

3. You and your student's parents will need to familiarize yourselves with the various regulations and rules of your student's special education classes and programs. Each state will have different expectations for the student, and you'll need to be an expert on the specific subtleties of your student's situation. A good first resource is your state's Department of Education. If your student has a specific special education teacher (or if your district or school has such an expert), this would be a good resource as well. Contacting someone in the community who is familiar with both your student's specific disability and the state's programs and accommodations under these circumstances is definitely a good thing for both you and the student's parents to do.
4. If your student has an assigned team of care professionals, work closely with each of them. Over-communication between every individual - parents, teachers, and special needs professionals - who works with the student will be key. Everyone will bring nuanced and essential information to the table. Positive and comprehensive communication will make it easy to take advantage of the differing perspectives when working to support the child. At the very least, make sure that everyone has each care professional's contact information. If you are able to take the initiative in getting in touch with these individuals on a regular basis to benefit the student, do so. This could be as simple as setting up an ongoing email chain, to which you send occasional updates regarding the child's performance in school. If you feel the need to have an in-person meeting, or if something happens that either you or the parents need to run past a professional, you'll already have the network in place to make that easily accessible.
5. Ensure that you have a centralized location for all paperwork regarding the student's education. Special education often requires (and produces) large amounts of official forms and other types of documentation. Parents and teachers alike can consider this a nuisance. It may fall to you to make sure that everything is organized, and that there are backup copies of essential forms. All paperwork regarding the student's IEP (Individualized Education Program) needs to be in one place, as does information relevant to a student's 504 Plan. If you need assistance with the way this information should best be organized, talk to a special education director at your school. For better or for worse, your student's parents will likely assume that you are more on top of this information than they are, and may request related information from you at any time.

6. When it's time for you to meet with your student's parents, don't forget that they have a lot on the line. They are extremely invested in their 's child's future, and they have a more emotional attachment to the case than you do. They may be very protective; they may be scared. If you are meeting with your student's parents and other professionals at the same time, you might have to function as a bridge, or as a support system for the parents while you are all learning how best to support the student. Remember that you can offer insight to the parents and the professionals, and you also need information from the parents. Ensuring that everyone is treated as an integral part of your student's care team will result in more powerful support for the student.
7. Make sure that the child, if appropriate, is kept apprised of the relationship and communications between his or her parents, teachers, and other professionals. As one of the goals of education, special or otherwise, is to produce students who are capable of taking care of themselves and becoming valuable and productive members of society, your student with a learning disability needs to know how best to take care of him or herself. This does not include keeping your student uninformed or keeping him or her out of the loop. As best as you can, or as is appropriate, let your student know what is happening in meetings that concern his or her care or future. In return, ask your student if he or she has questions that need answers from the care team, or if he or she has any frustrations, hopes, successes, or disappointments that he or she would like the team to know. Some students may feel comfortable sharing this with their parents on their own. They may not. One of your roles is to function as a facilitator of these types of conversations. Embrace it.

When you're partnering with a children's parents to form a team to support their success, you may find that you need to stand up for the child in ways you might not need to apply for other children. In these cases, it's important to be confident in your role, compassionate to the needs of others, and to stand up for the child's rights and needs as much as you possibly can (Protected Tomorrows, 2016).

Section 3: Key Takeaways

- Parents often underestimate their importance to their child's educational team. Their importance is, however, paramount. As a teacher, you can help parents understand and appreciate this.
- Parents need to be informed about their child's learning disability.

- Parents can assist with helping their child learn at home, observing a child's symptoms, helping finetune treatment, and more.
- As a teacher, one of your goals is to support both the parent and child so that they can support each other.

Conclusion

Ultimately, when you are working to support a student in your classroom who needs special accommodations, you need to remember that that student is scared, but smart. When you're designing your curriculum, when you are managing your classroom, and when you are working with that student one-on-one, there are things you can do to ensure that the student is learning and having a good experience. Helping mitigate your student's anxiety, prioritizing parental support, and simply being observant so you can identify when a student may be struggling: These are all ways that you can assist your students with learning disabilities so that they experience a stellar education while under your care.

References

- Frye, D. (2020, August 3). What is Dyscalculia? Math Learning Disability Overview. Additude. <https://www.additudemag.com/what-is-dyscalculia-overview-and-symptom-breakdown/>
- Singh, M. (2018, October 15). Signs and Symptoms of Dyscalculia. Number Dyslexia. <https://numberdyslexia.com/signs-symptoms-dyscalculia/>
- Frye, D. (2020, July 24). What is Dysgraphia? Additude. <https://www.additudemag.com/what-is-dysgraphia-understanding-common-symptoms/>
- Cheshire. (2017, March 9). Signs, Symptoms, and Treatments for Children with Dysgraphia. Cheshire Fitness. <https://cheshirefitnesszone.com/signs-symptoms-and-treatments-for-dysgraphia-in-children/>
- Brazier, Y. (2020, February 25). What to Know About Dyslexia. Medical News Today. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/186787>
- Mayo Clinic. (2017, July 22). Dyslexia - Overview. Mayo Clinic. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dyslexia/symptoms-causes/syc-20353552>

Frye, D and Karanzalis, L. (2019, November 5). What is Nonverbal Learning Disorder? Additude. <https://www.additudemag.com/what-is-nonverbal-learning-disorder-symptoms-and-diagnosis/>

Psychology Today. (2017, September 22). Nonverbal Learning Disorder. Psychology Today. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/conditions/nonverbal-learning-disorder>

Landi, N. (2017, February 22). Understanding Specific Reading Disorder. Lang Linguist Compass <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6051548/>

Driscoll, L. (2019, October 21). Recognizing a Reading Comprehension Disorder. Lorraine Driscoll. <https://lorrainedriscoll.com/recognising-a-reading-comprehension-disorder/>

CDC. (2020, April 8). What is ADHD? CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/facts.html>

Lyness, D. (2017, November). ADHD (For Teens). Kids Health. <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/adhd.html>

Newman, T. (2017, December 8). What is Dyspraxia? Medical News Today, 2017. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/151951>

Thomas, L. (2019, December 2). How to Identify and Support Children with Dyspraxia. Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/identifying-and-supporting-students-dyspraxia>

Barkley, R and Saline, S. (2019, September 12). Your Child's 7 Executive Functions - And How to Boost Them. Additude. <https://www.additudemag.com/slideshows/boost-executive-function/>

Wexellblatt, R. (2020, August 27). How to Teach Accountability. Additude. <https://www.additudemag.com/teach-accountability-adhd-homework-middle-school/>

Zeigler Dendy, C. (2020, January 14). Teaching Strategies for Students with ADHD. Additude. <https://www.additudemag.com/teaching-strategies-for-students-with-adhd/>

Reynolds, J. (2017, July 21). What Methods Can Help Manage ADHD-Related Time Blindness? US News. <https://health.usnews.com/health-care/patient-advice/articles/2017-07-21/what-methods-can-help-manage-adhd-related-time-blindness>

Additude. (2020, August 26). The Daily Report Card. Additude. <https://www.additudemag.com/daily-report-card-to-improve-adhd-classroom-behavior/>

Meyer, H, and Lasky, S. (2017, August 18). School-Based Management of ADHD. The ADD Resource Center. <https://www.addrc.org/disorder-105-tips-for-teachers/>

LaVoie, R. (2019, August 30). How to Motivate a Student with ADHD. Additude. <https://www.additudemag.com/motivating-a-child-with-adhd-classroom-tips/>

Brain Balance. (2017, October). The Benefits of Exercise for Children with ADHD. Brain Balance. <https://blog.brainbalancecenters.com/2017/10/exercise-children-adhd>

Nelson, K. (2019, October 1). 7 Ways to Help Students Who Struggle with Anxiety. We Are Teachers. <https://www.weareteachers.com/7-ways-to-help-students-who-struggle-with-anxiety/>

Busch, B. (2016, October 12). The Problem of Perfectionism. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2016/oct/12/the-problem-of-perfectionism-five-tips-to-help-your-students>

Terada, Y. (2019, March 29). Helping Students Beat Test Anxiety. Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/helping-students-beat-test-anxiety>

Chandler, C. (2016, October 25). How to Get Students to Take the Stairs. MiddleWeb. <https://www.middleweb.com/33114/how-to-get-students-to-slow-down-and-think/>

JCOS. (2020, n.d.). Case Studies. John Connel O'Connor School. <https://johncardinaloconnorschool.org/case-studies>

Protected Tomorrows. (2016, January 18). Ten Ways You Can Advocate for Your Child. Protected Tomorrows. <https://protectedtomorrows.com/blog/2016/01/18/10-ways-you-can-advocate-your-child-learning-disability/>

Morin, A. (2020, July 18). The Important Role of Parents in Special Education. Verywell Family. <https://www.verywellfamily.com/parental-importance-special-education-2162701>

Imad, M. (2020, March 17). 10 Strategies to Support Students. Inside Higher Ed. <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2020/03/17/10-strategies-support-students-and-help-them-learn-during-coronavirus-crisis>

Cuncic, A. (2020, January 13). Teaching Students with Social Anxiety Disorder. Verywell Mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/teaching-students-with-sad-3024340>



The material contained herein was created by EdCompass, LLC ("EdCompass") for the purpose of preparing users for course examinations on websites owned by EdCompass, and is intended for use only by users for those exams. The material is owned or licensed by EdCompass and is protected under the copyright laws of the United States and under applicable international treaties and conventions. Copyright 2020 EdCompass. All rights reserved. Any reproduction, retransmission, or republication of all or part of this material is expressly prohibited, unless specifically authorized by EdCompass in writing.