

# WHAT ROLE DO I PLAY AS A PARENT/CAREGIVER IN THE PROCESS OF INDIVIDUALISED PLANNING IN SCHOOLS

For almost 20 years in South Australia, schools have been implementing individualised education planning for students with disabilities.

Following the 2005 Disability Standards for Education, all schooling authorities are aware of their responsibility to provide “equality before the law in the area of education” for students with disabilities.

Parents and Caregivers have a right to be involved in the negotiation of learning and education plans. You can request a meeting with the school about your child’s learning progress or any other concerns you may have and invite an Advocate.

All Individual Learning Plans / Positive Behaviour Plans / Negotiated Education Plans have the same intent: To facilitate the best possible social inclusion and curriculum access for Students with Disabilities.

Usually when negotiating an individual plan for a student with a disability there is a focus on strengths, learning social needs, an emotional focus and opportunity for parent comment. Goal setting keeps the focus on reasonable expectations related to student progress. A review date is usually set and the Principal and parent/caregiver sign the document. The document becomes the record of agreement to adjustments the school will make for inclusive learning opportunities for your child.

## THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES MAY BE INCLUDED IN AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN:

- Check for understanding of spoken language; allow for language processing time
- Use Visual Schedules
- Use Reinforcers and Reward systems to modify behaviour and learning habits
- Use a positive behaviour approach; look for what the behaviour is communicating
- Avoid confrontation with the student; note that their thinking patterns are different
- Prepare the student for any transitions or changes
- Schedule breaks in the learning task or after it to support students to self-regulate
- Provide the student with a safe place to go for learning social interactions

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# WORKING THROUGH THE 'SCHOOLING' MAZE

## FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS OF STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Developed and produced by the School Inclusion Program  
in collaboration with Family and Community Services



In 1992 the Australian Disability Discrimination Act was made law and in 2005 the Australian Disability Standards for Education were guaranteed in every jurisdiction within our country.

These legal procedures guarantee your child's right to an education "on the same basis" as a child without a disability. As the parent of a student with a disability, you are the first and most important advocate for your child. We encourage you to discuss with schools any concerns about your child's education. This brochure has been developed to assist in the successful inclusion and education of your child.

## CHOOSING A SCHOOL FOR MY CHILD WITH ASD - WHERE DO I START?

- Determine what works for your child and you
- Consider all your local schools —public, independent, Catholic and gather the written information they provide
- Visit the schools— make an appointment with the Principal; talk about the specific needs of your child
- Talk with an Autism SA School Inclusion Consultant, a Disability Coordinator (DECD regional offices), and personnel from the independent and Catholic educator sectors
- Read the local papers
- Trust your judgement
- Whichever school you choose, remember the decision is not set in concrete. Changes can be made down the track if your child's needs change.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Autism SA School Inclusion Program works across all education sectors. We are unable to recommend specific schools. However our list of frequently asked questions, may guide you in your choice.

## POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO USE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH SCHOOLS R-12

- What are the values lived out in your school culture?
- How confident are you in your students' attitudes towards and your staff's ability to cater for diversity and difference?
- What opportunities can you provide for our son/daughter to have a place where they can go to "calm down", "stay calm", reduce anxiety?
- How open would your school be to allowing our son/ daughter to use break cards when he/she recognises the stress/anxiety level is increasing rapidly?
- What does your school provide in the way of mentoring by an older responsible student or a significant adult?
- How could you accommodate our son/daughter's sensory needs when moving between classes in crowded corridors?
- What is your school's policy and processes for behaviour management?
- What is your school's policy on bullying and harassment?
- How open would your teachers be to: including visual schedules for our son/daughter? Or to modify their curriculum expectations?

## USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

<b>CEO</b>	Catholic Education Office	Ph: 8301 6600
<b>AISSA</b>	Association of Independent Schools	Ph: 8179 1400
<b>DECD</b>	Department of Education and Child Development	Ph: 8226 1000 or 1800 088 158
	<a href="http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced">www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced</a>	
	DECD Education Complaint Line	1800 222 696

## EDUCATIONAL TERMINOLOGY

<b>NEP</b>	Negotiated Education Plan
<b>NIT</b>	Non-Instructional Time
<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan
<b>SSO</b>	School Services Officer
<b>PBS</b>	Positive Behaviour Support
<b>ESO</b>	Education Support Officer
<b>IBS</b>	Interagency Behaviour Support