

Good Practice and Parents with a Learning Disability



Who we are



Eveline Kevin

What it is like being a parent with a learning disability



We are proud parents who love our children.

It is tough being judged and not getting the support that you need.

**What might we need support
with**

Everyone is different



Ask

What might we need support with



- Budgeting
- Setting up routines with our children
- Setting boundaries with our children
- Dealing with the benefits agencies
- Reading letters

What might we need support with



- Finding out how to get to where you need to be
- Give at least 3 days notice if we need to go to a new place
- Juggling appointments
- Setting up routines at home

What might we need support with



- Learning to cook healthy meals
- Filling out forms
- Finding good support
- Knowing who the good and bad people are around us

**What might we need support
with**

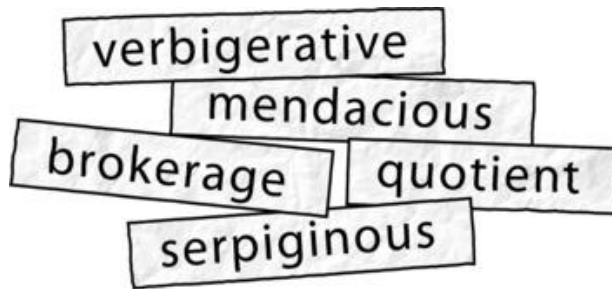
**Remember everyone is
different**



Ask

What goes wrong for parents with a learning disability?

- Assessments that do not take account of our learning disabilities.
- Not enough easy read information
- Negative attitudes from professionals



What goes wrong for parents with a learning disability?



- Children and adult services do not always work together
- Support not available when needed
- There is no long term support

What helps most



- Workers that listen to you
- Workers that explain things to you clearly
- An advocate

What helps most



- Workers that work together and give the same advice
- Workers that are honest
- Workers that see a family

What helps most



- Childcare
- A support network
- Be flexible

Accessible Information and Communication

Written Information



- No Jargon
- Use a clear font like Arial or Century Gothic
- Use font size 14 or above
- Use **bold**, not underline or *italics* for important points like dates and times

Accessible Information and Communication

2

~~Two~~

Written Information

- Use short sentences. Only one point to a sentence.
- Use the number **2** not two.
- Ask people what works for them.

Meetings



Before meetings

- Make sure the parent has an advocate if they want one.
- The meeting lead should make sure that parents:
 - know the reason for the meeting
 - who will be at the meeting
 - know where and when the meeting is and how to get there

Meetings



Report

Before meetings

- Parents should have all reports and paperwork in good time to get ready for meetings.
- New information or concerns should be discussed with parents before meetings not during them.
- Offer childcare if needed.

Meetings



During meetings

- Have breaks
- Don't use jargon
- Keep the parent at the centre of the meeting
- Don't talk about your personal life, focus on the meeting.

Meetings



During meetings

- If meetings get too long they need to end and carry on another time.
- Remember that everyone is different – ask what works for them.

Meetings

After meetings

- We need the record of the meeting in good time and an advocate to go through it with us
- We need to think about what was said and we might need to ask questions



Parent assessments – what makes a good assessment?

From the parents point of view



Communication



- Give us information and letters in easy read format about assessments
- Do not assume that a parent can read or that they have someone who can read things for them

Communication

~~Are you able to attend the concert that is being held on Friday?~~

- Do not send lots and lots of paperwork
- Avoid handwritten notes in joined up hand writing

Communication



- Avoid jargon or explain new words about the assessment in easier language
- Explain and explain again – check we have understood and use different words if you need to
- Talk slowly and clearly

Communication



- Show us you are listening
- Do not write lots of notes in front of us
- When possible tell us in advance if you are coming to do a home visit

The bigger picture



- Look 'outside the box' – the issue might not be poor parenting. There might be another reason like not enough money

The bigger picture



- Don't make assumptions – try and find the reason why we are doing what we are doing

The bigger picture



- Find out who we have to support us outside social services - who can explain things, and read letters? Is there a family member, neighbour, a solicitor or an advocate?

Relating to the parents



- Match your body language and expressions to the information you are giving – Don't give bad news with a smiling face it may be misunderstood.
- Be polite, friendly and respectful
- Turn up on time

Relating to the parents



- Try and build up a positive relationship
- Be straight forward – tell us ‘as it is’

**Thank You
for listening**

