

Special Needs Inclusion Project (SNIP)

TIPSHEET #3: Determining Accommodations

An Inclusion Resource Sponsored by: **CVS** Charitable
CAREMARK Trust

Accommodations are reasonable changes that allow a student with a disability to participate more fully in your program – something that allows them to work around their disability but doesn't limit their learning.



Accommodations can be as simple as a pencil grip or as complex as a talking communication device, and certainly include medical supports such as inhalers. (A modification is a change in what is being taught or expected of the student). Accommodations alter the “how” of learning and modifications alter the “what”.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATIONS?

- Accommodations can make the difference between a child being segregated from peers and a child being fully and meaningfully included in a program.
- Research shows that this inclusion is important for the child's development, but it is also important for the social and cognitive development of other children in the program.
- There are also legal reasons to provide accommodations: The Americans with Disabilities act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (504) protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination and require that program facilities are physically accessible.

WHEN DO WE NEED TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATIONS?

- Program materials should always include a place for individuals to request accommodations, with a question like “Do you need a reasonable accommodation to enjoy this program?” and a YES/NO that can be circled by the registrant.
- When a family circles “YES” or tells a staff member that their child needs accommodations, the organization must respond.
- If your organization holds public meetings, your agency must provide the public with opportunities to request accommodations, such as sign language interpreters.

Find more information about the Special Needs Inclusion Project (SNIP) at: www.SNIPSF.org
SNIP is a program of:

Special Needs Inclusion Project (SNIP)

HOW CAN WE DETERMINE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS?

- When a family has made a request, a trained staff member is responsible for leading a team through an assessment to figure out what accommodations a child needs to fully participate in the program.
- The team includes student and family. As part of this **confidential** process, the team identifies the critical skills for participation in the program, and then identifies the child's strengths, "functional limitations" and potential accommodations to reduce those limitations.

Note: If your program implements Universal Design for Learning, you may have minimal need to make special accommodations

EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS:

- Removing Physical Barriers:
 - situate the classroom of a child with physical disabilities on the ground level of your building- so it is accessible
 - rearrange a room so that a child can steer her wheelchair through it
- Removing Communication Barriers:
 - provide sign language interpreters
 - provide written materials in large font
 - use Braille or audio text
 - the teacher may wear a microphone so that a child can get and give communication
- Adapting Activities:
 - a student may participate with a buddy
 - allow a student to use dictation software to write
 - staff may implement a behavior plan to help a child learn pro-social, appropriate classroom behavior
- Adapting Equipment:
 - lower the basketball hoop
 - use a "T" for baseball
 - use balls with bells in them
 - provide large pencils with grips

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