



Ontario Prader-Willi Syndrome Association

Your Child & the School System

Info & tips to help you advocate for your child

Our Presenters



Cathy Shiner

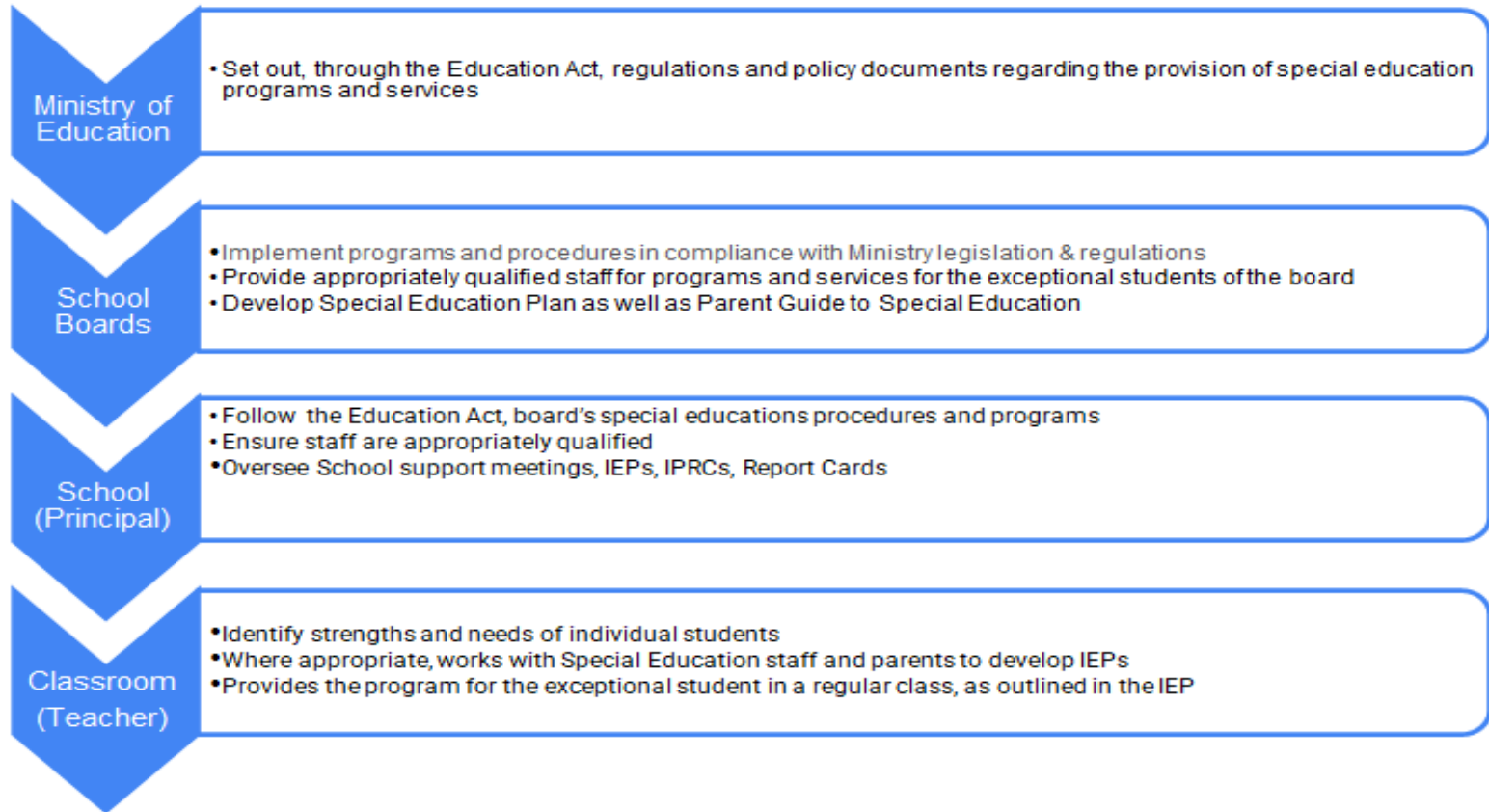


Marla Fine

Overview

- How Special Education is structured within the Ontario School system
- Effective Advocacy
- IEPs and IPRCs
- Transitions during the school year and from year-to-year
- Communication Tips
- Examples and Experiences of OPWSA families

Special Education Structure in Ontario (Who Decides/Does What!)



Effective Advocacy

Effective Advocacy requires knowledge and communication skills

- Understanding your child's strengths and needs
- Setting realistic goals about what your child needs
- Communicating to the teacher and the school
- Taking part in meetings
- Understanding special education framework - who does what at each level re: regulations and rules.
- Your school board's Special Education Parent Guide is a really good document to have. It's likely on the board's website.
- The Ministry of Education's Questions and Answers Parents May Have Regarding Special Education English is an excellent resource
- *Inclusion is the guiding principle in the school system

Some Important Meetings

- School Support Team Meetings
- Meetings with staff who can assess and help (School Psychologist, Speech & Language Pathologists, Social Workers)
- Report Cards
- IEPs
- IPRCs

And remember, OPWSA (Jennifer, other parents) is available to help and to attend meetings with you if needed/possible

An IEP (Individual Education Plan)...

- a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a student,
 - based on a thorough assessment of strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and demonstrate learning.
- may include *modified* and/or *alternative learning* expectations & *accommodations*.
 - *Modifications* are changes made to the grade level and/or number of Ontario Curriculum expectations that the student is expected to learn in a particular subject.
 - *Alternative expectations* are for areas not represented in the Ontario Curriculum.
 - *Accommodations* are: changes made to the learning environment; how the teacher instructs or assesses your child, *but without changing the curriculum*; the use of assistive technology or special equipment that helps your child learn and/or demonstrate their learning.
- Is developed within 30 days of a student starting or receiving a special education program/services. **Parents (and students, where appropriate) must** be consulted in the development of the IEP and given a copy.
- is reviewed and updated through the school year, usually once a term
- Tied to the Report Card

An IEP is not...

- a description of everything that will be taught to the student;
- a list of all the teaching strategies used in regular classroom instruction;
- a document that records all of the student's learning expectations, including those that are not modified from the regular grade level curriculum expectations;
- a daily lesson plan.

RELEVANT ASSESSMENT DATA

Information Source	Date	Summary of Results
Vision Assessment	12/08/2013	Nearsighted (wears corrective lenses).
Audiological Assessment	12/08/2013	Hearing within normal limits.
Speech and Language Assessment	13/06/2013	Receptive and expressive language skills are significantly delayed. Severe delays in articulation.
Educational Assessment	06/06/2013	Can recite alphabet letters and numbers 1-10. Recognizes and names primary colours.
Occupational Therapy Assessment	13/06/2012	Significant delays in fine motor skills, visual motor integration, and activities of daily living.
Psychological Assessment	11/08/2011	Significant delays in cognitive abilities and all areas of adaptive skills.

STUDENT'S AREAS OF STRENGTH AND AREAS OF NEED

Areas of Strength	Areas of Need
Willingness to communicate	Writing Skills
Socially interactive with peers and adults	Oral Language-Speaking Skills
Positive attitude	Functional Mathematics
Personal computer skills	Self-regulatory skills
Leisure skills	Fine motor skills
	Reading Skills

Special Education Program

Subject or Course/Code or Alternative Skill Area

Language Arts

Baseline Level of Achievement (usually from previous June report card):

Prerequisite secondary course (if applicable):

Letter grade/Mark: N/A

Curriculum grade level: JK (MOD)

Baseline Level of Achievement for Alternative Skill Areas:

Annual Program Goal(s): A goal statement describing what the student can reasonably be expected to accomplish by the end of the school year (or semester) in a particular subject, course, or alternative skill area.

Will consistently and independently recognize her name in a variety of environments and demonstrate basic book conventions independently (left to right, front to back). With limited assistance, she will create and retell stories based on personal experiences.

Learning Expectations	Teaching Strategies	Assessment Methods
Progress Report		
With limited assistance, identify the front and back of the book.	Teacher modelling, visual cues, verbal cues, repetition of the task, 1-1 conferencing, hand over hand instruction.	Observation and record on checklist (successful attempts, # of cues required).
With limited assistance, name 2 features of the story book cover for a book with a single picture cover.	Teacher selected books motivating to student, reinforcement of correct articulation.	Monitoring and recording articulation patterns, anecdotal records, vocabulary checklist.
Independently, choose her first name from an array of 3 first names and place it on the attendance board.	Array of different names, modelling of task (teacher/peer), portable word wall.	Observation and checklist of correct attempts.
With limited assistance, use 2-3 words to describe self created pictures.	Student created photo/digital albums, taping of stories.	Observation and anecdotal record, audio recording.
Independently and consistently, find	Adapted keyboard, model of name	Observation and anecdotal record.

GLE20-Learning Strategies

Baseline Level of Achievement (usually from previous June report card):

Prerequisite secondary course (if applicable): GLE10

Letter grade/Mark: 58

Curriculum grade level: 9

Baseline Level of Achievement for Alternative Skill Areas:

Annual Program Goal(s): A goal statement describing what the student can reasonably be expected to accomplish by the end of the school year (or semester) in a particular subject, course, or alternative skill area.

Complete all required expectations to earn a credit in this course with some modifications of specific expectations in two strands-Learning Skills and Exploration of Opportunities as outlined below. Focus this semester will be to learn how to develop and apply literacy skills and motivation to pursue opportunities for success in secondary school and beyond.

Learning Expectations	Teaching Strategies	Assessment Methods
One		
Identify and use two reading skills and strategies to improve understanding of texts.	Provide outline of reading skill steps.	Weekly log maintained by student indicating reading strategy used; monthly conference with teacher to monitor strategy use.
Identify and use two oral communication skills to support reading and writing.		Teacher structured observation notes (monthly).
Use two forms of writing (news report, summary) to suit audience and purpose.	Provide exemplar of writing samples.	Written submission rubric (culminating task unit one and two).
Identify and use two strategies to improve writing (organizing ideas, editing).		Weekly log maintained by student indicating reading strategy used; monthly conference with teacher to monitor strategy use.

IPRC's (Identification Placement Review Committee)...

- Students who have behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities may have educational needs that cannot be met through regular instruction and assessment practices. These students may be formally identified as “Exceptional” by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).
- The IPRC consists of at least three Board persons, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer.
- **Parents (and the student if the student is 16 years of age or older) are invited to attend the IPRC and are considered to be important contributors to the discussion; parents can invite others to attend (like a representative from OPWSA). It's helpful to let the school know if you plan to bring someone to the IPRC.**
- Other attendees: principal/vice-principal from student's school, teacher, interpreter if needed, other resource staff
- Original IPRCs are held at a location outside your child's school (another school or a board office) with an impartial committee who haven't met your child
- **An in-person meeting but attendance can be accommodated by phone or video conference**

IPRC's (continued)...

- At the meeting, participants, including the parents, share information to assist the committee in understanding the student's progress, learning strengths and areas of need.
- The Committee will determine:
 - whether a student is “Exceptional”
 - an appropriate placement,
 - any program/service recommendations.
 - provide a written statement of the decision, including the student's strengths/needs. **Parents will be asked to sign and indicate if they agree with the decisions.**
- Reviewed annually. Annual IPRC review meetings are usually done in your child's school with committee members who know your child
- **Parents can appeal a decision made by the committee. The procedure for appealing a decision is detailed in the board's Special Education Plan.**

IPRC Exceptionalities and Placements

The categories of exceptionality are:

- Behaviour
- Communication including Autism
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Language Impairment & Learning Disability
- Intellectual including Giftedness, Mild Intellectual Disability and Developmental Disability

The types of Placements are:

- Regular Class with Indirect Assistance
- Regular Class with Resource Assistance
- Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance
- Special Education Class with Partial Integration
- Special Education Class Full Time

Transitions Throughout the School Career

Key transitions in a student's schooling can include the following:

- entry to school - contact the school in January of year to start
- A change from one grade to the next
- a change from one school to another
- the move from junior school to middle school
- the move from elementary to secondary school
- the transition from secondary school to postsecondary activities
- a move to a school following a prolonged absence for medical reasons or after receiving care, treatment, or rehabilitation at another institution

Things That Can Help Students and Teachers with Transitions

- One page profile (to help staff get to know your child)
- Start planning and preparation early
- Plan for the transitions, and record it on the Transition page on the IEP
- Social stories
- Visits
- Involving the child in decision making (as appropriate); student voice

Transition Plan Example

Transition Domain

Education – School Entry (Transition Between Schools)



Goal

Olivia will be provided strategies to transition to middle school to manage a rotary schedule.

Actions Required	Name of Person(s) Responsible for Actions	Timelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In addition to group orientation and group visit, obtain Olivia's grade 6 timetable, visit the school and use the school map to plan and practise the various routes required between each classroom and to locate the library, cafeteria, etc.	HSP/Resource Teacher Guidance Student, Parent	May/June
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share best practices for organizational strategies with receiving teachers.	Sending and receiving teachers	May/June

Key Times in the School Year

- IEP timelines
 - IEP must be completed within 30 school days of placement in a program or
 - IEPs for students continuing to require Special Ed. programs and/or services must be completed within 30 school days of the start of the school year
 - Copy must be sent to parents (and student, where applicable) within the 30 school days
- IPRC timelines
 - Annual Reviews are often held from January to May, but good to let the school know sooner if you see a need for a change
- Reporting times throughout the year
 - Expect teachers/schools to talk about “Next Steps”
 - The wording used in Report Cards is often limited by the direction of the School board and the principal.
- Course selection periods
 - Work with guidance department; start early; student voice
- School selection (change of school - into middle school; into high school). Talk to your child’s school or check the board’s website for deadline dates and open houses

Special Ed. at Secondary School

- IPRC Exceptionalities and Placements (Regular class and Special education class) continue to apply
- Some school boards may have special education schools in which all students have an Exceptionality
- GLE (Learning Strategies) Course. An individual course that may only be taken by students with an IEP. The focus is to support the development of strategies for learning, including organization, work completion and other school skills to support all subject areas (offered as needed at all secondary schools).
- Courses at different levels (Academic, Applied, Locally Developed)
- Students may remain in school until the end of the school year in which they turn 21

Certificate vs. Diploma in High School

Certificate (OSSC)

- 14 credits
- 7 compulsory and 7 electives
- Students are not required to complete 40 hours of community involvement
- Students are not required to pass the Ontario Literacy test

Diploma (OSSD)

- 18 compulsory credits and 12 electives
- Must pass Ontario Literacy test
- Must complete 40 hours of community involvement
- Needed for college or university programs
- Beneficial to have when applying for jobs

Certificate of Accomplishment

- This is for students who are leaving High School after turning 18
- They have not met the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or the Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC)
- It can be useful for recognizing achievements for students who plan on doing future training or who are seeking employment following High School
- It is accompanied by their Ontario Student Transcript and their IEP (if applicable)
- Students can return to school to work towards additional credit and non-credit courses
- The OSSD or OSSC can be granted for returning students who have fulfilled the necessary requirements

Communication Tips

- Keep in mind your child's strengths and needs and interests; these are the terms the school thinks in too
- Set priorities e.g. "what kinds of supports are most crucial?" (a school is unlikely to be able to do everything)
 - Food issues and management
 - Support from an educational or special needs assistant at key times
 - Learning needs
 - Safety needs
- A one-page profile can be helpful; it's a concise way to share strengths, needs and background info about your child

ONE PAGE PROFILES



LAURA

WHAT OTHERS LIKE ABOUT ME, AND WHAT I LIKE ABOUT MYSELF

Artistic, Caring, Good at climbing, gives great cuddles,
Good at making, drawing and building stuff
Creative, Thoughtful, Adventurous

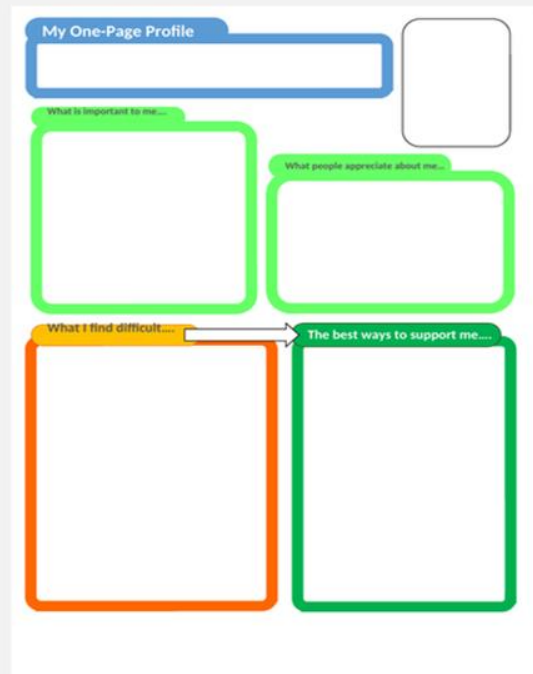
WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO ME

- Having 2 cats - Emily and Jess
- My three stick insects, and seeing if their eggs hatch
- Playing with my friends - Emily, Abbie, Eleanor and Caitlin
- Seeing my movies - Momo and Phoebe
- Going to Glast every year with Granny, Aunt Wendy, Uncle Dave, Aunt Elaine and Uncle Stuart
- My art box and doing art at home several times a week
- My yellow rabbit, Sunny, who sleeps on my bed
- Knowing what is going to happen each day, and planning ahead for special things like my birthday (I like to plan my party about 4 months in advance)

HOW TO SUPPORT LAURA

- Laura is sensitive and perceives a small negative comment as a big telling off
- Laura needs lots of praise and encouragement
- Laura does not like change very much and particularly needs lots of reassurance about changing clothes
- Laura can seem quiet and shy before you get to know her, she may need you to initiate conversations

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My One-Page Profile

What is important to me...

What people appreciate about me...

What I find difficult...

The best ways to support me...

Communication Tips (con't)

- Information about Prader-Willi, especially as it relates to a school environment, is helpful to share; OPWSA can be available to assist (e.g. staff training)
- Build bridges between yourself and the school, especially the classroom teacher.
 - *Start with the classroom teacher. If the teacher cannot resolve the problem, then go up the chain - contact the principal, other board staff, including the superintendent of special education and then the director of education. You can also contact your school trustee*
- Be curious rather than judgemental
 - “I wonder if”, How might it be possible to..,
- Something to consider: You know your child best in the context and environments that you interact with him. The school staff may focus on different things because of the different environment
- A very helpful reference for parents is Negotiating the Maze: Strategies for Effective Advocacy in Schools

A Parent's Experience



Holly Sine

Cheers to Charity



- \$10/Ticket
- 1500 Tickets Printed
- Prizes:
 - \$1000 worth of gift cards
 - \$500 worth of gift cards
 - 2 x \$250 worth of gift cards
 - 5 x \$100 worth of gift cards
 - 10 x \$50 worth of gift cards

Raffle proceeds go towards supporting OPWSA's key programs:

PWS Week at Shadow Lake Camp, First Trike Program, Family Fun Day, Fall Conference, free fridge locks to Ontario members, and family gatherings.

Understanding Prader-Willi Syndrome and Autism

- Date: Friday, November 12th
- Time: 11:00am – 12:00pm EST
- Description:
Prader-Willi Syndrome is a relatively straightforward diagnosis. Once symptoms are observed, a blood test can confirm the diagnosis. But, what do you do when you suspect your child, who already has a PWS diagnosis, may also have autism? Many of the behavioral characteristics of PWS are similar to those of autism. Cindy will explain how the two diagnoses are similar and different, why and when to consider an autism evaluation and what the diagnosis, or lack thereof, ultimately means for the child and their family.



**Cindy Szapacs,
M.Ed. BCBA**

Virtual Dance Party

- Date: Friday, November 12th
- Time: 4:30pm – 5:00pm EST
- Description:
Michelle Hillier from Experience Groove will be hosting a 30 minute Virtual Dance Party/Wellness-Focused Movement Experience for individuals with PWS of all ages. No dance experience required! Just come and have fun!





Ontario Prader-Willi Syndrome Association

Thank You!