



Evidence -Based consulting

From the desk of
the Tumbleweed consultant

Hello Everyone,

I hope this year has gotten off to a good start for most of you. So far, I have heard tales of trips to Vegas, broken legs and a few beginning school days gone terribly awry. If you are receiving this email, it is because you are listed as a contact person for your Autism Interdisciplinary Team. This year, you will receive monthly information on evidence based practices to read and share with that team.

Someone once told me that an expert was a person who carried a briefcase, wore a tie and came from over 100 miles away. Well, for those of you working in your local educational districts, this is not always possible. I am sure you have all felt the frustration of consulting in your own district only to find your advice is not received with the reverence and awe that you so desire.

My original plan was to request funds for the purchase of briefcases, ties and then drop each AIT member a minimum of 100 miles from their destination, however.... Lee has indicated that it is of greater value to provide you with information on current evidence based practices in the field of autism. The truth is that your ability to provide solid recommendations for programming is far more valuable than the most bodacious Gucci briefcase and any distance you may travel.

The National Autism Center defines evidence based practice (EBP) as that which includes:

- Professional judgment and data-based decision making
 - Values and preferences of families, including the student on the autism spectrum, whenever feasible
 - Capacity to accurately implement interventions
- (For more information on EBP from the National Autism Center, go to:
http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/pdf/NAC%20Ed%20Manual_FINAL.pdf)

Use of visual supports is an evidence-based practice in autism. Supports such as Visual schedules are usually one of the first issues I find myself tackling during the year and a crucial element to developing independence. For more information on visual schedules, check out:

Visual Schedules: How and Why to Use Them in the Classroom By Kara Hume, Ph.D.
This article can be found at: <http://www.education.com/reference/article/visual-schedule-classroom-autism-ASD/>

Happy reading and safe travels at any distance you may go!

Lori Chambers

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