

Care Plans for SADS Kids in School

Definitions

School nurses use Care Plans for children who have a medical condition to help them keep your kids safe in school. These plans should be used by teachers, aides, school administration—every person who has contact with your child at school. School districts and schools around the country have many names (and initials!) for these plans but, essentially, they should all contain the information that we recommend on our Individualized School Health Care Plans.

To help you sort out some of the various types of plans (names and initials) being used, we provide the following brief definitions:

Individualized Educational Plan/Program (IEP): The IEP is written by the IEP team for a student who has been found to be eligible for special education and related services under IDEA.

504 Plan: 504-Plan is written for a student who is not eligible for special education under IDEA, but still needs accommodations in environment or instruction in the regular education classroom to access an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment (Arnold & Silkwood, 1999).

The federal government has established under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Section 504 that a child cannot be denied access to “reasonable accommodations” in his or her school regarding health issues that may impair his or her ability to function. A 504 plan is, therefore, for students who have a “disability--temporary or permanent--that substantially limits one or more major life activities”.

Each school district should have a plan in place for 504 accommodations. The plan should include all modifications and services required to ensure a student's right to a free and appropriate public education.

Individualized Health Care Plan (IHP): The IHP is a plan of action for management of actual and potential health care needs during the school day, on field trips, and at school-sponsored activities. The IHP provides a format to record each step in the nursing process, where the school nurse summarizes the assessment findings, synthesizes problem statements in the form of nursing diagnoses, formulates goals, formulates plans of action, and documents interventions and the evaluation of outcomes (Arnold & Silkwood, 1999, p. 2).

Emergency Care Plan (ECP): Whenever there is a known risk of an emergency, as there is in the management of students with SADS conditions in schools, then the school nurse creates an Emergency Care Plan (ECP). The ECP is an outcome of the IHP and is listed in the IHP as such. It is a clearly written step-by-step set of instructions for what to do in a particular emergency situation. It is written in language that a layperson can understand because it is created to be used by non-nursing school personnel who may respond to an emergency. Unlike the IHP, the ECP is distributed to appropriate staff, and the school nurse trains those staff to respond to emergencies that may arise with individual students (Arnold & Silkwood, 1999).

These are most likely not all of the types of plans—and names—that are being used around the country. The definitions of the usage of the plan may not be accurate for every school district either. However, we hope these will be helpful as you work to get a plan in place for your student(s). please let us know if you have any questions or encounter any problems.

Good Luck!