

Communicating *with* School Personnel: Parents' Checklist



Your goal is to create an effective team. A positive attitude and an open mind will demonstrate your willingness to assist teachers and others who care for your child in a non-conflicting manner. In turn, educators will find comfort in knowing they can turn to you with questions and concerns they may have about the well-being of your child.

- Document discussions with school staff and decisions made about your child's management plan. People present during these discussions should include the principal and all individuals who have contact with your child during the day (e.g., the school nurse; physical education; music, and art teachers; bus drivers; lunchroom personnel; etc.). This allows everyone the opportunity to learn about food allergies, practice with prescribed auto-injectable devices, and ask questions.

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- If you are planning to hand out material in meetings with school staff, keep it short and informative. Refer school personnel to FAACT's School Personnel section for support, resources, and FREE downloads.

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- Include your contact information on all materials provided to school staff in case someone needs to contact you for additional information during the school year.

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- Encourage school staff to practice emergency action plans, just as they would practice a fire drill. This will build confidence among staff and help ensure swift action takes place in the event of an emergency. Some schools may already have a food allergy policy in place. Be sure to review the policy with your medical provider and make suggestions for your child, as necessary.

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- Discuss "what ifs" and plan for unexpected situations to ensure everyone is confident in their ability to handle any type of emergency throughout the day.

- o What if a reaction happens during an after-school program?

- o What if a reaction occurs on the playground?

- o What if a reaction occurs when a substitute teacher is leading the class?

- o What happens if a reaction occurs on the school bus?

- During the meeting with school personnel, the nurse should demonstrate how to use your child's prescribed epinephrine auto-injector, or you can do this. Practicing use of your child's epinephrine trainer will build confidence among caregivers and will help ensure prompt action in emergency situations.

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- Having an education advocate sometimes helps to open lines of communication and address areas of concern in discussing 504 and other health plans that may otherwise not have been addressed in initial meetings.

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Communicating *with* School Personnel: Parents' Checklist (pg.3)

- ❑ Find out the school's policy and plans for storage and accessibility to your child's epinephrine devices. Provide your school with information on the importance of epinephrine in food allergy emergencies. Topics to cover include:

- o Temperature control

- o Strategic placement

- o Training on use

- o Importance

- o Multiple doses available should a second dose be needed

- o Expiration dates
