Considerations on the Management of Education and Learning
in The Age of COVID-19 and Other Health Conditions
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1. Some of our students will receive what is called Distance Learning (involving virtual teaching platforms, workbooks, phone calls, and other non in-person communications, to continue education during school closures. In the US, IDEA provides that Distance Learning may be an option for a student with a disabling condition or illness that warrants a physical absence from school.

2. Certain types of assessments may be limited due to distancing precautions, Here, along with feedback from the family, the health provider's role in identifying limitations associated with this student's illness will be paramount. Such information will help facilitate or confirm the need and modes for educational services. He or she will also be an important point of contact regarding the documentation of worsening symptoms (that can warrant additional needs or services from the school, such as counseling, etc.). Moreover, the provider may cite the need for extended periods of Distance Learning for the student after the current COVID-19 crisis lightens up- even for siblings who may bring the illness home to the vulnerable student.

3. The wearing of a face mask may be exempted for students who, because of their disability's limitations (directly related to symptoms, age, or hearing/communication impairment, etc.) may make them otherwise unable to wear a mask.

4. 'Compensatory education' may be appropriate for students once they resume their education, to help them 'catch-up'.

5. During Distance learning and Shelter in Place periods, educational meetings in the US (such as IEP's, Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) Addendum meetings, Transition Plans, etc.) should continue according to stated timelines. However, they may be held virtually or by telephone, for example, when needed.

6. Establish a main point of school contact during Distance-Learning and Shelter in Place periods.

7. Identify public health guidelines that will directly affect services and modes of education, transportation, etc.

8. Parent, Provider, and Student feedback on the efficacy of in-class learning, Hybrid Learning, and Distance Learning for this particular student will be important. Safety, of course, is the number one priority. Even after any one health crisis subsides, issues surrounding the needs of anyone vulnerable to infection may continue to warrant some levels of Distance Learning. At the same time, programs used in Distance Learning require adequate levels of executive functioning and sustained attention to be effective. As these are abilities our students often struggle with, there may need to be someone from the school to help facilitate this student's progress in certain online programs (such as in math, etc.).

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