

What to Expect When Your Child Has a Special Need: The First Year



4KIDSNEEDS is a foundation for children, and the families and caregivers of those children, living with a special need. Our focus is on creating a community responsive to improving quality of life through outreach, support networks, family activities and financial assistance in a safe and secure environment.

This process guide will be an interactive book that will help parents and caregivers navigate through the first year of their child's special need, resulting in more successful care management and an improvement in their child's quality of life.

Guide Content

Based upon our ongoing focus groups, this content is subject to change. We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have!

- Dealing with Emotions and Accepting the Diagnosis
- Your Rights: Insurance & Resources
- Education and Early Intervention
- Life Planning: Daily Practices and Financial Planning for the First Year
- Parenting for a Special Needs Child
- Siblings of Special Needs Children
- Organizational Tools for Care Management
- Resource Guide and Helpful Links

Dealing with Emotions and Accepting the Diagnosis

- All people react differently to sudden change and overwhelming events.
- This guide will help parents and caregivers understand the unexpected emotions they may have after hearing their child's diagnosis.
- By dealing with these emotions effectively, parents and caregivers can move forward in a positive way.

Your Rights: Insurance & Resources

- When your child has a special need, he or she may be eligible for services that you may not be aware of such as transportation and home modifications, if needed.
- The Guide will review insurance eligibility and how to coordinate with your provider and/or find a provider.
- The guide will help take some of the confusion out of finding appropriate services for their child.

Education and Early Intervention

- Knowing about your child's need is one of the most important steps in managing his or her care.
- Taking early steps toward the management of any special need is also very important. Therefore it is important to be aware of specific educational rights, laws and services that are offered.
- This guide will include stories, advice, and resources for both of these steps.

Life Planning: Daily Practices & Financial Planning for the First Year

- Creating a routine is important in managing any special need.
- This guide will show parents and caregivers how to create a practical routine to be prepared, every day along the way for the first year.
- Looking at financial planning for the family in terms of increased medical and care costs
- Future editions are being planned to include infancy, childhood, adolescence and beyond.

Parenting for a Special Needs Child

- The guide will share coping skills, stories from other parents, and advice from doctors and other professionals on the struggles and triumphs of being the parent of a special needs child.
- The guide will also explore the management of a healthy relationship between spouses, family in stressful times.

Siblings of a Special Needs Child

- Brothers and sisters of a special needs child can benefit and learn from their relationship greatly.
- The guide will include activity ideas, stories, and tips, as well as resources for parents and siblings.

Organizational Tools for Care Management & Resource Guide with Helpful Links

The guide will feature a comprehensive but easy to understand section full of resources, helpful links and telephone numbers, as well as some lists that will help parent and caregivers of special needs children manage their child's condition with less stress and less confusion .

Included will be an organizational planner for medical records, daily routine planning, financial planning, notes, questions and “to do’s”.

This section will be available via the website and in the printed Guide.