

Case Conference

What is a case conference?

A case conference is an initial meeting held prior to a child with additional needs' transition to school. It's an opportunity for the school, parents, professionals involved with the child (e.g. speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, resource teacher, physiotherapist, etc.) as well as special education staff from the school board to work collaboratively to develop a transition and support plan based on the child's individual profile. In essence, the case conference represents the first step in building the child's support team with the people who already know the child and those who will be welcoming the child into school. The case conference is essential to ensuring a child's smooth transition to school.

What is discussed at the case conference?

Planning effectively for a child's transition to school takes a coordinated effort and involves knowing your child as well as possible. For this reason, a number of items will be discussed at the case conference, including:

- Your child's strengths, interests and needs;
- Assessment information;
- Types of supports your child needs to be successful, as well as available supports;
- Transportation needs;
- School readiness activities;
- Involvement of community agencies that are already working with your child;
- Additional referrals, as needed.

The case conference should result in a list of things to do, who will do what and deadlines. If additional meetings are necessary, the date should be set before leaving.

Who schedules the case conference?

Typically, the coordinator of special education from the school board or your child's case manager, if he or she has one, will schedule the case conference. The coordinator will inform you and professionals supporting your child or your family of the date, time and location of the case conference.

Do I have to attend the case conference?

Parents are expected to attend the case conference. You know your child best and have information crucial to creating a smooth transition plan for your child.

When does a case conference take place?

Case conferences are typically held in the spring prior to a child starting school. It usually lasts 1 to 1 ½ hours, but it is best to allow a bit more time in case it is needed.



How do I prepare for the case conference?

The first step in preparing for the case conference is to remember that you know your child best. Attending a case conference is a new experience for most parents. Here are a few suggestions to help you prepare:

- Gather and organize reports and other documents so you can quickly refer to them during the case conference. (See the information sheets on *Creating a Portfolio* and *Creating a Parent Information Binder*);
- Jot down your goals for your child as well as any concerns or questions you have;
- List the supports you believe your child will need in school to help him or her be as successful as possible.