

### **12 Steps to a Successful IEP Meeting**

*Reprinted from the Williams Syndrome Assoc. National Newsletter, Fall 1991*

#### **1. Review the current IEP.**

Has the IEP worked well? What goals and objectives been accomplished? What goals and objectives still need more work? What are the pluses and minuses of the program?

#### **2. Write a STRENGTHS/NEEDS list for your child.**

What can your child do? What does like to do? What does he need to be able to do?

#### **3. Make a list of questions that will help you in writing your child's IEP.**

- What programs have or have not been successful? Why?
- Has your child had many major changes like operations, changes in the family, changes in medication or treatment since the last IEP was written?
- What academic goals do you think are realistic?
- Does your child need some self help, social and behavioral goals?
- What would your child like to see in the next IEP?
- What related services do you feel are necessary for your child to benefit from his educational program?
- Should vocational goals be written?
- How much time does your child spend with non-handicapped children?
- Is this an important transition year (example: preschool to kindergarten, etc.)?

#### **4. Decide if you need more information.**

Do you know your child's present level of performance? Have you received progress reports? Are you aware of testing that may need to be done? Is it time for a re-evaluation?

#### **5. Get the answers to your questions.**

If needed, observe your child in the present program or visit some of the classrooms that would be available next year. Meet with teachers and other staff to find out what they think about the child's needs and the types of programs which would be appropriate. Do not limit your options to the programs that are currently available. Read your child's records.

#### **6. Write down the goals and objectives you want your child to achieve.**

Ask yourself the following questions: a) What skills would you like your child to learn? b) What can your child be taught in school that would help at home? c) What behaviors can be improved with help from the school? d) What are your main concerns for your child? e) What are your hopes for your child as an adult?

*[To view California State Board of Education's Content Standards for English-language arts, mathematics, history-social science, science, and visual and performing arts for Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade, go to <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci> ]*

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## **12 Steps to a Successful IEP Meeting (continued)**

### **7. Make a PRIORITY LIST.**

Organize your goals in order on importance to you. Decide which goals are necessary for your child to receive an appropriate education. Organize other issues such as related services and least restrictive environment in order of importance.

### **8. Find out who will attend the IEP meeting.**

When you are notified of the meeting time and place, ask who else has been invited to attend and if you believe someone providing services to your child has not been included in the meeting, ask that they be invited. Decide if you want to invite someone for moral support, to make certain you understand all that is happening, or to present additional information. Let the school know whom you are asking to come with you.

### **9. Make sure enough time has been scheduled for the meeting.**

Ask how much time has been scheduled for the meeting. If you feel the time scheduled is too short, ask to meet at another time. Make sure you have enough time to ask questions and share your opinions.

### **10. Be ready to support your ideas and requests.**

Find information in the records, progress reports, evaluation results and elsewhere to support your ideas or requests. Know WHY you are making requests or suggestions. Have a “back-up” plan or suggestions that can be part of “give and take”, or negotiations, with school staff. Understand your “Priority List” of goals so you can “give” on lower ranked goals or issues in order to receive your “highest priority” goals or requests.

### **11. Plan for the meeting**

- ORGANIZE your materials.
- WRITE DOWN your questions.
- KNOW what you want to say.
- REVIEW assertive communication skills.
- PRACTICE communicating assertively.

### **12. Be POSITIVE!**

Assume that you and school system personnel can work together effectively to develop an appropriate program for your child.