

Ten Tips for Therapists

Work together with the classroom team to promote the participation and productivity of students with disabilities.

Observe the class environment.



Survey teaching styles and classroom activities. Your findings will assist you to create relevant goals and objectives for students on your caseload.



Visit the lunchroom.

Check out the cafeteria and discover ample opportunities for students to practice activities of daily living, socialization and mobility.

Build a rapport with others.



Ensure teachers and classroom aides refer to you by your name, not your professional title.



Use as few adaptations as possible.

Multiple contraptions overwhelm classroom staff and increase the chance that things will go wrong or remain unused.

Write relevant goals and objectives.



Create just a few clear goals that apply to classroom or lunchtime activities. Compose general goals that apply to multiple classes, yet include specific directions for the classroom staff. Continually monitor student participation and adjust goals accordingly.



Keep your promises.

Deliver the equipment you promise to provide. Show up when you say you will. Always call and give notice of cancellations.

Ask for feedback.



When things do not go as planned, ask why. Listen to the suggestions and concerns of other staff members. Use input from those that serve the student on a daily basis to refine your interventions and modifications.

Share your expectations.



Tell students and teammates what you expect of them - and why. Ask the classroom or special education teacher what they expect in return.



Stay connected.

Busy schedules and packed caseloads prevent therapists from making regular visits to the classroom. Take five minutes to call and let the school staff know you care and want to help.

Try things out in person.



Go into the classroom to implement new adaptations or techniques yourself. Do not delegate this important job to teachers or classroom aides. Being there in person, enables you to perfect adaptations. Once you have refined the intervention, entrust its implementation to a classroom or therapeutic assistants.