



"Students with disabilities are people first and foremost. It shouldn't be just up to the students to figure out how to fit in. It should be up to the adults in the school to model positive behavior, to give positive re-enforcement, and to find ways to include students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have dreams, wants, feelings, and desires just like everyone else. Teachers, administrators, and the principal should be careful when making assumptions about what students with disabilities can and cannot do in an educational setting. Students with disabilities have inherent value and worth! They deserve not just a fair and appropriate public education but also deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. They rise to high expectations, not low expectations!"

-Charlotte Woodward, NDSS Education Program Associate

Charlotte's Top Ten Tips for Self Advocates

1. Get a good night's sleep.
2. Come dressed professionally.
3. Know your dreams, passions, talents, and goals.
4. Be polite, kind, and nice to IEP professionals.
5. Have a conversation with your parents on the ins and outs of an IEP meeting.
6. Stand up for yourself if you hear anyone talking about low expectations.
7. Have high expectations for yourself.
8. Come early to your IEP meeting; time management is important.
9. Advocate to be included in the general education curriculum.
10. Ask questions if you don't know something and don't be afraid to speak up.



Accommodations: What to Ask For

Accommodations remove learning barriers in the classroom to provide each student with equal access to learning. IEP accommodations are adjustments to the environment, instruction or materials that allow a student with a disability to access the content or complete assigned tasks. Accommodations do not alter what is being taught.

Common Accommodations

- Scribes
- Modality of learning: audio, visual, hands-on, American Sign Language
- Extra time on tests and schoolwork
- Recording pens
- Large print textbooks
- Study sheets and teacher outlines
- Use of computers and calculators
- Review sessions
- Preferential seating
- Daily check in with case manager or special education teacher
- Use of mnemonics
- Adjusted assignment timelines

Unique Accommodations

- Quiet corner to calm down and relax when anxious
- Positive re-enforcement
- Projects instead of written reports
- Extra credit
- Peer-to-peer tutoring
- Personal time outs to regroup and prepare for transition
- Adapted recess with adult lead activities to increase peer interactions
- Visual charts and schedules



Five Things Nondisabled Students Gain from Having Students with Disabilities in Their Class:

1. A potential friend
2. A lunch buddy
3. Someone to hang out with at after-school clubs and activities
4. Someone to stand up for when students with disabilities are being bullied
5. Someone to help them with their schoolwork if they're having a hard time with it