

Educational vs. Medical Models Comparison

Educational

Educational team includes parents, educators and Therapists

Therapy focuses on intervention to improve student's ability to learn and function in school.

Services are provided primarily at school.

Services provided in the student's educational setting, often in group setting

Students age range is 3-21.

Services are provided at no cost to parents

Services are provided during the school year

Goals are reviewed and updated at least every twelve months.

Reevaluations are completed once every three years.

Decisions about Intensity or duration of services are team-driven.

Medical

Medical team, which includes family, decides frequency And duration of therapy (or insurance company).

Therapy focuses on treatment specific to underlying medical diagnosis.

Services in outpatient setting or home

Treatment is generally one-to-one.

Patients span all ages.

Payment is fee for service, insurance, Medicaid.

Services are provided year-round.

Goals are reviewed and updated as needed.

Reevaluations are completed to update levels of performance as needs dictate.

Decisions about continuation of services are made by the medical team (or insurance).

(Your school district name here)



Welcome to (your school district name here)

Your school/agency tag line here.

Tel: 555 555 5555

Developed by members of the Regional Autism Advisory Council's Warren County Task Force

(Your school district name here)

School District Address

School District Contact Phone Number

What are Special Education Services?

Special education services pick up where early intervention services for young children leave off, at age 3, and continue through age 21 for students who qualify. The school district generally provides these services through the special education or student services department, based on an assessment and planning process that utilizes a team of experts and intervention providers, as well as the child's parents.

The document that spells out the student's needs and how they will be met is the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP describes a student's strengths and challenges, sets goals and objectives, and details how these can be met through the provision of supports and accommodations, specially trained staff, and positive behavior supports.

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act) is the federal law that specifies the child with disabilities right to public education. Ask school staff for a copy of "Whose Idea is It" that gives additional details of these rights and processes.



Educational vs. Medical Models of Services

It is often hard to understand the differences between educational (or school based) and private therapies, often referred to as medical model therapies.

Educational Model

The Educational Model focuses on the skills impacting educational performance in all subject areas. The provision of school-based therapy is governed by federal and state laws. The IEP team, including the parents, will identify needs and prioritize goals and agree on services. The IEP in this model will focus primarily on the functional outcomes that enable the child to benefit from the school program. The school team, including therapists (PT/OT/Speech), will work on acquiring functional skills, using natural opportunities for the child to develop sensory, motor, communication, or social skills, and to identify strategies that school staff and parents can use in the child's daily routines and environment.

Related services, such as OT/PT/Speech, are provided through direct, collaborative or a consultative model of service delivery. In the latter, the therapist consults with the classroom staff, which allows the teaching staff to integrate the therapy strategies within the classroom.

Related services in the school (OT/PT/Speech) may continue to be needed after private therapies are no longer indicated. For example social skills are impacting participation in the school setting but are adequate in the one to one setting.

Educational Eligibility = Disability + Educational Need



Medical Model

The Medical Model generally focuses on the impairment regardless of the severity level to ensure that the child successfully performs the basic activities of daily living (i.e. putting on their clothes, feeding themselves, communicating their wants and needs), and address developmental and/or medical issues that impact the child in the home and/or community. Services are usually performed on a one-to-one basis in an outpatient clinic or home setting

Private therapies may continue even when the school team decides that school-based therapies are no longer needed for the child to access the curriculum standards. For example, once the child enters the school-age setting, the team may decide that Physical Therapy may not be warranted if the child can maneuver safely and effectively in the school environment.

Best practice would include active and collaborative communication between school and private therapists. Parents have an important role in fostering this communication.

**Medical Eligibility = Disability +
Performance in Daily Living Activities**