

WHAT CAN A FAMILY WITH SPECIAL NEEDS DO?

FAMILY RESPONSE

How might a family respond to special needs identification of a child

- Blame game- it's my fault, haven't put time into this child's needs
- Fear of assessment – feel it is an assessment of parent
- Fear of label for child although this might be the key to finding the right support and teaching strategies for the child
- Concern for cost of additional curriculum as likely can't share what worked for other children
- Find child's strengths/interests and work that into the rest of their studies
- Teach the child to love learning

SETTING GOALS

How to sift through what is available - past years of homeschool help

Set realistic IEP goals

Annually meet with each therapist

pay her – determine appropriate goals for this year

then set your own IEP

insurance coverage available? have therapist teach you

Might have access to 10 blocks of therapy – you determine its usage

Choose what you can work on

Support group of SN parents to learn from each of your therapists

May consider using PPM131 Appendix A Letter of Intent to access therapies through school board but this is not a guarantee of services

AUTISM EXAMPLE

Up to delay of 30% development by age in thinking

accommodation of time - 15 yr old acts like 10 year old

if your behaviour expectations are reasonable there is potential for joy

participate in this progress

need compassionate person compassion to come along side, walk beside them at their speed

over-expectation creates attitude of 'unworthy' in child

I am bad, there is something wrong with me, I can't fix it

think positively

distractibility = curiosity

impulsivity = creativity

hyperactive = energy !!

ABA – communication program for children with autism

very expensive \$60000/child

Currently province allows parents \$5000 total for a 5 year program

Consider sleep/exercise/nutrition/sensory stimuli level

Pay yourself to learn therapies, do the therapies with your child yourself
Search the internet, Pinterest
Create curriculum - don't teach by book, but by what he needs
money, time, laundry life skills
Consider scholastics only as needful
Behaviour - example of "Ferrari brain with bicycle brakes"
difficult for parent to keep ahead

Planning school year

'teachers pay teachers' website - numerous resources
certain bloggers to follow
internet has info at your fingertips -but it is time consuming - develop a
plan -it will take time
Videos purchased

HSLDA Special Needs General Information

(with permission of HSLDA, from the member only page)

Exceptionalities areas: Intellectual, Communicative, Sensory; Behavioural, Physical, Multiple

Steps:

- 1) speak to your family physician
- 2) hearing or vision test can easily rule out some of the most basic learning blocks
- 3) refer you to other specialists - a referral for some services will be covered by OHIP
- 4) ongoing learning difficulties that don't have an obvious physical root
may want to see other educational professionals
may see you without a referral, may cost but are invaluable,

Benefits of individualized educational program at home **VS** Public system

- 1) pace, level, and style they need
- 2) one-on-one teaching time, and repetition
- 3) controlled environment & consistent structure - routine and predictability
- 4) emotional stability
- 5) right kind of socialization - avoiding distractions, unsympathetic peers
- 6) array of possibilities

Membership with HSLDA entitles member to 1 hour free consultation with special needs consultant. This is not an assessment.

End of HSLDA item

STRATEGIES to go forward

Within OCHEC and within our support groups

Start out with leadership, then make information accessible to all members
Put knowledge in the hands of the parents
come together as a community
support for high school (speakers at conventions)
educate pastors on home education
re-establish Special Needs Conference
Maintain Special Needs stream at convention
Share with our young homeschool families on expectations
Sponsor mentor group to attend support group meetings to share
OCHEC check with Ministry of Education/ministry of Health re use of
letter of intent to request services
OCHEC check in with access to therapies with CACC/LIHN

OCHEC website resource pages -article, audios from conventions, links to resources

OCHEC build a contact list of mothers willing to share with others

Short articles for website on following - if someone in your support group is willing to contribute or assist OCHEC, their efforts will be greatly appreciated

- Heart to heart from a leader = from one leader to another - what I have learned
- Heart -to-heart with a homeschool mom - a glimpse into the life of
- TIP pages on "How can you help" ie. a mom of a child with Tourette's syndrome/autism/ teenagers

THERAPIES & REFERENCES

NOTE Once a reference is shared:

- becomes no longer available due to excessive workload or perhaps health, maternity etc
- hence families may be loathe to share their contacts !
- service level may change hence need quick method to notify others

Homeschooling students that learn differently can be very daunting for families. They are often questioned and challenged. These families need a lot of encouragement to find good resources to support their child. It is very important for them to seek outside help because it can be overwhelming and because homeschooling a child with learning challenges can lead to investigation. Membership in HSLDA is recommended. And lastly, early intervention is so critical to get the child on the path to success! (Consultant)

Potential service providers

(list is very limited, does not infer OCHEC endorsement, OCHEC appreciates your contribution to this list - please email to info@oche.org)

Dr. Russell Barclay (youtube)

Carole Barnier - www.sizzlebop.com www.hi.com

Trix Bradley - NILD -Edison Learning Centre (Waterloo) www.edisoncentre.com

Suzanne Day - (Barrie) - www.neuroclinicbarrie.com

Diane Geerlinks - www.geerlinkslearning.com -assessments, therapies, parent courses to learn therapies

Dr. Ed Hallowell - (youtube) talks about the amazing talents in autism

Dr. Victor A Kuraitis O.D. vision therapy 905-935-1440 St. Catherine's

Ben Loveday - (London) psychiatrist 226-374-6545

Dr. Coralee Mueller - (Oshawa) Vision therapy

Matthew Turton (Kitchener) - Breakthroughs in Learning - www.breakthroughsinlearning.com

Barbara Arrowsmith Young (Toronto, Peterborough) - Arrowsmith School - www.arrowsmithschool.org

Karen Uschold - (Hamilton) Vianney Academy of Learning, Inc. - mom with experience www.vianney.ca

ORGANIZATIONS:

Every disability has a facebook page and a website - a good place to start your search

CRA- RDSP - <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/registered-disability-savings-plan-rdsp.html> - savings plan that is intended to help parents and others save for the long term financial security of a person who is eligible for the disability tax credit, contributions are not tax-deductible, withdrawals not treated as income.

Government contributions to the plan (grants at the rate of \$1 - \$3 for every \$ contributed by others & unmatched bonds) are taxed as income when withdrawn.

CRA - Disability Tax Credit to reduce caregiver's taxable income- need physician signed form

HSLDA - members only site - has many links for many diagnosis in members only pages www.hslda.org

Learning Disabilities of Ontario - webinars, workshops, self-advocacy, etc.

www.ldao.ca www.ldao.ca/introduction-to-ldsadhhd/what-are-lds/

LHIN - Local Health Initiatives Network (previously CACC) - every town - this is the Ministry of Health

Closing the Gap program, very important for serious challenges for therapy acquisition

McMaster Medical Centre - (Hamilton) autistic program run through them, get your paper work in order first

NILD <https://nildcanada.org/parents> - therapist, parent training

Youtube videos on 'how to' for many therapies - be discerning but these can be helpful