

2024 RESOURCE GUIDE

Helping Students With Epilepsy Succeed

Introduction

Preparing for the new school year can be challenging, especially for parents of children diagnosed with chronic conditions, like epilepsy. This guide aims to provide essential resources, tips, and support to ensure your child has a successful and safe school experience in Michigan.

Key Steps for a Smooth Transition

1. Meet with School Staff

- You can request an IEP or 504 meeting with teachers, school nurses, and administrators to discuss your child's condition and specific needs. You can call the school to request this, but you should also follow up with an email to put it in writing.
They have 10 days to respond to your written request and the meeting should be scheduled within 30 days of the request.
Note: It is important to retain all communication records.
- Provide them with the Seizure Action Plan (SAP) tailored to your child's epilepsy. You can work with your child's physicians to create this plan. If you need a template for a Seizure Action Plan, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan can provide you with one.
- Let your school know that epilepsy is more than seizures. Whether it is a side effect of medications or the seizures themselves, epilepsy can impact a student's cognitive functioning. Partner with the school to help actively monitor your child's progress and how to modify plans as needed.

2. Develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan

- Work with the school to create or update an IEP that addresses academic and health needs.
- Be sure that any accommodation is detailed in the documented plan, such as extra time for tests, a quiet place to rest after a seizure, or permission to carry necessary medications.
- For additional ideas of what could be included in your child's plan, review the Family-Matters section of the Michigan Department of Education website here: <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/special-education/parent-resources/family-matters>.

3. Medication Management

- Provide the school with up-to-date medical records and a list of medications, including administration instructions (this should be documented on your child's Seizure Action Plan).

- Talk with your school about how this information will be shared with teachers, recess staff, lunch room staff, coaches, etc.
- Talk to the school about how access to the medication is also managed.
- The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan is also available to provide Seizure First Aid Training, which can include emergency medication training as well. You can learn more about this here:
<https://epilepsymichigan.org/learn/seizure-first-aid/>

4. School Presentations

- It is valuable to educate other students and families about epilepsy and seizure first aid, and you can provide resources that assist people in being prepared to respond if your child had a seizure at school.
- The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan has resources available to help:
<https://epilepsymichigan.org/student-resources/>

Preparing Your Child

1. Education and Self-Advocacy

- Teach your child about their condition in an age-appropriate way.
- Encourage them to communicate their needs and feel comfortable discussing their epilepsy with teachers and peers.

2. Seizure Response Training

- Ensure your child knows what to do during a seizure and feels confident seeking help.
- Role-play scenarios so they are prepared to explain their condition to others.

Additional Tips

1. Medical ID

Consider having your child wear a medical ID bracelet or necklace that provides essential information about their condition and emergency contact details.

2. Transportation

Inform bus drivers and transportation staff about your child's condition and any necessary precautions or emergency procedures.

3. After-School Activities

Work with activity leaders to ensure they are aware of your child's needs and are trained to respond appropriately to seizures.

4. Regular Communication

Maintain ongoing communication with the school staff about your child's progress and any changes in their health or medication.

Conclusion

You are not alone on this journey.

Epilepsy is the fourth most common neurological condition, behind migraines, stroke and Alzheimer's, and 1 in 26 people will be diagnosed with epilepsy at some point in their lifetime.

In Michigan we have around 109,000 people living with active epilepsy, and 14,000 of these are students.

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan leads the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives.

By taking these proactive steps, you can help ensure your child with epilepsy has a safe, supportive, and enriching school year. Utilize the resources available in Michigan, and don't hesitate to seek support from local organizations and fellow parents. Your involvement and advocacy are key to your child's success.

On our next page, we provide vital resources that can be helpful on this educational journey.

2024 Resources

By being prepared and utilizing available resources, you can help create a positive and successful school experience for your child with epilepsy.

Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan
Phone: 1-800-377-6226
Email: info@epilepsymichigan.org
Website: <https://epilepsymichigan.org/>

Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS)
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
Phone: 1-800-359-3722
Email: cschcsfc@michigan.gov
Website: <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/assistance-programs/cshcs>

Michigan Alliance for Families
Phone: 1-800-552-4821
Email: info@michiganallianceforfamilies.org
Website: <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/>

Michigan Department of Education – Special Education Services
Phone: 1-833-633-5788
Website: <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/special-education/parent-resources>

Special Education Mediation Services
Phone: 1-833-543-7178
Email: info@MiKids1st.org
Website: <https://mikids1st.org/>

Student Advocacy Center of Michigan
Phone: 1-855-688-1916
Email: helpline@studentadvocacycenter.org
Website: <https://www.studentadvocacycenter.org/>

Got Transition
Phone: 1-202-769-0486
Email: info@GotTransition.org
Website: <https://www.gottransition.org/>

Requesting accommodations when taking the ACT
<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/registration/accommodations.html>

Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education:
Know Your Rights and Responsibilities
U.S. Department of Education
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

Disability Resources Michigan
Website: [Disability Resources \(michigan.gov\)](http://DisabilityResources.michigan.gov)

Michigan Career and Technical Education
Phone: 1-877-901-7360
Website: <https://www.michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/mcti>

Michigan Rehabilitative Services
Phone: 1-800-605-6722
Email: LEO-MRS-CustomerAssistance@michigan.gov
Website: <https://www.michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/mrs>

Office of Civil Rights - Michigan

Michigan school districts must adopt written procedures for the prompt resolution of complaints of discrimination or harassment. These procedures are available at any district school or office. District procedures are often printed in school student and parent handbooks. Many districts also post this information on their district or school web sites. It is ideal to alert the local Michigan school district first of any concerns and follow its procedures for investigation and resolution, however, complaints can be filed with the U.S. Department of Education at any time. The Office of Civil Rights that oversees complaints in Michigan can be contacted at:

Office for Civil Rights,
Cleveland Office
U.S. Department of Education
1350 Euclid Avenue, Suite 325
Cleveland, OH 44115
Telephone: 216-522-4970
Fax: 216-522-2573
Email: ocr.cleveland@ed.gov

You may also contact Jim Whittaker, at:
P.O. Box 30712
Lansing, MI 48909
Telephone: 517-241-2091
Fax: 517-241-5347
Email: whittakerj@michigan.gov