

Individualised Education Plans (IEPs)

It is important that educational institutions have tools in place to assure equity and inclusion for students with complex learning needs, including those with ADHD. One of the practical steps that can be taken to achieve this goal is the application of an Individualised Education Plan (IEP) for students in need.

What is an IEP?

An IEP is a written document outlining reasonable adjustments and extra support provided to students with disabilities or learning needs that differ significantly from that of the rest of their class (ITAC, n.d). IEPs are an important component of managing ADHD in children (CAHDS, 2022). The writing of a formal IEP is essential for any student who is being provided with significant adjustments to their education experience (DDWA Team, 2022). The purpose of this document is to give a clear picture of what the school is/should be doing to help your child and ensure that the school is meeting legal requirements of disability accommodation under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education (All Means All, n.d) .

What Can You Expect from an IEP?

An IEP will include strategies for helping your child academically but may also address social/behavioural strategies and goals (Logsdon, 2022) .

Every child with ADHD will have different strengths and limitations, but an IEP for a child with ADHD may include extra time on tests, immediate reinforcement and feedback, and individual instructions (CDC, n.d). Methods of introducing individual instructions and feedback may include things like computer-assisted instruction and peer tutoring (Pariseau, 2011).

The creation of an IEP involves meeting with your child's teachers to negotiate potential accommodations and agree on the contents of their IEP. Many different people may be able to help provide information about your child that is useful for an IEP development meeting.

Sources of information about a child's needs and what can be done to fulfill their needs include the following:



Friends and Family

- Child's Parents
- Child's siblings
- Child's friends



Educators

- Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- School Principal



Health Professionals

- Psychologist
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational Therapist

The Role of Parents

Parents/carers have an essential role to play in the planning of an IEP and schools are required to consult with parents when writing an IEP (DDWA Team, 2022).

The process that a parent should take when attempting to get an IEP in place for their child can be summarised as follows:



HAVE CLEAR GOALS

- It's important to know what outcomes you hope for and expect for your child
- Consider how your vision for your child might relate to a potential IEP



PLAN FOR THE MEETING

- Talk to your child about their experiences and concerns around their schooling.
- Consult with those who can help you build your case.
- Ask whether you may obtain a draft of the IEP.



ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD AT THE MEETING

- You can bring along a partner or another person if this makes you more comfortable.
- If your child is present at the meeting, help them to be understood and listened to.



MONITOR AND UPDATE

- An IEP should be updated every six months or so (Alkahtani & Kheirallah, 2016).
- If the goals of the IEP have been achieved it may be time to develop new goals.

References

Alkahtani, M. A., & Kheirallah, S. A. (2016). Background of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) policy in some countries: A review (**). *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(24), 15-26.

All Means All. (n.d.). *Your child's IEP – Guide for families on personalised plans for learning and support*.

All Means All - Australian Alliance for Inclusive Education. <https://allmeansall.org.au/iep-guide/>

CDC. (n.d.). *ADHD in the Classroom: Helping Children Succeed in School*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (.gov). <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/school-success.html>

Complex Attention and Hyperactivity Disorders Service (CAHDS). (2022). *Is ADHD Complex?* 8. Government of Western Australia.

<https://cahs.health.wa.gov.au/~media/HSPs/CAHS/Documents/Mental-Health/Is-ADHD-Complex.pdf>

DDWA Team. (2022, May 11). *What are individualised planning- curriculum adjustments?* Developmental Disability WA - DDWA. <https://ddwa.org.au/what-are-individualised-planning-curriculum-adjustments/>

ITAC. (n.d.). *Individual education plans (IEPs)*. Institute of Teacher Aide Courses ITAC.

<https://www.itac.edu.au/resources/individual-education-plan>

Logsdon, A. (2022, April 11). *8 basic components of an Individualized Education Program*. Verywell Family.

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/essential-parts-of-an-individual-education-program-2162702>

Pariseau, M. E. (2011). *Individualized education programs for students with ADHD: Analysis of special education services provided and cost of intervention* [Doctoral dissertation]. State University of New York.