

# The Individualized Education Program: Partnering for Success

# SpecialQuest

Multimedia Training Library

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*Supporting Young Children with Disabilities  
and Their Families in Inclusive Settings*

Developed by

**SpecialQuest Birth–Five: Head Start/Hilton Foundation Training Program**

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The Individualized Education Program: Partnering for Success

Facilitator's Planning Worksheet



4 hours,  
20 minutes total

# The Individualized Education Program: Partnering for Success

## Learning Outcomes


- ◆ Participants will consider multiple perspectives:
  - when planning for an IEP meeting,
  - during the IEP meeting, and
  - while implementing the IEP.
- ◆ Participants will reflect on their own practice.
- ◆ Participants will identify areas where they can improve the IEP process.
- ◆ Participants will identify how inclusion can be supported through the IEP process.

Agenda	Length	Facilitator
Introduction and Overview	25 minutes	
Agree on Ground Rules	5-10 minutes	
Partnering for Success	15 minutes	
Video Viewing & Discussions	2 hours, 25 minutes	
Part I	45 minutes	
Part II	40 minutes	
Part III	40 minutes	
Large-Group Share-Back	20 minutes	
Break		
IEP Synthesis Activity	45 minutes	
Small-Group Discussion	35 minutes	
Large-Group Share-Back	10 minutes	


# The Individualized Education Program: Partnering for Success

Agenda	Length	Facilitator
Personal Reflection and Application	5 minutes	
Wrap-Up	5 minutes	
Reflections/Continuous Improvement	10 minutes	


**Icon Key**




**Chart**



**Handouts**



**DVD**



**Key Point**

## Facilitation Team

Name/Family Voice

Name/Early Care and Education Voice

or Early Childhood Special Education

Name/Early Intervention Voice

## Presentation

Date/Time

Location

# of Participants

## What you will need:

### Audio/Visual Equipment:



- LCD Projector and Screen or TV
- DVD Player
- Speakers

### DVD:



- The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well*



### Charting Equipment:

- Flip chart and markers
- Masking tape or pins

# The Individualized Education Program: Partnering for Success



## Handouts (English/Spanish):

- #1 Learning Outcomes
- #2 *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well* – Acknowledgements
- #3 *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well* – Guided Viewing
- #4 IEP Synthesis Activity

## Important Considerations

This is a long session. You may want to plan a break between the activities around viewing the video and the synthesis activity.

The video used in this session has three parts that focus on planning for and contributing to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting, as well as implementing the IEP. Strategies for the IEP process, drawn from real-life experiences, are described in the video, which is intended to help people develop a positive mindset by considering the different perspectives of the various individuals involved in the IEP process.

This video is part of the larger *Preschool Inclusion Series*, which includes three additional videos:

- *Preschool Inclusion: Working Together to Make It Happen* provides information about the foundations for inclusion from the perspectives of family members, service providers, and administrators from several service delivery systems.
- *Preschool Inclusion: Samantha* gives participants the opportunity to examine inclusion from the perspective of a young girl and her family as she transitions to kindergarten.
- *Preschool Inclusion: Drew* provides participants the opportunity to explore resources that support collaboration for inclusion, particularly when a parent also has a disability.

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The video for this session, *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well*, is not intended to provide the legal and technical aspects of developing an IEP. A number of resources that explain the law and the technicalities of the IEP are included in the Preschool Inclusion Series Resource List on the supplements page of the Web-based SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library: <http://www.specialquestlibrary.org>.

In order to effectively guide this session, you need to be familiar with the current reauthorization of the federal law, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It is critical that you have accurate information about what is in the law so that you can distinguish the federal legalities from state or local regulations, guidelines, and/or practices.

Make sure you know the specific details of the IEP requirements for the state/locality where you are training.

- All states have their own regulations and guidance for the IEP process.
- Some states also allow local variations in the IEP.
- Remember: states may allow the use of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for preschool as a state-wide or local option in lieu of an IEP.

All federal laws and regulations related to IEPs must also be addressed in a preschool IFSP.

Getting a sense of the participants' experience with IEPs will help you guide this session more effectively. You might want to combine an IEP-focused opener with participant introductions. For example, ask participants for one of the following:

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- One word that describes their experience with IEPs,
- The first thing that comes to mind when they think about IEPs, or
- How they would rate their experience with IEPs on a 1–10 scale (1 being no experience and 10 being very experienced).

During this session, you will be asking the participants to form groups, with members within each group representing each of the various roles involved in the IEP process. Either use your favorite grouping strategy for this activity or have each group (gathered by roles) count off by 5's or 6's so that each team will have one person from each role.

This session is related to several sessions in the original SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library:

- “Developing Family Service Provider Collaboration,” Session 5 in the *Building Relationships with Families* volume
- “Getting Started,” Session 7 in the *Including Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities* volume
- “Transition at Age 3,” Session 9 in the *Including Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities* volume
- All of the sessions in the *Collaboration and Teaming* volume

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Several supplemental resources that would be useful for this session are available on the Web-based SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library:

- Inclusion Planning Checklist: Home-Visiting Programs (birth–five revision)
- Inclusion Planning Checklist: Center-Based Early Care and Education Programs (birth–five revision)
- IFSP/IEP Comparison Chart (handout)
- IEP Scenario: Yolanda





The  
Individualized  
Education  
Program:  
Partnering  
for Success

*Facilitator's  
Script*



25 minutes

## The Individualized Education Program: Partnering for Success

### Introduction and Overview

Welcome to "The Individualized Education (IEP) Program: Partnering for Success." My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I represent the voice of \_\_\_\_\_ (family, preschool special education, early care and education). Facilitating with me today are \_\_\_\_\_ (name/voice) and \_\_\_\_\_ (name/voice).

**Facilitators briefly introduce themselves and describe the unique background and experiences they bring to this session.**

This session will focus on the Individualized Education Program process and each team member's role in preparing for and contributing to the IEP meeting, as well as during implementation of the IEP.

**Add participant introductions, as needed. See the Important Considerations section of the Facilitator's Planning Worksheet about possible openers that could be added to the introductions.**

**Review the Learning Outcomes and Agenda.**

**See pp. 21-22 of the Facilitator's Guide.**

## Learning Outcomes



### Handout #1: Learning Outcomes.

The learning outcomes for this session are:

- ◆ *Participants will consider multiple perspectives:*
  - *when planning for an IEP meeting,*
  - *during the IEP meeting, and*
  - *while implementing the IEP.*
- ◆ *Participants will reflect on their own practice.*
- ◆ *Participants will identify areas where they can improve the IEP process.*
- ◆ *Participants will identify how inclusion can be supported through the IEP process.*

## Agenda

Agree on Ground Rules

Partnering for Success

Video Viewings and Discussions

Large-Group Share-Back

IEP Synthesis Activity

Personal Reflection and Application

Wrap-Up

Reflections/Continuous Improvement



5-10 minutes



## Agree on Ground Rules

See pp. 22-23 of the Facilitator's Guide.

Chart and post ground rules.



15 minutes total

## Partnering for Success

A quality Individualized Education Program, or IEP, is the foundation of a positive learning experience for a child with a disability. The IEP is viewed in many different ways. Some view it as a document. Some view it as a roadmap for addressing a child's special educational needs. Some view it as a process. The IEP is all of these things. And we believe that it can have an impact not only on a child's education but also on shaping a child's future.

The IEP is designed to be a team-based process. It is essential that multiple perspectives inform the process to ensure that the best possible IEP is developed and that the child for whom the IEP is developed has the opportunity to experience high-quality services that promote that child's optimal growth and development. The following descriptions of roles represent those most frequently involved in the IEP process.

First, there are families. Members of a family know their children best and they play a critical role in developing the IEP. They also may be involved in implementing the IEP in daily activities and routines at home and in the community. Family members may be very familiar with the IEP process—or they may not know it at all. It is the role of educators and service providers to help them become partners in the

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process and to assist them in acquiring the information and skills they need to become effective decision-makers in this process.

Early childhood education providers also play a major role in the IEP process, especially in implementing the recommended IEP strategies in preschool, child care, or other early education environments. Because these providers embed strategies into their daily activities and routines, it is important that they participate in the IEP process so that they understand the intent of the IEP and how it will inform their work. In addition, they provide key information about the child from their perspective and environment.

Specialists, including itinerant early childhood special educators, are typically involved in the IEP, as well. They provide targeted supports for teachers and families that help address goals and objectives in everyday activities. Specialists may also provide direct services or teach and model techniques for families and teachers. Their specialized knowledge is critical to ensuring that the unique needs of the child are met.

Administrators from all of the agencies involved in supporting and educating a child provide important leadership that affects the development and implementation of an IEP, particularly in the areas of resource allocation, facilitation of interagency relationships, and support to staff and families. We've heard from many people that the tone set by administrators significantly influences the outcome of the development and implementation of an IEP. In addition, IDEA requires that the administrator from the public agency (usually the child's local educational agency), or their designee, is responsible for the legalities associated with the IEP.

**Invite participants to add other perspectives on the list of role activities.**

The preschool IEP can be more difficult to coordinate than the elementary school IEP because preschool children may be served in a variety of settings.

Multiple perspectives of all involved in the IEP process should be considered during preparations for the IEP meeting, during the IEP meeting, and while implementing the IEP. In a few moments, we will be viewing a 3-part video program that includes the different voices and perspectives of the various individuals involved during each of these stages in the IEP process.



**2 hours,  
25 minutes total**




*45 minutes*

## Video Viewing and Discussions

### Part I: Preparing for IEP Meetings

The video, *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well*, was developed in 2009. The individuals in the video represent various roles and systems; they also come from a variety of cultures, geographic locations, and population densities. Watching the video and participating in an activity related to the video will provide you with an opportunity to consider and discuss the perspectives of individuals in the various roles that are part of the IEP process and some of the unique challenges and circumstances they face.

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Assign to each of the tables or groups one of the following roles: administrator, family member, classroom teacher, and specialist. If you have a large group, you could have participants consider the perspectives of the administrator from two angles: an early childhood special education administrator and an early childhood care and education administrator; and consider the classroom teacher perspective from different viewpoints: an itinerant preschool special education teacher and an early childhood education teacher.

**Handout #2: *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well – Acknowledgements***

**Handout #3: *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well – Viewing Guide***

We will view each of the three parts of the video separately. After each part, we will stop and share some general reflections on what we saw and heard. Then you will work in your groups to discuss, from the perspective of your assigned role, what messages you heard, the implications of those messages, and specific things you could do at each stage of the IEP process.

The first segment of the video focuses on ways to prepare for the IEP meeting. Parents, administrators, and specialists share some practical tips that lay the foundation for a successful, collaborative, and productive IEP meeting. After we view Part I of the video, we'll discuss your initial responses in the large group; then you'll discuss your thoughts from the perspective of your assigned role. We will do the same thing for the second and third portions of the video. After we

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have discussed all three parts of the video in small groups, we will share the key ideas from each video segment and consider those ideas in light of the different roles they represent.

You may use the viewing guide for note taking while watching the video.



**Start video: *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well, Part I: Preparing for IEP Meetings* (17 minutes)**

**Help participants think about the video from their assigned perspective, even if the role is not reflected in a particular portion of the video.**



### Large-Group Discussion (5 minutes)



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*What are your initial reactions to this section?*

*What words or phrases caught your attention?*

---

**Ask for several responses to each of the questions above.**



### Small-Group Discussion (20 minutes)

Let's shift our focus now and start thinking about the video from the perspective of your assigned role. In your groups you're going to do two things. First, drawing from the messages from the various perspectives, talk about what you can do in your assigned role to prepare for the IEP process. Then, after you've discussed this for about

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15 minutes, identify 1 or 2 ideas from the list that would have the greatest impact to share with the rest of the group. Identify a recorder for your group who will chart these key ideas.

**If necessary, use probing questions to get the small groups started.**



40 minutes

### Part II: Contributing to Successful IEP Meetings

Now let's take a look at Part II of the video: Contributing to Successful IEP Meetings. The focus of Part II is the process of meeting to develop an IEP. In this section, parents, administrators, teachers, and specialists discuss the roles of each team member during IEP meetings and provide some practical strategies for making IEP meetings successful. You may want to take notes on your viewing guide.



**Start video: *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well, Part II: Contributing to Successful IEP Meetings* (15 minutes)**



### Large-Group Discussion (5 minutes)



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*What are your initial reactions to this section?*

*What words or phrases caught your attention?*

---

**Ask for several responses to each of the questions above.**



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### Small-Group Discussion (20 minutes)

Let's again think about the video from the perspective of your assigned role. Drawing from the messages from the various perspectives, discuss what you might do in your assigned role to contribute to an effective IEP meeting; and then, after you've discussed this for about 15 minutes, identify 1 or 2 ideas from the list that would have the greatest impact to share with the rest of the group. Identify a recorder for your group who will chart these key ideas.

**If necessary, use probing questions to get the small groups started.**



*40 minutes*

### Part III: Putting IEPs into Action

Now let's view the final portion of the video: Putting IEPs Into Action. In this section, parents, administrators, teachers, and specialists discuss how important it is to communicate and share information about progress during the implementation of the IEP. Part III also provides strategies for working together to implement the IEP. You may want to take notes on your viewing guide.



**Start video: *The Individualized Education Program: Strategies for Making It Work and Doing It Well, Part III: Putting IEPs Into Action* (15 minutes)**



### Large-Group Discussion (5 minutes)



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*What are your initial reactions to this section?*

*What words or phrases caught your attention?*

---

**Ask for several responses to each of the questions above.**



### Small-Group Discussion (20 minutes)

For our third and final time, let's think about the video from the perspective of your assigned role. Again, you'll be doing two things in your small groups. First, drawing from the messages from the various perspectives, discuss what you might do in your assigned role to support the implementation of the IEP. And then, after you've discussed this for about 15 minutes, identify 1 or 2 ideas from the list that would have the greatest impact to share with the rest of the group. Chart these key ideas.

**If necessary, use probing questions to get the small groups started.**



*20 minutes*

### Large Group Share-Back

We've spent a lot of time thinking about the IEP process from our assigned role. It's very important to carefully consider the perspectives of a particular role, but it is equally important to have an understanding of all of the perspectives that are essential to the IEP process. Let's share with each other 2–3 key ideas for each role at each stage in the IEP process.

Let's start by sharing the key ideas from each role on preparing for IEP meetings.

**Start with one table; and if there is a second table with that role, ask if they have anything to add to the first list. Move to the next role, and so on. Once all roles have shared about preparing for IEP meetings, move on to the key ideas for Part II from each perspective, and then Part III.**

**You may want to use time cards to help participants use their share-back time well.**

**You may want to type up these suggestions and distribute them to participants as a follow-up to the training.**

A common thread through each of the videos—and throughout your comments—was the importance of working together and partnering for success.

**For the next activity, move people into groups with each role represented in each group to form a “team.” Suggestions for how to regroup participants can be found in the Important Considerations section of the Facilitator’s Planning Worksheet.**



**45 minutes total**



*35 minutes*

## IEP Synthesis Activity

### Small-Group Discussion

The IEP requires ongoing communication and collaboration among team members, including families, throughout the process. We are now going to begin an activity that is designed to help us consider how we can encourage the participation of all of these individuals who contribute to the IEP process. We will also consider how to ensure that children have opportunities to learn, play, and develop with their typically developing peers. Throughout this activity, you’ll want to be thinking about the implications that these efforts have for IEP processes you might be involved in. You will work with your new group, a team that is made up of the multiple perspectives from which we’ve viewed the video.



### Handout #4: Synthesis Activity

In your new team, read Shayla's IEP Scenario on pages 1–2 of Handout #4. You may read it individually or as a group, with one group member reading it aloud.

Use the roles chart on page 3 of Handout #4 and take a moment to individually jot down, from the role perspective assigned to you earlier, what you can contribute and what you need from others during each part of the IEP process.

Then, as a team, discuss the issues posed in the Small Group Discussion on page 4 of Handout #4: what needs to happen and how you can partner to ensure that Shayla is given optimal opportunities to learn, grow, and develop with her typically developing peers.

Prepare to share back one “aha” about the importance of partnering for inclusion.

**Allow 30 minutes for discussion.**



*10 minutes*

### Large-Group Share-Back

This synthesis activity was intended to highlight the importance of partnering to ensure that preschool-age children are given optimal opportunities to learn, grow, and develop with their typically developing peers. As a result of discussing Shayla's IEP scenario, what insights did your team have around partnering for inclusive IEPs?

**Summarize key ideas from the share-back.**



5 minutes total

## Personal Reflection and Application

As a result of participating in this team-based discussion, what implications do you see for your own work? Record your thoughts.



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*Would a couple of you like to share your thoughts?*

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5 minutes total

## Wrap-Up

The video, The Individualized Education Program, and the synthesis activity have helped us unearth some of the reasons for and value of a team-based approach to the IEP process, particularly in relation to inclusive IEPs.



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*Are there any questions or comments about the training today?*

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**Review Learning Outcomes.**

**See p. 28 in the Facilitator's Guide.**



10 minutes total

## Reflections/Continuous Improvement

We've generated a lot of great ideas about how we can work together during the IEP process. Take a moment to jot down 2–3 ideas that you can use in your work right away.

**Gather Continuous Improvement feedback.**

**See p. 28 in the Facilitator's Guide.**

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Your suggestions for improvements help us to make our sessions responsive to your needs as learners. We'd like to hear about what worked for you in this session and what could be done to facilitate your learning.

Divide a piece of chart paper into 2 columns, as shown. Entitle 1 column **"What worked?"** and the other column **"Suggestions for improvement."**

What worked?	Suggestions for improvement

Chart participants' comments without rebuttal or discussion. *Facilitators can act on these suggestions, as appropriate, in future training sessions.*



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*What worked for you today?*

*What suggestions for improvement do you have?*

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**Share information about the next training and describe follow-up activities or participants' next steps.**

We appreciate your participation today.

## End training session