

Planning Checklist for Returning to School

Possible topics to cover when you talk with your child's health care and schools teams when your child is being discharged from the hospital

- Communication:** A letter from the doctor that explains your child's current needs while at school is very helpful to school staff. It is important to have a way to inform everyone who works with your child throughout the day, including substitute teachers.
- Health care needs at school:** Are there specific care tasks that need to be done by school staff while your child is at school? What medicines will your child need, and how should they be given? What are expected side effects? Who should be contacted if there are problems at school? Will your child need occupational, physical or speech therapy?
- Are there any changes in your child's ability to think and concentrate?** This includes their ability to learn new things, their memory and ability to plan and finish projects. Has your child has any change in their ability to communicate?
- Does your child have mobility issues?** Will your child need help moving about the school? Is involvement in PE class appropriate? Will your child need help during emergency drills?
- Does your child have hearing or vision needs?** Will this impact where they should sit in the classroom?
- Are there emotional or behavior changes to be aware of?** Is your child worried about going back to school? Will they need help with school work or social situations? Be alert to changes in your child's or teen's emotional state after a prolonged absence. This may affect their desire to go back to school.
- What are your child's physical abilities, such as strength, balance and endurance?** Is there a need to shorten or modify the school day? Does your child need rest periods during the day? If so, is there a safe, supervised place for rest? Will the bus schedule need to be adjusted? Will your child need more frequent bathroom breaks, permission to carry a water bottle, or need frequent snacks?
- Will your child need a 504 accommodation plan or special education support with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?** Talk with your school team about which plan will meet your child's needs. Visit the [Early Intervention and Education Resources](http://www.cshcn.org) on www.cshcn.org for information on these plans.
- Talking about their condition:** What does your child understand about their condition? What would your child like for peers and teachers to know about their condition?
- On-going treatment:** Are there follow-up appointments that may impact attendance?
- In an emergency, what information will school staff need?** Inform School staff which symptoms are concerning, which are true emergencies and what to do for each. It may help to create a health history form to travel with your child. The [In Case of Emergency form \(Spanish version\)](#) and the [Getting to Know Me form \(Spanish version\)](#) on www.cshcn.org may be helpful.

