THE 10 QUESTIONS EVERY PARENT SHOULD ASK AT AN IEP *Meeting*

A PARENT GUIDE FROM SPECTRUM TREK

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The 10 Questions Every Parent Should Ask at an IEP Meeting

IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or IPP meetings are important opportunities to ensure your child receives the support they need to succeed in school. But many parents walk into these meetings feeling overwhelmed or unsure what to ask. As a former elementary teacher and autism mom, I've been on both sides of the table. These questions can help guide productive conversations and ensure your child's needs remain at the center of the discussion.

1. What are my child's current strengths in the classroom?
It's important to start with strengths. Understanding what your child does well helps build confidence and ensures support plans build on those strengths.
Ask teachers to share examples of when your child is successful during the school day.

2. What specific challenges is my child experiencing at school?
Ask for clear examples of when and where challenges occur.
For example:

- transitions
- social interactions
- focus
- academic tasks
- sensory environments

Understanding the context helps identify the right supports.

3. What supports or accommodations are currently in place?
Ask the team to explain exactly what supports your child receives.
Examples may include:

- sensory breaks
- visual schedules
- extra processing time
- reduced workload
- quiet workspaces

Make sure you understand how and when these supports are used.

4. How is my child progressing toward their IEP goals?
Ask the team how progress is measured.
Questions to ask:

- How often is progress monitored?
- What data or observations are used?
- Are the goals still appropriate?

Progress tracking ensures the plan is working.

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5. What strategies are helping my child succeed?
Teachers and support staff often discover strategies that work well.
Examples might include:

- visual supports
- movement breaks
- structured routines
- assistive technology

Ask how these strategies are being used and whether they can also be supported at home.

6. What happens when my child becomes overwhelmed or dysregulated?
Understanding the school's plan for difficult moments is very important.
Ask:

- What early signs do staff notice?
- What calming strategies are used?
- Who supports my child during these moments?

This helps ensure responses are consistent and supportive.

7. How do teachers and educational assistants communicate with each other about my child's needs?
Many students work with multiple staff members during the day.
Ask how information is shared between:

- classroom teachers
- educational assistants
- resource teachers
- specialists

Strong communication between staff helps maintain consistent support.

8. How can we improve communication between home and school?
Consistent communication helps parents stay informed and supports continuity between home and school.
Options may include:

- communication notebooks
- email updates
- scheduled check-ins
- behavior or progress reports

Choose a method that works for both the family and school team.

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9. What skills should we be working on at home to support my child's development?
Teachers often have valuable insight into skills that can be reinforced at home.
Examples may include:

- independence skills
- social communication
- organization
- emotional regulation

Working together creates consistency for the child.

10. When will we meet again to review progress?
IEP plans should be reviewed regularly.
Ask:

- When will the next review meeting happen?
- How will progress be shared in the meantime?

This ensures the plan continues to evolve as your child grows.

A Final Note for Parents
IEP meetings can feel intimidating, but remember:
You are an important part of your child's team.
You know your child better than anyone else.
Your voice matters.
When families and schools work together, children are better supported and more likely to succeed.