

# Obtaining School Records on a Student - Checklist

The school usually has a wealth of information about all children, distributed among a number of people and a number of records. Gathering this information after a referral and prior to evaluation may reduce the need for testing and will provide a very thorough picture of the child and his/her abilities and patterns. Investigating the following areas will contribute to the overall "picture " of the child:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prior Teacher reports:** Comments written on report cards or in permanent record folders may provide a different view of the child under a different style of teaching. Successful years with positive comments may be a clue to the child's learning style and may provide you with information about the conditions under which the child responds best.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Reports of prior parent-teacher interviews:** Prior conferences between previous teachers and parents may provide you with information that may be important in understanding the child's patterns and history.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cumulative school record:** This particular file may contain information from standardized achievement test results, group IQ results, teacher comments dating back to kindergarten, records from previous schools, individual reading test results and family information.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Group IQ test information:** This information is usually found in the permanent record folder. Many schools administer this type of test i.e. Otis Lennon, Henmon Nelson in grades 3, 6 and 9 so look carefully. Within the past year or so the term School Abilities Index has replaced the term "IQ" or Intelligence Quotient.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Standardized test scores:** These scores should be analyzed for patterns of strengths and deficiencies. The older the child, the greater the number of scores that one can compare.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Report card grades:** These materials can be reviewed for comments, patterns of productive and difficult years.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Attendance records:** These records should be reviewed for patterns of lateness or absence. If such patterns exist the reasons should be investigated to rule out medical causes (hospital stays, illnesses), psychological causes (dysfunctional family patterns, school phobia etc) or social causes (peer rejection or isolation).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Number of schools attended:** There are times when a child will be enrolled in several schools in several years. The reasons for the many moves should be investigated and may AD/HD to the child's adjustment difficulties.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prior teacher referrals:** Investigate school records for prior referrals from teachers. There are times when a teacher will refer but no action may have been taken due to time of year, parent resistance, delay in evaluation procedures etc. These referrals may still be on file and may reveal information that can be useful.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Medical history in the school nurses office:** Investigate these records for indications of visual or hearing difficulties, prescribed medication that may have an effect on the child's behavior (i.e. antihistamines), medical conditions in need of attention or that can be contributing to the child's present situation.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prior psychological, educational or outside reports:** Investigate the possibility of any prior testing that may exist in one of the school folders (i.e. psychological).