



Zero 4 Nine: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

The campaign slogan promotes, zero drinks for the nine months of pregnancy.

Province-Wide F.A.S.D. Awareness

London, ONT – With his dog Shadow by his side, Tom Wilkinson brought his Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) awareness walk to the Middlesex- London Health Unit this afternoon. The 28 year- old Belleville man began his walk across the province on Monday, April 3rd in Windsor and hopes to complete his journey on Wednesday, May 10, 2006 on Parliament Hill.

Tom Wilkinson was *diagnosed with FASD at the age of 13*. The disorder has left him with **limited intellectual development and abilities and has created difficulties with physical, social and emotional development**. This is the second time he has undertaken a walk across Ontario, having first completed the challenge in 2001. A part-time employee at the Wal-Mart in Belleville, Tom is also a strong advocate for community services and support for individuals with FASD.

“Every step Shadow and I take on this walk from Windsor to Ottawa will be worth it if it prevents one baby from being born with FASD,” says Tom Wilkinson. “It is my hope that by making more and more people aware of this syndrome, that some day, no babies will be born with it.”

The goal of Tom’s Walk Across Ontario is to raise awareness and funds for FASTEC, the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Treatment & Education Centre Inc. in Belleville, through pledges and the sale of green “Zero 4 Nine” (zero alcohol for nine months) bracelets.

<http://www.thehealthline.ca/viewnews.asp?newsid=555>

04.06.06
Middlesex-London Health Unit

Sometimes the Biggest Reason to Abstain

From Alcohol is a Little One

101 Reasons to Abstain from Alcohol during Pregnancy:

two eyes
one nose
two ears
ten toes

ten fingers
one sweet mouth
two strong legs to run
two arms to give hugs with
one straight and strong spine
two hands to hold on tightly with
two feet to walk on tall and proud

one heart to beat steady & strong
two lungs to sing a nursery song
20 baby teeth for a beautiful smile
32 bright & white secondary teeth
one liver for a healthy metabolism
two first words: "Mama" & "Dada"
1 first step towards independence

2 frontal lobes to control impulses
1 corpus callosum to process info
2 healthy parents to care for baby
1 precious little spirit that will thrive
with the love of a nurturing family,
to realize a full potential of health,
happiness, and life independence

How Can and IEP or 504 Help the Teacher?

Accommodations CAN help the classroom and teacher!

Although, accommodations would seem to be extra work for the teacher, in the long run, it is **wise and productive to be proactive** by implementing the modifications. The behavioral benefit as well as the skill building activities will ultimately help the teacher have a **productive day for all students** in the classroom.

Benefits

1. If the student does not feel frustrated they will behave during instruction
2. If the class does not have disruptions the whole class can benefit from instructional time.
3. If the students are using more of their time to learn then scores will be higher.
4. If the teacher puts the effort in up front the payoff will be increased and stress will be reduced.

Remember the basics:

1. Providing structure helps all students to focus
2. Making instructions simple (step by step) and concrete reduces misunderstanding
3. Use multiple methods of teaching (auditory, visual, verbal, and tactile) helps provide stimulation and growth for all students

What services might be needed?

Currently, it seems that many children diagnosed with FAS or even those undiagnosed appear to receive services for ADHD, emotionally impaired, learning disabled and possibly communication skill development. It should be understood that specific interventions should be tailored to meet the needs of each child, as there are generally coexisting or co-current disabilities associated with FAS.

When children are exposed prenatally to alcohol they may be affected slightly or severely with multiple negative results. One prescribed teaching method is not helpful or possible. These children have central nervous system abnormalities both structurally and neurologically plus global cognitive or intellectual deficits that effect a range of domains. Therefore, service needs can and will include a broad range of techniques. It is best to look at children as individuals and look at their specific issues.

The bottom line is there are no set number of services or type of services that will be a “*one-size fits all*”. According to the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report issued October 28, 2005 states, “General areas of service needs for persons with FAS and their families should include strategies that stabilize home placement, improve parent-child interaction through caregiver education, advocate for access to services and educate service professionals involved with affected persons and their families regarding FAS and its consequences.”

IEP's vs. 504 Plans

There are two types of written plans, which must be developed and implemented by public schools regarding students with disabilities. Students with disabilities requiring only reasonable accommodation must have a written plan under Section 504; this is commonly referred to as a 504 plan. 504 plans should be developed by a committee, consisting of the student with a disability (if appropriate), the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), the student's teacher(s), the student's counselor, and the 504 coordinator. The student's disability and corresponding need for reasonable accommodation are identified and documented in the plan. Likewise, the plan delineates the specific accommodations, which will be implemented by the school. All school staff involved in the provision of accommodations should be contacted by the 504 coordinator and made aware of their duties and responsibilities. The plan itself should be updated at least annually.

For students with disabilities who require specialized instruction, the IDEA controls the procedural requirements. The IDEA process is more involved than that required under Section 504. Instruction and accommodation under the IDEA are provided in accord with a plan called an Individualized Education Program, known as an IEP. A student's IEP is a legal document, which, in part, sets forth the duties and responsibilities of the school district and staff regarding that student. It is the responsibility of special educators, regular education teachers, administrators, counselors, and other professional educators to be thoroughly familiar with the provisions of the IEP for EACH of their students with disabilities.

The remainder of this document sets forth the general procedural information that regular educators should know about the IEP/IDEA process. **REMEMBER:** Be safe. Seek the advice of special educators. Whether you are a teacher, an administrator, or a counselor, you will save yourself considerable time and trouble -- and you will do a much better job for your students with disabilities -- if you learn to appreciate these specialists as a valuable resource.

Step One: Identification

Schools and educators have a legal duty to identify students with disabilities.

Step Two: Intervention

Once an educator identifies a concern regarding the performance of a particular student, a period of intervention begins. The educator should document the concerns and subsequent interventions. The key issue is whether the strategies enable the student to benefit from the regular education curriculum.

Step Three: Referral to the 504 Coordinator

The educator must refer the student for further consideration if either of two situations exists:

Step Four: Review by the 504 Committee

When a case is referred, the 504 coordinator should call a meeting of the 504 team.

Step Five: Referral for Special Education Evaluation and Formation of the IEP Team

As soon as a case is referred to special education, the matter comes under the control of the IDEA. At this time, a special educator becomes the "case manager" and an IEP Team is formed.

Step Six: Evaluation

The case manager gives the IEP Team members notice and the first meeting is held to determine the existence of a disability and what, if any, need exists for specialized instruction.

Step Seven: Eligibility

After the evaluation is completed, the Team is reconvened and looks at whether the results meet the state and federal criteria for the existence of a disability under the IDEA and whether the student requires specialized instruction.

Step Eight: Designing the IEP

If the Team decides that the student is eligible, the Team must then design the student's educational program.

Step Nine: Implementation of the IEP

The IEP is an important formal legal document. The program established by the IEP must be fully and immediately implemented by the district.

Step Ten: Monitoring

IEP implementation and the student progress in accord with the IEP should be monitored continuously throughout the year.

Step Eleven: Review (Annual IEP Review and Three-Year Re-Evaluation)

The IEP must be reviewed.

IEP's vs. 504 Plans Continued...

Discipline

The law recognizes that students with disabilities, whether receiving special education or receiving only reasonable accommodation, should not be removed from school for infractions which are manifestations of their disabilities. Consider two examples:

1. Students with learning disabilities in the area of reading, or with disabilities that result in any number of processing difficulties, may not comprehend written guidelines, or may not pick up on "implied" behavioral expectations. Such students cannot be held accountable for violations of expectations, which have not been explicitly presented to the student in a manner assuring comprehension. Failure to comply with such provisions would be "manifestations of their disabilities."
2. Students with autism, emotional disturbance, or mental retardation may behave in ways that do not conform to our usual notions of appropriate educational decorum. Nevertheless, to the extent that such behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the student cannot be disciplined for such behavior.

The IDEA sets forth specific procedural requirements for disciplinary actions involving removal from school. Note that this requirement has the potential to create confusion in that the Team may be inclined to make a judgment regarding the facts (i.e., whether the alleged behavior occurred) instead of limiting its judgment to whether the behavior, if it did occur, is a manifestation of the disability. Also note that even if the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability (and the student is therefore suspended or expelled) the school district must continue to provide services to the student. If the student cannot come to school, then the district must provide a home tutor, or provide services in another setting. As with all other decisions regarding services to students with IEP's, the alternative educational setting must be determined by the IEP Team.

Transition

The IDEA requires that beginning at age 14, IEP's incorporate the various goals and objectives applicable to student needs regarding transition from high school to post-high school life. Regular educators in middle school and high school should therefore be aware that IEP's will contain such goals and that the education of students with IEP's on these grade levels will involve requirements, curricula, and activities which go beyond the regular education curriculum.

Self-Advocacy

Arguably the most important skill for students with disabilities to acquire is that of self-advocacy. This involves knowledge of one's rights and the skills necessary to assure enforcement of those rights. Regular educators should remain aware that self-advocacy training is an important part of specialized instruction. Remember that students are in the process of learning these skills; they are not masters of these skills. As such, be helpful to students with disabilities; encourage their efforts to enforce the modifications/accommodations to which they are entitled. As students learn to use self-advocacy skills, they may initially use these skills in an unrefined or harsh manner. Try not to be insulted or become defensive when students attempt to enforce their rights as persons with disabilities. Remember that these students must learn to identify and enforce their rights and that they had better learn this by the time they graduate.

<http://www.slc.sevier.org/iepv504.htm>

Frequently Asked Questions about 504 Plans for Teachers

1. **Q. What is a 504 plan?**
A. A 504 plan is a legal document falling under the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is designed to plan a program of instructional services to assist students with special needs who are in a regular education setting. A 504 plan is not an Individualized Education Program (IEP) as is required for special education students. However, a student moving from a special education to a regular education placement could be placed under a 504 plan.
2. **Q. How is a student considered for a 504 plan?**
A. A student with a physical or emotional disability, or who is recovering from a chemical dependency, or who has an impairment (i.e. Attention Deficit Disorder) that restricts one or more major life activities.
3. **Q. What are examples of "major life activities"?**
A. Major life activities include caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and learning.
4. **Q. What is the process for placing a student on a 504 plan?**
A. There are essentially four steps:
 1. Student is referred by teacher, support staff, parent/legal guardian, physician, or therapist. On occasion, a student may initiate a self-referral.
 2. A 504 plan meeting is held.
 3. A plan for the student is developed.
 4. A review date is set.
5. **Q. Who is involved in the process?**
A. The student, parent/legal guardian, teachers, principals, Pupil Services administrators, support staff (i.e. nurse, counselor, psychologist, language/speech pathologist) as well as the student's physician or therapist may be involved in the placement process including the 504 meeting.
6. **Q. What is the teacher(s) role/responsibility in the 504 placement process?**
A. If you have a concern regarding a child's performance and/or behavior that you believe is caused by a disabling condition, you should initiate a referral after consultation with support staff and/or building administrators.

Also, you should participate in any meetings where a 504 plan may be developed. Further, you should be ready to supply pertinent data and documentation such as test scores, discipline referrals, and anecdotal information to assist in the writing of the plan.

7. **Q. What accommodations might be included in the 504 plan?**
A. Attached is a sample list of accommodations taken from the Pupil Services Handbook. Additional examples are presented below:
 A child's seat assignment accommodates a disability.
 A diabetic child may be permitted to eat in the classroom.
 A child may be permitted to go to the office for the administration of medication.
 A student's assignments or testing conditions may be adjusted (i.e. extensions of time, modification of test questions).
Note: This is a team process where all members of the team, not just the teacher, may have responsibilities in fulfilling the requirements of the 504 plan.
8. **Q. What if a teacher disagrees with the 504 plan or any of its components? What are my rights?**
A. If you disagree with the 504 plan you can:
 Express your views at the meeting and suggest alternatives. Refuse to sign the plan.
 Contact your building steward if you believe the plan alters your terms and conditions of employment.

9. Q. Once the plan is approved, what are my responsibilities?

A. You are expected to reasonably follow the strategies written to implement the plan and to participate in the review process.

10. Q. Can a 504 plan be altered and can I request changes in the plan?

A. Yes. Make a written request to your building principal for a Pupil Services Team meeting. Send a copy to all who attended the meeting where the original plan was approved. In addition, be sure that there is a planned review date on the original 504 document so that the effectiveness of the plan can be evaluated and adjustments made, if needed, at that time.

11. Q. If I sign off on a 504 plan, what is my accountability?

A. You are legally responsible to implement your designated accommodation/strategies on the plan. You are advised to maintain regular and consistent documentation to display that you have attempted to implement the plan. For example: You may keep a file of student, work or write special notations in your grade book, or maintain personal notes. Keep copies of any adjusted tests, assignments, behavior plans, and all notes to and from parents/legal guardians.

Again, if the plan isn't working for the student, ask in writing for the assistance of support staff (counselors, nurses, psychologists, etc.). Also, some degree of accountability rests with the parents/legal guardians in following through. Do not accept the burden alone. Again, keep copies of all pertinent documents.

12. Q. Can I call the union office with questions or concerns regarding individual students, placements, and 504 plans?

A. Yes. We will advise and support. Ultimately, the union office will pursue the matter if students are not being well-served or if violations of contract occur. If you have a problem, the initial contact should be through the union steward who will follow up with the building principal and appropriate staff.

We hope these twelve guidelines are helpful. They are not designed to cover or explain every aspect and detail of the federal statutes and rules that govern Adjusted Regular Education Plans (504 plans). The 504 process includes a number of forms and documents that you may encounter as the process unfolds.

<http://www.chtu.org/504.html>

Functional Behavioral Assessment & Behavior Intervention Plan

Functional Behavioral Assessment

From Terri Mauro,

Definition: A *Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)* is an attempt to look beyond the obvious interpretation of behavior as "bad" and determine what function it may be serving for a child. Truly understanding why a child behaves the way he or she does is the first, best step to developing strategies to stop the behavior. Schools are required by law to use FBA when dealing with challenging behavior in students with special needs. The process usually involves documenting the antecedent (what comes before the behavior), behavior, and consequence (what happens after the behavior) over a number of weeks; interviewing teachers, parents, and others who work with the child; evaluating how the child's disability may affect behavior; and manipulating the environment to see if a way can be found to avoid the behavior. This is usually done by a behavioral specialist, and then becomes the basis for a Behavior Intervention Plan.

Behavior Intervention Plan

Definition: A *Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)* takes the observations made in a Functional Behavioral Assessment and turns them into a concrete plan of action for managing a student's behavior. A BIP may include ways to change the environment to keep behavior from starting in the first place, provide positive reinforcement to promote good behavior, employ planned ignoring to avoid reinforcing bad behavior, and provide supports needed so that the student will not be driven to act out due to frustration or fatigue. When a behavior plan is agreed to, the school and staff are legally obligated to follow it, and consequences of not following it should not be inflicted on the student. However, as with so many provisions of IDEA, when there is a true partnership between schools and families creates the best scenario for students to learn.

Sample behavior plans for specific disabilities

<http://specialchildren.about.com/od/specialeducation/qt/behaviorplan.htm>

<http://specialchildren.about.com/od/fba/q/FBA.htm>

Sample Functional Behavior Plan <http://www.visionplanet.com/pdf/BIprintdocument.pdf>

Basic plans include...

Describe the behavior,	Who is responsible for prevention strategies?
When it was observed?	Response strategies, and
What testing has been administered?	Reinforcement strategies
What conclusions were drawn?	
What other strategies were considered?	