

For Parents: Ten Mistakes to Avoid After The IEP Meeting

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It is no use saying we are doing our best. You have got to succeed in doing what is necessary.
- Winston Churchill



Believe once the IEP is written, all the work is done.

The IEP can be a wonderfully-written document, but if it doesn't get implemented how useful is it? Keep track of the goals your child is working on. Make sure the needed accommodations are in place. Ensure your child is getting all the supports she needs in the least restrictive environment.



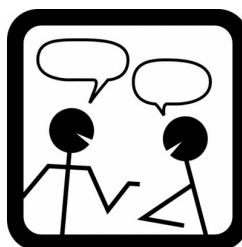
Not involve your child.

Make sure your child understands what his goals are, who is to provide what support, when/where that support will be provided, etc. Your child needs to know these important parts of his IEP so he can speak up for himself if/when the IEP is not being followed, and so he can tell you, too.



Forget to celebrate successes.

Make time to celebrate success that comes in many forms: the progress your child is making, the positive relationships you're building, something nice a teacher or student does for your child, and more.



Discontinue the communication with school staff.

Keep the conversation going! Stay in close touch with your child's teacher, via Email, written notes, phone, and/or in-person meetings. Agree on the frequency of these communications, and honor that commitment.



Not ask to see ongoing data that is being collected.

Chances are you want more than a copy of the data. This is a perfect opportunity to have a face-to-face meeting with the teacher so you can understand what the data is measuring. Ask for a copy of the data and put it in the notebook you are continually updating.

Forget to thank members of the school team that are cheerleaders for your child.

Let people know you appreciate their efforts. Send a handwritten note, a box of cookies, or take a staff member to lunch! Showing your appreciation and gratitude is the right thing to do and will enhance your relationships with people who touch your child's life.



Not forward relevant newsletters, articles, and websites to the school team.

Think of all the ideas, suggestions, and resources you collect – pass them on and ask the school staff to share their resources with you.

Avoid filing paperwork from recent IEP meeting.

Pull out your notebook, add the actual IEP, any emails about the IEP, recent evaluation results, any Prior Written Notices given, etc. Do this after each meeting and you'll be more prepared for the next meeting. Throughout the year, add progress reports, other pertinent emails, samples of your child's work, copies of evaluations, etc.



Confused about your options when disagreements continue.

Trying to resolve disputes at the lowest level is the goal. Read the procedural safeguards document you were given, and ask other parents to recommend an advocate that can help you weigh the pros and cons of your options.

Not document how your child's inclusion in general education and extra-curricula activities are benefiting others.

The teachers will be documenting the progress your child is making. But it is important to also to record how your child's inclusion in the general education classroom has impacted his/her classmates. Jot down comments you hear from peers, their parents, and staff. Share with others who wonder about the benefits of inclusion.



Checkout additional helpful IEP resources on my website. [Click here.](http://www.visionsandvoicestogether.com/resources/ieps)
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