

School transition checklist for parents/ guardians of a child living with epilepsy

Transition programs should be responsive to the individual needs of children and their families.

When preparing for a successful transition for your child with epilepsy when he/she starts school, moves from primary school to secondary school or changes schools, it is useful to consider the following points.

Setting the scene for success

Have you read and shared the the Epilepsy Smart Schools Practical Guide with key school staff? (Refer www.epilepsysmartschools.org.au)

Have you provided an Epilepsy Management Plan (EMP) and if indicated an Emergency Medication Management Plan (EMMP) to the school? Support to families to develop the EMP can be provided by the Epilepsy Foundation

Have you contributed to your child's Student Health Support Plan? (Refer Epilepsy Smart Schools Practical Guide)

Have you considered the possible impact of epilepsy on your child's learning? (Refer *Learning conversations about epilepsy - A parent's guide*)

Communication

Have you identified the staff member who will be coordinating your child's transition and work with you to ensure any concerns and/or issues that may arise are dealt with promptly?

Have you been informed of the procedures in place to advise teachers about your child's epilepsy and to ensure all teachers are aware of any additional needs your child may require?

Have you communicated to the school any identified risks or considerations that are relevant to your child such as:

- fatigue management
- sport participation
- testing conditions e.g. exams
- lighting

- heating
- learning issues
- social issues

Have you established how information about the following will be communicated between home and the school?

- seizures/or other medical concerns
- learning issues
- social issues
- homework
- upcoming events
- camps
- excursions
- other

Have you established how the school will ensure your child is included in all school events e.g. sport, excursions, camps?

Epilepsy understanding and training for teachers

Has the school arranged for epilepsy training, related to your child, through the Epilepsy Foundation (this is in addition to first aid training)?

If emergency medication (e.g. midazolam or rectal diazepam) has been prescribed for your child:

Have you advised key school staff that teachers will need specific emergency medication training conducted by a recognised trainer?

School training can be delivered by Epilepsy Foundation nurses.

Epilepsy disclosure

If your child wants to share his/her epilepsy with their peers:

Have you established how the school will support your child in disclosing their epilepsy to their peers? (Refer epilepsysmartschools.org.au)

or

If your child does not want to share his/her epilepsy with their peers:

Have you established how the school will protect your child's privacy? (e.g. photo boards in public areas)

Further support options to discuss with your child's school

Program for Students with Disabilities

is a targeted supplementary funding program for government schools. Resources are provided to schools, for a defined number of students with moderate to severe needs. Resources can be used in a number of ways to support students.

Student Support Service Officers

are available in government schools and comprise a broad range of professionals including psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers to assist students with additional needs.

Catholic and Independent schools provide services and extra support for students with additional needs. Speak to the school Principal to find out more information.

References

1. Sharing our journey. The transition from kindergarten to school Department of Education and Training Melbourne, August 2010 <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/healthwellbeing/sharingourjourneykit.pdf>
2. Transitioning from Primary School to Secondary School Supporting students with additional or complex needs that arise from disability when moving from primary to secondary school. Student Inclusion and Engagement Division Department of Education and Training Melbourne, April, 2014 <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Transprmytosec.pdf>
3. Department of Education and Training policy, www.education.vic.gov.au



The Epilepsy Smart Schools Practical Guide is an easy-access resource that reflects the Victorian Department of Education and Training epilepsy policy and provides linkages to over ten free resources. The guide and associated resources can be accessed via www.epilepsysmartschools.org.au

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