

Making the Most of Your Child's IEP: The "411" on Creating Effective IEP Goals



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Formed Families Forward

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Pre-Test

Formed Families Forward - who we are...

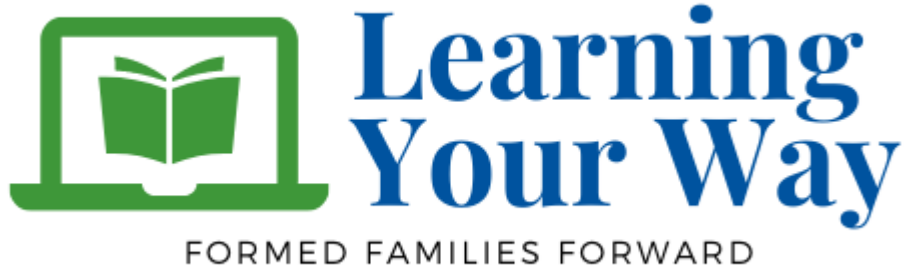
- A family-led resource center in Northern Virginia supporting foster, adoptive and kinship families who are raising children, youth & young adults with special needs, and professionals who work with our families.
- We offer free training, consultations to families, events, resources, and systems navigation. Also - peer support groups; webinars; classes; child care program; videos and other resources.
- Family partner to Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VDOE project)

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Certificates of Attendance:

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Register at
<https://bit.ly/FFFLYWfall24>

FREE ONLINE COURSES

LEARNING YOUR WAY
Self-Paced Classes open now!

FREE access to topics:

- Special Education 101
- Constructive Communication and Collaboration
- Trauma Basics
- Dispute Resolution
- Kinship Care
- Other Health Impairments: ADHD, FASD, Tourette Syn.
- Positive Parenting

Now Open!

Safe & Calm Workshop

- Monday, December 16 at 11:45 AM or 6:45 PM
- Light Meal
- Take home calming and prevention tools
- Spanish interpretation available

<https://bit.ly/FFFsafeholidays>

Free Training for Parents & Caregivers of School Children

STAYING SAFE & CALM OVER WINTER BREAK & BEYOND

Training to Reduce Stress, Build Routines, & Manage Risks at Home

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ENJOY:
A light meal:
Choose a lunch-time OR dinner-time session!

Spanish language interpretation (on request)

LEARN TO:
Reduce Stress
Build Routines
Manage Risks

LEAVE WITH:
Practical Strategies
Take-Home Items
New Connections
Resources

REGISTER TODAY
FormedFamiliesForward.org
or call (703) 539-2904

Monday, Dec. 16, 2024
11:45 AM - 1:00 PM OR
6:45 - 8:00 PM

Charles Houston Recreation Center
901 Wythe St., Alexandria VA

MADE POSSIBLE WITH SUPPORT FROM VA DBHDS

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Peer Support Groups



- **Fairfax Kinship Support Group**- Virtual on first Thursday evenings; in-person on third Thursday evenings
- **Formed Families Together (Foster, Adoptive and Kinship) Support Group**- Virtual on first Sunday evenings; in-person on third Wednesday evenings

Register at <https://formedfamiliesforward.org/services/peer-support-groups/>

POLL

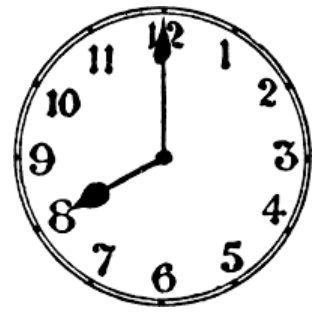
What's your role(s)?

- Adoptive parent
- Kinship caregiver
- Foster or resource parent
- Professional
- Birth parent

Chat in any additional roles.



Plan for Our Time



- A quick review of the legal foundation for IEPs
- Why do meaningful goals matter?
- What's the PLAAFP and what does it have to do with goal creation?
- What are the characteristics of high-quality, meaningful goals? How do we make our goals “SMART”?
- How do I know my child is making progress?
- And, if not, how do I make changes?

A Quick Reminder: What is an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?



- Outlines the special education services and support a student with a disability will receive (written program)
- Guarantees a free, appropriate public education (FAPE)
- Mandated and guided by federal law: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Created by a multidisciplinary team (includes family)

Parent Participation - What IDEA Says!

Parental participation is the “very essence of the IDEA,” and when schools fail in the obligation to include parents in the IEP process, it is very likely that FAPE will be denied.

Amanda J. v. Clark County School District, 2001, p.892

Who is a parent under the IDEA?



- A biological or adoptive parent
- A foster parent
- A guardian
- An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative)
- If none of above can serve, a surrogate parent appointed by school
- An emancipated minor
(§ 20-124.6 and § 21.1-215.1 of the Code of Virginia; 34 CFR 99.4 and 34 CFR 300.30)

Essential Components of an IEP

- Present Levels of Academic Achievement & Functional Performance (PLAAFP) OR Present Levels of Performance (PLOP)
- Measurable Annual Goals
- Description of Special Education Services and Supports
- Methods for Measuring and Reporting Progress
- Participation in General Education Curriculum
- Accommodations and Modifications
- Transition Planning (for students aged 14 and above)

The PLAAFP Statement

“A statement of the child’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including—

- (i) How the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children); or
- (ii) For preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child’s participation in appropriate activities.”

Sec. 300.320 (a) (1)

What does IDEA say about goals?

Each child's IEP must contain the following:

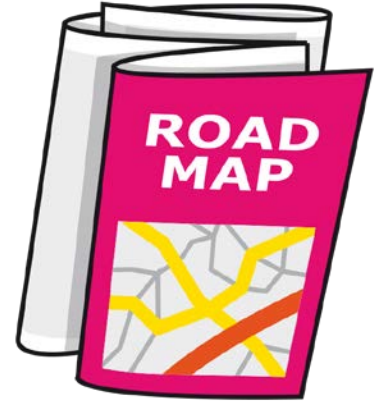
(i) a statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to –

- (A) Meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum;
- (B) And, meet each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability.

Sec. 300.320(a)(2)

Why do meaningful goals matter?

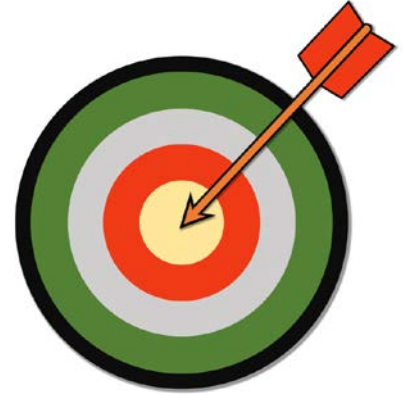
- Drive targeted and effective instruction
- Facilitate measurable student progress
- Ensure compliance with legal standards
- Enhance student motivation and engagement
- Support long-term educational and life outcomes



Aligning Goals with Present Levels of Performance

Essential for creating relevant goals!

- Highlights strengths to build on
- Identifies gaps and areas of need
- Provides a baseline to measure progress
- Ensures that instruction is targeted effectively
- Creates continuity and logical, achievable progression in learning



Elements of a High-Quality PLAAFP

**Student
Needs**

**Effects on
Progress**

**Baseline
Information**

**Connection
to Goals**

Student Needs

PLAAFP should include:

- Main areas of concern
- Parents/caregivers' concerns
- Results from the evaluation
- Student's strengths
- Student's instructional preferences



Source: PROGRESS Center at the American Institutes for Research

Effect on Progress in General Education

PLAAFP should include an explanation of how the student's disability affects their **access** to and **involvement** and **progress** in the general education curriculum.



Baseline Information



PLAAFP statement should:

- Be based on current data
- Be specific enough to determine progress
- Be based on multiple sources/variety of assessments
- Discuss assessments in relation to peers and/or specific skills

Connection to Goals and/or Services

Does the PLAAFP provide enough information to develop annual goals and/or determine services and supports?



Test Questions for PLAAFP Statement

Does it provide a snapshot including both strengths and areas of need?

Is family input present and clearly considered?

Are statements supported by data? Are multiple sources of data used?

Are the data understandable to the family/student/teacher?

Are PLAAFP summary statements present for each skill area included?

Could you write observable and measurable individualized goals based on PLAAFP?

If you removed the student's name, could someone who knows the student well identify the student based on reading this PLAAFP statement?

How does this PLAAFP stand up to the test?

Rodney is a 12 year old, 7th grade student who was diagnosed with a learning disability in math in 5th grade. At that time, he was earning Ds and Fs in math class and received a score of “Fail/Below Basic” on the end of year SOL math assessment. He continues to have problems in his math and science classes. Jeremy is a strong reader and is performing well in his English and History classes.

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Insist on a Better PLAAFP Statement

When PLAAFP statements are inaccurate or incomplete, it is likely that the rest of the IEP is invalid, possibly leading to a violation of the FAPE requirement of IDEA.

Developing Educationally Meaningful and Legally Sound IEPs, Yell et al.

Creating High Quality Goals Starts with Asking the Right Questions



- What do we want for the student?
- What is the current reality of the student's circumstances?
- What does the student need to be successful?
- How do we support the student's family and educators to assist the student?

Source: National Center on Intensive Intervention, PROGRESS Center

How do we recognize
high-quality,
meaningful IEP goals?



1) High-Quality Goals Set High Expectations

Why We Do What We Do

*Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District
RE-1 (2017)*

- “To meet its substantive obligation under the IDEA, a school must offer an IEP **reasonably calculated** to enable a child to **make progress** appropriate **in light of the child’s circumstances.**” (emphasis added)



2) High-Quality Goals Include:

Who

- Student

Timeframe

- Length of Time

Conditions

- Under What Conditions

Behavior

- Will Do What

Criterion

- To What Level or Degree

Source: W&M TTAC

3) High-Quality IEP Goals are

S

M

A

R

T



Specific



Measurable



Attainable



Relevant



Time Based



Specific

When orally presented with a 2nd grade reading passage, Lilliana will demonstrate comprehension by verbally....





Measurable

...with an overall 3 out of 4 score on a weekly reading comprehension rubric...





Time-bound

... by 5/31/25.





Attainable & Relevant

Ask: Is this goal relevant and attainable for Lilliana?



High-Quality Goal Examples

- By June 8, 2020, when given an equation shown on a graph and the use of a graphing calculator, Stephen will graph linear equations and inequalities with two variables with 85% accuracy in 3 out of 5 attempts.
- Chloe will tell fictional or personal stories, sequentially and with three or more details, using appropriate sentence structure and at least 5 word utterances over 2 of 3 opportunities across 5 data days, as measured by teacher/therapist observation & data collection by April 2020.

SPECIFIC * MEASURABLE * ATTAINABLE * RELEVANT * TIME-BASED

Is This Goal SMART?

Given a text, John will accurately summarize the main idea and key details with 90% accuracy across three consecutive trials per quarter.

SMART Goal Example



By June 2025, given a 3rd grade text and a graphic organizer, John will accurately summarize the main idea and key details in writing with 90% accuracy across three consecutive trials per quarter.

4) High-Quality Goals are Individualized

Sample Goals and Goal Banks

- Sample goals and goal banks may contain the technical components of a compliant goal, but they are unlikely to be the right fit for students.



5) High Quality Behavior Goals are Written to Increase Desired Behavior

Behavior goals should be designed to increase desired replacement behaviors.

Not the most productive goals:

- X Will refrain from....
- X Will remain in assigned area
- X Will not.....

High-Quality Behavior Goal Examples

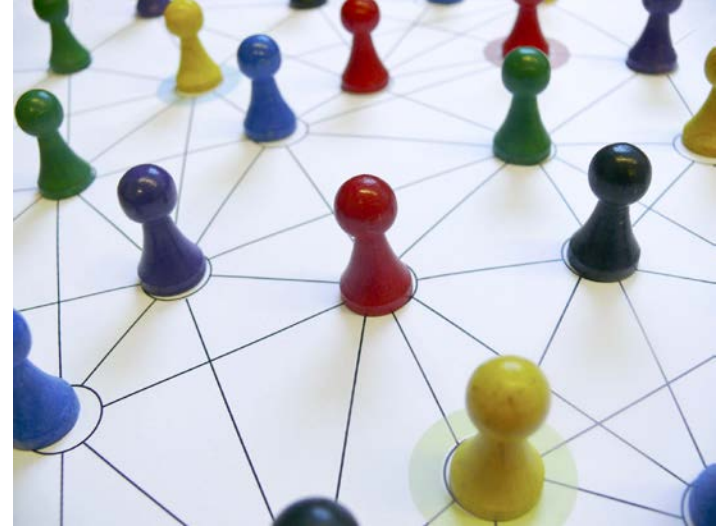
- Given a class discussion on assigned reading material, Erin will squeeze stress ball and wait silently for 20 seconds for others to comment before adding to discussions, in 4 of 5 weekly trials by the end of 2nd grade.
- Given a task and a list of materials, Jim will gather 100% of the needed items to complete the task on 4 of 5 tries evaluated by teacher checklist monthly by the end of year.

SPECIFIC * MEASURABLE * ATTAINABLE * RELEVANT * TIME-BASED

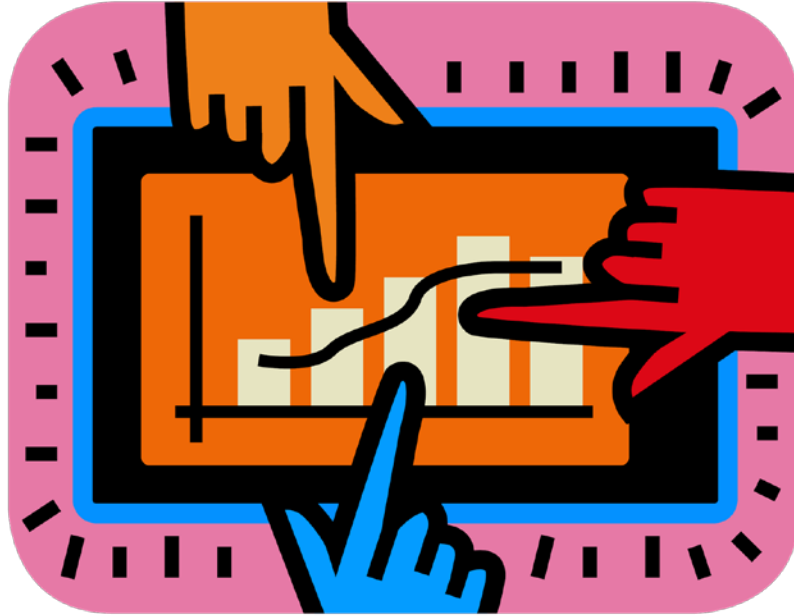
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Functional Behavioral Assessment

- Clear description of the behavior
- Collect indirect & direct data
- Analyze data, determine trends, hypothesize function of behavior
 - Antecedent events
 - Operational definition
 - Consequences



Where Does Progress Monitoring Fit In?



The Basics of Progress Monitoring

Repeated measurement of student performance used to inform instruction of individual students in general and special education.

Recognizing a Good Progress Monitoring Plan

- What is the baseline data and goal?
- Who will collect the data?
- How often will data be collected?
- What tool will be used to collect data?
- What is the timeline/frequency?



What Makes a Good Progress Monitoring Tool?

- Brief and easy to administer
- Able to be used repeatedly over time
- Sensitive to change in student performance
- Valid, reliable, and evidence based



National Center on Intensive Intervention

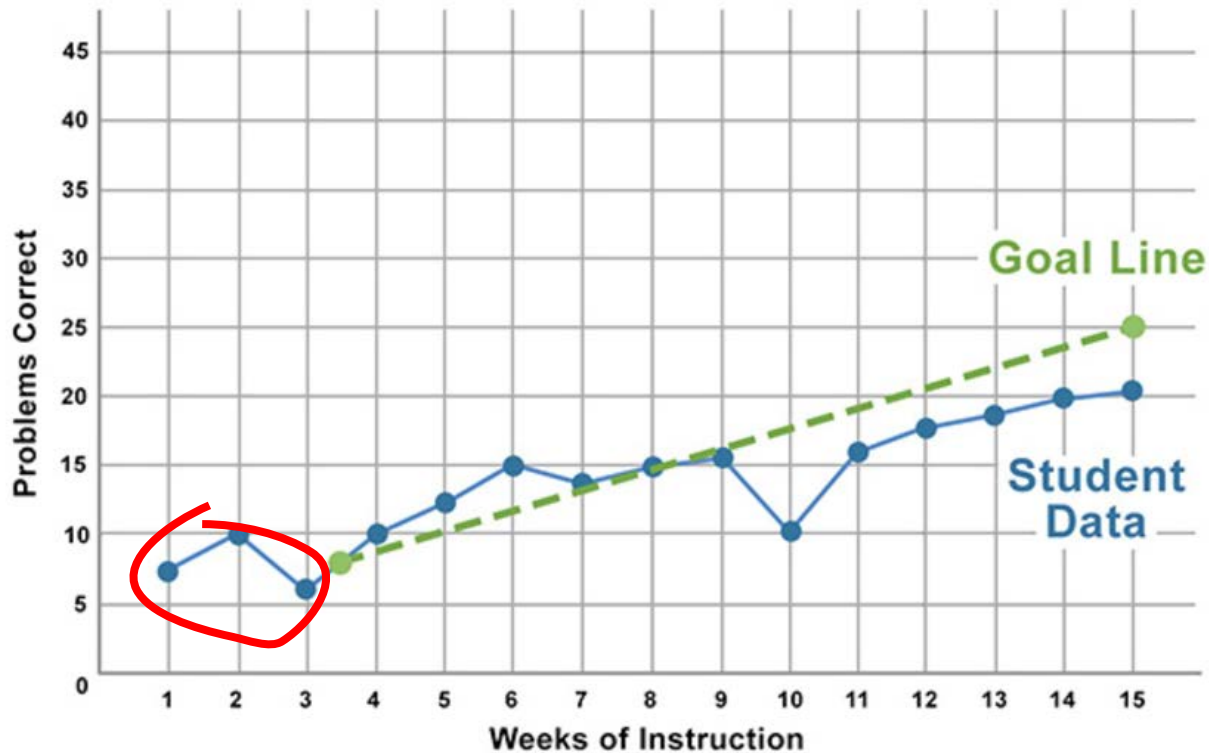
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Data Should Be Able to be Graphed



- Interpret trends & patterns
- Compare progress to benchmarks
- Identify areas of success/concern
- Make data-driven instructional adjustments

Creating a Graph



Progress Must Be Reported to Families

IDEA requires that parents are regularly informed of their child's progress toward IEP goals, at least as often as progress is reported to parents of students without disabilities.

Progress Monitoring Tells Us When Goals Need Adjusted

- Student has already met goals
- Student is consistently struggling despite interventions
- Student's needs have changed



Tips for Formed Families

- Request draft goals in advance
- Seek input from others (outside providers, DSS, family, etc.)
- Consider a trauma impact statement in the PLAAFP
- Remember: goals should be ambitious
- Make sure your voice is heard and included in the IEP
- Ask for an IEP meeting if adjustments are needed

Conclusions – Caution: Ask Yourself...

Are the goals:

- Linked to PLAAFP
- Ambitious
- Measurable
- Data Driven



Thank you!

**Please complete the
Post-Test & Evaluation**

Formed Families Forward – Stay in Touch!

PLEASE COMPLETE THE EVALUATION & POST TEST.

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