

Advocacy Tools

Assertiveness

- Know your rights and due process to obtain them
- Be self confident when you communicate with others
- Do not feel intimidated by other members of the team
- Do not feel guilty when asking for change
- State needs clearly and directly
- Document all facts pertaining your case
- Stick up for what you believe in
- Advocate effectively on your our your child's behalf

Listening Skills

- Listen attentively; don't interrupt; allow the speaker to finish
- Be genuinely interested in what other person says
- Look and act interested – don't engage in some other activity
- Listen to understand not to reply
- Put the person speaking at ease – it will remove barriers
- Help him/her to feel they can speak freely
- Stop talking – you cannot listen when you talk
- Expect the above courtesy to be given to you at meetings

Communication Skills

- Use your listening skills
- Act as part of a team
- Share information
- Ask clear questions
- Ask for clarification (i.e." what did you mean by"
- Recap your understanding of a suggestion, of a statement
- Express your point of view in a reasonable manner
- Take other viewpoints into account; try to understand them
- Be patient