

Have expectations of your child to achieve and learn great things!

High School Years...

- Know what is being offered to the student in the high school and ask how it develops skills and competencies for work, living in the community and making stable friendships.
- Assume inclusion. Courses at the high school can be made available to your child and curriculum can be modified.
- Get good information about transition planning and services that should be occurring at age 16, if not before.
- Expect your child to be employed upon graduation. Get to know available employment resources and providers of employment services. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and Mental Retardation Services (MRS) can also be of assistance to you.
- Speak out about the importance of inclusive and skills - based education being related to success in adult life.
- If your family member is in the mental retardation system make sure that he/she has an updated Prioritization of Urgency of Needs (PUNS) and service preference packet. Otherwise, please call (215)685-4677 for registration information.
- Make sure that your family member is involved in extracurricular school activities and community activities.
- Continue asking and expecting your son/daughter to want to work and to contribute to his/her community.

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This document was developed by the Supports Coordination Work Group of Philadelphia's Vision for Employment 2010. An initiative of Mental Retardation Services (MRS) and Networks for Training and Development, Inc. funded by the PA Office of Developmental Programs through the City of Philadelphia, Department of Behavioral Health and Mental Retardation Services.

General Information for Families and Caregivers Involved in Special Education



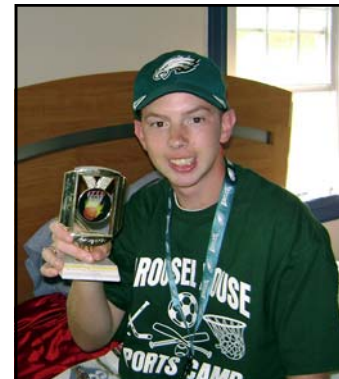
Elementary School.....

Help your child to participate in neighborhood events and activities.



Middle School

Provide broad exposure and continue to cultivate interests and lifelong learning.



High School.....

Have expectations of your child to achieve and learn the same things as their classmates without a developmental disability.

Philadelphia Mental Retardation Services,
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Ask your child what they want to be when he/she grows up!

Elementary School...

- Ask your child, “What did you learn today at school?”
- Help your child be known in your neighborhood - at the playground, in stores and other places where people are and where people enjoy speaking with one another.
- Know your child’s strengths, talents and interests and don’t be bashful about discussing them with the teacher and others.
- Invite people who support your wishes and dreams for your child to the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting. This includes your child’s Supports Coordinator.
- Document all phone calls with school personnel so that you have an accurate record of verbal as well as written communication.
- Discuss the benefits of assistive technology and other accommodations at your child’s IEP.
- If you are experiencing difficulty getting what your child needs to be properly educated, ask your Supports Coordinator for a list of Advocacy Organizations and contacts.
- Make sure that your child is registered with Mental Retardation Services (MRS) if they are eligible.
- Know the educational law. This includes the PA Chapter 14 Regulations and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 2004.
- If the IEP that you received to sign is *not* what you participated in, DO NOT SIGN IT or the Notice of Recommended Assignment of Plan (NORAP) that may have accompanied it. Request, in writing, another meeting or mediation right away.
- Assume that your child will be attending the same school that he/she would if he/she did not have a disability. Specially designed instruction and supports are the law and explains what teacher’s are expected to do to develop skills and competencies.

Promote opportunities for ALL children learning together!

Middle School Years...

- Insist that your child attend the school that he/she would attend if he/she did not have a disability. Make sure that specially designed services and supports are written clearly in the IEP and are being implemented.
- Ask what the educational standards are for your child’s same age peers and ask how those standards will be embedded in your child’s daily classroom activities.
- Continue to get to know other families who share your high aspirations for your son/daughter.
- If your child is in the mental retardation system, make sure that your child’s Prioritization of Urgency of Needs (PUNS) and service preference packet is up to date. Your Supports Coordinator will work on this with you. Continue to invite your Supports Coordinator to IEP meetings.
- Continue to tell everyone who comes into contact with your child their strengths, interests and talents.
- Make sure that your child’s educational days looks like that of their same age peers. Specially designed supports can be provided in extracurricular activities too.
- Visit high schools before your child is ready to transition to high school. Ask what the high school has to offer. This includes neighborhood schools, magnet schools, and charter schools that have opportunities that can enrich and challenge your child as he/she moves closer to adulthood.
- When you and your child are in the community, look at jobs that people are doing . Talk to your child about jobs and careers that he/she might be interested in.