

## **“MDA Educational Advocacy for MDA Families”**

MDA Public WebEx – November 22, 2011

Guest Presenters: Marie Ritzo & Jill Castle

During the WebEx, participants sent questions to the presenters Marie Ritzo (Children’s National Medical Center) and Jill Castle (Arizona Department of Education); provided below are the questions submitted by members of the MDA community, along with answers offered by our esteemed presenters. Please forward additional questions to [healthcareservices@mdausa.org](mailto:healthcareservices@mdausa.org).

### **Questions & Answers**

**Q: I have a daughter who is a Jr. in high school and we are getting ready to have our first DRS meeting about her "transitioning" process. She has always had a 504 and I'm wondering if we need to have her evaluated for IEP (even though it's quite late in the game) in order to receive these (or better) services?**

**A:** You will need to go through the qualification process to qualify for an IEP. Your daughter must have the need for “specialized instruction” along with her disability in order to qualify. There are many resources for children in special education for transition. You can contact me at [Jill.castle@azed.gov](mailto:Jill.castle@azed.gov) for some of those however since your daughter doesn’t have an IEP at this time the school is not legally bound to have transition goals tied to activities in the community. This is something you would need to do yourselves.

**Q: One thing we've had an issue with is goals are defined to rehabilitate or improve within the context of the IEP plan we had - but our son with Duchenne is not going to improve or gain strength through PE etc... how do we get the PE etc.. to work within a maintenance regimen?**

**A:** We put social goals in the adaptive PE. We also looked at modifications for inclusion, NOT strengthening or improvement. That is perfectly acceptable in relation to state standards.

**Q: My daughter is 4 years old has Myotonic Dystrophy and does not talk. Can I put in her IEP about AT to help her with communication.**

**A:** Absolutely. Assistive technology should ALWAYS be part of the IEP discussion. You look at the need first then figure out what will get your child the access.

**Q: How should P.E. class be graded for 15yr high schooler with CMT? Have IEP and multiple doc notes stating limited running, no compact, impact, jumping. However P.E. teacher gives 8/10 on daily activities and C on physical fitness test with no extra testing even though my son is dressed correctly and attends class daily and gives it his best. Received B in P.E. class for 1st 9wks which is not bad but goes**

**against grade point average. When contacted teacher I was told he is not counting my son off for activities and if my son tries harder he will do better.**

A: Call an IEP meeting. That isn't right. The curriculum should be modified, meaning they should only have the requirements graded that he can participate in. You can even take PE out.