

IPP Cheat Sheet for Parents

This guide is meant to help parents understand common learning supports and strategies that are often discussed as part of an Individualized Program Plan (IPP). It is not a checklist you must complete, and not all strategies are needed for every child.

What an IPP is: A written school plan that outlines specific supports and strategies to help a student succeed.

What an IPP is not: A diagnosis, a promise of services, a guarantee of grades, or a replacement for curriculum or classroom teaching.

Use this resource to prepare for conversations, not to replace them.

Start Here: High-Impact Strategies Parents Often Ask About First

These strategies and supports are commonly included in IPPs and often make an immediate difference in day-to-day learning. They are a great place to start, especially if you are new to IPPs.

Strategy	Why It Works	What It Achieves	Age Bands	Executive Function
Keep routines with visual schedules and clear instructions	Reduces uncertainty and memory demands	Builds predictable routines	All	Plan & Prioritize
Provide written and verbal instructions	Supports different learning styles	Improves task understanding	E–M	Memorization
Break tasks into smaller steps	Makes work feel manageable	Supports task completion	All	Task Initiation
Allow extra time to complete work or tests	Reduces pressure and overload	Reduces anxiety during learning	All	Time Management
Use planners or digital calendars with teacher check-ins	Supports tracking deadlines	Builds independence over time	M–H	Organization
Provide quiet or low-distraction workspaces	Improves attention and regulation	Supports sustained focus	All	Stay Focused

Age bands used: **E** = Elementary (K–5) | **M** = Middle School (6–9) | **H** = High School (10–12)
 Many strategies span multiple ages; these bands reflect where they are most often used.

11 Executive Functions

Focus & Organization: Stay Focused, Organization, Time Management, Stick With Goals

Self-Control & Emotions: Think Before Acting, Manage Feelings, Adapt to Change

Planning & Reflection: Task Initiation, Plan & Prioritize, Memorization, Metacognition

After starting with a few high-impact supports, families often add strategies gradually. These ideas are organized to reflect a typical journey, starting with building routines, then supporting tasks and learning, and finally building independence over time.

Building Predictable Routines

Strategy	Why It Works	What It Achieves	Age Bands	Executive Function
Use consistent classroom routines	Creates familiarity and safety	Builds predictable routines	E–M	Adapt to Change
Preview schedule changes in advance	Helps students prepare mentally	Builds flexibility	All	Adapt to Change

Supporting Organization & Planning

Strategy	Why It Works	What It Achieves	Age Bands	Executive Function
Provide structured folders or binders	Reduces lost materials	Improves organization	E–M	Organization
Help organize materials at set times	Builds routines around organization	Improves organization	All	Organization
Use visual timers for transitions	Makes time visible	Supports smoother transitions	All	Time Management
Teach how to prioritize assignments	Helps students plan workload	Strengthens planning skills	M–H	Plan & Prioritize

Supporting Task Completion

Strategy	Why It Works	What It Achieves	Age Bands	Executive Function
Reduce number of questions per page	Lowers cognitive load	Supports task completion	All	Stay Focused
Allow work to be completed in stages	Prevents overwhelm	Supports follow-through	All	Stick With Goals
Offer early check-ins during assignments	Identifies issues sooner	Improves task completion	M–H	Task Initiation

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Reducing Anxiety During Learning

Strategy	Why It Works	What It Achieves	Age Bands	Executive Function
Allow breaks during long tasks	Prevents overload	Reduces emotional stress	All	Manage Feelings
Use calm-down or sensory tools	Supports regulation	Improves emotional control	All	Manage Feelings
Offer reassurance and check-ins	Builds confidence	Reduces anxiety	All	Manage Feelings

Supporting Demonstration of Learning (Product)

Strategy	Why It Works	What It Achieves	Age Bands	Executive Function
Allow choice in how learning is shown (oral, visual, written)	Matches strengths	Shows true understanding	All	Metacognition
Use assistive technology (speech-to-text, spell check)	Removes barriers	Improves written output	M–H	Memorization
Shorten written assignments when needed	Focuses on key learning	Maintains engagement	All	Stay Focused

Building Independence Over Time

Strategy	Why It Works	What It Achieves	Age Bands	Executive Function
Gradually reduce adult support	Encourages skill-building	Builds independence	All	Stick With Goals
Teach self-advocacy skills	Empowers student voice	Builds self-awareness	M–H	Metacognition
Regularly review what strategies are helping	Adjusts support as needed	Supports long-term growth	All	Metacognition

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