



# SPECIAL NEEDS

## WHAT IS DIFFERENT?

This new requirement recognizes the need to build inclusive programs that involve both parents and other professionals.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

To support all parents seeking settlement services, it is important to have inclusive CNC programs that support children's varying levels of development and needs.

Newcomer parents who have children with special needs may not be aware of the resources, support and services available to them. It's important to work with parents to develop a plan and create the most positive CNC experience for the child and family. It's also important to assist parents in locating appropriate resources and support in the community.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- Develop a positive relationship with parents by showing warmth and interest
- Discuss child's activities and routines at home
- If a child has an Individual Program Plan (IPP), review the IPP with the parent and CNC staff who work directly with the child. Place a copy of the IPP in the child's file, and contact the other professionals who were involved in developing the IPP to introduce yourself and seek any necessary clarification. Remember, the Special Needs Consultant is available to support you through this process – you can always contact her with any questions or concerns.
- If a child and family is not yet connected with supportive community resources, contact the Special Needs Consultant, and/or research what supports might be available locally
- Consult and collaborate with parents and other professionals to develop a plan for the child's care that builds on the child's strengths and interests.
- Plan of care should be responsive and supportive to the child's evolving strengths and interests.
- Maintain a positive approach and supportive role.

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- Observe the child with an open and accepting attitude
- Write down observational notes – avoid jumping to any conclusions, and identify child's strengths, abilities and interests
- Plan daily activities that will build on the child's strengths and/or IPP, and develop a plan for documenting the child's progress/lack of progress.
- Schedule meetings to review the child's progress.

By taking the time to discover and nurture children's strengths, you are helping the child and their family to develop self-confidence as they settle into a new culture and a new way of life. This positive approach and supportive role will often be remembered and appreciated long after the child and family have left your program.

An Individual Program Plan (IPP) might be developed and updated as necessary.

If, in spite of best efforts, your organization does not have the resources or expertise to meet the special needs of a child, the CNC staff must help parents locate more appropriate care and support in the community. Before considering this "last resort", consider the following:

- How will it affect the parent?
- How will it affect the child?
- How will it effect the organization?
- Has staff consulted with the Special Needs Consultant about the child?
- Have staff implemented all of the suggestions

An IPP is:

- Developed to address the specific special needs of children.
- A collaborative team effort involving the child, parents, caregivers and other staff who work closely with the child; the individuals involved may change over time, depending on the needs of the child .
- A planning document that helps monitor and evaluate a child's development and progress
- A document for communicating a child's development and progress with parents and staff.
- A summary of the individualized goals and objectives that a child is working towards.
- A summary of accommodations that will help the child.
- An ongoing record to ensure continuity of programming.
- A guide for transition planning

**Source:** Alberta Education Learning and Teaching Resources Branch (Canada). Individualized program planning (IPP): ECS to grade 12. Edmonton (AB); 2006 [cited 2011 Oct 14] Available from: <http://education.alberta.ca/media/511715/ipp.pdf>



made by the Special Needs Consultant?

- Does your organization truly lack the resources needed to work with the child?
- Does your staff truly lack the expertise needed to work with the child?

### **When a Child's Needs have Not Been Identified - Short Term Care**

When a child with unidentified needs receives Short Term Care, it is difficult to do more than respond as appropriately as possible to the child and the behaviour you observe. Where possible, and when time permits, you may ask parents about obvious needs but you will be unable to confirm an actual need or identify appropriate resources.

Consider asking parent/s if the child has any:

- Difficulties communicating?
- Difficulties sleeping?
- Difficulties eating?
- Difficulties following directions?

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- Planning for the Support of a Child with Special Needs

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### **3-3 PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN**

#### **CNC for Children with Special Needs**

- g. When a child has an individual program plan, developed in consultation with professionals to meet the special needs of the child, CNC staff work in partnership with the parent and other professionals, as necessary, to implement activities and routines that accommodate that plan.
- h. When, in spite of best efforts, the ISO finds that it does not have the resources or expertise to meet the special needs of a child, CNC staff help parents locate more appropriate care and support in the community.