



Process for planning a 504 Meeting

With the 2011-2012 school year coming to a close, we felt that now would be a great time to share tips with you regarding 504 Plan Meetings for the 2012-2013 school year.

1. **Document everything!**
 - a. All phone, email and letter contacts
 - b. Document problems
 - c. Document good things

2. **Research 504 plans**
 - a. School Advisory Toolkit
 - b. JDRF Website
 - c. Other internet websites

3. **Write down all accommodations you need and want**
 - a. Label items which are either non-negotiable items or items you'd like but could give up
 - b. Put all accommodations in a logical order
 - i. Blood testing issues (when and where)
 - ii. Classroom accommodations (extra time, homework modifications)
 - iii. Rule accommodations (can carry a backpack, eat in classroom, etc.)
 - iv. Training (who is trained, substitute procedures, etc.)
 - v. Communication with parents, doctor, nurse, teachers, etc.)

4. **Get a medical/health plan from the doctor (which is NOT a substitute for a 504 plan)**

5. **Write a letter requesting a meeting for the purpose of establishing eligibility for a 504 plan as well as writing and approving the 504 plan.**

- a. Address this letter to the Principal of the school with copies to the District 504 Coordinator (usually the Special Education Director), the child's counselor/social worker if applicable, and the District School Nurse. If your child is mature enough, request that the child also attend the meeting.
- b. Keep a copy.
- c. Include in the letter a request for all appropriate personnel who are knowledgeable about your child to attend the meeting and that it is your expectation that the meeting will take place within a certain time period after receipt of the letter (about 10 days is appropriate.)
- d. Begin the letter with a thank you for what the child's school has done for the child in the past and your willingness to work with the school to provide the best services for your child in the future.
- e. Include with the letter a copy of the medical/health form from the child's doctor as well as the list of accommodations you are requesting. (Do not include the labeling of what is non-negotiable and what is.)
- f. If possible, include a hardcopy of the JDRF School Advisory Toolkit – either an original available from the JDRF local Chapter or a copy. If a hardcopy is not available, at least include in the letter the link to the JDRF website where a copy can be requested.

6. Attendance at the meeting

- a. Although it may not be desirable or necessary at the very first meeting, you may always take someone with you to a 504 meeting. If both parents can attend, that is the best. A neighbor or someone else to touch/calm you if you start getting emotional is a good thing. An advocate or attorney might be good at future meetings if things do not go well.
- b. Bring cookies/healthy snacks to the first meeting as a thank you and ice breaker.
- c. Verbally thank those in attendance for what they have done and what they will be doing in the future for the safety and well-being of your child. Acknowledge that caring for your child with diabetes will take some time and effort, but assure them that you are there to cooperate and assist when necessary.
- d. Try to remain calm during the meeting. LISTEN to and consider what school personnel are saying. If you don't agree, say so.
- e. Go through all of your requested accommodations – modifying them when the school makes a better suggestion with which you agree.
- f. At the end, if you are happy, sign the form and get a copy!
- g. If you are not happy, don't sign anything and say you will give some thought to what to do next.
- h. If the meeting is not completed due to lack of time, make sure another date is scheduled to conclude the meeting.

