INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ON RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

INFORMATION AND PRESENTATION BY DEVELOPMENTAL PEDIATRICS DEVELOPMENTAL SPECIALISTS AND NURSE PRACTITIONERS – MATTHEW HICKLING, CPNP, ERIN LARRABEE, CPNP, CHEYENNE DOUGLAS, CPNP, AND MAUDE KAYE, CPNP
AGENDA / GOALS

- Brief discussion on information that can be helpful to parents of children with special needs in return to school guidance/decision making. This includes:
  - Overview and stance on return to school
  - Program and IEP’s
  - Safety
  - Resources
  (10 minutes)

- Questions and Answers from Developmental Pediatrics Nurse Practitioner staff
  - This will be done by parents submitting questions through the chat section. All attendees will remain muted throughout presentation.
  - NP’s will answer questions sent in during the allotted time.
  (20 minutes)
Complete safety from COVID-19 is **not possible**. However, reasonably SAFE return can occur, and there are many benefits of return to in-person learning, especially for children with special needs.

- **Rapid changes**
- **Child and family at low-risk**
- **Child and family at higher risk,**

From the CDC: “Some children may be at increased risk of getting COVID-19 or may be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. For these children, parents and caregivers may need to take additional precautions with regard to school re-entry. There are more COVID-19 cases reported among children with intellectual and developmental disabilities than those without.”
What puts children at higher risk?

From the CDC:

Children who are medically complex, who have serious genetic, neurologic, metabolic disorders, and with congenital (since birth) heart disease might be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Similar to adults, children with obesity, diabetes, asthma and chronic lung disease, or immunosuppression might be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
PROGRAMS AND IEP'S

• Case-By-Case Basis

• IEP’s are individualized documents and each child will need their own consideration. The questions that should be considered include:
  
  • 1. Will it be safe for my child?
  • 2. Will my child’s most pressing needs and their capabilities be supported?
  • 3. Recognizing that some services may not be available or modified, what are creative ways to supply support and encourage progress?

• In this exceptional time, close communication with school staff and family is critical.
SAFETY

• From NYS Education Department –
  • FACE COVERING AND PPE
    • Cloth face coverings protect others if the wearer is infected with SARS CoV-2 and is not aware.
    • Cloth masks may offer some level of protection for the wearer. Evidence continues to mount on the importance of universal face coverings in interrupting the spread of SARS-CoV-2.
    • Although ideal, universal face covering use is not always possible in the school setting for many reasons.
SAFETY

• What about Individuals who have difficulties with masks?


• Social Story link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InP-uMn6q_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InP-uMn6q_U)

• Mask Wearing Toolkit:
  • [https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/MediaLibraries/URMCMedia/strong-center-developmental-disabilities/documents/Mask-Wearing-Toolkit.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0tluBK6iTbA830Q4ZOFDLkwpgk6lXEgW2ry8AKYJdKlk1Bl4rLTfHp14](https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/MediaLibraries/URMCMedia/strong-center-developmental-disabilities/documents/Mask-Wearing-Toolkit.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0tluBK6iTbA830Q4ZOFDLkwpgk6lXEgW2ry8AKYJdKlk1Bl4rLTfHp14)
QUESTIONS TO HELP GUIDE YOUR DECISION

• Your child
  • Does my child have any health conditions that would make them high risk?
  • What are their learning needs? How would they be met in the different school options?
  • Can my child tolerate the masking and social distancing requirements of in-person school?

• Your family
  • Are there high risk family members or care providers?
  • Is your family able to accommodate distance learning?
  • Who would supervise your child during the school day? How does it impact caregivers work schedules?
    What would you do about transportation to and from school?

• Your school
  • What are the options being offered?
  • What precautions are being taken?
  • How will the school to addressing each part of my child’s IEP?
RESOURCES

• Here is some general guidance on return to school:

• American Academy of Pediatrics Guidance for School Re-Entry:

• Here is a tool for families to use to help with the decision to return to school for a child with special needs.  https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/decision-tool.html

• New York State Education Department School Reopening Guidance

• This is a good website for social stories and the virus as well as other resources:  https://familiestotherinc.org/coronavirus-covid-19/#kids

• Considerations and Ideas to help your child with the transition back to school....