

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS

When parents first learn that their child has a disability, they are often faced with the challenge of finding the appropriate educational setting which is best suited for the growth and development of their child. It is important to become familiar with the basic rules (set forth through the U.S. Department of Education) which provide educational guidelines for children with disabilities.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal legislation that requires eligible students with disabilities to have equal access to a free and appropriate education. A parent, teacher, administrator, doctor, or a community agency may refer a child who is suspected of having a disability for assessment. Once it is determined (via proper assessment tools) that a child has a disability, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is set up and tailored for that child. The IEP mandates that a team of knowledgeable persons (teacher(s), parent(s), child if appropriate, local education agency (LEA), and other individuals at the parent's or LEA's discretion) create a specific and comprehensive special educational program unique to that child. IEPs are designed to monitor the student's strengths via measurable goals with specified assessment tools, to delineate supplemental supports and services, to define the parent's and student's level of involvement, and to create transition plans (grade to grade, school to school, school to adult life). Special education services in California are provided for all children with disabilities birth to twenty-two years of age.

To find further information on deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and additional special education programs in your local area, you may contact your local county office of education. The county offices can direct you to the programs in your area, as well as provide you with information and guidance on the IEP process listed above. A list of these county offices can be found in the "Educational Resources for Children" section of this directory.