



Evaluation Nuts & Bolts: What Parents Can Do to Prepare Their Child

Maine Parent Federation

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Evaluations are an important part of your child's educational program. Testing provides useful information for you and your child's teacher, and helps with planning an appropriate program for your child. There are several things you can do to make this a good experience for your child.

- ★ **RELAX** - Testing is usually a fun experience. Often a young child sees testing as a series of games. You can help your child by telling him that testing is O.K. and he will only do things that other children his age can handle. Assure him that he is not being evaluated because he is “dumb” or because he is a “bad” person. Explain that the tests will help his teachers make learning better for him by finding out which things are easy for him and which things are hard.
- ★ **REST** - A child with plenty of rest is more able to think clearly and stick with a task. It is important to be sure your child has enough sleep for two or three nights before testing.
- ★ **BE HONEST** - Some parts of the testing will be easy for your child, and some parts will be hard. Most school tests are made for children between the ages of 6 and 16, so some questions are very easy and some are quite hard. Some parts of the test can be like puzzles — nobody gets all of a puzzle right the first time. Tell your child that nobody expects him to get everything right.
- ★ **PREPARE** - Your child will do as well as he or she can on the evaluation. Don't try to pre-test or have your child practice answering questions. You really won't help your child do better on these tests and you will probably make your child nervous. Instead, spend time thinking about things that might help the evaluator. Make a list of important information about your child's past like when she started to walk and talk, illnesses she has had, or any special fears she may have.
- ★ **TRUST** - Trust your child's school. The teachers and principal of your child's school will help you understand the purpose for the evaluation. They cannot give you copies of the test book and they cannot give you a copy of your child's answers but they will give you a written report of how your child did on the tests. They will also explain the test results if you don't understand them.

For more information on Evaluations and other topics of importance to families of children with disabilities and special health care needs, contact Maine Parent Federation by telephone at 1-800-870-7746 (Statewide), 207-588-1933, or by email at parentconnect@mpf.org.

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