Etiquette Training

The Do’s & Don’ts of an IEP Meeting

Betsy Meyers, OTS
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Introductions

Tammy Blake, OTD, OTR/L
- 17 years school-based experience
- Co-presenter AOTA
  - 2014 - The Development of Expert Practice in School-Based Occupational Therapy
- Co-Author - Growing... Plants, Functional Skills and Communication Skills in School Gardens

Betsy Meyers, OTS
- 2 months school-based experience
- DEC student (*Mary Baldwin Univ*)
  - “Refreshing Recess” with 1st & 2nd grade classrooms
- Level II Fieldworks completed
  - SNF, Outpatient Pediatrics
What are some words of wisdom that you would tell the "younger" you before entering your first IEP meeting??
Lessons Learned *(AOTA OT Connections)*

- Remain calm, composed and breathe
- Less is more
- Be careful what you agree to

- Parent-friendly, less OT jargon
- Parents love the positive
- Collaboration with parents, not confrontation
Lessons *(Cont’d)*

- Not a place for “surprises”
- Have your data, samples of work
- Keep it functional, strengths-based
  
  - The child *shows signs* or *appears*
  
  - Explain how OT fits in the picture
Helpful Tips *(from Mama OT)*

- Truth is the most important aspect of your job.
- Build positive relationships. Be friendly. Be flexible.
- Don’t rush into treating students right away.
- Give yourself time to organize your master schedule.
- Lead groups when you can.
- Don’t be afraid to reach out for help!
- Focus on school function 😊
“Building Compassion & Conversation”

Fialka & Fialka-Feldman, 2017

- Understand the family’s perspective
- Replace jargon with conversation
- Encourage self advocacy
According to **IDEA**…

- IDEA: Related Service (*Part B*)
- ESSA: Specialized instructional support personnel (*SISP*)
- Address function and participation in the classroom

- Best practice as determined by AOTA:
  - Top-down approach
  - Curriculum, social, functional aspects of school
What makes OT’s role unique during IEP discussions?

“I’ve got an elevator pitch, an escalator pitch, and, just to be safe, a stairway pitch.”
Top 10 Things Not to Say in an IEP

1. “I am new to (school county) and don’t really know your child”
2. “We met prior to the meeting and determined…”
3. “We (I) don’t provide that service at (school county).”
4. “If he/she were my child…”
5. “Confidentially speaking… / Off the record…”
Top 10 Things Not to Say in an IEP

6. “We don’t have the money/expertise/time to provide that service.”

7. “Let me consult with my supervisor/SpED director/PSL/attorney about…”

8. “All children with this disability receive this accommodation/placement…”

9. “We’d like to present this IEP/goal/accommodation…”

10. “This is what I do for all students with…”
Would you like to share how you learned some of your own “Do’s” & “Don’ts”?

I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work
- Thomas A. Edison

I HAVE MADE A HUGE MISTAKE

SAFE ZONE
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