

Documentation 101

Documentation is a critical component of your job. You will be responsible for observing and then concisely writing what you see, while tying everything back to the plan of care. This is not an easy task. Let's look at the how-to's of documentation:

Helpful tips when documenting...

- ◆ Observe
- ◆ Describe rather than evaluate
- ◆ Use your intervention words
- ◆ Refer to your "Do's and Don't of Documentation sheet
- ◆ Pretend your supervisor is standing over your shoulder
- ◆ Treat each note seriously as if it would end up in court
- ◆ Pretend your child's parent/guardian is standing over your shoulder.



Do...

- ✓ Include name, case number, date, etc.
- ✓ Be concise
- ✓ Report on goals
- ✓ Describe
- ✓ Indicate problems
- ✓ Indicate strengths
- ✓ Be objective



Don't...

- ✓ Evaluate
- ✓ Go into great detail
- ✓ Be subjective
- ✓ Use another client's name
- ✓ Report on a child's inappropriate behavior without reporting on how you intervened



Remember to:

- ✓ Describe what happened rather than evaluate
- ✓ Focus on behaviors, transition times and receptiveness to your interventions rather than the intermarry of what you and the child did.
- ✓ Be objective and non judgmental



Documentation, at the very basic level, is nothing more than a form of communication. All documentation goes to the child's medical chart. It provides communication to other treatment team members. It is vital and important. Your documentation tells the story of the child's life.

Think about it...

When you find yourself "stuck" on how to appropriately state something in your documentation, seek out the advice of your supervisor or colleague. Sometimes a fresh perspective is all it takes to get the point across.