

G: Parent Advocacy Checklist – Getting Ready for a Meeting

Be Informed About What You Need to Know and Share

1. Describe Your child's Special Needs (Diagnosis, Exceptionality)
 - If there is a diagnosis, understand it and describe it?
 - What are your child's specific problems?
 - Are there functional problems as well as academic problems?
 - What areas are affected by these difficulties?
2. Describe Your child's strengths
 - Academic strengths
 - Social strengths
 - Personality strengths
 - Talents
 - Character strengths
3. Describe Your child's learning needs
 - Academic Social skills
 - Self-esteem
 - Self-advocacy
 - Emotional
 - Behavioural
4. Describe your child's learning style
 - Teaching strategies
 - Coping strategies
 - Technology that works for your child
 - Behavioural strategies
5. Understand the School Process and how it is organized
 - Teacher / parent observations
 - Team meetings
 - Testing
 - Informal tracking and observations
 - Program Development Team
 - School Supports
 - Individual Education Plan (IEP)
 - Accommodations or Modifications
 - Psychological assessments
 - Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)
 - Review of IEP and report cards

- Transition Plans - into school, between schools, and upon leaving school
- Your rights and the rights of your child
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
- Community Agencies and Parent Associations

6. Arranging meetings

- Telephone – document call
- Note – follow up in writing/by email
- Send meeting correspondence to the principal
- State the purpose of the meeting
- Note the wording
- Work with the school to set dates and times
- Prepare your questions before the meeting
- Take an advocate
- Take notes during the meeting
- Advocate politely and positively for your child's needs

Source: Adapted from the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO), London Region