



SPECIAL NEEDS | FIELD GUIDE

When your child is called disruptive

Ask what happened before the label becomes the whole story.

A note from Victoria

It hurts to hear one word stand in for a child you know so well. I want the adults around your child to describe the situation, not reduce your child to a judgment.

What to do

Ask for the specific behavior, when and where it happened, what came just before it, and how staff responded. Ask what your child was trying to communicate and what support was available. Review the current plan with the team and invite your child's account in a way they can share it. For formal school discipline or rights questions, consult a qualified advocate; do not assume this sheet states the legal rule.

Words you can use

"Can we replace 'disruptive' with what you observed, what happened before it, and which support was available in that moment?"

One useful step I can take today:

I could start with: Request one factual incident description and one meeting to review the support that was missing.

The strength I see in you

You are insisting that your child be understood as a person, not a label.

Educational peer support, not individualized medical, legal, or school advice. Partner with your child and their care or school team; consult a qualified advocate about rights questions.



SPECIAL NEEDS | WORKSHEET

When your child is called disruptive

Use this page in your own words. You can leave any part blank.

The exact observation instead of a label

What happened immediately before

A support to review with the team

My next manageable step

A person, service, or place I can turn to (if useful)

Educational peer support, not individualized medical, legal, or school advice. Partner with your child and their care or school team; consult a qualified advocate about rights questions.