

FDLRS Record

Newsletter for the University of Florida FDLRS-MDC program in Jacksonville

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What Does University of Florida-Jacksonville FDLRS Do?

By Stephanie Kinnare, Ph.D.

Thanks to funds from the Florida Department of Education, our University of Florida, Jacksonville FDLRS-MDC program is able to provide valuable support services to children, adolescents, their families, and their schools.

A large piece of our program provides diagnostic evaluations for children and adolescents, including psychoeducational, psychological, and/or neurodevelopmental evaluations. We specialize in evaluating students who are medically complex and children who have complex psychosocial histories, as these cases often require the expertise of a multidisciplinary team. We have found it helpful to families and educators alike when we translate our psychology DSM-5 diagnoses and our medical ICD-10 diagnoses into the school language of IDEA.

We also provide trainings to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other professionals in the community. We cover such topics as pediatric anxiety interventions, behavior interventions, study strategies, Individualized Education Plans, Response to Intervention, and how to interpret cognitive testing.

Helpful to many families, educators, and professionals, has been our offering of consultations. We review previous testing with appropriate parties in the child's life, and make recommendations for treatment and educational planning. We also help families navigate through the school system, linking their children with the appropriate ESE representative. We have collaborated closely with teachers and medical personnel, helping to problem-solve on case-specific academic and treatment issues.

Our continued partnership with the University of North Florida has been greatly beneficial to our patients, our UNF interns, and our team. We are excited to add the newly developed partnership with Jacksonville University as well! Our interns provide valuable short-term counseling to our patients.

For more information, or to contact us, please view our website at hscj.ufl.edu/pediatrics/diagnostic-and-learning-resources or call us at 904.633.0770.



OUR SERVICES

Who we Serve:

- Individuals between the ages of 3 & 22 who have not graduated high school.
- Who are struggling in school and have complicated medical, behavioral, developmental, &/or social histories
- And who reside in Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, & St. Johns counties

Services for Families:

- Comprehensive, multidisciplinary assessment, which may include psychoeducational, emotional-behavioral, &/or developmental pediatric evaluations
- Feedback sessions and a report detailing our findings
- Assistance in planning for your child's educational and psychological needs
- Trainings for parents covering a variety of topics

Services for the Community:

- Training/consultations for educators, students, & other professionals
- Educational consultation and support services: This can include collaboration with school personnel to facilitate school placement & provision of services



Transition Planning

by Audrey Bringman, B.S.

Transition planning is a collaborative effort involving the student with disabilities, the family of the student with disabilities, school and school district, and local agencies. Students should be active participants in individualized education plan (IEP) meetings beginning at age 14, if not earlier. Family members of the students with disabilities are also an integral part of the transition planning process. Family members should be familiar with the IEP process by the time their students reach high school; however, transition IEP goals will be different than what they may be accustomed to seeing. Transition IEP meetings are going to stimulate conversation and develop plans with goals to help the student successfully transition to life after high school. During these planning meetings, the students should have the opportunity to practice self-advocacy and self-determination skills to express their future independent living, academic, and career goals. Furthermore, family members should be supportive when the student demonstrates this level of independence, and final decision making should be a joint effort (Morningstar, A. Turnbull & H. Turnbull, 1995).

Transition planning is not an easy process; it can be overwhelming, and is an experience that many people do not get to practice in advance. It is important to utilize all members of the transition team in order to ensure a smooth and successful transition out of high school. Additionally, there are several transition resources available to help you navigate this process. The [Transition Roadmap](#) is one such resource that provides a detailed guide for transition planning.

Reference

Morningstar, M. E., Turnbull, A. P., Turnbull, H. R., III. (1995). What do students with disabilities tell us about the importance of family involvement in the transition from school to adult life? *Exceptional Children*, (62)3, 249-260.



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UF-Jacksonville
FDLRS-MDC serves
Baker, Clay, Duval,
Flagler, Nassau, &
St. Johns County.

Section 504: What is it? How Does it Differ from IDEA?

By Stephanie Kinnare, Ph.D.

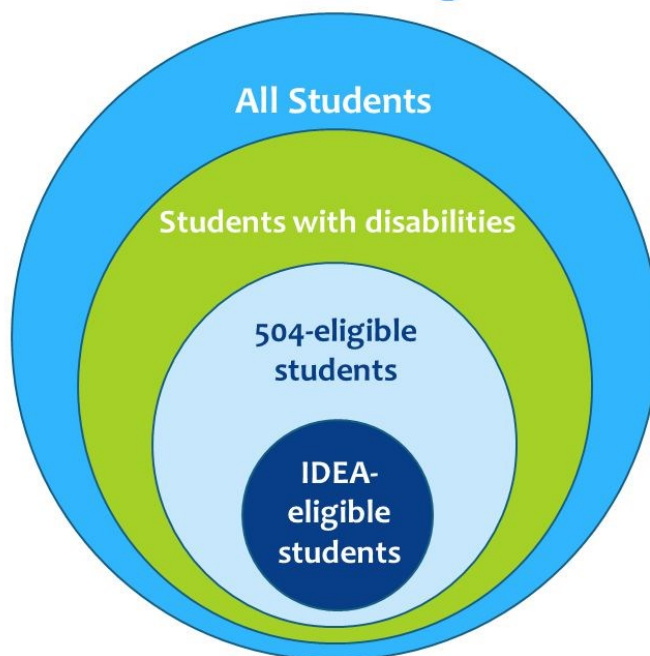
Section 504 "is part of a federal civil rights law known as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973" (Florida Department of Education, p. 1). This law mandates that students with disabilities have the same right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) as their non-disabled peers. Both Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) ensure individuals with disabilities have access to the same educational activities that individuals without disabilities access, but there are some significant differences between Section 504 and IDEA.

First, disabilities addressed under Section 504 are more broadly defined than under IDEA. Under Section 504, disabilities include any "physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities" (p. 4). In contrast, IDEA includes specific disability categories, such as traumatic brain injury, specific learning disabilities, hearing impairments, vision impairments, etc.

Second, IDEA requires that the student's disability impair the student's *learning* in particular, and/or that the student has demonstrated need of specialized instruction. Hence, some impairment in educational performance is typically noted within the auspice of IDEA. The impairment of the student's disability under Section 504 is more broadly defined. The disability may impair life activities such as "caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, and working." Hence, educational performance is not necessarily negatively impacted for individuals with disabilities protected under Section 504.

Third, IDEA covers individuals from birth through age 21. Section 504, however, covers individuals across the life span.

IDEA/504 Diagram



By definition, students under IDEA are also protected under Section 504, but students protected under Section 504 are not necessarily eligible for the exceptional student education (ESE) services of IDEA. Despite their differences, both Section 504 and IDEA work to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the same educational opportunities as their non-disabled peers.

Reference:

Florida Department of Education. *A parent and teacher guide to Section 504: Frequently asked questions*. Retrieved from <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7690/urlt/0070055-504bro.pdf>

Easing the Transition from Summer to School

by Stephanie Kinnare, Ph.D.



Many children may be anxious about starting a new school year. Here are some tips that may help aid the transition from summer to school:

1. Relay information about the school to your child. Help your child anticipate what to expect.

- a. Tell your child about their new teacher(s) (e.g., name, what the teacher(s) look like, a little about their personality). If you are not able to meet your child's teacher(s) beforehand, look up a picture of your child's teacher(s) on the school website.
- b. Get a copy of your child's class schedule before school starts and review the schedule with your child.
- c. For new schools, if possible, take a tour of the school with your child before school starts, so that your child can understand the layout of the building.
- d. For students entering middle school and high school where lockers are present, ensure your child knows how to open a lock. Have your child practice opening and closing a lock. A contest can be held among siblings, whereby they try to open the lock in the lowest time possible.

2. Practice the morning routine. A week before school starts, practice going to bed at a time consistent with a school night's bedtime, and waking up in time for school. Implement the morning routine, and even practice getting to the bus stop on time.

3. Give your child something 'special' that they can wear or bring to school. For example, a new pair of favorite school shoes or a favorite backpack may help get your child excited for the first day of school.

4. Reconnect with school friends. Schedule a playdate shortly before the first day of school, or host a backyard back-to-school party. Reconnecting with peers may normalize your child's anxieties about

school starting, and may excite your child to see their peers again at school.

5. Talk about anxieties but do not dwell on them. It is normal for children to have some worries regarding school, such as academics or social relationships. Listen to your child's concerns, normalize them, and work to bring in positive features of school into the conversation.

6. Remind your child that fun activities can continue throughout the school year. Remind your child that just because school may be back in session, does not mean that your child cannot go outside and play like he or she did during the summer months. Maintain fun activities on weekends or other times during the school year.

7. Discuss the afterschool routine. To ease transition into the afterschool routine, discuss ahead of time when homework time, dinnertime, playtime, and bedtime will occur. Ensure your child knows where to hang his/her backpack and schoolbooks, school shoes, and other important school items. An organized routine and an organized space for school items should ease the transition from summer to school routine.

Reference:

Blades, N. (2016). How to beat the back-to-school blues. *PBS Parents*. Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/going-to-school/back-to-school/back-to-school-blues/>

Recommended Reading:

For other tips on back-to-school topics, visit PBS Parents and view other articles under their Education tab: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/going-to-school/back-to-school/>

Pre-Employment Transition Planning

By Audrey Bringman, B.S.

It is never too early to start thinking about your student's future; what will your student do after high school? Will he or she go right to work or college or learn a vocation or trade? It is important to start transition planning for your student while he or she is still in high school. More importantly, your student should be an active participant in these conversations and plans. If your student is unsure about what he or she wants to do in the future, allow time for career exploration through volunteering and job shadowing to expose your student to a variety of opportunities. Working in Student Based Enterprises is one way to gain work experience, and community-based vocational instruction (CBVI) is another method in which students participate in career exploration through job sampling in paid and/or unpaid positions while they are still in high school.

Research suggests participation in vocational courses and paid work experiences in the last 2 years of high school are among several factors that contribute to employment and positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities (Benz, Lindstrom, & Yovanoff, 2000). Furthermore, recent legislation has increased awareness and support for pre-employment and pre-placement services for transition youth with disabilities. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (P.L. 113-128), commonly referred to as WIOA, was signed into law on July 22, 2014. "In general, WIOA focuses vocational rehabilitation outcomes on competitive integrated employment and promotes greater emphasis on transition services for youth with disabilities" (The ARC, 2015). Pre-employment transition services include:

Job exploration counseling; work-based learning experiences (e.g., in-school or after school opportunities including internships) in



an integrated environment to the extent possible; counseling related to transition or post-secondary education at institutions of higher learning (e.g., college); workplace readiness training; and instruction in self-advocacy. (The ARC, 2015).

[The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Florida Department of Education](#) is a resource in the state of Florida that provides pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities who are still in high school. If you are interested in seeking services through The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for your student, it is best to ask your school guidance counselor for a referral to the local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation office.

For more information on the transition youth services that are provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in Florida, go to their webpage: <http://www.rehabworks.org/stw.shtml>.

Reference:

Benz, M. R., Lindstrom, L., & Yovanoff, P. (2000). Improving graduation and employment outcomes of students with disabilities: Predictive factors and student perspectives. *Exceptional Children*, 66(4), 509-529.

The ARC. (June 2015). *WIOA: What it means for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD)*. Retrieved from <http://www.thearc.org/document.doc?id=5183>

7 Apps to Help Keep Your Kids on Track

by Lisa D. Bailey, Ph.D.

Children today have busier schedules than ever and it can be a challenge for them to keep track of everything they need to do. Particularly for children with ADHD and other learning challenges, staying organized and getting everything done sometimes feels impossible. School assignments are often lost or forgotten and it can be difficult to properly plan ahead.

In today's world, technology provides many helpful options. Here are some apps that can be used to help students get organized and keep track of tasks and assignments.

Name of App	Developer	Description	Devices	Cost
Remember the Milk https://www.rememberthemilk.com	Remember the Milk, Inc.	Create task lists with due dates, provide reminders, break tasks into subtasks	iPhone, iPad, Android phones and tablets, Blackberry 10, Kindle Fire, Mac, Windows, Linux, Online	Free
myHomework https://myhomeworkapp.com/	Instin	Track classes and assignments, provide reminders of due dates	iPhone, iPad, Android, Kindle, Mac, Windows PC, Online	Free with ads or \$4.99/year with additional features and no ads
My Study Life https://www.mystudylife.com/	My Study Life, Ltd.	Create class schedule, make task lists with reminders, track progress on tasks	iPhone, Android, Windows, Windows Phone, Online	Free
Power Planner https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/store/p/power-planner/9wzdncrfj25v	BareBones Dev	Create class schedule, make tasks lists with reminders, track progress, track grades	Windows PC, Windows Phone, Android, Online	Free to \$1.49
Plan It, Do It, Check It Off http://igetitapps.com/	I Get It, LLC	Customizable photo task list, make recordings of task instructions	iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch	\$4.99
inClass http://www.inclassapp.com/	inClass, Inc.	Create class schedule, make task lists with reminders, track progress on tasks, take and share notes	iPhone, iPad	Free with ads or \$0.99 with no ads
School Manager https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.janbina.schoolmanager&hl=en	Jan Bina	Create class schedule, make task lists with reminders, track progress, track grades	Android	Free

By Lisa D. Bailey, Ph.D.

Assertiveness is a term we hear often, but many people are unsure what it is and, more importantly, how to “be assertive.” Assertiveness is a necessary skill, and the good news is that it can be taught. You can help your children learn appropriate assertiveness skills that allow them to stand up for themselves and get what they need, while also respecting the rights and needs of others.

First, understanding the concept of assertiveness is important. There are three major categories of communication that people use with one another: passive, aggressive and assertive. Assertive communication is considered the ideal way of communicating with others, while passive and aggressive communication cause a host of difficulties for those who use those styles.

Passive communicators tend to come across as meek and are often labeled “pushovers.” They do not clearly state their own needs, often going along with the group and letting others make their decisions. When they do ask for something, passive communicators hint at what they want instead of asking outright. They often become upset when others do not respond in the way they wanted. For example, while waiting for a turn in a game, the passive communicator may say, “It sure would be nice to have a turn.” However, this kind of statement is easily ignored and the child is unlikely to get a turn in the game.

On the opposite end of the spectrum are aggressive communicators. Aggressive communication ignores the rights of others. This person is viewed as a bully and often hurts others emotionally or physically when trying to get their own needs or wants met. Aggressive communicators tend not to take others’ feelings into account and generally do not listen to the ideas of other people. For instance, in the above situation, the aggressive communicator would snatch the game away and say, “It’s my turn!”

Between these extremes is the assertive communicator. Assertive communication is considered the most balanced and fair way of communicating. These individuals ask for what they want, but also consider what other people want. They make decisions for themselves, but also respect others’ right to do the same. They also take responsibility for their part in interactions, which passive and aggressive communicators tend not to do. When playing a game, the assertive communicator may say, “I would like to play. Let’s take turns.” This statement clearly requests a turn, but also suggests a way to play so that both children are allowed to enjoy the game.

Here are some tips to help your child become more assertive:

1. Children learn by observing others. Model appropriate assertiveness skills for your child, so that he or she can

see what these skills look like on a daily basis.

2. We are able to be assertive when we feel good about ourselves. Boost your child’s self-esteem by helping him or her to recognize his or her positive qualities.
3. Teach your child that his or her needs, wants, and opinions are important and deserve to be heard. Ask your child for his or her opinion, particularly about things that concern him or her. For instance, at an age-appropriate level, involve your child in discussions of chores and responsibilities, allow your child to make choices in daily activities, and ask for your child’s opinions about age-appropriate topics (e.g., school, friends, current events).
4. Teach your child to consider others’ opinions. Practice taking turns in conversations and helping your child learn to ask questions about others’ views. For children who struggle with this, help them practice paraphrasing what you said during your part of the conversation.
5. Help your child learn to take responsibility for his or her own behavior. Help your child recognize when he or she handles situations well and when he or she could have made different choices that would have led to a different outcome.
6. Encourage positive thinking skills. When your child is feeling uncertain, prompt him or her to think of his or her positive qualities, skills, and abilities, rather than focusing on negative thoughts.
7. Everyone has areas in which they can improve. Teach your child that it is okay to have areas for growth. When your child makes mistakes, help him or her view them as an opportunity for learning, rather than as something negative about him or herself.
8. Help your child practice “looking assertive” (stand up straight, smile, look the other person in the eye, repeat positive self-talk). This goes a long way toward helping your child feel more capable and makes it easier to practice assertiveness skills.
9. Encourage self-regulation of behaviors and emotions. Help your child learn to recognize and appropriately communicate his or her emotions. Help your child learn how to positively channel these emotions into productive behaviors. When your child has a better handle on his or her own emotions, your child will be better able to communicate them to others.
10. Encourage your child to respectfully speak up with adults and with peers when he or she needs something or when he or she disagrees with something. Offer praise and encouragement when your child practices assertiveness skills.

Reference and Recommended Reading

Schab, Lisa M. (2009). *Cool, calm, and confident: A workbook to help kids learn assertiveness skills*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc.