LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19
Resources for You - Special Edition

Things are different & Everything’s changed. We are devoting this issue of The Coalition newsletter to sharing the information our Center receives in the hopes you will find it useful. To stay abreast of changes at the federal level you may want to subscribe to the US Dept. of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)’s monthly newsletter at: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USED/subscriber/new?topic_id=USED_137

Starting at the Federal Level:
From the US Dept. of Education, Office of Civil Rights, March 21, 2020:

“As school districts nationwide take necessary steps to protect the health and safety of their students, many are moving to virtual or online education (distance instruction). Some educators, however, have been reluctant to provide any distance instruction because they believe that federal disability law presents insurmountable barriers to remote education. This is simply not true. We remind schools they should not opt to close or decline to provide distance instruction, at the expense of students, to address matters pertaining to services for students with disabilities. Rather, school systems must make local decisions that take into consideration the health, safety, and well-being of all their students and staff. To be clear ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), † Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act should not prevent any school from offering educational programs through distance instruction.

The Department understands that, during this national emergency, schools may not be able to provide all services in the same manner they are typically provided. While some schools might choose to safely, and in ac-

As part of the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) funding, the SC Department of Social Service (DSS) is offering child care assistance for parents who have been deemed essential staff and are required to report to work during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The purpose of this program is to provide child care assistance to essential workers so that they are able to place their kids in child care while they report to work during the COVID-19 emergency. Even if a parent’s child care provider is closed and they need to choose another provider so they can continue to report to work, they can apply for this category of child care.

In order to qualify, you must be currently working at an essential business or government agency, you must need child care so you may continue to work, and you must complete a child care application which you can find at: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/human_resources/docs/covid19_essential_workers_child_care_app.pdf

You do not have to meet any income guidelines for this time-limited program. To apply, complete the child care application and email it to: christi.jeffcoat@dss.sc.gov.

In the email, please include your first and last name, the best phone number to reach you, and the occupation/business where you work. If you don’t have access

Continued on Page 2
The Coalition
cordance with state law, provide certain IEP services to
some students in-person, it may be unfeasible or unsafe
for some institutions, during current emergency school
closures, to provide hands-on physical therapy, occupa-
tional therapy, or tactile sign language educational ser-

vices. Many disability-related modifications and services
may be effectively provided online. These may include,
for instance, extensions of time for assignments, videos
with accurate captioning or embedded sign language in-
terpreting, accessible reading materials, and many
speech or language services through video conferencing.

It is important to emphasize that federal disability law
allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the in-
dividual needs of students with disabilities. The determi-
nation of how FAPE is to be provided may need to be
different in this time of unprecedented national emergen-
cy. As mentioned above, FAPE may be provided consis-
tent with the need to protect the health and safety of
students with disabilities and those individuals providing
special education and related services to students.

Where, due to the global pandemic and resulting closures
of schools, there has been an inevitable delay in providing
services – or even making decisions about how to
provide services - IEP teams must make an individual-
ized determination whether and to what extent compen-
satory services may be needed when schools resume nor-
mal operations.

Finally, although federal law requires distance instruc-
tion to be accessible to students with disabilities, it does
not mandate specific methodologies. Where technology
itself imposes a barrier to access or where educational
materials simply are not available in an accessible for-
mat, educators may still meet their legal obligations by
providing children with disabilities equally effective al-
ternate access to the curriculum or services provided to
other students.”

The Department of Education understands that, during
this declared national emergency, there may be addition-
al questions about meeting the requirements of federal
civil rights law; they note: “where we can offer flexibil-
ity, we will.”

If you have questions, want additional information or
technical assistance, or believe that a school is violating
federal civil rights law, you may reach out through email
at OCRWebAccessTA@ed.gov, call your regional office
(https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr), or visit the website of
the Department of Education’s OCR at www.ed.gov/ocr.
You may contact OCR at (800) 421-3481 (TDD: 800-
877-8339), at ocr@ed.gov, or contact OCR’s Outreach,
Prevention, Education and Non-discrimination (OPEN)
Center at OPEN@ed.gov. You may also fill out a com-
plaint form online at www.ed.gov/ocr/

Child Care Assistance for
Essential Staff

Continued from Page 1

to email or have other questions please contact Ms.
Jeffcoat at (803) 898-2741.

If you need help finding available child care, please
contact the South Carolina Department of Social Ser-
vice Child Care Resource & Referral Network at 1
(888) 335-1002 or go to the website at:
www.sc-cerr.org and submit a referral indicating your
need to find an opening in a child care facility and
someone will assist you.

If a parent qualifies, vouchers will be paid directly to
the child care providers. The SC Voucher system has a
maximum weekly provider rate that can be paid. Pro-
viders that are in the ABC Quality program already
have an established weekly rate based on their quality
level. DSS will not charge a weekly co-pay per child,
however parents may be asked to pay for the difference
between what the child care provider charges and the
voucher rate. All license-exempt child care programs
operating during this time of COVID-19 Emergency
and serving children all day, must have an emergency
temporary license to operate. If needed, please contact
Child Care Licensing at (803) 898-9020 or email Cyn-
thia Lara at cynthia.lara@dss.sc.gov for more infor-
mation on this process. License-exempt providers that
have received a temporary license to operate during this
time of emergency are able to receive vouchers for eli-
gible children.

This category of child care is not retroactive. DSS will
pay from the point of approval through August 30,
2020.

For more information about DSS’ response to COVID-
19 related to child care, please visit our child care web-

site at www.scchildcare.org.
Supporting Your Child’s Learning at Home During COVID-19

As schools across the country and around the world are closed in response to the outbreak of COVID-19, parents everywhere are searching for reliable, easy-to-understand resources to support their children’s learning at home. The IRIS Center has created a new module specifically for parents to address this urgent and growing need. Parents: Supporting Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic offers practical tools and easy-to-implement strategies to help:

- Clarify what is and (perhaps just as importantly) what is not a parent’s role during school shutdowns
- Prepare for at-home learning
- Support your child’s learning
- Promote your child’s social and emotional well-being
- Support your child if he or she is struggling or has a disability

More, the module includes practical, real-world tips and strategies for:

- Keeping up with what a child is expected to learn
- Creating and sharing learning spaces in what are often crowded living environments
- Reducing distractions and other obstacles to learning

Parents: Supporting Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic can be accessed free of charge on the IRIS Center’s website. Access the learning module at:

https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/c19/

Have You Heard About Aunt Bertha?

Aunt Bertha’s network connects people seeking help and verified social care providers that serve them.

Thousands of nonprofits and social care providers serve their communities. But for most people, navigating the system to get help has been difficult, time consuming, and frustrating. Too many Americans are suffering, and they don’t need to.

Visit Aunt Bertha, enter your zip code in the designated search bar and you will receive information for goods and services in categories such as: Food, Housing, Goods, Transit, Health, Money, Care, Education, Work, and/or Legal. For more information visit Aunt Bertha at her website:

https://company.auntbertha.com/about/

South Carolina Assistive Technology Project (SCATP)

SCATP is still available to help you learn more about assistive technology. At SCATP, assistive technology professionals provide free or low-cost workshops and hands-on training on functional strategies and the latest devices, along with information on accessible web and information technology.

SCATP will begin virtual office hours Tuesday and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Visit the SCATP website (https://scatp.med.sc.edu/) and click on COVID-19 Resources for direction to join the SCATP Zoom Meeting to ask your technology questions. Here is the schedule for upcoming workshops:

5/12/20: Helping Students Struggling with Executive Function Build Organization Skills for Transition

5/19/20: Dragon: Speech recognition made easy! Webinar

5/26/20: Read OutLoud and Write OutLoud

5/27/20: Assistive Technology, UDL, and Literacy: Making It All Work

6/2/20: Inspiration9: Concept mapping at its best!

Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) - Fast Facts

The U.S. Department of Education collects data from states about infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities who receive early intervention services, special education or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The OSEP’s Fast Facts summarizes key facts related to specific aspects of the data collection authorized by Section 618 of the IDEA. Data presented includes that collected through child count, educational environments and settings, discipline and exiting data collections.

This information was recently released:

On Autism:
Find the latest data from the 2018-19 school year:

On Emotional Disturbance:
Find the latest data from the 2018-19 school year:
Keep Calm & Color Within the Lines

Direct Care Innovations (DCI) announces its 1st Annual Art Contest

Simply download one of the coloring pages from their link, color it, and submit your finished art to Contest@DCISoftware.com!

Please be sure to include your name and phone number in the email so you can be notified if you are a winner. Contest will begin May 15th and conclude on June 15th, with a live webinar to choose the random winners!

DCI will be hosting a live webinar on June 15th at 3pm CST to draw the prizes and show off some of the submissions. Five winner will receive: 1st Prize $500; 2nd Prize $300; 3rd Prize $100; 4th Prize $50; 5th Prize $50.

Contest is open to anyone working for a Direct Care Agency, a direct support professional, an individual receiving services or a guardian or parent of an individual receiving services!

To receive information on how to download coloring pages or to join the webinar that announces winners visit: https://www.dcisoftware.com/featured-events/

Or email: Contest@DCISoftware.com or sales@DCISoftware.com

By submitting artwork you authorize DCI to use your entry for promotional purposes. Please visit www.dcisoftware.com for more information about Direct Care Innovations.

Helping Children Cope

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) have posted an article (in multiple languages) on their website to help people talk with children about COVID-19. Follow this link to read the article:


While you’re on their site, take time to review all of the great resources they have posted.

The contents of this newsletter were developed under a grant from the US Dept. of Education, #H328C160018. However, contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer, Kristen Rhodes.
Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund
Student Aid

Information for Students

The CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund-IHE/Student Aid provides funding to institutions to provide emergency financial aid grants to students whose lives have been disrupted, many of whom are facing financial challenges and struggling to make ends meet. Students cannot apply for assistance directly from the U.S. Department of Education but should contact their institutions for further information and guidance. Institutions have the responsibility of determining how grants will be distributed to students, how the amount of each student grant is calculated, and the development of any instructions or directions that are provided to students about the grant.

The funding opportunity number is ED-GRANTS-041020-003. If you have questions concerning this program, please submit them via e-mail to HEERF@ed.gov, or by phone, at 202-377-3711.

Looking for Remote Support?

If you are a parent that uses Facebook to stay connected and you are in need of an online support group, Just type Our Special Little Ones in the search bar. Click on the link & ask to join. Once you agree to the rules, you will be notified of your new group membership. This is a private group to share resources, ideas and advice with parents of children with special needs. Only members of the group can see who is in the group and what other members share or post.

Additionally, on Facebook is a local group called Charleston SC Special Needs Community. This is also a private group and you must agree to the group rules before joining. The purpose of this group is to share resources, information and support in a non judgmental forum for any parent with a child or adult with special needs. Many parents and providers are members of both groups, lending our community to a wealth of information and support in these challenging times. Join this group by the same procedure as Our Special Little Ones.

The National Alliance on Mental Mental Illness (NAMI), out of an abundance of caution due to COVID-19, has cancelled all in-person supports groups at this time. Instead, they are hosting a Family Support Group every Tuesday at 6:00 pm and a Connection Support Group every Thursday at 6:00 pm. You can log in through your computer or call in on your phone. To obtain a link to the group visit: https://mailchi.mp/2a1609bd674/monthly-e-newsletter-3857581?e=d7d353506

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention offers a COVID-19 on-line support with access to resources. It can be found at: https://afsp.org/mental-health-and-covid-19

VirtualSC, South Carolina's free, state-sponsored online program is offering free educational resources to students, parents, and teachers while schools are closed. Please visit virtualsc.org/resources to find a variety of resources, including: test prep for national exams like SAT, ACT, PSAT, Advanced Placement exams, personalized math programs for 6-12th grade students, free educational videos, and more.

Do You Know About Autism Little Learners

A lot of us have learned, over the years, that many of the teaching strategies that work so well for children with autism work great for other kids as well, including those with no disabling conditions. Social Stories are a great example.

The subject of wearing masks may have come up in your home. If you visit the website below you can download a great social story about wearing masks. Take a moment today (and tomorrow) to read this short story together. This tool will help your children and family members better understand and cope with the changes in our community. Plus there are a lot of other great social stories on the site. https://www.autismlittlelearners.com
Sobre el Proceso de Educación Especial

Aquí puede ver brevemente cómo un estudiante es identificado como niño que tiene una discapacidad y necesita educación especial y servicios relacionados. Después de familiarizarse con el proceso básico de educación especial, puede usar los enlaces a final para aprender más acerca de aspectos específicos de lo que la ley IDEA requiere.

Paso 1. El niño es identificado como estudiante que puede necesitar educación especial y servicios relacionados.

Identificación de Niños” (en inglés, Child Find). Cada Estado debe identificar, localizar y evaluar a todos los niños con discapacidades que necesitan educación especial y servicios relacionados. Para cumplir, los Estados llevan a cabo tareas de “Identificación de Niños.” Un niño puede ser identificado por las labores de “Identificación de Niños,” y sus padres pueden ser preguntados por este sistema si el sistema pueda evaluar a su hijo. Los padres también pueden llamar al sistema de “Identificación de Niños” y pedir que su hijo sea evaluado.

Remisión al o petición de evaluación. Un profesional de la escuela puede pedir que un niño sea evaluado para ver si tiene una discapacidad. Los padres también pueden ponerse en contacto con el maestro del niño u otro profesional de la escuela para solicitar que su hijo sea evaluado. Esta petición puede ser verbal o por escrito. Es necesario el consentimiento paterno antes de que el niño pueda ser evaluado. La evaluación tiene que ser llevada a cabo dentro de 60 días después de que el padre dé su consentimiento (o, si el Estado tiene un límite de tiempo, dentro de ese límite).

Paso 2. El niño es evaluado.

La evaluación debe examinar al niño en todas las áreas relacionadas con la discapacidad que se sospecha que puede tener. Los resultados de la evaluación serán utilizados para decidir la elegibilidad del estudiante para educación especial y servicios relacionados y para tomar decisiones sobre el programa educativo apropiado para el niño.

Si los padres no están de acuerdo con la evaluación, ellos tienen el derecho de llevar a su hijo a una Evaluación Educativa Independiente (en inglés, Independent Educational Evaluation, IEE). Ellos pueden pedir que el sistema escolar pague por esta evaluación.

Paso 3. La elegibilidad es decidida.

Un grupo de profesionales calificados y los padres revisan los resultados de la evaluación del estudiante. Juntos deciden si el estudiante es “un niño con una discapacidad,” tal y como es definido por IDEA. Los padres pueden usar alguna de las opciones para resolver disputas bajo IDEA si no están de acuerdo con la decisión de elegibilidad.

Paso 4. El niño es hallado elegible para los servicios. Si al niño se le declara como “niño con una discapacidad” tal como es definido por IDEA, entonces es elegible para la educación especial y los servicios relacionados. El Equipo del IEP debe reunirse para redactar un Programa Educativo Individualizado (IEP, por sus siglas en inglés) para el niño en un plazo de 30 días de calendario después de que el niño es determinado elegible.

Cuando se ha determinado que el estudiante es elegible para recibir servicios, debe escribirse el IEP. Los dos pasos siguientes resumen lo que implica escribir el IEP.

Paso 5. Se programa la reunión del IEP.

El sistema escolar programa y dirige la reunión del IEP. El personal escolar debe:

- ponerse en contacto con los participantes, incluyendo a los padres;
- notificar a los padres con suficiente antelación para asegurarse que tienen la oportunidad de asistir;
- programar la reunión a una hora y en un lugar conveniente para los padres y para la escuela;
- comunicar a los padres el propósito, la hora y el lugar de la reunión;
- indicar a los padres quién asistirá; y
- comunicar a los padres que ellos pueden invitar a la reunión a las personas que tienen conocimiento o pericia especial en cuanto al niño.

Paso 6. La reunión se lleva a cabo y el IEP es redactado.

El Equipo del IEP se reúne para hablar sobre las necesidades del niño y redactar su IEP. Los padres y el estudiante (cuando es apropiado) forman parte del equipo. Si la ubicación del niño es decidida por un grupo diferente, los padres también deben formar parte de ese grupo.

Los padres deben dar su consentimiento antes de que el sistema escolar pueda proporcionar la educación especial y servicios relacionados al niño por primera vez. El niño comienza a recibir los servicios lo antes posible después de la reunión.

Si los padres no están de acuerdo con el IEP y la ubicación de su niño, ellos pueden exponer sus preocupaciones a otros miembros del Equipo del IEP e intentar llegar a un acuerdo. Si el desacuerdo continúa, la escuela puede ofrecer la mediación o los padres pueden pedirla. Los padres pueden someter una queja a la agencia Estatal de educación o pueden
solicitar una audiencia de proceso legal debido a través de presentar una queja debido. Si los padres solicitan una audiencia, una sesión para resolución debe ser celebrada antes de la audiencia, y la mediación debe estar disponible.

**Paso 7. Los servicios son proporcionados.**
La escuela se asegura de que el IEP del niño sea llevado a cabo tal y como ha sido escrito. Los padres reciben una copia del IEP. Cada uno de los maestros del niño y proveedores de servicios al niño tienen acceso al IEP y conocen sus responsabilidades específicas para que se realice el mismo. Esto incluye los acómodos, modificaciones, y apoyos que se deben proveer al niño de acuerdo con el IEP.

**Paso 8. El progreso es evaluado y comunicado a los padres.**
El progreso del niño hacia las metas anuales es evaluado tal y como se ha declarado en el IEP. Los padres son informados con regularidad del progreso de su hijo y si el progreso es suficiente para que el niño alcance las metas al final del año. Informes de progreso deben ser entregados a los padres como se ha declarado en el IEP.

**Paso 9. El IEP es revisado.**
El IEP del niño se revisa por el Equipo del IEP al menos una vez al año, o más a menudo si los padres o la escuela lo piden. El IEP es revisado siempre que sea necesario. Los padres, como miembros del Equipo, deben ser invitados a estas reuniones. Los padres pueden hacer sugerencias para realizar cambios, pueden estar de acuerdo o discrepar con las metas del IEP, así como también pueden estar de acuerdo o no con la ubicación.

Si los padres no están de acuerdo con el IEP y la ubicación, pueden discutir sus preocupaciones con otros miembros del Equipo e intentar llegar a un acuerdo. Hay varias opciones que incluyen pruebas adicionales, una evaluación independiente, y la petición de la mediación o una audiencia de proceso legal debido. También, pueden presentar una queja en la agencia de educación Estatal.

**Paso 10. El niño es reevaluado.**
El niño debe ser reevaluado por lo menos cada tres años, a menos que los padres y la escuela estén de acuerdo que no es necesario llevar a cabo otra evaluación. Esta evaluación se conoce como una evaluación “trienal.” El objetivo es averiguar si el niño sigue siendo “un niño con una discapacidad,” tal y como es definido por IDEA, y ver cuáles son las necesidades educativas del niño. Sin embargo, el niño debe ser reevaluado más a menudo si las condiciones lo justifican o si el padre del niño o el maestro piden una evaluación nueva.

Para obtener ayuda de alguien que hable español, comuníquese con Family Connection of South Carolina al: 800-578-8750

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**Cómo ayudar a los niños a lidiar con los cambios provocados por la COVID-19**


**COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) INFORMACION Y RECURSOS**


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**The CARES Act:**
A Discussion About Stimulus Checks and the Palmetto ABLE Savings Program

Join this virtual discussion to get the latest information about federal stimulus checks for adults with disabilities and learn more about the following:

- Eligibility for a Palmetto ABLE® account
- Depositing the stimulus funds into Palmetto ABLE accounts
- The usefulness of Palmetto ABLE accounts to meet your short-term and long-term needs

Date: May 20, 2020
Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

To join the webinar from your computer, tablet or smartphone:
https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/978604149

You can also dial in using your phone.
United States: +1 (571) 317-3122

Access Code: 978-604-149

Or join from a video-conferencing room or system.
Dial in or type: 67.217.95.2 or inroomlink.goto.com
Meeting ID: 978 604 149

Or dial directly: 978604149@67.217.95.2 or 67.217.95.2##978604149
Services to Students with Disabilities During COVID-19

The SCDE's Office of Special Education Services has developed and is continually updating resources, materials, and responses to frequently asked questions about providing special education to students with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic and statewide closure of schools. This website offers a wide variety of resources for parents, educators, and schools: https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/special-education-services/information-about-covid-19-coronavirus/

On May 4, 2020, State Superintendent of Education, Molly M. Spearman, sent a Memorandum to all District Superintendents regarding Governor McMaster’s Executive Order 2020-29 issued on April 27, 2020. The Memorandum offers guidance on Face-to-Face Services and Support to Students and Families. Within the Memorandum she states, If mutually agreed upon by both the district and parents, during the last 2 weeks of school, the following opportunities may be considered for face-to-face interaction. For each activity, the appropriate precautionary measures recommended by the SC DHEC and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including social distancing, should be taken to protect the health and wellbeing of both students and educators:

- Parent/teacher conferences;
- Parent/student/teacher meetings, such as meetings to review & update IEPs;
- Assessments, evaluations, and screenings, if applicable;
- Demonstration or completion of tasks that require hand-on activities, such as completion of certain industry credentials;
- Teacher activities, such as grading, planning, or preparing for summer and next school year;
- Services for students, such as provision of specialized instruction or related services, as outlined in a student’s IEP, and/or;
- GED testing through GED Test sites for adult education students.

Questions about IEPs? Contact Lynette Cox at 803-734-2833