



The Student with Narcolepsy & the Education System

504 VS. IEP: WHAT DOES YOUR CHILD NEED?

Section 504: Rehabilitation Act

- Federal Civil Rights Law that protects against discrimination; Vocational Rehabilitation Act
- Provides a plan for how the child will access learning environment
- Changes to learning environment to level the playing ground
- Can continue to receive in post-secondary education

Eligibility: 1) Child has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities
2) has a record of or 3) is regarded as having such an impairment

Individualized Education Plan

- Federal Special Education Law; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Provides a plan for child's special education program at school
- Provides individualized special education and related services to meet child's educational needs
- Will discontinue when the student graduates or ages out of K-12 education system

Eligibility: 1) Child identified as having one or more of the 13 specific IDEA disabilities listed and 2) the disability affects educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the general education curriculum

Teachers who know how to respond to Narcolepsy symptoms can influence how fellow students and staff respond to a student with Narcolepsy.

Narcolepsy is an incurable neurological sleep disorder where the brain is unable to regulate typical sleep-wake cycles. It is poorly recognized and seriously under-diagnosed. Children are commonly misdiagnosed with ADHD, depression, behavioral disorders, sleep apnea, and other mental health disorders before the true Narcolepsy diagnosis.



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Teachers in both K–12 and college settings need to understand that the child with Narcolepsy is not lazy. Ensure accommodations are provided in the classroom and for state, district, and college exams, and support the family through observations related to medication, sleep, and behavior.

ACCOMMODATIONS

- Do not penalize for tardiness
- Allow for short naps (20-30 min) in the classroom or a designated area
- Do not wake student if they fall asleep
- Allow student to stand, move around, and access water, which can help stay awake
- Check for comprehension and allow for peer notetaking, teacher provided notes, and recorded lectures of classes
- Do not keep student in at breaks for work, they need to move around and wake up
- Reduce assignments and tasks once the student demonstrates mastery
- Schedule testing when student is most awake, allow breaks and time for naps
- Allow preferential seating/course selection
- Work with disability office (college students)

With the school's help, a student with Narcolepsy can be successful!



Research shows that chronic excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS) in school-aged children affects:

- Academic functioning
- Conduct problems
- Family/peer relationships
- Making/keeping friends
- Emotional well-being and control
- School activity engagement
- Education/sports participation
- Career choice
- Job retention
- Physical well-being and safety