

# Being an Education Advocate for Your Struggling Learning or Child With a Disability

- ✓ Your experiences are valuable and can be used to improve things.
- ✓ You know when something is or isn't working.
- ✓ You have ideas to make things better.
- ✓ You have a long standing connection to this child.



## 1. Understand Your Child's Learning Needs

### Understanding helps you:

- ✓ Know which services are appropriate for your child
- ✓ Have high expectations
- ✓ Find the right assistive technology and accommodations
- ✓ Use resources to learn more!

## 2. Know the Key Players

- ✓ Who is the director or decision maker?
- ✓ Are staff people public, non-profit, or private employees?
- ✓ How can you find a person's name?

## 3. Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

### Learn about them by:

- ✓ Reading Web sites
- ✓ Asking how service is funded
- ✓ Asking to see laws and policies
- ✓ Asking questions
- ✓ Joining a group

## 4. Be Well Organized

- ✓ Keep records
- ✓ Put it in writing
- ✓ Keep a phone log
- ✓ Have a meeting notebook

## 5. Use Clear and Effective Communication

- ✓ Focus on needs of the child
- ✓ Problem solve together to find solutions

## 6. Know How to Resolve Disagreements

- ✓ Disagree without being disagreeable
- ✓ Apologize if needed
- ✓ Separate the person from the problem
- ✓ Realize NO ONE has all the answers
- ✓ Make sure your facts are correct
- ✓ Choose your battles
- ✓ Use formal dispute processes provided

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Page 1 of 1