

Lehman College
The City University of New York
Department of Counseling, Leadership, Literacy & Special Education

EDS 791

Lecture 2

The Structure and Nature of Special Education

I. Steps in the IEP Process

The overall purpose of the IEP process is to ensure every child with a disability receives an appropriate education.

Some students come to school already identified as having a disability. These children have received special education services during their early childhood years.

Referrals could have come from parents, a social service agency, public health nurses, day care professionals or a doctor.

Generally, these children have significant developmental issues (walking, talking, motoric, visual and learning). In some cases, these children are diagnosed at birth as having a serious genetic disorder that is or will be interfering with normal functioning.

Pre-school children in special education oftentimes, receive services from a multi-disciplinarian team (special education teacher, speech, OT, PT, psychological and medical)

Referrals to IEP process usually occurs in one of two ways.

1. Elementary schools have in place a multi-tiered response to instruction. The RTI approach. Explain the tier approach.
2. Pre-referral process can be initiated by parents, school personnel or outside professionals.

It's important to note that every student with a disability does not need special education services. Services are provided if your disability affects your educational performance.

7 steps of the IEP Process

Step 1 – Prereferral: Identifying and implementing a plan of action for the student's problem.

Step 2 -Referral: Deals with learning more about the student's problem. Can result from the child's case study review

Step 3 - Assessment: Testing to measure progress and to determine if a disability exists. Assessments are conducted by the multidisciplinary team

Step 4 - Eligibility: Determines whether a student qualifies for special education services. If student does qualify than an individualized educational plan (IEP) is developed.

Step 5 -Development of an IEP Plan: - The IEP plan is developed by the multidisciplinary team, it determines the resources needed for the student to access the general education curriculum, lists the goals and objectives for the student to achieve, and outlines the services and supports needed by the student.

Step 6 - IEP Implementation: The delivery of services. It spells out the appropriate instruction and accommodations needed for a student to be successful.

Since the IEP is a legal document it needs to be followed with great care. There can be serious consequences if the IEP is not followed by all staff members involved with the student.

Step 7- Evaluation & Review: In most states the IEP is reviewed annually to determine if the student is meeting the educational goals required for academic success and to determine next year's special education placement.

An IEP can be reviewed at any point in time if the teacher or parent feels that the present IEP goals and objectives or services are not meeting the child's IEP needs. Needed to make minor changes as well. Ex. Change service from 45 to 60 minutes

A comprehensive triennial evaluation is conducted every 3 years to determine the extent of academic, social, or behavioral progress and to determine if the student still requires special education services.

II. FAPE, LRE, and Inclusive Education

Two important concepts that are the foundations for an inclusive education are free appropriate public education (FAPE) and least restrictive environment (LRE)

Inclusive education is the balance of what services should be provided within the general education classroom and what services should be provided in a more specialized educational setting.

This is not always easily agreed upon by the multidisciplinary team.

Inclusive education – yea or nay is oftentimes a passionate and strongly opinionated topic outside the general classroom.

Important Concerns Related to these Discussions:

1. Full-time vs. Part-time Inclusion
2. Related Services Programing in a general education classroom vs. a specialized setting.
3. Who should work with child? Classroom teacher or Specialist
4. Who should be Responsible for Child's Academic Progress? Classroom teacher or Specialists
5. What's the role of time (minutes in the day) in Collaborating and Consulting
6. What role should Co-teachers have? Each teacher works with entire class vs. special education teacher works with special education student

III. Administering Special Services

1. General Education Teacher
2. Special Education Teacher
3. Paraprofessional or Teaching Aides

Related Services

1. Speech & Language Therapists
2. Occupational Therapists
3. Physical Therapists
4. Counselors & Psychologists
5. School Nurse
6. Teaching Aide
7. Medical Services when necessary (medication, epi-pen, medical equipment, etc.

All related services are provided free of charge to the child. (FAPE)

IV. Special Settings

1. Regular class
2. Resource Room
3. Separate Class
4. Separate Public School within the District – BOCES/ Vocational Training
5. Separate Public School outside the District
6. Private Day School – in or outside the state - Transportation is provided
7. Residential School within the State
8. Residential School outside the State
9. Hospital Setting

V. Types of Settings within the school

1. Self- contained setting (Special Class)
2. Pull out program - Individual or small groups of children Ex. Resource room

Question - What happens when parents don't approve of the special education placement?

Due Process Rights:

Confidentiality: School Records – Who can see them?

VII. Individualized Family Service plans (IFSP's) & IEP's

The IFSP guarantees FAPE to infants & toddlers ages birth to 2. This service targets the entire family and provides an educational plan within the natural environment of the family (Home).

Individual Family Service Plans are written documents to ensure special services are delivered to infants, toddlers and their families. They are similar to IEP's

Service Managers provide oversight and coordination of all the services to be delivered.

Key Components of IFSPs:

1. Child's current functioning levels (physical development, cognitive development, speech & language development, psychosocial development and self-help skills.
2. List of the family's strengths and needs regarding the child.
3. List the major outcomes expected in terms of the services delivered. The evaluation criteria to be used and a timeline for expected improvement.
4. Services necessary and a schedule for their delivery.
5. Projected dates for initiation of services.
6. Name of service coordinator and service providers.
7. Bi-annual evaluation – every 6 months.
8. Methods for transitioning child to services available from 3-5.

Differences between IFSPs & IEPs

1. Who are the service targets - Infants & toddlers & their families vs. Preschoolers & student's with disabilities.
2. Place for Services – Natural environment vs. school
3. Costs to Families – Some services may be charged to families on a sliding scale according to income vs. no cost to families.
4. Lead Agency – State designates vs. child's home school

VII. Basic elements that every individualized program must contain (IEP & IFSP)

Review charts on pages 27 and 29 "Information Required in IFSPs and IEPs"

VIII. Additional Plans for Behavior and Transitions

1. FBA
2. School suspensions

Discuss Transitional Plans

1. 1.Pre-k to K
2. 2.College & work prep after 12th grade