

Be Prepared Parents' Key To Successful IFSP and IEP Negotiation

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IFSP vs IEP

Family Driven

Education Driven

What A Parents Wants

What is Educationally
Necessary

At Home On Your Turf

Held At School

Eligibility Not Dependant on Labels

Must Fit Eligibly Criteria

Generally Goals And Objectives
More “Loosely” Written

Observable and
Measurable Goals

Must be formally reviewed every
6 months

Must be formally reviewed
annually

Progress reported via quarterly
reports

Progress report on same
schedule as reports
Non-disabled peers

**Be a participant not a Spectator.
Do your homework.**

Months Before your IFSP/IEP meeting

- Request a copy of the special education laws (Federal and State)

Write: Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents
P.O. Box 371954
Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954
Phone: 202-512-1800
www.gpoaccess.gov

Department of Education
www.ed.gov - Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation

- Learn the “players” in your school district or birth – 3 council. Feel comfortable with the chain of command.
- Visit and observe potential settings for your child’s education. Include all sites even those you don’t think are appropriate.
- Keep a notebook of dates and notes of conversations with professionals about your child.
- Repair any deterioration in you relationship with people who will be at the meeting. Put your feelings aside? Remember this all about your future. Resist the temptation to try to get even for things of the past.
- Develop relationships with other parents active in your school and community. Makes allies within you child’s school and community through exposure and education about your child.
- Investigate having an advocate attend your case conference.
- Write a “vision” statement for your child’s development, education, and life.

“To accomplish great things we must not only act, but also drea; not only plan, but also believe.” - Dan Wilkins

**Knowledge is power!
Do you Homework**

Weeks Before your IFSP/IEP meeting

- ❑ Ask who will be invited and invite any one you would like to attend. Consider inviting a friend to LISTEN and take notes for you.
- ❑ Observe your child and brainstorm his strengths and weaknesses. Remember that services are based on needs!
- ❑ Determine your goals for your child. Rank the goals according to importance.
- ❑ Get copies of any evaluations to read.
- ❑ Ask your child how he feels about school. What are his concerns? What has he found successful?
- ❑ Make a list of important points you want to bring up at the meeting.
- ❑ Review your child's previous IEP and assess appropriateness of these goals and assess the progress your child has made.
- ❑ Have an informal pre-conference meeting with those who will attend the meeting. Get a feel for what they may bring up at the meeting so you won't be surprised. Consider asking each of the conference participants to fill out a pre-conference information survey.

**“Do not try to modify my behavior. Be still and listen. What you define as inappropriate may be my attempt to communicate with you in the only way I can.”
-Norman Kunc**

**Knowledge is power!
Do you Homework**

Weeks Before your IFSP/IEP meeting....

- ❑ Decide what you are going to wear. Practice appropriate body language.
- ❑ Schedule the meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place. Make sure enough time has been scheduled to allow sufficient time for the conference.
- ❑ Plan where you will sit during the meeting.
- ❑ Prepare materials to take with you, i.e. tape recorder, notes, class work, etc.
- ❑ Role play what you think may happen at the meeting. Come up with responses to use at those times when you feel hurt or on the spot.
- ❑ Consider changing the place of the meeting to a place you feel comfortable.
- ❑ Arrange childcare for the meeting time.

“When you dream alone it is only a-dream, but when you dream together it is the beginning of reality.” - Don Helder Camera

Be prepared.

Night Before your IFSP/IEP meeting

- ❑ Pamper yourself.
- ❑ Plan to get to bed early.
- ❑ Gather the materials you need for the meeting.
- ❑ Lay out the clothes you plan to wear. Dress for success!
- ❑ Silently rehearse important comments.
- ❑ Enjoy your family!

“Whoever said ‘sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never harm me’ needs a reality check.” – Anonymous

Be prepared.

Day of your IFSP/IEP meeting...

- ❑ Eat regular meals.
- ❑ Review your notes.
- ❑ Plan to go out to dinner after the meeting.
- ❑ Allow adequate time to get to the meeting. Don't rush!

“Live your dream. People who say it cannot be done should not interrupt those who are doing it.” - Anonymous

**No one knows your child better than you do!
Be a participant not a spectator.**

At the IFSP/IEP meeting...

- ❑ Shake hands and make eye contact with all people present at the meeting. Don't be intimidated. No one knows your child as well as you do!
- ❑ Sit next to the most powerful person in the room. Show them that you will participate as one of the team.
- ❑ Consider your body language. Sit back and listen. Lean forward and make eye contact when you speak. Ask everyone at the meeting to start out by sharing one positive comment about your child.
- ❑ Speak up and contribute. Be prepared with your comments on your child's present levels of performance/what you see now.
- ❑ Share your list of your child's strengths and weaknesses.
- ❑ Ask many questions. Don't assume you already know the answers. Listen to what others are saying.
- ❑ Check items off your list of important points as they are addressed to your satisfaction.
- ❑ Don't be afraid to offer or ask for other options than those proposed.
- ❑ Never sign the IEP at your conference. Ask for a copy to take home. Take time to read it thoroughly. Don't assume everything was written the way you "heard" it. Check to see that the goals are observable and measurable.

“Goals are dreams with a deadline.” - H. MacKay

Knowledge is power!

After the IFSP/IEP meeting...

- Assure your IFSP/IEP is implemented.
 1. Observe classes/therapy
 2. Ask questions about progress on goals.
 3. Ask for activities for practice and carry over at home
 4. Ask for IFSP/IEP review or case conference when issues arise you can't work out alone with the teachers/therapists.
 5. Review the data collected on progress on goals.

**“Man’s mind stretched to a new idea, never goes back to its original dimensions.”
-Oliver Wendell Holmes**

WHAT AN IEP SHOULD TELL

WHO?

WHEN?

WHAT?

WHY?

HOW?

WHERE?

HOW MUCH TIME?

WRITINGS GOALS/OUTCOMES

Goals should be written for every identified need of your child.

Goals should describe what a child should be expected to accomplish within a 12 month period.

Each goal should be written as a positive statement that describes an observable event.

Well written goals contain 5 essential parts.

Who?	Who will achieve or show proficiency?
What?	What skill or behavior is targeted?
How?	How will it be accomplished and at what level?
Where?	Where is the setting for the activity or under what conditions?
When?	When will the event be accomplished?

Examples

Johnny will increase his reading comprehension scores from 2.3 to 3.3 as measured by standardized reading testing by May, 2000.

By March, 2000, Sally will follow two part directions in the classroom using only auditory cues to be measured by teacher tracking.

Sue will increase the length of her spontaneous utterances from 2 words to 3-4 word sentences and phrases both at home and in the classroom to be measured through a language sample taken in both environments in June.