



## Children with Special Health Care Needs

### IHP

The individual health plan (IHP), sometimes called an individual health care plan or IHCP, is for a child with a health care need at school. It is developed by the school nurse, parent, and student's doctor. It defines what procedures and medications will be administered and under what conditions and outlines clearly what signs and symptoms a child may exhibit and what those mean.

### 504

The 504 Plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment. There are subtle but important differences.

- Not all students who have disabilities require specialized instruction. For students with disabilities who do require specialized instruction, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) controls the procedural requirements, and an IEP is developed. The IDEA process is more involved than that of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and requires documentation of measurable growth.
- For students with disabilities who do not require specialized instruction but need the assurance that they will receive equal access to public education and services, a document is created to outline their specific accessibility requirements. Students with 504 Plans do not require specialized instruction, but, like the IEP, a 504 Plan should be updated annually to ensure that the student is receiving the most effective accommodations for his/her specific circumstances.

#### Important definitions

**Children with Disabilities:** Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

**Disability:** A legal term and conclusion made by the 504 team, based on how the child is currently functioning.

**Impairment:** A medical or behavioral health, or educational diagnosis.

Parent and Educator Resource Guide to Section 504 in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools:  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/504-resource-guide-201612.pdf>



## IEP

The Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is a plan or program developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives specialized instruction and related services.

IEP Process Guide: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/proguide.pdf>

## Laws

### Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Section 504

- Federal civil rights legislation
- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities, public and private, that receive federal financial assistance
- Provides for **equal opportunity and access**
- Enforced by the **U.S. Office of Civil Rights**

### Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of (IDEA) 1990

- Federal education legislation
- Previously known as Education for all Handicapped Children Act (1975); reauthorized in 2004 – **Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act**
- Federal financial assistance to state/local education agencies guarantees special education/related services to eligible children with disabilities
- Provides an **educational benefit – same opportunity for education as students without a disability**
- Enforced by the **U.S. Office of Special Education Programs**

### Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

- Federal civil rights legislation
- Prohibits discrimination solely on the basis of disability in employment, public services, and accommodations.
- Provides for **equal opportunity and access**
- Enforced by the **U. S. Office for Civil Rights** under an agreement with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

## Services:

If you have students with complex health needs, the following resources are available to provide assistance and training:

### Massachusetts Technology Assistance Resource Team (MASSTART)

A free program providing services for children with special health care needs and who may be assisted by medical technology in the school setting.

<https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-technology-assistance-resource-team-masstart>



### Pediatric Palliative Care Network (PPCN)

A free program that serves the unmet physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of eligible children in Massachusetts and their families. Services are provided at no cost to children 18 years old and younger who have a life-limiting illness.

<https://www.mass.gov/pediatric-palliative-care-network-ppcn>

### Other Resources

Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Innovation and Improvement Center

<https://emscimprovement.center/>

Florida Department of Education. (2012). Individual Health Care Plans and Section 504. Available at:

[http://sss.usf.edu/resources/format/pdf/Individual\\_Health\\_Care\\_Plans\\_Section\\_504\\_final.pdf](http://sss.usf.edu/resources/format/pdf/Individual_Health_Care_Plans_Section_504_final.pdf)

NASN (January 2015). Individual Health Care Plans: The Role of the School Nurse Position Statement. Available at

[https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/UploadedImages/04a7992c-d12a-4648-8fee-8a48cca734fc/Position\\_Statements/2015psihp.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/UploadedImages/04a7992c-d12a-4648-8fee-8a48cca734fc/Position_Statements/2015psihp.pdf)

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US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. (December 2016). *Parent and Educator Resource Guide to Section 504 in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools.* Available at:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/504-resource-guide-201612.pdf>

Will, S.S. (Editor), Arnold, M.J. (Editor), Zaiger, D.S., (Editor). (2017) *Individualized Health Care Plans for the School Nurse, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* Sunrise River Press