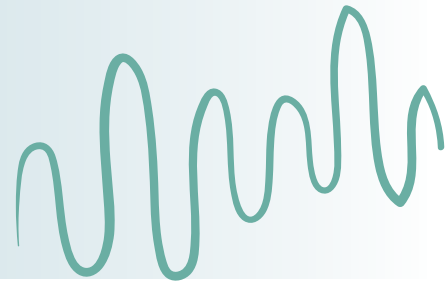


FAQ

for Ridgewood SEPAG Sensory-Friendly Dinners



✔ What is a Ridgewood SEPAG sensory-friendly dinner?

A sensory-friendly dinner is a time for families and friends to eat out at a local restaurant. Consider this your typical dining experience, except that special care has been taken to provide a lower-sensory atmosphere, such as turning down or off overhead music, as well as a judgment-free experience, including dining with families who have similar support needs and being served by staff who are prepared ahead of time on the general needs of our community. Food and checks are expedited, and our Ridgewood STEPSS students (ages 18-21 years) often provide activities to keep kids entertained during brief waiting periods. Although we can't guarantee 100% satisfaction, we do hope these thoughtful adjustments help you have a great experience out with your loved ones.

✔ Why is the Ridgewood SEPAG doing this for our community?

The Ridgewood SEPAG, in conjunction with Ridgewood Village Council and support from Access Ridgewood members, are providing this much needed service because we all need to feel seen and included. Many families never take what they see as a risk to eat out, either because they worry about their child's unpredictable behavior at a restaurant or because they've tried in the past but had a negative experience for any number of reasons. Our goal is for you to release yourself and your family of the pressure, help you access a delicious meal at a local restaurant, and be exactly who you are: a valued member of our diverse and powerful community.

✔ If my child is struggling (e.g., not staying in their seat/at the table, not keeping noise levels down), do I need to leave?

You may of course pick up your check and excuse yourself anytime. However, we hope that you trust you're in a safe space among families who understand the difference between disrespect and impulses.

✔ Do I need to make a reservation with the restaurant to attend?

No. However, you should reserve a spot on the Ridgewood SEPAG Eventbrite for the particular dinner so that the restaurant can anticipate how many families to expect throughout our designated window. Once the event has been arranged by the Ridgewood SEPAG with the restaurant, we will distribute a flyer that includes the restaurant name and address, timeframe, and a link/QR code to the Eventbrite reservation site.

✔ How much do I pay?

There is no fee to RSVP for the event, and payment is made at the end of your meal in a typical restaurant-patron transaction. You simply pay for what you eat!

✔ Is there a way to stay informed about upcoming sensory-friendly dinners?

The Ridgewood SEPAG's goal is to host one sensory-friendly dinner per month during the school year, and perhaps during the summer as well. All families on the Ridgewood SEPAG email list (i.e., families whose Ridgewood students receive services under an IEP or 504 Plan) will receive notifications about the dinners through emails and the Ridgewood SEPAG monthly newsletter. Others may "follow" the Ridgewood SEPAG on Eventbrite, to be alerted about upcoming dinners.

✔ Where can I submit feedback?

We are eager to hear all feedback that families have about our sensory-friendly dinners. If your family's needs were not adequately met by the set-up of the event, we would love to hear from you so we can make our future dinners more accommodating for your family and others. Also, if there were aspects of the event that worked well for your family, we'd like to hear about that, too, so we can continue those accommodations. Any and all thoughts are welcome and can be shared by emailing us at contact@RidgewoodSEPAG.org.



Ridgewood SEPAG

Formerly the Learning Services Home & School Association

www.RidgewoodSEPAG.org • contact@RidgewoodSEPAG.org