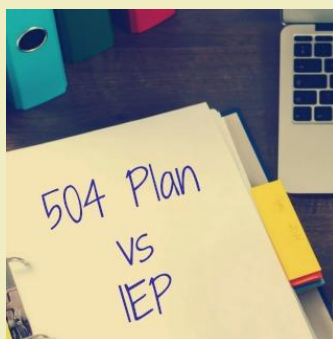




Tips for a Healthy Family 504 Plans vs IEP

September 15, 2017



School is back in session, and students and families are excited for a great year. For children with special health care needs, both IEP and 504 plans can help them be successful in school. There are many similarities between the two plans, but both offer unique accommodations and supports for students. Understanding the difference can be helpful for families looking for assistance.

An IEP is a plan of action and response for a child's special education needs in school. The plan provides for services to the student based on his or her unique needs. To qualify for an IEP, a student must have at least one of the [13 specific disabilities](#) listed in the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#). This disability must also affect the child's ability to learn from the school's general education curriculum. An IEP also requires that a team be created that includes a parent or guardian, a general educator, a special educator, a person who can interpret the evaluation, and a building representative. Based on the IEP plan, a child's progress and goals are tracked each year. The IEP can change as the child's needs change from year to year.

A [504 plan](#) is also a plan of action for students to gain access to

learning at school. It provides for technology or other supports to allow a child with any disability to access materials and tools to improve performance. It is based on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It has a wider definition of what is a disability than the IEP, so a child who doesn't qualify for an IEP could still receive services through the 504 plan.

The [Wyoming Department of Education](#) has more information on special education services in the state. They have forms to download and a manual on accommodations. The website [Understood.org](#) provides a detailed comparison of both programs. Contact the Wyoming Department of Education if you have additional questions.

For more information, check out our website at <http://www.uwyo.edu/wind/f2f> or follow us on Twitter [@WYF2F](#).

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