



## OCECD Parent Toolkit

INFORMATION  
SHEETS



**Be INFORMED.**

**Be EMPOWERED.**

**Be your child's  
ADVOCATE.**

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## Communication Tips

As busy parents of a child with a disability, it is often easier to pick up the telephone when we have an issue that we need to discuss with someone at our child's school. Although this sometimes gets the job done, there are occasions when a written form of communication can be more effective. It is important for parents to keep documentation of the interactions that occur. Some effective communication strategies to consider are as follows:



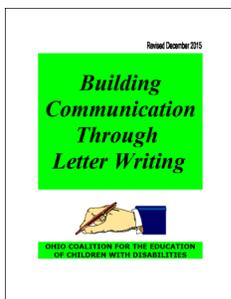
Keep a phone log. When you talk with someone about your child, record it on your phone log. Keep it simple. Document the date, the time, who you spoke with, and a few notations about the conversation that took place.



It also may be helpful to keep a meeting log. Record the date of the meeting and a general summary of the discussion that took place. You may want to note important decisions that were made, concerns that you had about the meeting, or items that may need additional follow-up.



E-mail your child's teacher, special education director, or principal about important issues or concerns. Set up an email folder for each contact for easy retrieval. If you do not routinely back-up your computer, print off a copy of all e-mails to keep for your records.



Write a follow-up letter to the school district after your meetings if you have continued concerns, or if you did not agree with a decision that was made by the IEP team. Let the school district know how you viewed the meeting and what you understood the outcome of the meeting to be. It is important to provide the school district with written documentation about your perspective regarding issues that were discussed.



If an issue is especially important, send a letter via certified mail with a return receipt requested. Keep the documentation you receive from the Post Office and a copy of the letter with your child's permanent records.

Keep copies of all communication you send to, or receive from your child's school district.

**Developing good communication skills and practices are helpful to all parties involved. Your "paper trail" may be used to clarify the issue at hand or to establish the data needed to obtain services your child needs.**

Disclaimer: This publication is intended to provide information only and is not intended as legal advice. You should consult a lawyer, if you need legal advice.