

Top Tips for a successful meeting: A parents Guide

Beforehand

- Ask for an agenda
- Who will be attending
- What the timing will be
- Who is running the meeting
- When and where the meeting is being held
- Let the host know what your main points are
- Inform the host if you are bringing someone to support you

Be Prepared

- Be clear in your mind why the meeting has been called
- Be clear what you would like to get out of the meeting
- Read any reports and relevant documents
- Highlight any concerns or areas of confusion you have
- Ask your child what their views are
- Get help recording child's views if need be

What to Bring

- A note pad and pen
- Any relevant reports or letters (e.g. medical)
- Any other useful information (own research)
- Your list of questions/ views/ concerns

Who Could Support You

- A friend or relative who knows what you want to say
- DIASO volunteer
- An advocate from a charity
- Another professional

During The Meeting

- Introduce yourself
- Make sure you know who is who (write names and titles in your notes)
- Tick off questions on your list as they are answered
- Refer to the agenda
- Speak up if you don't understand something
- Listen well to each person
- Try not to interrupt
- Respect other people's views
- Make sure you express your views and opinions
- Don't feel pressured into agreeing things if you are unsure
- Use your support to clarify things, advocate for you and make notes
- Be aware of your body language and tone of voice
- Be realistic about what can be achieved (priorities, small steps)
- Be as positive as possible and try and provide solutions

Closing the meeting

- Ask for a summary of the main action points- who is going to do them, what are they going to do, when are they going to do them?
- Check all your questions have been answered
- Ask when the next meeting will be

After The Meeting

- Ensure you receive the meeting notes or minutes
- Write to the chairperson if you disagree with any points in the minutes
- Write your own letter if notes are not forthcoming
- Keep an eye on deadlines to make sure you and others complete the action points