

# section

11

Educational Rights for Your Child  
Part 1

# Educational Rights for Your Child

## part one

### What Do I Do When My Child Is Having Difficulty at School?

It may be difficult to know where to begin when your child is having difficulty at school. A good starting point is to meet with your child's teacher. Get together and share your concerns and gain insight into any potential academic concerns. You can include others in your meeting if appropriate, such as the school administrator, counselor, or school psychologist. Together you can draft a written plan to address any potential concerns. Don't wait until you get a report card to assess the progress. Check in with your child's teacher every 2 to 3 weeks to ensure the plan is working as anticipated.

If the strategies above are unsuccessful, request a referral for an evaluation **in writing** to the school administrator. When you write a referral request letter, be sure to do the following:

- Describe your concerns about your child's academic and behavioral problems
- Include information about your child's medical or mental health diagnoses
- Keep a copy for your files

# share your concerns



## strategies

The school may respond to your request in several different ways. It may offer

- special accommodations (commonly referred to as Section 504 accommodations)
- an evaluation for special education
- no intervention (although your child may need private services)

Schools are required to consider a variety of information (including but not limited to parent information) in determining what support or interventions may be necessary to address your child's needs. A diagnosis of neurofibromatosis is helpful but not sufficient in determining eligibility for services. Eligibility is based on school-related behavior and performance and not on how your child functions outside of school.

support

## section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to prevent any form of discrimination for eligible students who have a disability. For the purposes of 504, a “disabled person” is one who

- has a physical or mental impairment that **substantially limits** one or more major life activities
- has a record of such impairment
- is regarded as having such impairment

**Parents may request accommodations to “level the playing field” for eligible students with a disability.**

### What Are Major Life Activities?

Some major life activities include the following:



Caring for oneself



Performing manual tasks



Walking



Seeing



Hearing



Breathing



Concentrating



Thinking



Communicating



Speaking



Learning



Working

## section 504

### What Types of Impairment Determine Substantial Limitation?

An impairment associated with substantial limitation is one that

- results in failure or underachievement when a child is compared with same-age nondisabled peers
- impacts a major life activity
- lasts at least 6 months
- will not improve without intervention from the school

### Examples of Classroom 504 Accommodations

Tailoring homework assignments

Changing the way a test is given

Simplifying instructions about assignments

Providing a copy of peer notes

Supplementing verbal instructions with visual instructions

Using behavioral management techniques

Giving oral exams (tests given by spoken communication)

Using tape recorders

Providing computer-aided instructions

Providing nursing services to supervise administration of medication

Extending time needed to complete tests and assignments

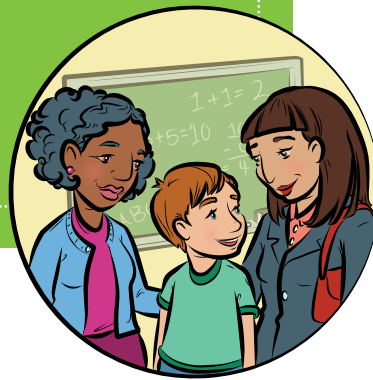
Providing an extra set of books to keep at home

## section 504

### Section 504 Meetings

Many but not all school systems have annual meetings with parents to develop a child's Section 504 plan. Parental involvement is not required by federal law, but your preparation and follow-up for these meetings can have a major impact on the outcome. Pay attention to all the parent tips in the segment coming up on **Individualized Education Program** meetings. Although your rights may be different, the process is similar.

Be involved.





activity to share with your child

11



Print this page for your child!

## “selfie” pop quiz

There are many important things to learn about in school, but Moxie says that it’s just as important to learn about yourself! Moxie calls this skill *self-awareness*! If you take the time to get to know yourself, you will have more confidence to do the things you’re great at and you will figure out the things you may need some help with. Take the quiz below. Be sure to share your answers with your parents or guardians.

For questions 1 through 4, circle the answer that best describes how you feel.

- I know that I have a special condition called neurofibromatosis.
  - Yes
  - I think so
  - I’m not sure
  - No
- I feel comfortable asking my teachers for help I need during class or with assignments.
  - Yes
  - I think so
  - I’m not sure
  - No
- I feel good about my future.
  - Yes
  - I think so
  - I’m not sure
  - No
- I feel comfortable telling other people, like my friends, about my neurofibromatosis.
  - Yes
  - I think so
  - I’m not sure
  - No







Print this page for your child!

“selfie” pop quiz

For questions 5 through 8, write your responses on the lines below.

5. Three things I am good at **in school**.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Three things I need help with **in school**.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Three things I enjoy doing **outside of school**.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Three things I need help with doing **outside of school**.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

