

My Child is Struggling: What does this mean? How can I help?

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Risk Factors of Learning Difficulties

- **READING** - Poor fluency, poor accuracy (errors pertaining to syllable repetition, incorrect reading, word repetition, ending substitution, syllable omission, or letter substitution/omission/insertion) (Ergul, 2012); Risk factors by grade level (K-3) <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-risk-indicators-grade-level>
- **MATH** - Reading or language difficulties, behavioral concerns (including inattention), memory difficulties, difficulties with number identification and quantity discrimination (kindergarten) (Mazzocco, 2007)
- **PRESCHOOL** - Failure to use language for communication (age 3), delayed motor skills (age 5), limited exposure to oral and written language (NICHCY, 2004)
- **GENERAL** - Child's attitude towards school, academic success, relationship with teacher, parental support, school supports (Sorenson et al., 2003)

Problems Associated with Learning Disabilities (Sattler, 2014)

Cognitive/Academic

- Difficulty connecting letters-sounds
- Difficulty expressing ideas in writing
- Difficulty following directions
- Poor listening skills
- Poor number sense
- Poor phonological awareness, comprehension, verbal expression, and/or vocabulary

Information-Processing/Executive Functions

- Difficulty generalizing, identifying critical content of reading material, and/or retelling a story in order
- Difficulty identifying critical information when solving problems
- Difficulty self-monitoring, shifting attention, and/or sustaining attention.
- Poor independent work habits, organizational skills, planning skills, study skills, and/or retrieval of encoded information

Perceptual

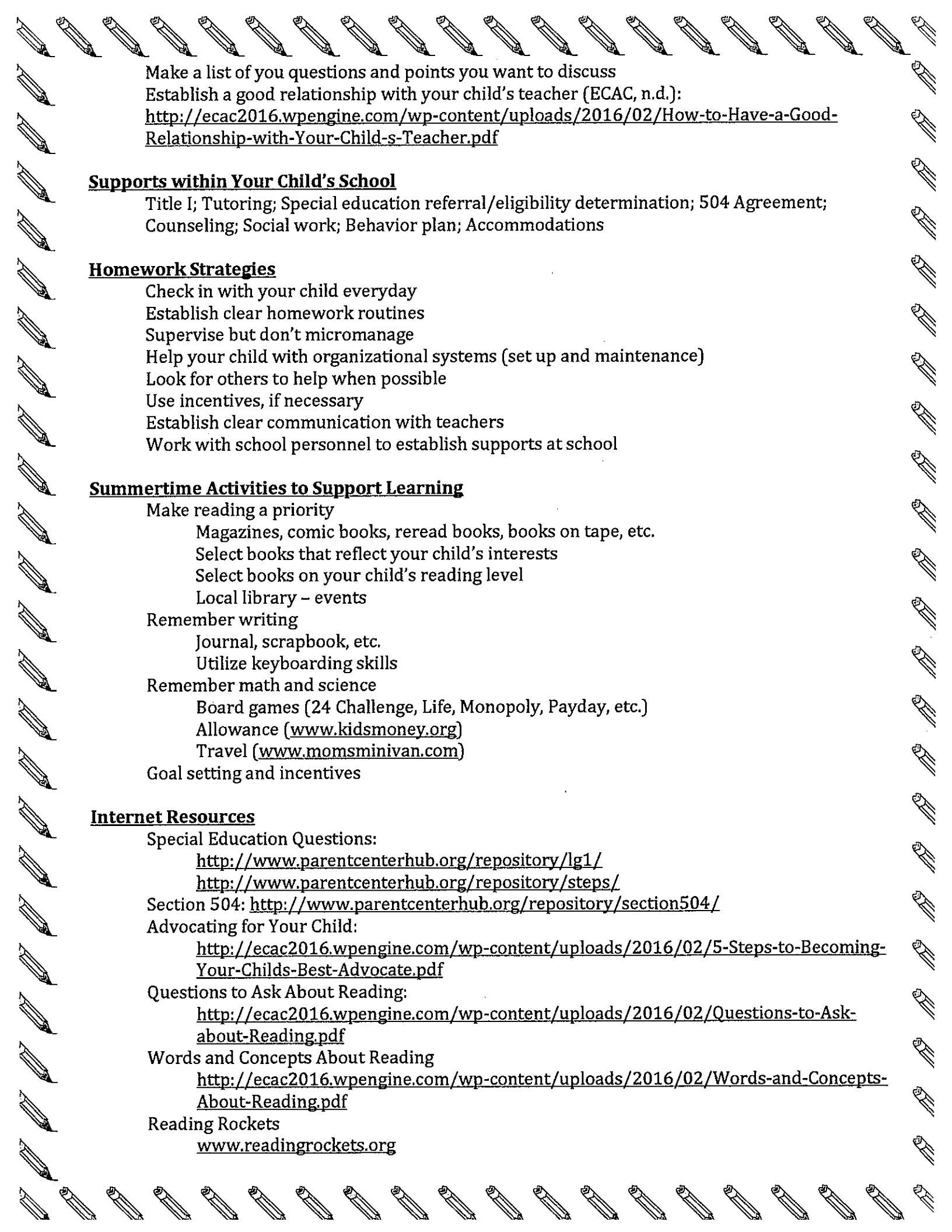
- Delayed development of consistent hand preference
- Difficulty pronouncing words and memorizing auditory and visual stimuli
- Misreads and/or reverses numbers
- Poor attention span, fine-motor coordination, and/or speech articulation

Social-Behavioral

- Acting-out behavior
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Difficulty following social rules of conversation, making friends, and/or with conflict resolution
- Disruptiveness
- Distractibility, hyperactivity, immaturity, and/or impulsiveness
- Poor self-image

Now what?

- Early intervention is key! Catch problems early and get supports in place!
- Early identification is key!
- Request a parent-teacher conference – let the teacher know you're concerned.



Make a list of you questions and points you want to discuss
Establish a good relationship with your child's teacher (ECAC, n.d.):
<http://ecac2016.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/How-to-Have-a-Good-Relationship-with-Your-Child-s-Teacher.pdf>

Supports within Your Child's School

Title I; Tutoring; Special education referral/eligibility determination; 504 Agreement; Counseling; Social work; Behavior plan; Accommodations

Homework Strategies

Check in with your child everyday
Establish clear homework routines
Supervise but don't micromanage
Help your child with organizational systems (set up and maintenance)
Look for others to help when possible
Use incentives, if necessary
Establish clear communication with teachers
Work with school personnel to establish supports at school

Summertime Activities to Support Learning

Make reading a priority
Magazines, comic books, reread books, books on tape, etc.
Select books that reflect your child's interests
Select books on your child's reading level
Local library - events
Remember writing
Journal, scrapbook, etc.
Utilize keyboarding skills
Remember math and science
Board games (24 Challenge, Life, Monopoly, Payday, etc.)
Allowance (www.kidsmoney.org)
Travel (www.momsminivan.com)
Goal setting and incentives

Internet Resources

Special Education Questions:
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/lg1/>
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/steps/>
Section 504: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/section504/>
Advocating for Your Child:
<http://ecac2016.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/5-Steps-to-Becoming-Your-Childs-Best-Advocate.pdf>
Questions to Ask About Reading:
<http://ecac2016.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Questions-to-Ask-about-Reading.pdf>
Words and Concepts About Reading
<http://ecac2016.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Words-and-Concepts-About-Reading.pdf>
Reading Rockets
www.readingrockets.org