

What are Special Factors for Consideration?

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is an educational plan designed to meet the unique needs of your child with a disability. The "Factors for Considerations" section addresses specific factors that may **affect your child's learning and ability to progress** in the general curriculum.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires **IEP teams to consider five [special factors](#)** when developing, reviewing, or revising an IEP. **Virginia requires a sixth special consideration.** The IEP team must consider each factor, and the team must document whether the consideration applies to the student and how it will be addressed.

Consideration #1: Does Your Child's Behavior Affect Learning?

If it is determined that your child's **behavior** interferes with their learning or the learning of others, the IEP team must consider the use of **positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports** to address the behaviors. The team may explore:

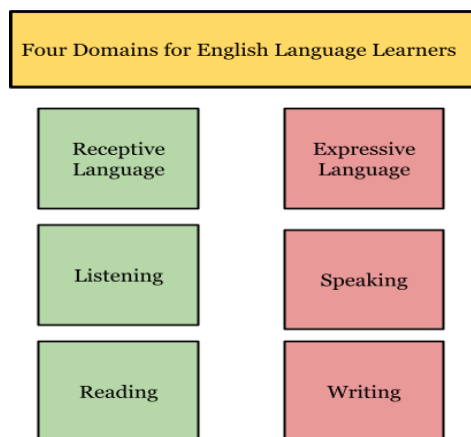
- **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA):** Helps identify why a child behaves in certain ways.
- **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):** Provides strategies and supports to improve behavior.
- **PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports):** Focuses on preventing problem behaviors before they escalate.

Examples may include scheduled breaks, a reward system to reinforce positive behavior, and access to a quiet space for self-regulation.

Consideration #2: Does Your Child Have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)?

If your child is an **English Language Learner (ELL)**, the IEP must consider the **language needs** as those needs relate to their IEP. This includes second-language conversational skills and academic language proficiency to support and strengthen the implementation of the IEP goals. The team should discuss:

- How language proficiency affects learning and participation, e.g., **listening, speaking, reading, and writing.**
- The need for **English Language (EL) services, interpreters, or translated materials.**
- Accommodations for **state testing and classroom instruction.**



Examples include bilingual instruction, extra time on tests for students developing English skills, and using an interpreter during IEP and other meetings.



Consideration #3: Is Your Child Blind or Have Visual Impairment?

For students who are **blind or visually impaired**, the IEP team must evaluate the need for **Braille instruction** and other accessible learning materials unless an assessment shows it is not needed.

Examples may include:

- **Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)/Accessible Educational Materials (AEM):** Large-print books, audiobooks, digital text-to-speech software, Braille books, or instruction in using Braille.
- **Assistive Technology (AT):** Screen readers, magnifiers, computer apps, specially lined paper for notetaking, or providing class notes in Braille.

Consideration #4: Is Your Child Deaf or Have Other Communication Needs?

For children who are deaf or hard of hearing, the IEP team must consider their **language and communication needs**, including:

- Access to **sign language, spoken language, or communication devices**.
- The need for **interpreters, captioning services, or assistive technology**.
- Opportunities for **direct communication** with peers and teachers.

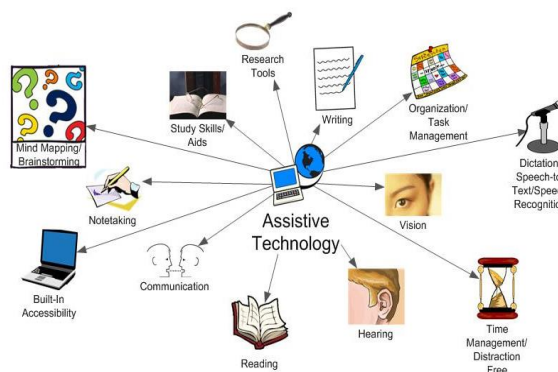
Examples may include receiving instruction in American Sign Language (ASL), using an FM system to amplify the teacher's voice, providing real-time captioning services, or using an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device to support total communication.



Consideration #5: Does Your Child Need Assistive Technology?

If your child needs **assistive technology (AT)** to support their learning, the IEP team must consider which devices or services are necessary for your child to access their education.

- **AT Devices:** Speech-to-text program, communication devices, screen readers, adaptive keyboards, etc.
- **Supports and Training:** The IEP may also include training for staff, students, and families on how to use the technology effectively.



Examples may include using a slant board and lined paper for writing, visual schedules, graphic organizers, or providing a reading pen to help a student with reading challenges.

Consideration #6: Virginia's Self, Health, and Relationship Education (SHaRE)

Virginia requires IEP teams to consider the need for **age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate instruction** related to **sexual health, self-restraint, self-protection, respect for personal privacy, and personal boundaries** of others. The Virginia Department of Education has developed guidance on the *Self, Health, and Relationship Education (SHaRE)* considerations.

Considerations include:

- **Curriculum Considerations:** Includes instruction on healthy relationships, consent, personal boundaries, and sexual health tailored to the student's needs.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parents must participate in the decision as to whether their child will participate, if eligible. The decision to opt out must be documented.
- **School Responsibility:** Schools must provide developmentally appropriate instruction and document how it aligns with the student's educational goals.

Resources: [Self, Health, and Relationship Education \(SHaRE\): Guidelines for the Consideration of Age-Appropriate and Developmentally Appropriate Instruction](#)
[Self, Health, and Relationship Education \(SHaRE\) Consideration Guide](#)
[Considering a Student's Limited English Proficiency in the IEP Checklist \(Center for Parent Information and Resources\)](#)
[AT Tools in Schools Booklet \(Virginia AT Network\)](#)



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