



My child got suspended, what do I do?

While you may feel panic, take a deep breath. Here are a few tips for now:

- Get a copy of your school district suspension policy. This policy must be followed.
- If your child is in Special Education (has an IEP), he or she is treated the same as any student, up to a point. After 10 days of suspension special rules apply. It is important to know those rules. Matrix's Discipline packet explains those & other important differences in detail. Call us or go to our website for more information.
- Ask your child what he or she thinks happened and find out his/her understanding of the school rules. This is important as you decide what the consequence will be at home. When your child is home on suspension, you may want to require them to do school work and limit "fun" activities.
- If your child has an IEP, put in writing that you want to schedule an IEP meeting. If there is a Behavior Support Plan (BSP) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), the plan needs to be reviewed. If there is no Behavior Plan, request that a plan be developed (see *Matrix's Behavior Issues and Special Education* packet).
- If your child is not in Special Education, there might be an undiagnosed special need that may have contributed to the behavior such as ADHD, anxiety, depression, Asperger's Syndrome. If you think this may be the case, put in writing a request for a Special Education assessment (see *Matrix's Assessment* packet).

Some things to know about suspensions:

- Suspensions can occur for violations that occur on school grounds, going from or coming to school, or at a school-sponsored activity.
- A principal can provide alternatives to suspension, including counseling, an anger management program, or community service. California Ed. Code states suspension shall be used only when "other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct."
- There are different kinds of suspension such as "supervised suspension" or "in-school suspension" which is staffed and schoolwork is done. For a student with an IEP, it may not count as one of the 10 days of suspension, depending on the services provided.
- An informal conference between the principal and student is held prior to suspension.
- The school must make a reasonable effort to phone the parent and send written notice of the suspension to the parent.
- For students whose IEPs include transportation, they must be provided alternative transportation at no cost, if they are suspended from the bus.

FINALLY -- behaviors that result in suspension are sending a message. This is an opportunity to identify that message and get your student needed support.



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