

Raising Special Kids

Here with families, here for families

ADE/ESS Check-In Meeting

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Raising
Special
Kids

What is Raising Special Kids?

- Arizona's Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) operating under Part D of IDEA sec. 671
- Comprehensive family support and resource center for parents and families of children birth – 26 with the full range of disabilities
 - General website resource information dissemination
 - Newsletter and enewsletter distribution
 - Individual support to parents and professionals via phone or conferencing
 - Intensive individualized family support in-person at our office, in the community, and (on a limited basis) in the family's home
 - Trainings and workshops for families that are open to the general public
 - Training for professionals that work in the field of disability
 - Online recorded webinars and online training modules
 - Provide Parent to Parent mentoring

Organization response to COVID-19

- Raising Special Kids staff are strongly encouraged to work from home
- Workshops and trainings for all audiences are cancelled as of March 12, 2020 until further notice
- Intensive individual assistance provided by phone or online conferencing
- Defer requests for in-person training or outreach events
- In-person meetings with community partners and professionals are changed to phone or online conferencing

Organizational shift

- Not unlike the shift that schools and districts made in March, but on a smaller scale.
 - Developed technology for providing online training and outreach
 - Created unique messaging for families of children with disabilities and special health care needs
 - We are all in this together
 - This situation is something that likely none of us have ever experienced
 - It is okay to not be perfect, doing the best we can for our family is all that anyone can ask
 - Leaned-in to Social Media to push out accurate information
 - Mobilized staff and volunteers for individual outreach
 - Started calling families – ‘how are things?’

Discussion points for today

- What we are hearing from families:
 - In general
 - As it relates to education and distance learning
 - As it relates to special education
- One thing we *aren't* hearing from families
- Raising Special Kids services and supports
- Today's Take-away

What we are hearing from families

- In General
 - Concern about basic needs; food, housing and loss of income
 - Concern about loss of therapies and providers
 - Fear and anxiety about their child losing skills that were either mastered or were emerging – being unable to regain and/or maintain them
 - Social isolation – concern for bad habits
 - Child Find
 - Should I call my child's neighborhood school?
 - Should I wait? Will they call me back?

What we are hearing from families

- Perception of, experience with, of distance learning

Challenges:

- Understanding schoolwork
- Using/learning online learning platforms
- Balancing work and school hours from home (multiple children)
- Managing changed and new routines
 - Therapy services

Participation:

- Parent refusal
- Student refusal
- Language Access
- Some teachers are more skilled with technology than others

What we are hearing from families

Top issues/questions we've fielded from parents and families

1) Evaluation

- a) My child is currently in the middle of an initial evaluation
- b) The school said they will complete it in Fall
- c) My student is struggling now and needs help, what should I do?

2) Transitions

- a) AzEIP to Preschool (619)
 - Aging out of AzEIP and not getting Child Find evaluation for Preschool
- b) Preschool to Kindergarten
 - No re-evaluation so same goals and same self-contained placement

One thing we *have not* heard from families

- Communication – Parents are reporting frequent contact and communication with teachers and school staff

“It is different, but they are doing it!”

Parent quote from Facebook Live event about education and distance learning



Raising Special Kids services and supports

- Dedicated COVID-19 resource page on our website
 - <https://m.raisingpecialkids.org/resources/covid-19-info#>
- Quarterly newsletter shift in 11 days
 - <https://m.raisingpecialkids.org/blog/2020/connecting-spring-2020-all-in-this-together-covid9-19>
- New and existing parent training curriculum offerings:
 - Positive Behavior Support
 - Special Education During COVID-19
 - Health Care Systems During COVID-19
 - Legal Options & Considerations During COVID-19
 - <https://m.raisingpecialkids.org/events-training>
- Facebook Live Fridays (Wednesdays in Spanish) happening now!
- Tuesday RSK Speaker Series: starting next week

Raising Special Kids supports and services - continued

- Individual Assistance for parents and families
 - Parent to Parent Mentoring
 - Family Support (education, healthcare, basic needs, etc.)
 - Intensive Individual Assistance (document review, meeting attendance, behavior coaching, etc.)
 - Refer a family: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4664831>
- Services and supports for professionals
 - Parent perspective panel presentations
 - Professional development and facilitation in partnering with parents and family engagement

Today's take-away

- Resource – one page (two sides) information for families.
- Theme Special Education:
 - what's the same?
 - what's changed?
- Access here:
 - <https://m.raisingpecialkids.org/blog/2020/covid-19-education-resources>

SPECIAL EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

We are all in this together!

WHAT'S CHANGED?

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

School buildings are closed for the rest of the 2019-20 school year. Students are participating in distance learning and are either using an online platform or have had packets delivered to their homes from the school. Although the location has changed, IEP placements have remained the same. Physical, occupational, speech therapies and meetings are being held over the phone, through electronic conferencing, or other any method that works for everyone.

COMMUNICATION

It is important for families to read emails/ letters from their child's teacher and from the district. Communicate with your child's teacher and therapists regularly and respond as soon as you can to requests. Focus on collaboration.

GENERAL TIPS

Document what your child is doing, challenges they encounter and things you've done to try to help. Recognize this situation is new for everyone and we are finding solutions together. You can always request a meeting with your child's teacher or an IEP meeting to discuss your concerns. **Perhaps most importantly, remember to take care of yourself and your family.** Things will not be perfect. Just do the best you can. It is OK!

