

P.I.S.D. SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT GROUP GUIDELINES

The following are just some suggestions on the purpose and guidelines of a parent-teacher support group. Support groups ideally are designed to serve the community in areas of emotional and educational support. In order to maximize the effectiveness of a support group, it is critical to establish sustaining goals and objectives for your group and regularly provide educational topics while having fun in the process. When starting a support group, consider the following:

1. Establish a key contact for parents and teachers to contact who desire to join or participate in the group.
2. Establish a leader to communicate meeting dates and times.
3. Engage the entire group in determining information topics to discuss and outings for your group.
4. Establish meeting frequency and location.
5. Define goals and objectives of the support group (what do we want to get out of this group?). Then, layout your plan for the school year. Here are some regular topics to incorporate in your meetings:
 - a. Share 'n Tell (share doctors' names, successful therapies and/or facilities, new strategies for behaviors, other resources like adaptive dance classes...)
 - b. Create play groups and friends
 - c. Informational topics (local, legislative, etc.)
 - d. Educational (new strategies, ARD process, research)
 - e. Parent-Teacher relationship building – encourage your teachers to come and participate. Learn together!
 - f. Support your SAGE website link. Assign a member to communicate news, tips, events, doctors, etc. to SAGE for posting on the website for all parents to have access to. Make this a regular part of your meeting.