

POINTERS FOR PARENTS

Getting Youngsters What They Need At School

(NAPSA)—Parents who perceive their youngsters are having problems at school can take several steps to improve the situation. The Council For Exceptional Children recommends:

1. First, meet with your child's teacher and share your concerns. Work with him or her to develop intervention strategies for your child and set a time line, say two to four weeks, to see if they are successful. Stay in communication with the teacher during this time.

2. If the interventions are unsuccessful, meet with your child's teacher and a special education teacher. This teacher may suggest new alternatives.

3. If your child still experiences difficulty, ask that he or she be assessed for special education services. Your child will be given multiple assessments to determine his or her current level of functioning. The assessments may include overall achievement scores as well as mastery of specific academic skills and consider processing deficits. For example, a child may have perfect vision but see words and letters incorrectly. The child may reverse letters, only see partial letters or have difficulty remembering what's been read.

4. Meet with an education team and other professionals to determine if any additional information is needed about the child and whether special education would be a good idea. You will be asked to provide functional and developmental information about your child.

5. Determine, along with the education team, if your child has a particular category of problem, such as a learning disability,



The education system can do more for children with special needs than many parents realize.

mental retardation, behavior disorder, physical or other disability and what services—psychological, speech therapy, physical therapy—can help.

6. If it is determined your child could benefit from special education, you will meet with an Individualized Education Program Team (also known as Admission, Review, Dismissal Team). This team develops the program for your child. It should involve:

- Your child's goals and objectives for the year.
- An explanation of the extent to which your child will not participate in general education classes.
- A statement of your child's present level of functioning.
- Any modifications to state- or district-wide assessments your child needs.
- A statement of how progress will be measured.

You can learn more about teaching and raising a child with a disability online at www.cec.sped.org.