



EVIDENCE -BASED CONSULTING

FROM THE DESK OF
THE TUMBLEWEED CONSULTANT

Hello everyone!

I hope that your thoughts are filled with visions of turkey and pie. This is the season for giving thanks and I would like to say “thank you” to all of the hard working autism interdisciplinary teams and consultants that serve our schools.

Kansas is doing great things in the effort to identify and serve students with autism spectrum disorders. Like all other states, we have an added challenge of reaching families of students whose first language is something other than English. Building a relationship of trust and collaboration is especially challenging when we are unable to communicate directly with a parent. According to the CDC, the average age of diagnosis for autism disorders in the United States is 3 to 4 years of age, and even later for children living in socioeconomically depressed and rural communities. For the Hispanic population, the average age of diagnosis is between 7 and 8 years of age. This delay in identification means that our students may not get the help they need. Diagnosing in a bilingual community is complicated. Children are sometimes not referred for developmental testing by physicians and teachers because their delays are attributed simply to language and cultural differences. Families may not be aware of the red flags associated with autism. Cultural and familial attitudes toward disability may also impact a family’s feeling of acceptance while seeking help for their child. In the school, interpreters are our life lines to reaching these families. I have attached tips sheets for both service providers and interpreters. Also included is a list of web sites that provide information for parents in multiple languages. I would always recommend that you read through the English version before sending any information home to make sure it is appropriate for your family.

Please feel free to share this information with your interpreters and while you are at it, don’t forget a big “thank you” for making all those meetings and conferences possible.

Happy reading and safe travels,

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Resources for parents in Multiple Languages

- Autism Consortium
<http://www.autismconsortium.org/parent-packet/download-pdf-of-parent-information-packet.html>
- Autism Speaks
<http://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits>
- National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities
<http://nichcy.org/families-community/spanishresources>
- University of Michigan Health Systems
<http://www.med.umich.edu/yourchild/topics/autism.htm>
- Autism Society of America
<http://www.autism-society.org/espanol/>
- Medline plus
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/ency/article/001526.htm>
- Easter Seals
http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntlc8_whyES_espanol
- CDC Learn the Signs Act Early
<http://cdc.gov/ncbddd/spanish/actearly/index.html>

Tips for Interpreting



- * Interpret everything that is said including:
 - “Small talk”
 - Any Ideas the parent has about the nature of their child’s problem
- * Be aware of your own biases and be careful not to let them influence the interpretation
- * Be aware of cultural barriers that affect the message
 - Be respectful of what it is said and how it is said
 - Don’t make assumptions
 - Avoid stereotypes
- * Have a pre-session with the provider and the parent to introduce yourself and establish trust
- * Be conscientious of the speakers pause so that you can interpret when the speaker takes a natural breathing pause.
- * Sit in a location that is close to the person that you are interpreting for and that allows both speakers to have visual contact with each other.
- * Intervene if needed to clarify or to let others know a pause is needed to allow for interpretation.
- * Use the code of ethics to help in situations that are difficult.
- * If needed take notes, but only after you notified the speakers and let them know they will be destroyed after the session.

Tips for working With Interpreters

- * Be prepared to allow extra time for meetings that require interpretation.
- * Avoid “side conversations” with others in the room. It is the interpreter’s responsibility to interpret everything said. Nothing will be censored.
- * Only one person should speak at a time.
- * Remember cultural differences.
 - Be respectful in what you say and how it is said
 - Don’t make assumptions
 - Avoid stereotypes
- * Provide the interpreter with any written materials ahead of time.
- * Provide seating that allows the interpreter to sit near the person that they are interpreting for and that allows all speakers to have visual contact with each other.
- * Make eye contact with the person who is being interpreted, not with the interpreter.
- * Avoid directing comments to the interpreter (i.e. “Tell them...”).
- * Speak naturally but allow frequent pauses in conversation for the interpreter to convey your message. The interpreter may ask you to slow down or repeat if necessary.

