

7 Tips for Developing a Good 504 Plan

1. **Be proactive about being part of the process.**
Right from the start let the school know you want to attend your child's 504 plan meetings. Approach this with a spirit of teamwork. Share your ideas and insights about how your child learns best. Tell them what approaches and informal supports have helped in the past. Be sure to highlight your child's strengths. You may not be an expert in education, but you are an expert about your child.
2. **Make sure the plan is personalized to your child.**
Some schools try to standardize 504 plans for all students, with a certain disability, such as ADHD. However, different children—even if they fall under the same category of disability—can have different weaknesses and strengths. Push for accommodations and modifications tailored to your child's unique needs.
3. **Cover all areas where your child needs support.**
Discuss all the school settings and situations where your child needs support. Daily classroom work might be a given. But what about support during physical education class? Even school field trips may be challenging. Be thorough, and ask the team to consider covering all of the bases.
4. **Describe each service in specific terms.**
Vague descriptions aren't useful when listing your child's accommodations, modifications, services, and supports. If the plan provides for assistive technology, state the technology and name when your child will use it.
5. **Be sure the plan names personnel.**
Make sure your child's 504 plan lists the type of personnel responsible for providing each accommodation, modification and service. Assigning responsibilities makes it clear who's accountable for what. Any time you think the plan isn't being followed, you'll know which personnel to refer to when you contact the team.
6. **Check in with your child and teachers**
From time to time talk to your child and your child's teachers to see how the plan is working. Is sitting in the front of the room helpful for him? Or does she find it distracting because she's next to the door and sees people walking down the hallway? Ask specific questions about the plan to help you and the school figure out the best ways to help.
7. **Review and update the 504 plan**

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The 504 committee should review your child's 504 plan at least once a year. This is the opportunity to ensure the plan meets the demand of your child's new school year. It is important that the plan reflects current challenges and specific support he needs. Don't hesitate to ask the school about the annual meeting if officials don't contact you first.