Cardiac Neurodevelopmental Outcome (CANDO) Program

General Information about Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

Laws are in place that guarantee a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for every child. Some children diagnosed with congenital heart disease (CHD) may have learning difficulties and need special education services. The IEP team, including the parent, conducts an initial evaluation. The team reviews existing information about a student to determine whether he or she has an educational disability requiring services. An IEP is created to set reasonable learning goals for a student based on their learning needs. It outlines the services and supports that the school district will provide through specialized instruction.

Steps for Receiving an IEP:

1. If you think an IEP is needed, contact your child’s teacher, special education coordinator/chairperson, or principal to ask that your child be evaluated for special education services. This request should be in writing, and a meeting must be scheduled within 30 days of receipt of the letter by the school.

2. Children’s National can conduct the neurodevelopmental assessments. Contact the neurodevelopmental psychologist, developmental psychologist, or education specialist for more information.

3. Your child will be tested in all areas related to the suspected disability. The evaluation results will be used to decide if your child is eligible. Parents have the right to request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) at no cost to you, if you disagree with an evaluation conducted by the school district. If the IEP team is not in agreement with your request to fund an IEE, you have the right to submit paperwork for a Due Process Hearing to challenge the decision. If you need guidance for this process, contact the education specialist.
4. If the student is found eligible, the team will meet to develop the IEP. Districts have varying guidelines that determine when this meeting must take place. Check with your school to ensure the testing and meetings are scheduled within an appropriate amount of time. The IEP will include the following:
   a. Present levels of academic achievement
   b. Measurable annual goals and objectives
   c. Special education and related services
   d. Placement of the services
   e. Information about how the school will measure the student’s progress

5. The team must track student progress related to IEP goals and objectives. Parents will receive quarterly progress reports. The IEP will be reviewed at least one time each year.

6. Transition services are a coordinated set of activities that will prepare children with disabilities for life after high school. This includes post-secondary outcomes, such as employment; post-secondary education; employment training; independent living; community participation; and/or adult services. Check with your school district to find out when the transition plan must be included in a child’s IEP.