



WVPTI
Serving Families Statewide



WVPTI FALL NEWSLETTER

PIECING IT TOGETHER

*A Season of Learning,
Growth + Connection*

WHAT'S INSIDE



Starting the School
Year Strong:
Is the IEP Working?



Building a Positive
Parent-School
Partnership



Bullying, Friendships &
Belonging: Helping Every
Child Feel Included



Halloween for Every
Child: Making Fall
Activities Accessible &
Sensory-Friendly



Meet Pat Elliott
WVPTI's New Parent
Engagement Specialist

Meet **PAT ELLIOTT**
WVPTI'S NEW PARENT
ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST



We're excited to welcome Pat to the WVPTI team! Pat is passionate about supporting families and strengthening connections across West Virginia.

Starting the School Year

STRONG

Is the IEP Working?

*Same
Support
Brighter
Future* ♥

The beginning of the school year is a great time to check in and make sure your child's IEP is being implemented and meeting their needs. A little communication early on can help set the stage for a successful year!

Give it a few weeks then, check in.



It's normal for there to be an adjustment period at the start of the school year. After a few weeks, look for patterns and begin to evaluate how things are going.

Things to Consider:

- How is your child adjusting to their new routine?
- Do they seem supported and included?
- Are they talking about school positively, or expressing challenges?
- Have you received communication from teachers or service providers?

What if Something isn't Working

If you think the IEP is not being implemented or is not meeting your child's needs, here are some steps you can take:

1



Document your concerns.

Keep notes, emails, and examples of what you're seeing.

2



Contact the school.

Reach out to your child's teacher or case manager.

3



Review the IEP.

Compare the IEP to what is actually happening.

4



Request an IEP meeting.

You can request a meeting at any time to discuss changes.

You know your child best.

TOGETHER, WE CAN HELP THEM THRIVE.



Your IEP Check In:

- Are IEP services being provided as written?
- Are accommodations being used consistently?
- Is transportation working as planned?
- Are related services (speech, OT, PT, counseling, etc.) happening?
- Is your child making progress toward their goals?
- Is your child struggling in any new areas?
- Have you had communication with the teacher or IEP team?



Parent Tip

You don't have to wait until the annual IEP meeting to raise a concern. If something isn't working, you can request an IEP meeting at any time.

“ Small steps, open communication, and a supportive team can make a big difference. ”



Better TOGETHER

Building a Positive Parent-School Partnership

When families and schools work together, children are more likely to feel supported, included, and successful.

A strong partnership built on communication, respect, and teamwork helps create the best outcomes for your child.



COMMUNICATE

Keep an open, respectful line of communication.



DOCUMENT

Save important emails, notes, reports, and other information.



PREPARE

Before meetings, write down your questions, concerns, and goals.



SPEAK UP

Ask for clarification when you don't understand something and address concerns early.

Questions You Can Ask

- ☐ How is my child doing compared to the beginning of the year?
- ☐ Are all IEP services and accommodations being provided?
- ☐ What progress are you seeing?
- ☐ Where is my child struggling?
- ☐ What can we work on together?

“A positive partnership isn't about always agreeing—it's about working together for what's best for your child. ♥

Parent Tip



You don't have to wait until the annual IEP meeting to raise a concern. If something isn't working, you can request a meeting at any time.

Bullying, Friendships +

BELONGING

Every Child Deserves to Feel Safe, Included, and Valued.

When families and schools work together, children are more likely to feel supported, included, and successful. A strong partnership built on communication, respect, and teamwork helps create the best outcomes for your child.



Signs to Look For

- Changes in mood or behavior
- Not wanting to go to school
- Difficulty sleeping or eating
- Less communication or withdrawing
- Loss of interest in activities
- Unexplained injuries or damaged belongings



How You Can Help

- Encourage inclusive activities.
- Help your child practice social skills and self-advocacy.
- Talk with teachers about creating positive peer interactions.
- Be a role model, show kindness and respect.
- Work together with the school to address bullying quickly.



Talk With Your Child

- Do you feel safe at school?
- Who do you like to spend time with?
- Is anyone being mean or excluding you (or others)?
- What can I do to help?



Remember

- ✓ Listen to your child.
- ✓ Take concerns seriously.
- ✓ Communicate with the school.
- ✓ Advocate for supports and solutions.
- ✓ Keep the focus on safety, respect, and inclusion.



Halloween

for Every Child

Inclusive. Accessible. Fun for All.



Sensory-Friendly Ideas

- Try costumes made with soft, comfortable materials.
- Use face paint instead of masks.
- Bring noise-canceling headphones if needed.
- Take breaks when it gets overwhelming.
- Visit quieter neighborhoods or host a small gathering with friends.
- Look for local "sensory-friendly" or "all-abilities" trick-or-treat events.



Tips for a More Inclusive Halloween

- Offer non-food treats (stickers, glow sticks, pencils, etc.).
- Choose sensory-friendly costume options.
- Look for low-sensory events in your community.
- Consider trick-or-treating during the day or earlier in the evening.
- Give your child a way to communicate their needs (e.g., a card or bracelet).
- Be patient and flexible, every child's experience may look different!



Fun Alternatives

- Trunk-or-treat events
- Teal Pumpkin Project (indicates non-food treats)
- Sensory-friendly trick-or-treat hours
- Halloween movie night at home
- Fall-themed crafts or activities
- Dress up just for fun!

*Different abilities.
Same excitement.
A kinder, more
inclusive Halloween
for all.*



INCLUDE

ACCEPT

CELEBRATE

All Treats. All Smiles. All Belong.



Meet Pat

**PARENT ENGAGEMENT
SPECIALIST**

A Parent Helping Parents



We are excited to welcome Patricia "Pat" Elliott back to the WVPTI team as a Parent Engagement Specialist!

Pat is a parent of six children, ages 2 to 25, and understands the joys, and challenges, of parenting. She brings lived experience, advocacy knowledge, and a genuine passion for helping families.

Pat will work with families across West Virginia to provide support, information, and resources, help navigate the IEP process, and empower parents to advocate for their children.

*Sometimes parents just need
someone who will listen.
We're here to help.*



*Need Information, Training,
or Support?*

You don't have to navigate the journey alone.

Call 1-800-281-1436

We're here to help

WVPTI

News & Resources



Helpful Resources

Access fact sheets, guides, and tools to support your family.



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For resources, training information, and more!



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encouragement.

*Let's stay
connected!*