



COLLABORATION

TIPS



dream it. believe it. crUSH it.



PARENTS

1. Determine desired outcomes for your child and choose the intervention approach and the professionals who will help your family achieve them.
2. Clearly state your goals and expectations to every professional involved, so everyone is on the same page. At the same time, be open to new ideas.
3. Give respect if you want respect back. Be timely and polite, not demanding. Everyone is in unfamiliar territory. Also, be personable and ask about family. Encourage your child to do the same.
4. Inform professionals of the extra-curricular activities in which your child is involved, enabling them to develop an intervention plan that can be incorporated into those sports/activities. Professionals may also choose to use extra-curricular themes in their therapy plans.
5. Share important events/successes/accomplishments with each member of the team, helping the professionals get to know your child.
6. Help your child develop self-advocacy skills by having professionals' direct questions to the child from an early age. Have the child be the focal point of appointments – after all, he/she knows him/herself best! Also involve your child in his/her IEP and Annual Review meetings. This will help your child gain confidence and a greater understanding of his/her strengths and needs.
7. Become involved in professional trainings, advocacy and fundraising organizations that focus on your child's needs. This will further develop the child's and family's self-advocacy skills.

PROFESSIONALS

1. Allow the family the time to share the desired outcomes for their child. Remember they are summarizing years of their lives into one short meeting. Make additional appointments, if necessary.
2. Share some your goals and expectations for your new student.
3. The unknown can be the most debilitating part of the diagnosis with Usher syndrome, humbly share your initial concerns and don't be afraid to ask questions.
4. Work collaboratively with your team, there may be opportunities to share resources or incorporate goals. Get creative!
5. Touch base with the student even if they don't reach out. This will help build trust, confidence and develop a mutual understanding of his/her strengths and needs.
6. Notice something unusual? Share with the team, in fact this may spark a larger conversation.
7. Don't get discouraged, we are all in unfamiliar territory. Reach out, check in and keep the conversation going.

Learn more at www.avasvoice.org

The mission of Ava's Voice is to empower youth with Usher syndrome and to educate families and school communities.