

ABOUT HIDDEN SPARKS

Hidden Sparks is a non-profit whose purpose is to help children with learning differences reach their full potential in school and life. Hidden Sparks supports professional development for Jewish day schools to help increase understanding and support for diverse learners.

Hidden Sparks' programs combine school-based professional development in learning and positive behavioral support, classroom observation and coaching. Our philosophy is that by helping teachers meet the needs of struggling students, ultimately *all* students will benefit.

Now in its 10th year, Hidden Sparks has trained **190 coaches** in **65 Jewish day schools** in New York, New Jersey, Baltimore, Boca Raton, and Chicago, and 4 Israeli cities (Jerusalem, Modiin, Ramle, Ra'anana).

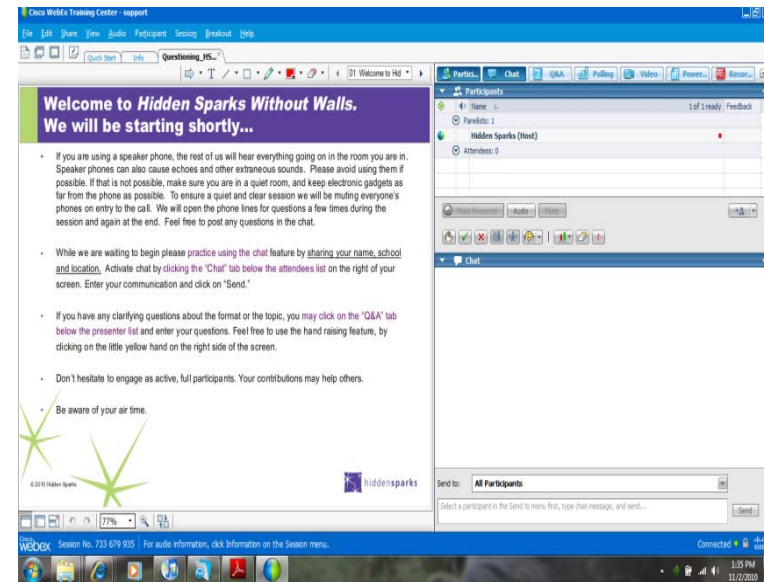


Welcome to *Hidden Sparks Without Walls*.

The webinar will be starting at 8:30 pm

Thank you for joining the webinar. There will be no sound until we begin at 8:30pm.

To alleviate background noise and ensure a quiet session, your phones have been automatically muted. Questions and comments can be submitted via the **CHAT FEATURE**. While we are waiting, activate the chat feature by clicking in the “Chat” tab that is located below the attendees list on the right of your screen.



When chatting, please remember:

- Select “**All Participants**” if you would like everyone to see your message. Select “**All Panelists**” if you would like only the presenter and facilitator to see your message.
- If you have any clarifying questions about the format, or the topic, you may click on the “**Q&A**” tab located below the presenter list and enter your questions.



hiddensparks
without walls

*ABCs of Advocacy:
How to be your child's best advocate*

Presented by Susan Schwartz
November 1, 2017



hiddensparks®
helping children reach their potential™

Our Guest: Susan Schwartz



Susan J. Schwartz, MA Ed, is a consultant learning specialist at the Child Mind Institute and a Learning Specialist at Friends Seminary in Manhattan. She is an expert in child development, reading and literacy, learning disorders, and the development of language skills and higher-level reasoning skills in children and adolescents. She has been on the forefront of interdisciplinary approaches to evaluating and treating children and young adults with reading, writing, math and organizational difficulties, and has taught cognitive and language development as well as neuropsychology and advocacy to psychiatry trainees, and supervised psychology interns and postdoctoral neuropsychology fellows. A seasoned lecturer, Ms. Schwartz has presented at conferences on a wide range of topics, including understanding autism spectrum disorders, the myths and realities of standardized tests, demystifying neuropsychological and educational reports. She is the 2017 recipient of The Art of Teaching award at Friends Seminary, and a member of the Board of Trustees at The Shefa School, a school in Manhattan for children with language-based learning disabilities.



Overview of the Session

ABC's of Advocacy

How can you figure out if your child has learning difficulties or attentional deficits?

How can you best support your child or a child in your classroom?

In what ways can you be an active participant?

What are your child's legal rights?



Session Goals

- 1. Determine whether to have your child evaluated.**
- 2. Understand what comprises an evaluation.**
- 3. Learn about the services that are provided free of charge as a result of Federal Law: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**
- 4. Learn about your child's rights and your rights**
- 5. Learn about IEP's and 504 Accommodation Plans**

What Are Your Concerns?

Signs of Struggle

- Academic
 - Reading
 - Written Language
 - Math
- Motor
- Speech/Language
- Social/Communication
- Behavioral/Emotional



Sharing information at Parent/Teacher meetings or conferences

About your child:

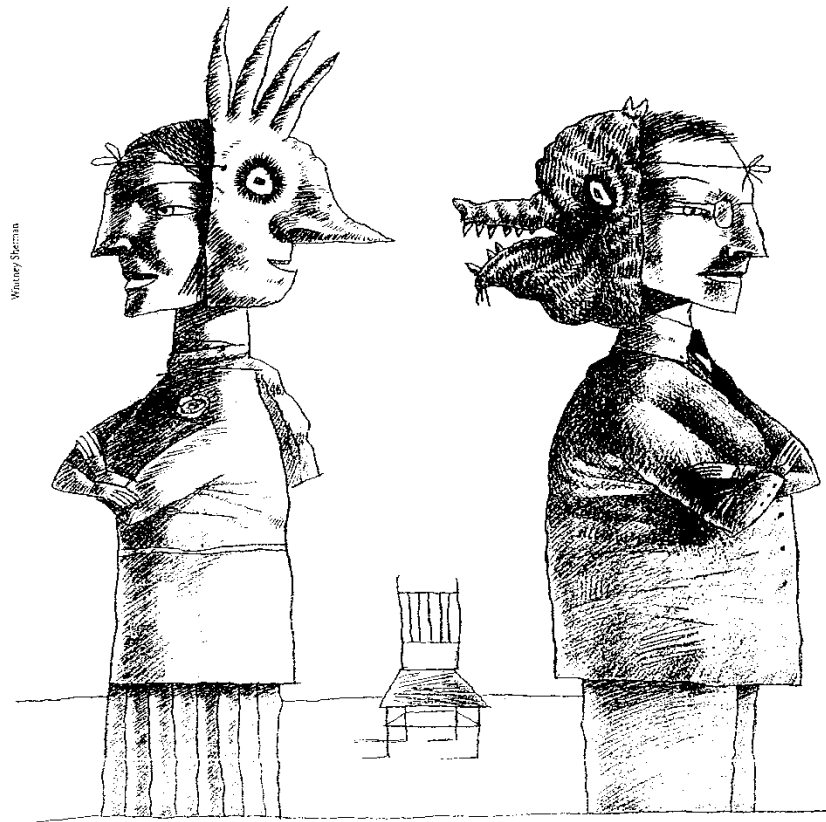
- What does the child know
- How is the child learning?
 - Reading
 - Math
 - Spelling
 - Writing
 - Social Studies
 - Science
- How is the child behaving?



Parent Teacher Conferences

The World of Teaching

THE FEAR



Winifred Sherman

46 INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

What do teachers know?

- Teachers are experts
 - Spend 6 hours each day with our child
 - Create an environment for learning
- Intensely personal, organic and hard to measure
- If you teach well and effectively you do not always get the credit
- Due to cultural perceptions, at a distinct psychological disadvantage!
- Know about family through the child's eyes
- Each child is different
- Children behave differently in school than at home



Teaching is a challenging job!



What do parents know?



- Parenting is also a hard job!
 - We do not start out as experts
 - Feel trapped by hope and love and worry
- What worked with one child does not always work with another
- Strengths and weaknesses of each child are different
- Children behave differently at home and at school.

We may think that OUR character is on view because of how our children behave.

First Steps

- Meet with teacher
- Meet with principal
- Discuss ways to assist child
- Refer for evaluation



Who Can Request Help?

- Parents
- Teacher
- School Psychologist
- Principal
- Doctors
- Judicial Officers



Written Statement asking your home school district to evaluate child to determine if he/she needs special education services.

REQUESTS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING!

Initial Referral



Through your home school district

- EI: Early Intervention (Birth-3)
- CPSE: Committee on Preschool Special Education (3-5 years)
- CSE: Committee on Special Education (5-21 years)

The Process

- A school may not assess a child for special ed. without parents written consent, and must provide parents with a written assessment plan explaining what tests and procedures school will use.



- Evaluators

- Pre-school: Parents select approved evaluator from list of sites
- K-12: School districts use their own staff



- Evaluation needs to be performed and recommendations implemented **within 60 school days** of receiving written consent from parent

No cost to family!



What are your rights as a parent?



- You can request a free school evaluation at any time
- The school must respond in 60 days to the request
- The school must evaluate all areas of suspected disability
- You have a right to a pre-evaluation conference
- You have a right to a report 2 days before your team meeting
- You have a right to request a *Functional Behavior Assessment*

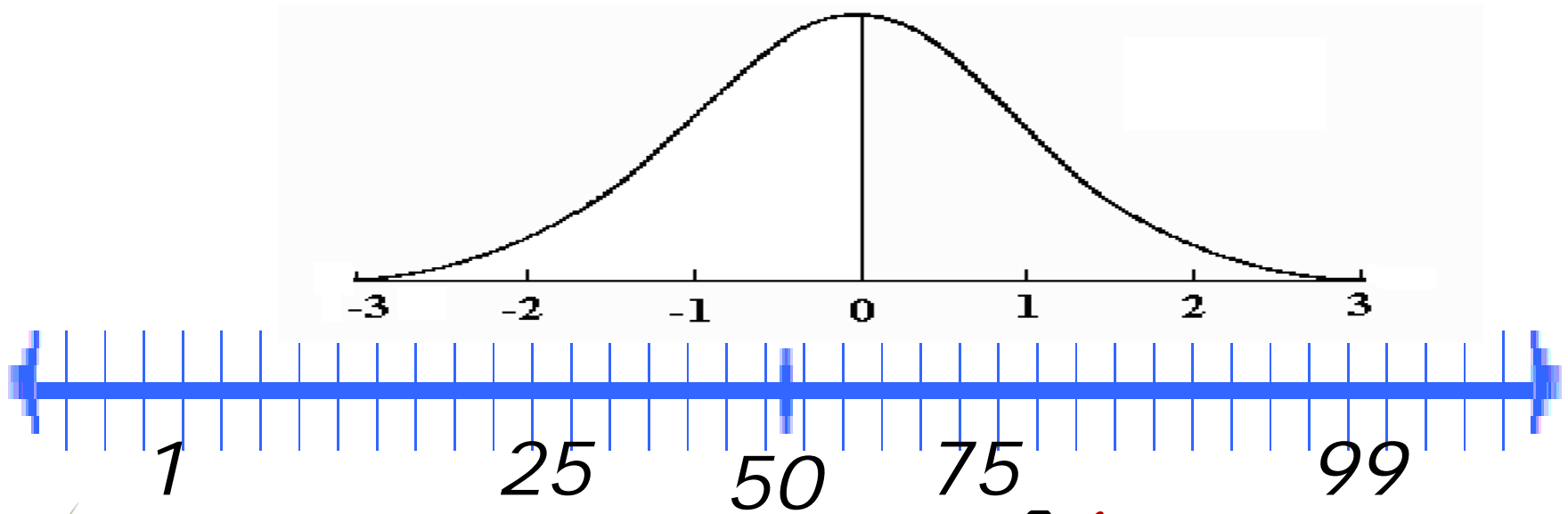


Comprehensive Evaluation

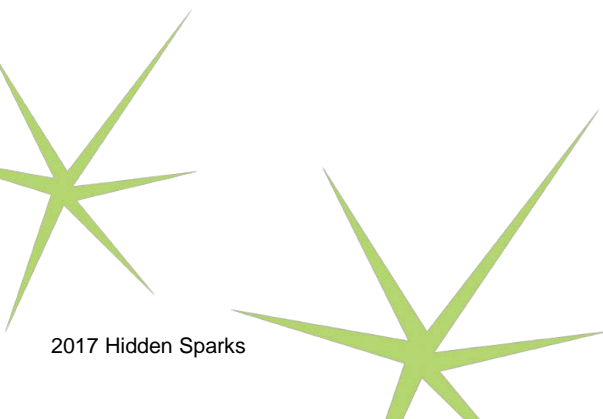
- **Developmental History**
 - Birth
 - Medical
 - Family
 - Social
- **Classroom Observation**
- **Other Assessments**
 - Language
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Physical Therapy
- **Psychological Evaluation**
 - Intellectual Functioning
 - Memory
 - Planning, Organization, Attention
 - Visual vs. Auditory Skills
 - Emotional Functioning
- **Educational Evaluation**
 - All academic areas
 - Process oriented measures
- **Vocational Assessment**



Statistics



What is the value of an evaluation?

- 
- 2017 Hidden Sparks



10 years
helping children
reach their potential

IDEA LAW-1997



- The purpose of the IDEA law is to ensure that all children with disabilities receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Appropriate = in the least restrictive environment.



Learning disability Defined:

“a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations”



- The results of the evaluation must be provided to you.
 - Meeting with evaluators
 - Written report
 - Meeting with the Committee where all the scores and tests are explained
- Committee on Special Education will review results to determine if child is eligible for services
- If you disagree with the results, you can request an independent educational evaluation (IEE).



Special Education Eligibility: Committee Members

- Parents
- Regular Ed Teacher
- Special Ed Teacher
- School District Rep
- Individual who can speak to eval results
- School Psychologist
- School Physician
- Parent Member
- The student if appropriate



What is the IEP

Individualized Education Program

- Explains current functioning compared to what is expected
- How disability impairs child in classroom
- Measurable goals (annual and short term)
- Special education, related services, supplementary aides, modifications, accommodations, assistive or adaptive technology
- Extent to which child will be educated with non-disabled children
- Dates of programming
- Reviewed annually



IEP Eligibility

- Committee members must agree that child does not achieve commensurate with age and ability levels
- Significant discrepancy between ability and achievement in one of the following areas
 - oral expression
 - listening comprehension
 - written expression
 - basic reading skills
 - reading comprehension
 - mathematics calculation
 - mathematics reasoning



IEP Eligibility

IEP Eligibility

- Child is classified into category of special ed.
- Committee will develop an **IEP** Plan
- Related services must be included as appropriate

Vs.

Section 504 Accommodation Plan

- NO **IEP**
- Accommodations not services
- Covers extracurricular and after school programming



If parents disagree:

- Request mediation and/or impartial hearing
- Child/Parent Advocate

Eligible Disabilities

- Autism
- Blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing
- Mental Retardation
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Disabilities
- Other Health Impairments
- Specific LD
- Speech/Language
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment

Options To Resolve Disputes

Mediation

Parent and school district meet with neutral third party who tries to help come to an agreement

Due Process Hearing

Parent and school district present a written and oral testimony of disputed issue to a “hearing officer”



Services and Classrooms

Services within the regular classroom:

- Specially designed instruction
- Supplementary aids
- Consultant teacher
- Shadow
- Modifications or Accommodations
 - Presentation of material
 - Environment
 - Time demands
 - Materials
 - Behavioral

Self-Contained Special Class

Related Services

- Speech or language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Resource room
- Counseling
- Reading remediation



Services and Classrooms

- Least Restrictive Environment
- Mainstream
 - Pull-out
 - In-class
 - After school
- Other Examples
 - Collaborative Team Teaching/Inclusion
 - 12:1:1
 - 8:1:1



Change in School Placement

- If recommendation is for an approved in-state or out-of-state school, school district must arrange for services within 30 days of recommendations.
- Annual IEP meeting to update goals
- Re-evaluate every three years
- If school unable to provide level of care child requires, BOE may pay for child to receive private schooling or additional programming.

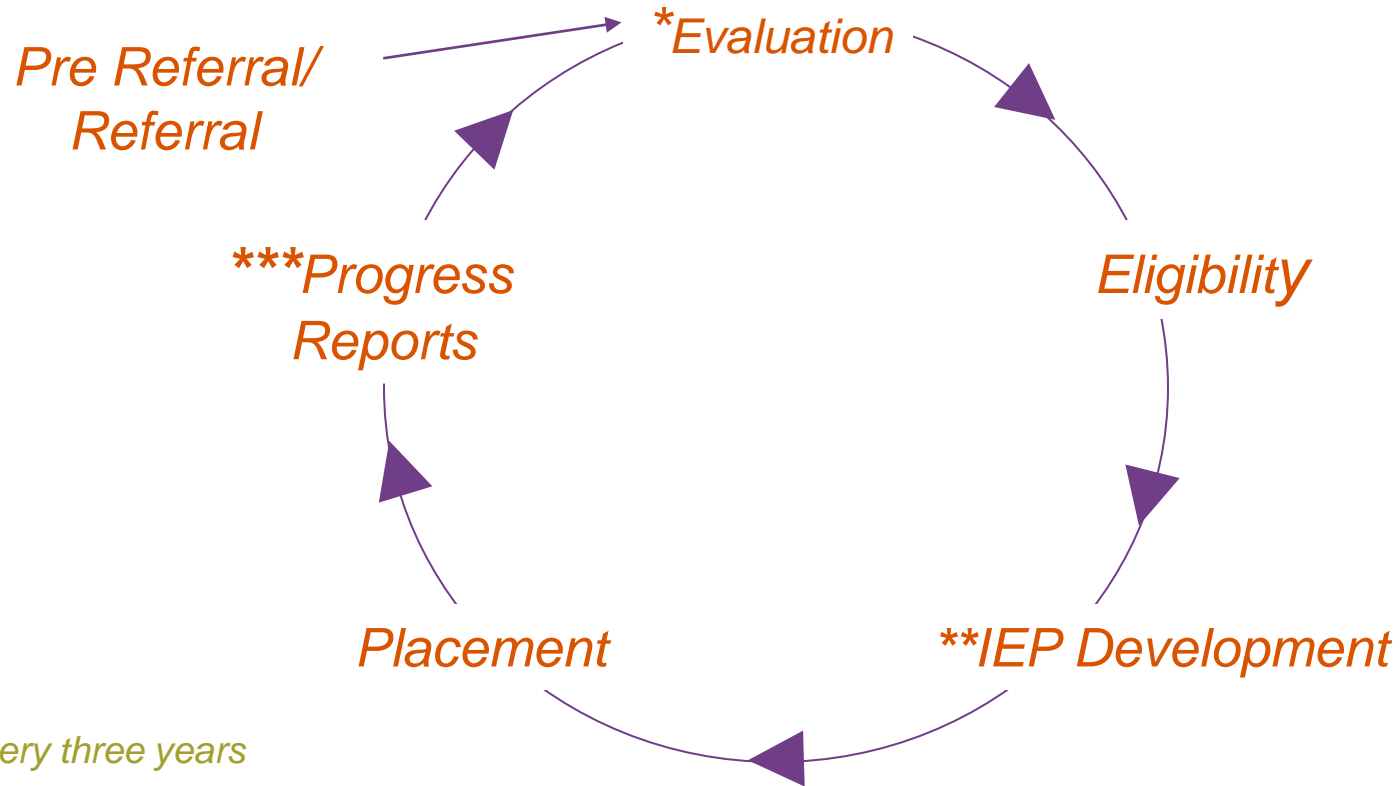


Participation

- Who may participate?
- Attend IEP meetings
- Review data carefully as most people IEP team members do not have training in assessment and interpretation
- <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/your-childs-rights/basics-about-childs-rights/download-essa-parent-advocacy-toolkit>



The IEP CYCLE



* Every three years

** Every year

*** As often as report cards





Know Where You are Going

Short-term imperative:

Measuring progress through data collection
and tracking



Mid-range imperative:

Preparing for transitions from one stage to the next

Long-term imperative:

Getting today what is needed for tomorrow



Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

For Parents and Teachers Tue. Nov.28, 2017	It's All in the Timing: Teaching Time and Task Management Presented by Sara Ward
For Teachers Tue., Feb 6, 2018	<i>Making Chumash Come Alive in a Classroom of Diverse Learners</i> Presented by Etti Siegel

**If you are interested in bringing
Hidden Sparks
to your school or city, please contact us:
[212-767-7707](tel:212-767-7707) or sara@hiddensparks.org**



Contacting Hidden Sparks

Contact Presenter:

Susan Schwartz

sschwartz@friendsseminary.org

Contact Hidden Sparks:

www.hiddensparks.org

news@hiddensparks.org (212) 767-7707

www.facebook.com/HiddenSparks



Hidden Sparks would like to thank:

