



OrFIRST

Oregon Families Information Referral Services and Training

THE IFSP/IEP PREPARATION CLINIC

Parents who are involved get better results for their children

- Children enrolled in special education have the same rights to an equal education as other children.
- These special education laws were created to protect your child's right.
- As a parent, it is your fifth* job to understand the laws and use them to your child's advantage.
- Your input is really important to to the schools that are teaching your child, and it is important that you prepare for your child's IEP meeting. Communication and Collaboration result in better academic progress.
- * you have more jobs, this is just the fifth one

Dreams for your child



What do you want for your child?

What does your child want for him/herself?

What is getting in the way of them reaching their dreams?

These are all important questions to ask before sitting down to prepare for the IEP meeting.

Before you begin the meeting



- Take a deep breath and remember, the school staff might be just as worried as you are.
- Take another deep breath and pull out the document you have created.
- What document? The one we are going to develop.

Where to begin



- Begin to gather information on how your child learns.
- Taking a snapshot of how your child learns and behaves at home, in the community, in small groups or public settings, helps everyone plan the best service for your child



What to look for, and how to look

- Play detective. Observe your child at home. And at school. Talk to others that know your child. Begin to take notes. Gather your child's records.
- How does your child learn (does he need reminders? does he need a visual calendar? does your child need other supports?)
- What are your child's individual strengths? (what does she love learning? what are your child's talents?)



What to look for and how to look

- What are your child's individual needs? (does your child need help holding a pencil? does your child need a quiet place to work?)
- What are you doing at home that works for your child? (what helps, what hurts?)
- How do you reward or discipline your child? (what works, what doesn't. every child has a motivator, what is it?)
- How does your child do on homework? (how much time, reaction...)
- What are your child's routines and habits? (favorite past times)

Before the IEP meeting



Ask for a draft of the IEP a few weeks in advance in writing. This is your right. This will help you create your own document.

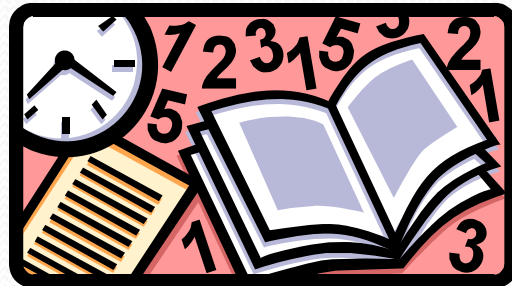
Before the IEP meeting



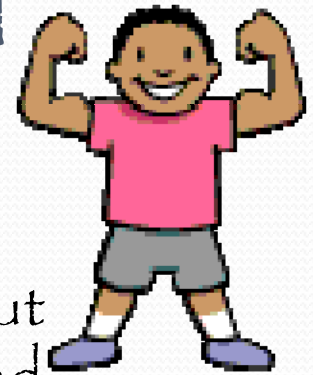
- Ask someone to go with you, it always helps to have someone take notes.
- If you cannot take someone with you, let the school know 24 hours in advance that you will be bringing a tape recorder.

There are many pieces of an IEP. This is about the PLOP!

- The present level of performance (PLOP) describes how your child learns and behaves at school. It needs to include information about how your child learns and behaves at home. All this information helps the team create goals for your child.



More about the PLOP



- The present level of performance tells the story about how your child does well, when your child struggles and what makes life tough, and what makes life good for your child.
- Remember, your child learns at home, perhaps not from a worksheet or from a book, but it is still learning.
- Your child's first teacher is you, and you need to share your experience with the other teachers in his/her life.

Goals

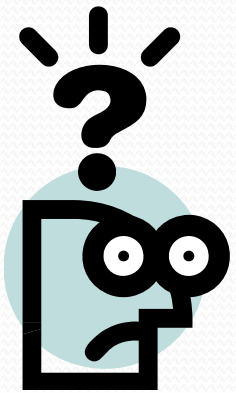


Goals are created from the information in the present level of performance

Goals are broad and are meant to describe what your child will be learning (what skills they will develop)

Where are Goals Used?

- The areas that your child has difficulty in.
- For example:
 - Academics: math, reading, writing, spelling
 - Social and behavioral issues: getting along with others, sharing and taking turns. anxiety, trouble with transition, aggression



More areas that might need goals.

1. Physical skills:

- How your child walks and moves. Your child's handwriting skills; child's cutting skills.

2. Communication skills:

- How your child hears and answers.

3. Self help and independent living skills:

- Counting money, buttoning clothes, tying shoe laces, asking for help when needed.



How long do goals stay on an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

- The goals are written for the entire school year of the child. (but the school year is from IEP to IEP)
- Each Goal may or may not have Objectives
- Your child might not meet all of his/her goals, and that is okay... As long as there is good progress and effort. (by your child and the school)



After the IEP meeting

- Read your meeting notes, listen to the tape, do the goals on the IEP match the goals in the notes?
- Keep the IEP handy, review your child's progress every few months, is the plan working?
- Ask for written progress notes every few months.

