IEP Survival Kit

Continued from pg. 4 decisions.

Know what the academic expectations are for her grade level and where she fits.

Janet DesGeorges, H & V Outreach Director, Advocate

• Be there when things are going ‘good’...earn the right to be ‘heard’—don’t just show up at school when there is a problem.

• Create a “Parent’s Agenda” for the IEP meeting to ensure that the issues you need to talk about are brought up.

• Be solutions-oriented...bring the answers...speak up!

Ruth Mathers, M.A., Certified ToD, Hands & Voices National Board of Directors

The principal of the school is most likely not a specialist in DHH issues. A parent can serve a valuable role by educating the principal about the parent point of view in a very respectful way. Offer to take a principal to lunch. Demanding, whining, and being disrespectful of the teaching staff’s abilities will not help the parent’s cause. Ignoring, id

deaf) to get their view of what worked and what needed to be changed in order for them to feel successful in the classroom. Always start with the positives that were occurring for the student before considering the negatives...then the team knows you appreciate their efforts for your child and are a little more willing to work on areas that need change.

Marc Marschark, PhD, Researcher and Author of Raising & Educating a Deaf Child

“Include interpreters and others at school who provide support services and know the kid. Parents often don’t see the same child they do, and their input is invaluable to the IEP discussion.”

Orla McNerney, Colorado H&V

• Keep a paper trail
• Always reply in writing and keep meticulous copies
• Check your child’s file at least once a year, you might be surprised by what you find
• Give praise when praise is not expected

Professionals you are negotiating with today will be the same professionals you’ll be calling on for help tomorrow.

• Transition planning can never start early enough.
• Everything comes down to assessment determining need. Without this, you can’t start to talk about services provided.
• Access, access, access. Ask yourself: “Does my child have full and effective communication access across the curriculum?”

Listen to what the team offers for a solution to an issue before you dive in with what you want. They may come up with a better offer than what you were shooting for!

• Take the emotion out of the equation. Don’t let yourself become overly emotional because it can distract you from what you mean to say. Get the emotion out with a Parent Guide or trusted advocate before the meeting and then get ready for business.

Cheryl DeConde Johnson EdD, NASDSE Consultant, H&V National Board of Directors

Classroom Acoustics:

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ing experiences. Have you ever been in a noisy restaurant with a group of family, friends, or business associates? The restaurant seating was challenging, and you ended up sitting at one end of the table with the majority of the important conversation taking place down at the other end. How did it feel to be so isolated? Could you ever really know for sure what you were missing of the critical conversation a few feet away?

What the Experts Tell Us

Please carefully consider the following:

• The Acoustical Society of America’s booklet “Acoustical Barriers to Learning” shares with us the impact of listening barriers on our children’s learning from teachers and peers:

“Students who do not have full auditory access to spoken information in classrooms (from the teacher or from peers) do not learn at a normal rate. The literature demonstrates that even slight hearing loss is often accom-

CCC-SLP, helps us to see the critical importance of incidental language learning. Even ten years ago, she shared that auditory learning potential was being seen in young children who are deaf through cochlear implant technology available at the time. She describes how that auditory learning potential was changing the prevailing assumption of the day – that a child could learn only what was directly taught to him/her. She cautions us that many opportunities for incidental learning will be lost if we continue to assume learning is completely dependent on direct instruction. With one simple sentence, she says it all:

“[incidental language learning] is the most efficient, and perhaps the only way to truly master a spoken language.”

• In the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) position statement on classroom acoustics, ASHA tells us that it is much more than just an issue of grades on a report card: