

School transition checklist for parents/ guardians of a child living with epilepsy

Transition programs should be responsive to the individual needs of children and their families.

When preparing for a successful transition for your child with epilepsy when he/she starts school, moves from pre-school to primary school/primary to secondary school or changes schools, it is useful to consider the following points.

Setting the scene for success

- ☐ Have you provided a Seizure Management Plan (SMP) and if indicated an Emergency Medication Plan (EMP) to the school? Support to families to develop the EMP can be provided by the Epilepsy Foundation
- ☐ Have you considered the possible impact of epilepsy on your child's learning? (Refer *Learning conversations about epilepsy - A parent's guide*)

Communication

- ☐ Have you identified the staff member who will be coordinating your child's transition and work with you to ensure any concerns and/or issues that may arise are dealt with promptly?
- ☐ Have you been informed of the procedures in place to advise teachers about your child's epilepsy and to ensure all teachers are aware of any additional needs your child may require?

Have you communicated to the school any identified risks or considerations that are relevant to your child such as:

- ☐ fatigue management
- ☐ sport participation
- ☐ testing conditions e.g. exams
- ☐ lighting
- ☐ heating
- ☐ learning issues
- ☐ social issues

Have you established how information about the following will be communicated between home and the school?

- ☐ seizures/or other medical concerns
- ☐ learning issues
- ☐ social issues
- ☐ homework
- ☐ upcoming events
- ☐ camps
- ☐ excursions
- ☐ other

- ☐ Have you established how the school will ensure your child is included in all school events e.g. sport, excursions, camps?

Epilepsy understanding and training for teachers

- ☐ Has the school arranged for epilepsy training, related to your child, through Epilepsy New Zealand (this is in addition to first aid training)?

If emergency medication (e.g. midazolam or rectal diazepam) has been prescribed for your child:

- ☐ Have you advised key school staff that teachers will need specific emergency medication training conducted by a recognised trainer?

School training can be arranged by Epilepsy New Zealand.

For ongoing support, call weekdays to our
Epilepsy New Zealand Information Line
0800 37 45 37

Epilepsy disclosure

If your child wants to share his/her epilepsy with their peers:

- ☐ Have you established how the school will support your child in disclosing their epilepsy to their peers?

If your child does not want to share his/her epilepsy with their peers:

- ☐ Have you established how the school will protect your child's privacy? (e.g. photo boards in public areas)

Further support options to discuss with your child's school

Funding and Support in School

Resources are provided to schools, for a defined number of students with moderate to severe needs. Resources can be used in several ways to support students.

Funding for those with moderate to high needs includes

- ORS (Ongoing Resourcing Scheme)
- The School High Health Needs Fund (SHHNF)
- Or in-class support funding for students with ongoing learning needs.

For more information on students learning support and funding go to

<https://www.education.govt.nz/education-professionals/schools-year-0-13/learning-support-0>

For children with complex epilepsy or with other conditions, there are many different people who are likely to work with you to help your child develop and learn. Including SENCO, RTLB, OT, Psychologist speech therapist, Physiotherapist, and resource teachers.

References

1. Sharing our journey. The transition from kindergarten to school Department of Education and Training Melbourne, August 2010 <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/healthwellbeing/sharingourjourneykit.pdf>
2. Transitioning from Primary School to Secondary School Supporting students with additional or complex needs that arise from disability when moving from primary to secondary school. Student Inclusion and Engagement Division Department of Education and Training Melbourne, April, 2014 <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Transprmrytosec.pdf>
3. Department of Education and Training policy, www.education.vic.gov.au



National Support Centre

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This fact sheet is part of a suite of resources that are targeted to both parents and teachers to assist students with epilepsy in the primary, secondary and special school settings. Special thanks to Dr Silvana Micallef, Snr Clinical Neuropsychologist, Austin Health, for her help in compiling this fact sheet.

The information contained in this publication provides general information about epilepsy. It does not provide specific advice. Specific health and medical advice should always be obtained from a qualified health professional.