

Directions

Resources for Your Child's Care

Second Edition, 2004

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
www.mass.gov/dph/fch/directions



Directions: Resources for Your Child's Care

Second Edition

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How to Use *Directions*

Directions was created for you, a parent of a child with special health needs. It can help you plan and coordinate care for your child. In *Directions* you will find:

- Ways to organize your child's health information
- Information about caring for your child's special needs
- Resources
- Tips from other parents of children with special health care needs

Directions has many forms to fill out and a lot of information to read through. Take your time to fill out the forms that are useful to you, gather your child's records, and read through the chapters. You may want to use different forms and sections at different points in your child's life. This notebook can be very helpful to you and your child's health care providers.

Organizing Tips:

- Put your child's ***Massachusetts Lifetime Health and Immunization Record*** in the front plastic pocket of this book. Take it with you every time you go to a health care visit, whether it is a check-up or an emergency visit.
- Use the calendar to write down important dates and appointments.
- Write down information about your child's health and health care in *Chapter 1*.
- Keep your child's health records in *Chapter 2*. Include copies of letters, bills, receipts, prescriptions, and other documents. If you run out of space, it is time to buy another 3-ring binder!
- Keep copies of your child's school records and care plans in *Chapter 3*.
- The ***Glossary*** at the end of this book has the meaning of some words and terms.
- Check the ***Family TIES Resource Directory***. It has the names, addresses, phone numbers, and web addresses for many useful organizations and programs.
- Ask for help. There are many people that can help you organize this note book, such as your child's primary care provider, nurse, care coordinator, case manager, teacher, other parents, or other family members.

Bring this notebook to your child's appointments and meetings with health care providers.



Internet Tips

The Internet is a good way to communicate and find information about your child's special needs. If you have access to the Internet, you can use a computer to:

- Find information about health and health care on the World Wide Web. Many excellent websites are listed in the ***Family TIES Resource Directory*** and in this book.
- Download (transfer) information from the Internet onto your own computer (like *Directions*, for example).
- Send email (electronic mail) with text and other types of files, including documents, images, and sounds.

How to Access the Internet

The Internet can be accessed from a home computer, or from:

- **Public Libraries** – Most public libraries have computers that are connected to the Internet and free to use.
- **Your Child's School** – Most schools have computers that are connected to the Internet. Ask your child's teacher or principal whether you may use a school computer to access health information for your child.
- **Family Resource Centers** – Many sites (such as your child's school, hospital, or primary care provider's office) have family resource centers or libraries that have access to the Internet. Check with one of these sites to find out if you can use a computer to access health information for your child.

Learning to Use the Internet?

There are many books and classes. If you are new to the Internet and the World Wide Web, contact your local library or school system for help.

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