you and your child.

Time Needs:

- extended time requirements
- vary activity often
- allow breaks
- omit assignments requiring copy in timed situations (e.g., "Mad Minute" math)
- use a home set of texts/materials for preview/review

Environment:

- preferential seating
- planned seating for bus, classroom, lunchroom, auditorium etc.
- alter physical layout of room
- define areas concretely
- reduce/minimize distractions (visual, auditory, spatial, movement)
- teach positive rules for use of space

Presentation of Subject Matter:

- teach to the student's learning style (e.g., linguistic, kinaesthetic logical/mathematical, etc).
- use specialized curriculum
- use teacher taped lectures or discussions for re-play
- provide notes
- show a functional application of academic skills
- present demonstrations (e.g., model)
- use manipulatives
- emphasize critical information
- pre-teach vocabulary
- make/use vocabulary files
- reduce language level or reading level of assignment
- use total communication
- use facilitated communication

Materials:

- pay attention to the arrangement of material on the page
- use taped tests and/or other class materials
- highlight text/study guides
- use supplementary materials
- offer note-taking assistance: with education aide's assistance or from a peer
- use typed teacher material
- use large print
- use special equipment (e.g., computer, calculator, auditory device, tape recorder, voice recognition system, keyboard, etc.)

Assignments:

- give directions in small, distinct steps (e.g., written/pictorial/verbal)
- use written back-up for oral directions
- lower difficulty
- shorten assignments
- reduce paper and pencil tasks
- give extra cues and prompts
- allow student to record or type assignments
- adapt worksheets, packets
- avoid penalizing student for spelling errors/poor penmanship

Self-Management:

- visual daily schedule
- calendars
- check often for understanding and review
- request parent reinforcement
- have student repeat directions
- teach study skills
- use study sheets to organize material
- design/write/use long-term assignment timelines
- review and practice real situations

Testing Adaptations:

- oral
- short answer
- taped
- multiple choice
- pictures
- read test to student
- preview language of test questions
- modify format
- shorten length
- extend time
- administer tests using alternate staff members (e.g., resource teacher etc.)

Social Interaction Support:

- use peer advocacy
- use peer tutoring
- structure activities to create opportunities for social interactions
- focus on social processes rather than end products
- structure shared experiences in school and extra-curricular activities
- use cooperative learning groups
- use multiple/rotating peers
- teach friendship skills like sharing/negotiation
- teach social communication skills (e.g., greetings, sharing, turn-taking, etc)

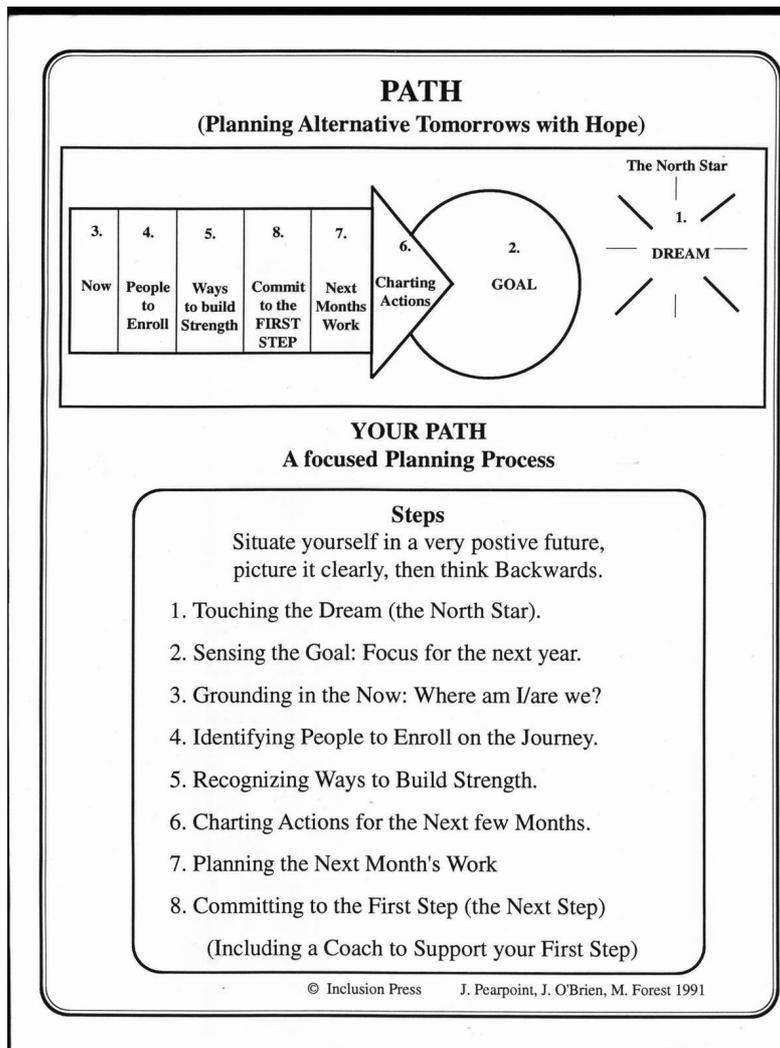
Motivation and Reinforcement:

- use verbal cues (e.g., "good job, Johnnie!")
- use non-verbal cues (e.g., a pat on the back)
- use positive reinforcement (e.g., a reward for positive results)
- use concrete reinforcement
- plan motivating sequences of activities (e.g., "First, you complete your math questions and then you go for recess.")
- reinforce initiation
- offer choice
- use strengths/interests

Appendix 5:

Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH)

Peter is a young man who has just turned 17 year of age. This PATH was done to aid in transition planning for Peter's IEP as he completes high school and looks towards entrance into a university program. The facilitators and Peter's guests worked with Peter to identify his strengths and his goals for the future. They then worked backwards to determine what the next steps would be for Peter to take in order to most effectively work towards his dream of independent life in the community, living in an apartment with his friends and family close by. What follows is the illustration of this process as created by the Graphic Recorder for the PATH process. There are many PATH facilitators available to help your child, your family, you or even an organization to which you belong develop a vision and determine pathways to realizing that vision within one, two, five or even ten years. Simply contact your local Association for Community Living, or school division office.



PETER'S P.A.T.H. TOMORROW'S

Alternative with Hope)

Present:

- Peter
- Michael - brother
- Gary Dr.
- Detr. Dad
- Anne - Mom
- Liz - Family friend
- Mary - Anne
- Shelly EA
- Jennifer - Resource
- Joyce - Spec. Ed. Dept. Head

Facilitators	ENROLL	STRONGER	FIRST STEPS	POSITIVE POSSIBLE
Sandy Hy	Peter Friends: PADDY ROY The list of people here at PATH	Communication Face Challenges (support him and work as a team) Maintaining Team Strength Maintain Respite Hours Maintain Support from Community Friends Dr. Shady	1. Refer to Alice by Fall '07 2. Start Sat. 24th sort, wash, dry, fold, put away 3. Registration cards Completed 4. Send home summer school application 5. March 5th start to make lunches every second day 6. April 1st learn/ start to use debit once a week in acct. at school. 7. April 1st start at school. 8. Carry wallet starting Feb. 19 9. By the end of June - Bus Schedule Problem Solving 10. What if situations after birthday 11. Meet May '07 12. Meet May '07 13. Meet May '07 14. Meet May '07 15. Meet May '07	1. Referral to Psy. for testing - SIBAR 2. Open to C.G.C. 3. Doing Laundry once a week 4. Graduate in June 2008 5. Take Consumer Math 40S (July 2007 Summer School) 6. Make lunch everyday the night before school. 7. Learning to use debit card (to purchase lunch at school cafeteria). 8. Learn to take bus to Polo Park and library - use Navigo to learn bus routes 9. Attending Support Groups 10. Fill out Applications for University 11. Look into/ Apply for scholarships 12. Contact Disability Support Group at U. of W. 13. Tour of University Campus. 14. Take books out independently from library. 15. Medication Review
Sheryl M. Shaw	It's going to work POSITIVE GOOD DETERMINE Exciting REALISTIC Honoured to be part of process Open Peter's Mind Peter has a vision LOOKS LIKE PLAN WILL WORK			

Facilitators

Sandy Hy

Sheryl M. Shaw

Taking Risks! Stepping Outside!

Summer Job at Library

Contradicting
Debit
University of Winnipeg
Ph.D. Environmental Studies *DETERMINED*
Research
Dwn Apartment
Bus or Bike Exercise to school
Work with Friends
Church Hide-A-Bed
Environmental Young Adults Committee
Video Mom
Grandparents
Write Novels
Computer, Keyboard
Cooking + Laundry in
PERSISTENT
CAUTIONAL
METHODOICAL
Europe
Costa Rica?

Living Skills:
\$ Banking
Paving Bills
Shopping - Groceries, Clothes, Etc.
Saving, Investments
Insurance Plan - Medications
St. Boniface - Tourettes Syndrome Service
Support Group Earn \$
Practitioner - New Directions?
Cleaning Person for some things