

Documentation Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Be objective
- Be professional
- Be descriptive
- Be succinct, to the point
- Be sure to document date and time
- Be sure to sign
- Connect the documentation to the plan
- Correct errors with a line through and initial
- Remember that you could be called to testify on anything you write

Don'ts

- Be judgmental
- Be vague—don't use words like “escalated” or “became agitated”
- Write a novel
- Use white-out or cover with marker
- Forget to document—if it's not documented it didn't happen

Scenario:

John was working with his co-worker, Tom, when he began to yell obscenities at him. He has done this before and you remember that he has a crisis plan for a time-out and that has worked before, so you take him out of the situation and to the time-out area. You let him continue to yell and vent and listen for awhile then tell him you would like him to try and calm down so you can really understand what he is saying. He begins to talk more slowly and quietly. After about 30 minutes, you feel he seems calm enough to resume his usual activity.

Sample:

1/4/11, 2:30pm Crisis Response

D—Client began to scream and swear at a peer. Writer quickly removed the client to the time-out room and provided one-to-one support for approximately 30 minutes as indicated in his crisis plan.

A—Client appeared to be angry and threatening to his peer and needed a time-out. He appeared much calmer after 30 minutes.

P—Resume usual activities and continue to monitor and implement crisis plan as needed.

Signature