6. Parental and Student Participation:

Your child’s school is required to collaborate with you and your child if your child is of appropriate age. This principle allows you to be involved as much as you would like, with your child’s education. It allows you to be a part of the IEP team and allows you to

- Access school records.
- Have control over records and who and who cannot see them.
- Get involved with the special education advisory committee
- Receive notice before the school does anything that involves your child and the right for your child to have a free appropriate public education

Some Resources That Might Help You

The League for Crippled Children:
The League provides services to children with disabilities and their families in the counties of Maryland, West Virginia and Pennsylvania. However, no child would be refused services regardless of demographics or circumstances.
http://www.leagueforcrippledchildren.com

National Mental Health Center:
This site provides a lot of information for families to use concerning various Mental Health issues.

National Autism Association:
This site provides useful information about children with Autism.
http://www.nationalautismassociation.org/

Child Adolescent Teen Behavior:
This site provides information about various child and adolescent behaviors and suggestions to help parents.
http://www.balmoralfarm.ns.ca/

Speech Impairment Resources:
This site provides links to useful speech impairment websites.
http://seriweb.com/speech.htm

Hearing Impairment:
This site provides very helpful information and website links for hearing impairments.
http://special.edschool.virginia.edu/categories/hi.html

Uncovering the Mysteries of Disabilities:
Additional Information about your family’s rights, local resources, and inspirational stories
http://faculty.frostburg.edu/mbradley/disabilities/umd.html

This pamphlet was created by Frostburg State University Psychology Students as part of the Center for Children & Families.

Please distribute as needed for educational purposes.
List of Disabilities:

- Specific Learning Disabilities
- Speech or Language Impairments
- Mental Retardation
- Emotional or Behavioral Disorders
- Multiple Disabilities
- Hearing Impairments
- Orthopedic Impairments
- Other Health Impairments
- Autism
- Visual Impairments
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Developmental Delay
- Deaf-Blindness

What is IDEA?
If you have a child with a disability they are entitled to certain rights in their education to ensure that they get the most appropriate education possible and can benefit from their education. Schools are required to work with your child to make their education as successful as possible. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA has created six principles that schools must follow when educating your child.

1. Zero Reject:
This is the first principle that IDEA uses to ensure that every child receives a free and appropriate education. This means that your child should receive equal treatment to their peers without disabilities, at No Additional Cost to You.

2. Non-Discriminatory Evaluation:
The non-discriminatory evaluation is used to determine if your child has a disability through testing. If a disability is found, this evaluation will determine if it would interfere with your child's ability to learn without any type of special education or other services. If it is found that your child's disability will interfere with their education, the appropriate special education services your child is entitled to receive will be determined. This testing requires the consent from YOU, the parent.

3. Appropriate Education:
If your child has been diagnosed with a disability their school must give them a suitable education based on the results of their non-discriminatory evaluation. If your child is between the ages of 3 and 21, then they have the right to receive an Individualized Education Plan, or IEP, which will bind your child's school to provide certain services and/or goals for your child to meet in certain time frames. Your consent is required. Your child's IEP should be in effect before the beginning of the school year, and should be revised and reviewed annually. If you choose to have your child's school to make an IEP for them, it is important to attend ALL IEP meetings with the school to ensure that your child is educated in the fashion that they deserve and are required to receive.

4. Least Restrictive Environment:
If your child has a disability, the school they attend is required to educate your child in the same room with the other kids. For example, if your child can be in a regular classroom with an aid that is trained to help them, then it is not legal for the school to put your child in a resource room all day.

5. Procedural Due Process:
Children with disabilities have this principle to protect them from their school's actions. This principle gives you the right to sue in court if you feel that your child's school is not fulfilling their part of the agreements made in your child's IEP. There are several steps involved in pursuing action against your child's school. The first is a "mediation session", where you and the school officials meet with a third party to try and reach an agreement on what is best for your child. This step can save money and time and gives you and the school the opportunity to talk out the problems both sides may have. Next, if the mediation session does not work then you would move on to a "due process hearing" in front of an impartial hearing officer. At that point, if the child's needs are not met you can seek to sue the school.