Cardiac Neurodevelopmental Outcome (CANDO) Program

How to Ask for Help If Your Child is Having Problems at School

Scheduling the meeting with the school team:

1. Write a letter to the principal and special education coordinator/chairperson of your child’s school. Ask for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. In an IEP meeting, you will discuss with the school staff the problems your child is experiencing in school and discuss how your child can be helped. (Keep a copy of the letter for your records.)
2. Contact the school if you have not received a meeting date within 10 days.
3. Keep a folder with all important documents.

During the meeting with the school team:

1. Describe your child’s strengths and the problems he or she is having in school.
2. Share your child’s schoolwork.
3. Share any correspondence with your child’s teacher(s) like phone calls or emails.
4. Tell the school team that your child has congenital heart disease (CHD), and possible problems with learning and attention. Provide copies of outside evaluations and reports.
5. Ask that your child be evaluated for special education services.
6. Ask that your child be given a 504 plan with accommodations while the evaluation is being done.

If the school will not evaluate your child or put 504 accommodations in place, contact the Parent Training Information Center or Parent Resource Center in your state.

A sample letter that can be given to your child’s school is found of page 2. Contact the Education Specialist, if further assistance is needed.

Wanda Rankin, M.Ed.
Education Specialist
Cardiac Neurodevelopment Outcome Program (CANDO) Program
Children’s National Health System
111 Michigan Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20010
(202) 476-5870
SAMPLE LETTER

Child Find Request Letter

Today’s Date
Your Name
Street Address

Dear Name of Principal/IEP Coordinator or Chairperson

I am the parent of ________________. ________________ is in the _____ grade in ________________’s class. My child has congenital heart disease, which confers an increased risk for neurodevelopmental problems, and has not been doing well in school. I believe (he/she) may need special education services. I am writing to formally request that ________________ be evaluated for special education services under the Child Find obligations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

I understand that a meeting will be scheduled to discuss my concerns. Please contact me, in writing, to let me know the time and date of the meeting. If you have any questions, please contact me at ________________.

Thank you very much for your help. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Your name