

## **Assertiveness IS:**

While you are working with the school team, there will also be times when you need to disagree or make an assertive statement. It is important to keep in mind that your message should be clear and direct but not aggressive or hostile. Avoid making overstatements and using words that indicate absolutes. Overstatements or exaggerations of your point will hasten a loss of credibility.

Also avoid putting the other person on the defensive. Even the most hardened criminals will always fight to justify themselves when put on the defensive. Attack issues, not people.

### **Assertiveness is:**

1. Knowing an understanding your rights
2. Knowing and understanding your child's rights
3. Asking questions anytime you need clarification
4. Repeating a question until it is satisfactorily answered
5. Insisting that all persons who should be at an IEP meeting are there, including someone in authority
6. Keeping a paper trail of all communication regarding your child's education, sending carbons to the appropriate people, and requesting copies and records from school.
7. Monitoring to be sure that the IEP is being implemented and followed
8. Knowing that you are a full partner in planning your child's education program and expecting to be treated as such
9. Letting people know that you intend to resolve issues and are willing to go to due process, if necessary
10. Learning all you can about your child's disability and needs
11. Knowing about available resources and using them
12. Finding out who the right person to talk to is, knowing who the key persons are, and trying all avenues
13. Praising and thanking people when appropriate
14. Never saying "I'm just a parent"

## The Communication Bag

### ASKING QUESTIONS

Describe for me...  
Tell me more about...  
Give me an example of...

### SHARING INFORMATION

Let me tell you about...  
Let me share with you...

### ASSERTIVE STATEMENTS

I'm not sure I agree... and I want to talk about how...

I have a problem with... and would like to explore...

I feel strongly that ... and would like to brainstorm...

Let me tell you my reaction... I would like to focus on...

### I MESSAGES

I'm upset when...  
I'm angry about...

### PERCEPTION CHECKS

It seems like you...

Your concern seems to be...

I am feeling that you...

### PARAPHRASING

What I think you mean is...  
I understand you to say....

Do you mean...

What you're saying means to me...

Let me be sure I'm understanding you...

What I hear you saying is...

### SOFTNERS

I'm curious about...

I'm wondering if...

What would happen if...

If would help me if...

Can you tell me the reason for...

Can you help me understand why...

### SUPER QUESTIONS

Compared to what?

Specifically what?

Specifically how?

Specifically why?

All? Should? Never?

You appear to be...