HANDS & VOICES™

ADVOCACY SUPPORT & TRAINING

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- Use a laptop or computer for best access. Phones and tablets will limit your access to **only** the presenter and the PowerPoint.
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- **A Q&A option can be found at the bottom of your screen. This allows you to type in any questions you have throughout the presentation. We will be facilitating questions for the presenter at the conclusion of the presentation.**

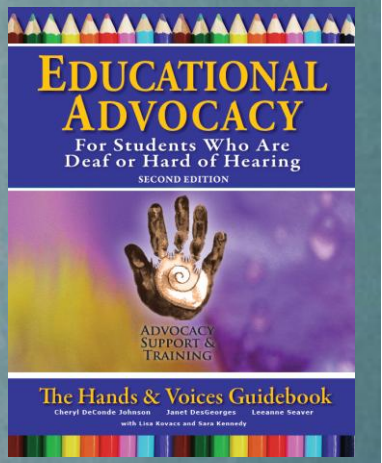
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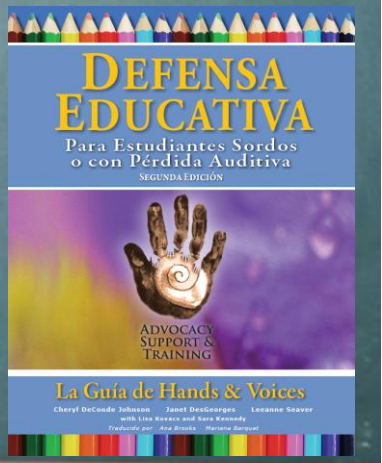
From Parent Records to Student Voice: The Power of Documentation

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Advocacy Support & Training Webinar Series

1. Document

Use simple strategies to track meetings, communication, services, and follow-up.

2. Coach & advocate

Help parents document concerns, communicate clearly, and follow through with schools.

3. Build independence

Help students practice documentation and self-advocacy across school, college, and work.

Big idea: Document what happens → use it to advocate → teach students to do it for themselves.

What documentation challenge comes up most often in your work with families or students?

Why documentation matters

- Creates a clear record of conversations and decisions
- Tracks services, accommodations, and follow-up
- Supports collaboration and celebrates progress
- Helps identify patterns and unresolved concerns

Keep it useful

Aim for notes that are:

- Factual
- Dated
- Specific
- Easy to find


KNOW
BEFORE
YOU GO

What should we document?

Meetings

IEP/504 meetings, decisions, action items

Communication

Emails, calls, conversations, questions

Services & access

Services received, missed supports, accommodations

Follow-up

Who will do what, by when, and the response

Progress

What is working, student strengths, successful strategies

WHO?

Who was involved?

WHAT?

What was discussed or agreed?

WHEN?

Date and time

WHERE?

Meeting, phone, email, classroom

WHAT'S NEXT?

Who is responsible, and by when?

STARTING NOTE

Too vague

“I talked to the teacher about accommodations.”

MORE SPECIFIC

Example

“Oct. 27 — Spoke with the teacher about captions for classroom videos. The teacher agreed to check settings and follow up by Friday.”

Your turn: What details would you add? Type one idea in the Zoom

Use only relevant details; protect private student information.

Coach parents without taking over

- Use factual, neutral language—not assumptions
- Save relevant emails and meeting summaries
- List questions, commitments, and follow-up dates
- Build on family strengths, priorities, and preferences

Coach with questions

“What would you like to remember?”

“What response are you hoping for?”

“What is the next step you want to take?”

Emails: NEVER ASSUME - ASK!!

- Start with understanding what they are capable of
- Build their skills
- Continue to support from a far

1. DOCUMENT

Record dates, facts, impact, and what support was needed.

→

2. COMMUNICATE

Ask clear questions and request a plan or clarification.

→

3. FOLLOW UP

Record the response, agreed actions, and next check-in.

Documentation is not about blame. It helps clarify needs, track commitments, and work toward solutions.

Situation

A parent reports that their child often misses information during classroom discussions because needed communication supports are not consistently available.

Zoom chat:

- What facts and dates should be documented?
- What questions could the parent ask the school?
- What would a useful follow-up plan include?

Younger students

Recognize needs; practice asking for help.

Middle & high school

Track accommodations; communicate with teachers.

Postsecondary

Request accommodations and connect with disability services.

Workplace

Explain access needs and follow up professionally.

The goal is gradual transfer: adults model, students practice, and independence grows over time.

Create a Parent/Student Report

- Strengths
- Challenges
- Plans for the future
- Present Level of Evaluation
- Goals for school year
- Accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services



REFLECT & APPLY

Start small

One dated note is better than trying to remember everything later.

Stay factual

Record what happened, what was agreed, and what comes next.

Transfer skills

Let students practice with support, then build independence.

Date / time _____

Who was involved? _____

What happened / what was discussed? _____

_____

Impact on student / support needed _____

_____

Agreed action / person responsible _____

Follow-up date / outcome _____

Store records securely and share only with appropriate people.

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QUESTIONS?

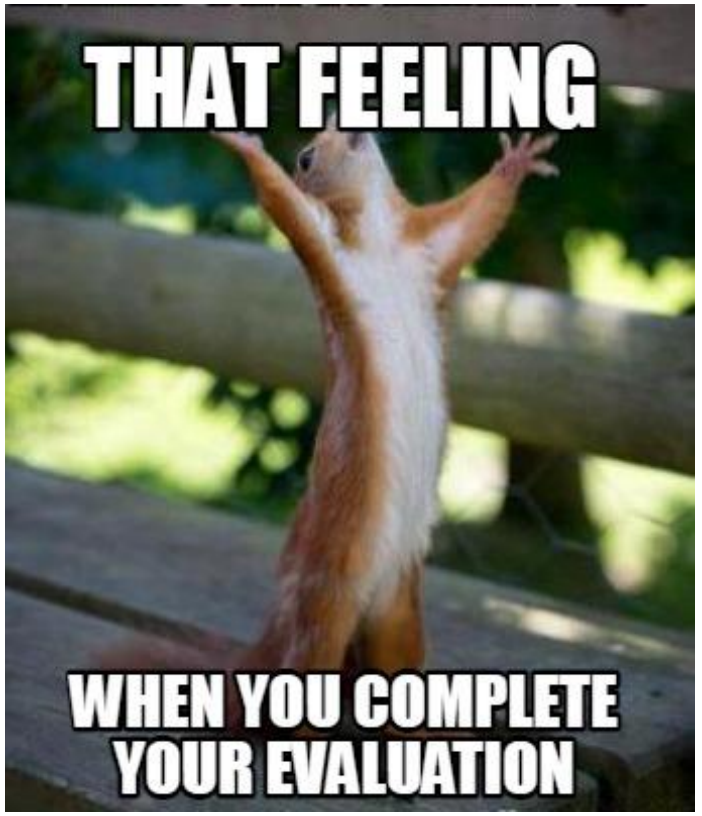
Q&A STARTS NOW.



PLEASE TYPE YOUR QUESTIONS INTO THE Q&A BOX.

Thank you!

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