Making Informed Decisions:
A Checklist for Families

Use this checklist when considering a new educational program, intervention, therapy, or recommendation. For each question, select Yes, No, or Need More Information. Your responses can help identify what you know and what you may want to ask or discuss before making a decision.

Questions to Consider	Yes	No	Need More Information
Is the person or organization providing the information qualified to make this recommendation?			
Is the approach supported by credible research beyond testimonials or individual success stories?			
Does the evidence apply to children with needs similar to my child and to the setting where the approach will be used?			
Are claims supported by credible evidence beyond information from those promoting or selling the approach?			
Does the approach address my child's strengths, needs, and priorities?			
Are the goals meaningful for my child and family?			
Does the approach respect my child's communication, preferences, autonomy, and individual differences?			
Is the approach realistic for our family in terms of time, cost, and other commitments?			
Have possible risks or negative effects been considered?			
Do the likely benefits outweigh the potential risks and demands?			
Do we know how progress will be measured and reviewed, including what will happen if the approach is not helping?			
Do I understand what will be expected of me, what support is available, and how this approach will fit with other supports and activities?			

What Do Your Answers Tell You?

Look at your responses as a whole. A "No" or "Need More Information" answer does not necessarily mean an approach is inappropriate or ineffective. It may indicate that you need to ask more questions, gather additional information, or discuss concerns before making a decision.

Pay particular attention to questions about the evidence supporting the approach, whether it is a good fit for your child and family, and how you will know whether it is helping.

Next Steps

Use your responses to guide conversations with your child's school team, providers, or other trusted professionals. Ask for more information, discuss concerns, and consider your options. The goal is to understand what is being recommended, why it is being recommended, and whether it makes sense for your child and family.