IEP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR LIFE SKILLS

The IDEA* definition of an IEP* supports including life skill goals in your child's special education program. Let this abridged version of an IEP be your discussion guide with your IEP team when requesting life skill goals.

An Abridged IDEA Definition of an IEP (Full version §300.320)

AN IEP is a "statement of the child's present levels of **academic achievement** and **functional performance**, including how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum."

Unfortunately, this is often the only part of the IDEA statute that is cited when assessing the needs of functional or life skills in the IEP.

It goes on to say an IEP is also….

"A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; for preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities."

And…
meet each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability;

And….
to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities;

And…..
to be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and non-disabled children in the activities.

Academic achievement refers to the academic subjects a child studies in school and the skills the student is expected to master in each.

Functional performance is generally understood as referring to skills or activities that are not considered academic. It is used in the context of routine activities of everyday living and considered that the range of functional skills is as varied as the individual needs of children with disabilities. The IEP Team must consider the impact the child's disability has on their ability to learn and do the kinds of things that typical, non-disabled children learn and do.

***IDEA** - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

***IEP** - Individualized Education Program