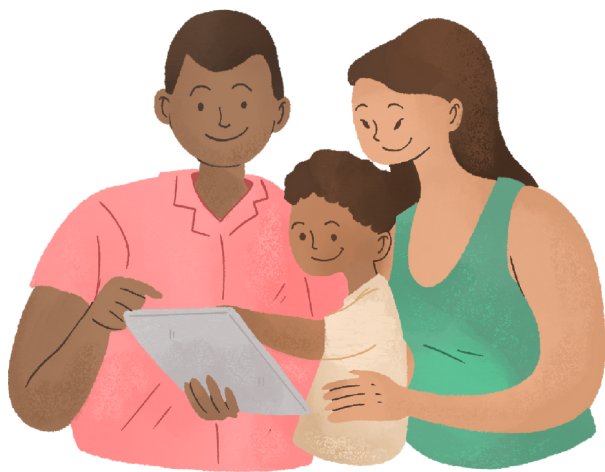


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Parents & Guardians

BEST ADVOCATES FOR THEIR CHILDREN



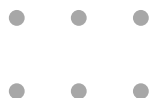
DR. LINDA T. JOHNSON

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Chapter 1:

Learn Everything Possible

*"The journey of raising a child with special needs is a winding one, but it is made easier when you are armed with knowledge."
-Temple Grandin-*

Learn everything possible regarding your child's disability. When you learn about your child's disability, you gain a better understanding of how it affects them. This knowledge can help you to identify the specific challenges they face and the strategies that can help them to overcome those challenges. For example, if your child has a learning disability, you will learn about the different types of learning disabilities and how they can affect a child's academic performance. This knowledge will help you to identify the specific areas where your child needs help and to find the resources that can provide that help.

In addition to understanding your child's needs, learning about their disability can also help you to advocate for their rights. As a parent, you have the right to ensure that your child receives the appropriate services and support. By learning about your child's disability, you will be better equipped to advocate for their needs and to ensure that they receive the services they are entitled to.




Here are some specific benefits of learning everything possible regarding your child's disability:

- You will be better able to understand your child's strengths and weaknesses.
- You will be better able to identify the resources that can help your child.
- You will be better able to advocate for your child's rights.
- You will be less likely to feel overwhelmed or helpless.
- You will be more likely to feel confident in your ability to help your child.

If you are the parent of a child with a disability, I encourage you to learn everything possible about their disability. This knowledge will be invaluable to you as you help your child to reach their full potential.

Here are some resources that can help you learn more about your child's disability:

- Your child's doctor or other healthcare provider
- Your child's school or educational team
- Local disability organizations
- Online resources, such as the websites of the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) and the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)



Chapter 2: Children's Learning Styles and Behaviors

"The more you observe your child's learning styles, the more you will be able to tailor your teaching to their individual needs."

-Dr. Mel Levine-

Be familiar with your child's learning styles and observe these behaviors in everyday activities. The importance of being familiar with your child's learning styles and observing these behaviors in everyday activities is that it can help you:

- Choose the right learning activities for your child. When you know how your child learns best, you can choose activities that will be most effective for them. For example, if your child is a visual learner, you might give them opportunities to draw, paint, or use manipulatives. If your child is an auditory learner, you might read aloud to them, have them listen to podcasts, or sing songs.
- Help your child overcome challenges. If your child is struggling with a particular subject, you can use their learning style to help them learn more effectively. For example, if your child is a kinesthetic learner, you might have them act out what they are learning or build a model.

- Make learning more enjoyable. When children learn in a way that is compatible with their learning style, they are more likely to enjoy the learning process. This can lead to increased motivation and better academic achievement.

Here are some specific things you can do to observe your child's learning styles in everyday activities:


- Pay attention to how they interact with the world around them. Do they prefer to look at things, listen to things, or do things?
- Notice how they solve problems. Do they think in pictures, words, or actions?
- Ask them how they learn best. What are their favorite ways to learn new things?
- Look for patterns in their behavior. Do they seem to learn better in certain settings or with certain types of activities?
- Once you have a better understanding of your child's learning styles, you can start to tailor their learning experiences accordingly. This will help them reach their full potential and succeed in school and in life.

Here are some additional tips for helping your child learn in a way that is compatible with their learning style:

- Provide a variety of learning activities. This will give your child the opportunity to learn in different ways and find the ones that work best for them.
- Be patient and understanding. Everyone learns at their own pace, so don't get discouraged if your child doesn't seem to be learning as quickly as you would like.

- Make learning fun. If your child is enjoying the learning process, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated.
- Encourage your child to ask questions. This is a great way for them to learn and clarify anything they don't understand.

By following these tips, you can help your child learn in a way that is both effective and enjoyable.



Chapter 3: Correspond With the People Around Your Child

"The best way to help your child succeed in school is to be an active partner with their teachers. This means communicating regularly, asking questions, and providing support."

-Jane Nelsen-

Correspond with your child's teachers and other school personnel when needed. The importance of corresponding with your child's teachers and other school personnel when needed cannot be overstated. Effective communication between parents and teachers is essential for a child's academic success. When parents and teachers work together, they can:

- Better understand the child's individual learning needs. Teachers can share their observations about the child's progress in the classroom, and parents can share their insights into the child's learning at home. This information can help both parties to identify any areas where the child may need additional support.
- Develop a shared plan for the child's education. By working together, parents and teachers can create a plan that outlines the child's goals for the year, as well as the strategies that will be used to help the child achieve those goals.

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- Resolve any problems that may arise. If the child is struggling in school, or if there are any other issues that need to be addressed, parents and teachers can work together to find solutions. This can help to ensure that the child receives the support they need to overcome any challenges they may be facing.

In addition to the benefits listed above, corresponding with your child's teachers and other school personnel can also help to:


- Build a strong relationship with the school. When parents are involved in their child's education, they are more likely to feel comfortable communicating with the school. This can help to create a positive and supportive environment for the child.
- Feel more confident about your child's education. When parents are informed about their child's progress in school, they are more likely to feel confident about their child's education. This can help to reduce stress and anxiety, and it can also help parents to be more supportive of their child's learning.
- If you are concerned about your child's education, or if you simply want to be more involved in your child's school life, don't hesitate to reach out to your child's teachers and other school personnel. They are there to help you, and they want to see your child succeed.

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Here are some tips for corresponding with your child's teachers and other school personnel:

- Be proactive. Don't wait for problems to arise before you reach out to the school. Set up regular check-ins with your child's teachers to discuss their progress.
- Be clear and concise. When you do communicate with the school, be sure to be clear about your concerns and your questions. The more specific you can be, the easier it will be for the school to address your concerns.
- Be respectful. Remember that the people you are communicating with are professionals who are dedicated to helping your child succeed. Treat them with respect, even if you are not happy with their response.
- Be persistent. If you don't get the answers you are looking for the first time, don't give up. Keep reaching out to the school until you feel like your concerns have been addressed.

Communicating with your child's teachers and other school personnel is an important part of being an involved parent. By following these tips, you can ensure that your child receives the best possible education.



Chapter 4: Keep Copies for Future Reference

"The best way to prepare for the future is to create it."

-Alan Kay-

Keep copies of all communication for future reference. Keeping copies of all communication is important for a number of reasons, including:

- To protect yourself in case of a dispute. If you ever have a disagreement with someone, having copies of your communications can help you prove your case. This is especially important in legal disputes, but it can also be helpful in other situations, such as when you are trying to get a refund or when you are trying to resolve a problem with a service provider.
- To track your progress. If you are working on a project or if you are trying to achieve a goal, keeping copies of your communications can help you track your progress. This can be helpful for staying motivated and for making sure that you are on track.
- To provide documentation for future reference. Sometimes, you may need to refer back to old communications for information. For example, you may need to know what was agreed upon in a meeting or what the terms of a contract were.

Here are some tips for keeping copies of all communication:

- Save all electronic communications. This includes emails, text messages, and social media messages.
- Print out important hard-copy communications. This includes letters, contracts, and invoices.
- Organize your communications in a way that makes sense for you. You may want to create a filing system or use a cloud-based storage service.
- Label your communications clearly. This will help you find them easily when you need them.
- Keep your communications for the appropriate amount of time. The length of time you need to keep your communications will vary depending on the type of communication and the purpose for which you are keeping it.


Keeping copies of all communication is a simple but important way to protect yourself and to keep track of your progress. By following these tips, you can ensure that you have the information you need when you need it.

Here are some additional reasons why keeping copies of all communication is important:

- To comply with legal requirements. Some industries, such as healthcare and financial services, have strict regulations that require businesses to keep certain records. Keeping copies of all communication can help businesses ensure that they are in compliance with these regulations.

- To protect your privacy. In some cases, you may need to keep copies of communications for your own privacy protection. For example, if you are receiving unwanted or harassing communications, you may want to keep copies of them as evidence.
- To document your work. If you are a freelancer or contractor, keeping copies of your communications can help you document your work and track your hours. This can be helpful if you are ever disputing payment or if you need to prove that you completed a project on time.

Overall, keeping copies of all communication is a good practice that can benefit you in many ways. It is a simple way to protect yourself, track your progress, and document your work.



Chapter 5: Keep Records of Your Children's Education

"The best way to advocate for your child's education is to be informed. This means keeping records of their progress and being familiar with their Individualized Education Plan (IEP)."

-The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)-

Keep records of your child's education, to include any testing and IEP reports. Keeping records of your child's education is important for a number of reasons, including:

- To track your child's progress over time. This can help you identify any areas where your child may need additional support, and it can also help you celebrate your child's successes.
- To provide documentation for your child's needs. If your child has any special needs, such as a learning disability or an emotional disorder, keeping records of their education can help you advocate for the services they need.
- To communicate with the school. If you have any concerns about your child's education, having records of their progress can help you communicate effectively with the school.

- To protect your child's rights. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees that all children with disabilities have the right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Keeping records of your child's education can help you ensure that they are receiving the FAPE they are entitled to.

Specifically, keeping records of your child's testing and IEP reports is important because these documents can provide valuable information about your child's learning strengths and weaknesses, as well as their individual needs. This information can be used to develop an effective educational plan for your child.

Here are some of the specific records you should keep:

- Report cards. These documents provide a snapshot of your child's academic progress throughout the school year.
- Standardized test scores. These scores can help you track your child's progress over time and compare them to other students in their grade level.
- IEP reports. If your child has an IEP, this document will outline their individual educational needs and the services they are entitled to receive.
- Notes from parent-teacher conferences. These notes can help you remember the key points that were discussed at the conference and any follow-up action items that were agreed upon.

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- Communication with the school. Keep copies of any letters, emails, or other documents that you send to or receive from the school.

It is a good idea to keep these records in a safe place where you can easily access them. You may want to consider creating a digital file or using a binder to store your records.

By keeping records of your child's education, you can help ensure that they receive the best possible education and that their rights are protected.