

# Exceptional Children Information for Parents



**EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN**  
NC Department of Public Instruction

May 3, 2023

## What is an Initial or Referral Meeting?

If you, or someone that works closely with your child, suspect there may be a disability that is impeding the learning of your child, you are most likely going to make a written referral to the exceptional children, or special education, department at your child's school. This referral will lead to a meeting to discuss concerns, strengths, and needs of your child. This meeting may be called different names, but the state uses the term "Referral" on documents.

You've made the written request for a Referral Meeting, but what is going to happen next? A group of individuals will gather called an IEP team. This team includes you, a regular education teacher, a special education teacher, and a principal or administrator (called a Local Education Agency Representative). If it's appropriate, your child can take part in this meeting as well, but it is your choice.

At this meeting, the IEP team will discuss valuable information about your child in order to determine what the next steps should be. Here are some questions to think about to help prepare you for the meeting.

- What are your child's strengths in academic areas as well as functional areas?
- What data do we already have about academic and functional abilities?
- What about your child's performance at school concerns you?
- Is your child having problems in language arts? Reading? Writing? Spelling?
- Is your child having trouble in math? Basic math concepts? Problem solving?
- Is your child having trouble with behavior/social skills? Having problems with peers?
- Is your child having health/medical problems that are affecting school performance?
- Is your child having trouble communicating?
- Is your child having trouble with motor skills?
- Is your child having trouble studying or getting work done?
- Is your child unable to take care of basic needs for daily living - feeding, toileting, dressing?

The meeting can end in a couple ways: (1) the special education process will stop, (2) there are sufficient data to allow eligibility to be determined; or (3) additional data are needed before being able to determine eligibility. In option 3, you will need to give permission before any evaluation can be performed.

For more information about initial evaluations and the evaluations that may be requested, visit sections 1503.2.2 and 1503-2.5 in the *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*.

You can find previous newsletters in the Parent Newsletter google folder at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/ECParentNewsletters>

## Important Links

- [Office of Special Education Programs](#) (U.S. Dept. of Ed.)
- [N.C. Department of Public Instruction](#)
- [Office of Exceptional Children](#) (NC)
- [No Kid Hungry](#)

## Upcoming Events

- Arc of the Triangle [Events](#)
- Autism Society [Workshops](#)
- Autism Speaks [Information Topics](#)
- CADRE [Parent Resources](#)
- ECAC [Events](#) & [Recorded Webinars](#)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness [Courses](#)
- NC Down Syndrome Alliance [Events](#)
- Special Olympics NC [Events](#)

## Autism Society of North Carolina

- May 17 at 11:30 am

There is controversy regarding Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), particularly when used as a comprehensive treatment for individuals with autism. It can be confusing for caregivers who are trying to determine treatment options and select providers for their child. In addition, some families and autistic adults may have experienced or heard of "ABA" treatments that are not reflective of best practices or even potentially harmful. This webinar is intended to help explain what ABA should look like – a treatment plan that is person-centered and promotes goals related to empowerment, independence, and overall happiness. We will also discuss what questions should be considered and asked when researching ABA providers and before beginning an ABA program. A panel including autistic individuals, parents, and ASNC clinicians will participate in the session. You must [register](#) to attend.

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