



Source: Sheila Hunsaker on CEC listserv

Here is an example protocol of a 1:1 needs assessment checklist that can guide decision-making for IEP teams:

Safety Concerns:

- a. Requires constant and vigilant supervision due to a limited understanding of danger.
- b. Engages in self-harming behaviors or poses a risk to others through aggression or physical outbursts.
- c. Demonstrates elopement behaviors, leaving the classroom or school premises without permission.
- d. Lacks awareness of environmental hazards, such as running into traffic, misusing equipment, or unsafe interactions with peers.

2. Intensive Medical Needs:

- a. Needs continuous monitoring for severe medical conditions (e.g., seizures, diabetes) requiring immediate intervention.
- b. Requires assistance with medical equipment, such as feeding tubes, oxygen tanks, or mobility aids.
- c. Needs support for personal care tasks like toileting, feeding, or hygiene due to physical limitations.

3. Profound Cognitive or Physical Disabilities

- a. Requires full assistance with daily living skills, including dressing, toileting, and feeding.
- b. Needs support with mobility throughout the school, such as navigating with a wheelchair, walker, or other assistive devices.
- c. Struggles with understanding and following even basic instructions without individualized guidance.

4. Severe Communication Barriers

- a. Is nonverbal or has limited expressive/receptive language skills, requiring constant support to communicate needs and participate in class.
- b. Depends on augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices and needs assistance using them effectively.
- c. Has difficulty understanding verbal instructions, requiring frequent repetition, visual supports, or sign language interpretation.

## 5. Extreme Behavioral or Emotional Needs

- a. Experiences frequent emotional outbursts, anxiety, or aggression that disrupt the learning environment and require immediate intervention.
- b. Demonstrates persistent elopement or flight risk behaviors, even without aggression, necessitating constant supervision
- c. Struggles to regulate emotions or behavior despite behavioral intervention plans, requiring individualized support throughout the day.

## 6. Overwhelming Sensory Processing Issue

- a. Experiences significant sensory sensitivities that interfere with participation in classroom activities without individualized support.
- b. Requires assistance implementing sensory regulation strategies to manage overstimulation or sensory-seeking behaviors.
- c. Needs help navigating different environments (e.g., noisy cafeterias, busy hallways) due to sensory processing

It is important to remind parents and staff that 1:1 support can work against the students LRE as it:

### 1. Promotes Dependence:

Constant adult presence might limit opportunities for the child to develop independence, problem-solving, and self-advocacy skills. The student may begin to rely on the aide rather than learning to manage tasks on their own.

### 2. Social Isolation:

A 1:1 aide can unintentionally create a barrier between the student and their peers. Peers might interact with the aide instead of the student, or the student might be pulled out of group activities more frequently.

### 3. Stigma and Self-Esteem Issues:

Being the only student with an adult shadow can make the student feel singled out, potentially impacting self-esteem or leading to stigmatization by peers.

### 4. Interference with Natural Learning:

The aide might over-assist, unintentionally limiting the student's natural engagement with teachers, peers, and the learning environment.

### 5. Restrictive in Nature:

Since LRE emphasizes educating students alongside their non-disabled peers, 1:1 aide (when not carefully managed) can create an environment more restrictive than necessary if other supports could suffice (e.g., small group instruction, peer supports).

\*\* Note to teams: it is important to rotate aides and support between staff members, so the student does not become reliant on one person, which can be detrimental if the staff member is no longer able to provide the support (e.g., relocates, retires or moves positions, position dissolves, etc).

-----  
Sheila Hunsaker