

Kids Get * Arthritis, Too!



DEVELOPING A 504 PLAN

Here are steps you can follow to develop your child's 504 plan:

1. Contact the school guidance counselor to schedule a meeting with the appropriate personnel.

- Meeting participants may include the counselor, classroom teacher(s), special education teacher, principal, school nurse, school social worker and school district 504 coordinator.

2. Prepare for meeting by compiling important documents, including:

- Written request for 504 accommodations, including the list of accommodations.
- Letter(s) from your child's doctor(s) outlining the medical condition and medication regimen. It may include recommended accommodations/modifications.
- Medical records
- School records
- Existing 504 plan (if applicable)
- Information about JIA, such as the Arthritis Foundation's brochures, Juvenile Arthritis and Juvenile Arthritis: A Teachers Guide, for meeting participants.
- You should consider bringing a family member or friend to the meeting for moral support.

3. After the meeting, request a written summary of the agreed-upon accommodations, including a timeline for implementation. It may take a week up to several months to put the plan in place.

4. You may need to follow up with the guidance counselor or the 504 coordinator to track the implementation progress. All verbal requests and agreements should be followed up with an email or letter.

5. Once implemented, ensure that all teachers and specialists have a copy of the accommodations. It is important to be flexible if the school has a valid reason for not providing a particular accommodation.

6. Develop a routine communication plan with your child's teachers, (e.g., emails, phone calls, face-to-face meetings).

7. If certain aspects of your plan are not being implemented, talk to your child's teacher first. If there is no resolution, escalate your complaint to the guidance counselor, then the 504 plan coordinator or school administrator.

8. Review and revise annually. Your child's 504 plan is a living document that needs to change as your child's needs change.

Don't Forget

Your child's 504 plan should:

- **List the specific accommodations, supports or services that will be provided and who will provide them. (Review a sample list of accommodations often used for children with JIA.)**
- **Identify the person responsible for ensuring the plan is implemented and monitored.**
- **Be distributed to teachers, specialists and support staff.**
- **Be placed in the child's school file.**