

CADRE and JAMS Foundation Present:
Voices from the Field
Interview Clip #1 Transcript – Jody Manning

Marshall: Jody, in your years at Pacer Center you've done a lot of really terrific work helping parents to prepare for their child's IEP/IFSP. As you think about working with parents, is there any advice that you believe is particularly helpful?

Jody: Yes, Marshall. We have some key points that we concentrate on with parents, when we're preparing them for meetings. One is that they should spend an adequate amount of time preparing for those meetings. So they should review data to support any requests that they'll be submitting to the school. Great sources of data for parents are going through their previous evaluations, getting data from there. They might also want to look at the present levels of performance, the PLAF and the IEPs, the current IEPs. They can also, of course, review progress reports and report cards as well. We would also encourage parents to pay particular attention when they're in the meeting to the communication style and making sure that that's effective and working for them in a productive way they'd like to see it work. In addition, when they're in the meeting we would encourage parents to look at the present level of performance from the current goals before the team moves on to writing new goals. So we want to make sure that we know where the student is currently before addressing where we would hope them to be in the future, in the next 12 months. In addition, parents should be aware of the state academic standards, so that's something that they'll need to look at for their child's current grade level to see where they are, and when they're in the meeting we would encourage them to ask the school where they think they're child is as far as the state academic grade levels and what can be done if there is some need to catch that student up as far as the state academic levels. Lastly, we would encourage the parents to expect to and ask the team to spend some time dealing with the assistive technology options. They should be talking about any challenges that the student might have and see what they might be able to address related to assistive technology options and/or devices.