

# Organizing Those Mountains of Files

## Notes from May 18, 2016 Shoreline Special Needs PTSA General Membership Meeting

*[Formal minutes including the business portion of the meeting will be posted separately once approved.]*

The chapter welcomed guest presenters for the evening: Cathy Murahashi from ARC of King County along with Maryam Jafari and Beth Ann Crispin from Seattle Children's Center for Children with Special Needs (CCSN). They provided guidelines and tips about organizing special education and medical files.

Advice included:

- It's important to steal ideas from each other and keep experimenting to find a system that you'll actually use.
- Have a plan for what you need to save and then follow the plan, asking questions such as whether the information is required or whether you're likely to use it again.
- Save less, find more.

Ideas shared by presenters and meeting participants:

- Write out your child's history so you don't have to repeat it over and over; can share it with teachers and providers.
- Create a one-pager quick rundown about the child that can be handed out (e.g., medically fragile child).
- Create an "all about me" page about the child where he/she can share more of their personal preferences.
- Month by month planner/checklist with important activities/dates and key contacts
- Sort by "soon" and "archives" categories, with "soon" stuff on a clipboard that is purged within the month.
- Take pictures of information to file.
- Use a private Pinterest board to save information.
- Manage files in Dropbox.
- Use an Outlook group to manage email conversations.
- Organize information in Evernote.
- Use a whiteboard to keep track of medications and caregiver communications.
- Use a binder method for each school year: IEP, 504, etc., tabs, most current on top.
- Binders for different therapies
- Spiral notebooks for each binder, too, for note-taking.
- Outlook folders for everything.
- Sweep every now and then when binders are getting full.
- Use electronic patient portal features to pull and archive stuff.
- Seattle Children's will burn records on a DVD once a year.
- iPhone medical ID feature.

- Medical alert company can retain your health records for quick access.
- Fireproof safe to archive critical documents.
- Can order the folders from the Developmental Disability Council for classrooms to hand out to families.

Resource leads:

- The Informing Families, Building Trust website.
- Several tools can be found or ordered through the CCSN website, including care organizers.
- MyMedSchedule.com to keep track of medical schedules.
- Microsoft Health vault to store files in the cloud.
- MyHealth Passport through [www.sickkids.ca](http://www.sickkids.ca) to create short overviews.
- Wright's Law website.