Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline

The Office for Civil Rights is committed to ensuring that students are not denied equal educational opportunity or subjected to discrimination based on their disabilities. This applies to the use of student discipline. Schools have overlapping responsibilities under Section 504 and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). OCR can investigate allegations of discrimination against students who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) as well as “Section 504-only” students.

OCR’s enforcement experience reflects that many students with disabilities face discipline because they are not receiving the support, services, interventions, strategies, and modifications to school policies that they need to manage their disability-related behavior. On July 19, 2022 OCR issued guidance on schools’ responsibilities to ensure nondiscrimination against students based on disability when imposing student discipline. Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 notes that meeting the behavioral, social, emotional, and academic needs of students by providing a free, appropriate public education (FAPE), can help prevent or reduce behaviors that might otherwise result in discipline.

FAPE requirements for students with behavioral needs include:

- **Identifying and Evaluating Students with Behavioral Needs**
  This duty could be triggered by such things as behaviors that may harm the student or others; frequent office referrals; demerits; the use of seclusion or restraint, or removals from instruction or services. This duty can also be triggered by information from parents, teachers, or records shared during enrollment.

- **Requirements Applicable to Evaluations and Placement Determinations**
  Evaluations must be conducted in a timely manner by qualified individuals and cannot be delayed because a student is doing well academically. Information from parents can be especially valuable as well as observations by psychologists or other professionals. A functional behavioral assessment, in the context of IDEA, focuses on identifying the function or purpose behind a child’s behavior, and typically examines a wide range of factors specific to...
the child. An assessment of a student’s challenging behaviors is needed to design a program that will meet the student’s individual educational needs.

- **Identifying Necessary Behavioral Supports, Including Behavioral Intervention Plans**
  Examples of individualized behavioral supports include: group or individualized counseling, school social worker services, school-based mental health services, physical activity, and opportunities for the student to visit a counselor or behavioral coach when they need time and space to “cool down” or self-regulate. A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) that is developed to address identified behavior should include information about: acceptable replacement behaviors, who will teach the student to use those behaviors and how, what staff should do to support the student if the behavior recurs, and how implementation and effectiveness of the plan will be monitored.

- **Supporting Students with Disability-Based Behavior in Appropriate Settings**
  Removal from the regular educational environment can only occur if the student’s needs cannot be met satisfactorily in that environment even with supplementary aids and services such as preferential seating, counseling services, or the implementation of a BIP.

- **Procedural Safeguards Available Under Section 504 to Parents or Guardians Who Believe Their Child with a Disability-Based Behavior Has Been Denied FAPE**
  Parents have a right to challenge evaluation denials, the scope of evaluations, the findings of an evaluation, and denial of supports or services to address disability-related behavior. Parents have a right to written notice, review of records, and an impartial due process hearing.

OCR notes that some schools informally exclude students by shortening their school day; requiring parents to not send their child on field trips; requiring a parent to be present in the classroom or administer medication to their child; or informing parents that their child will be suspended or expelled if they do not pick their student up from school, transfer their student to another school, agree to a shortened day, or agree to the use of restraint or seclusion. OCR could find that these practices violate Section 504.

Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
On October 1, 2022, Family Matters will celebrate 20 years of serving families. We have had over 78,000 individual contacts with parents during those years as we carry out our mission of building upon families’ strengths to empower parents and professionals to achieve the strongest possible outcomes for students with disabilities and to enhance the quality of life for children and young adults with disabilities.

Please consider donating to our $20 for 20 Years Fundraising Campaign to help families as they navigate the special education system in honor of our milestone anniversary.

**Quote from a parent served by Family Matters:**

“I just wanted to reach out and thank you again. We got my son access to Bookshare and he is using it to help him read a book a week!! I read a booklet that you sent me and I was able, for the first time, to actively participate in my son’s IEP. We were able to get him into co-taught classes and they have said yes to every single resource/modification that we requested. I was finally able to know what to ask for! I have been floundering for the last two years trying to communicate what I want for my son to the school but I had no idea how to go about it. I feel like an entire city has been lifted off me and I cannot express how grateful I am to you. I had no idea what to do or where to turn, and you gave me everything I needed. Thank you a million times!!”

**Words Matter Act**

A Bill has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives to update the terms “mentally retarded” and “mental retardation” which still can be found in the U.S. code. H.R. 8863 would update that language to “intellectual disability” or “intellectual disabilities” instead.

**H.R. 8863**

**School Services beyond the 22nd Birthday**

Starting with the 2021-2022 school year, Illinois students with disabilities who require continued public school educational experience to facilitate his or her successful transition and integration into adult life are eligible for such services through age 21, inclusive, which means the day before the student’s 22nd birthday, UNLESS their 22nd birthday occurs during the school year, in which case they are eligible for such services through the end of the school year.

**Public Act 102-0172 105 ILCS 5/14-1.02**
Anxiety and School Refusal

Has your child been experiencing anxiety? Does it affect school attendance and performance?

Parents have the right to call for an IEP team meeting if an Individualized Education Program for their child needs revised by adding services or if they feel there should be discussion about the need for further evaluations.

Students with individualized education programs are to receive the related services needed to assist them to benefit from their special education. The following are ideas of related services that may be needed if a child is experiencing anxiety or school refusal:

- **Counseling Services** – services provided by qualified social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors, or other qualified personnel.

- **Social Work Services** – preparing a social or developmental history on a child with a disability; working in partnership with parents and others on those problems in a child’s living situation (home, school, and community) that affect the child’s adjustment in school; mobilizing school and community resources to enable the child to learn as effectively as possible in his or her educational program; and assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies.

- **Psychological Services** – administering psychological and educational tests, and other assessment procedures; interpreting assessment results; obtaining, integrating, and interpreting information about child behavior and conditions relating to learning; consulting with other staff members in planning school programs to meet the special educational needs of children as indicated by psychological tests, interviews, direct observation, and behavioral evaluations; planning and managing a program of psychological services, including psychological counseling for children and parents; and assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies.

- **Parent Counseling and Training** – assisting parents in understanding the special needs of their child; providing parents with information about child development; and helping parents to acquire necessary skills that will allow them to support the implementation of their child’s Individualized Education Program or Individualized Family Support Program (ages 0-3).

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**Special Education Services Eligibility Category: Emotional Disability**

An emotional disability means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a degree that adversely affects a child’s educational performance:

* An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
* An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
* Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
Check out these resources:

- **Understood.org**
  - School Refusal

- **Healthy Children - American Academy of Pediatrics**
  - School Avoidance

Our webinars are available any time of day as archived recordings on our website. Learn beneficial information as your schedule allows. Just visit [www.fmptic.org/recordings/family-matters-recordings](http://www.fmptic.org/recordings/family-matters-recordings) and search by topic category, title, date of recording, or presenter name. Click on the event you plan to watch, submit basic registration data (name, email, etc.), and the webinar will begin.

### Archived Webinars

- **Functional Behavioral Assessments & Behavior Intervention Plans - What to Know as a Caregiver or Educator**
  - Assistance for Children with Sensory Issues, Social Skills Deficits, Behavioral Issues
  - Presenter: Nel Daymon
  - Date: 09/28/2021

- **Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)s and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)s**
  - Assistance for Children with Sensory Issues, Social Skills Deficits, Behavioral Issues
  - Presenter: Rose Slaght
  - Date: 01/12/2022

- **Educating Children with Emotional Disabilities**
  - Social Emotional Learning
  - Presenter: Rose Slaght
  - Date: 02/10/2022

- **The Inclusive Art of Supporting Students with Behaviors that Challenge Us**
  - Assistance for Children with Sensory Issues, Social Skills Deficits, Behavioral Issues
  - Presenter: Kate MacLeod
  - Date: 02/15/2022

### Items Available From Our Lending Library

- **The Anxiety Cure for Kids - A Guide for Parents and Children**
  - Elizabeth DuPont & Spencer Robert

  This book outlines specific action steps to communicate effectively with your child, help him or her confront fear, and boost your child’s feelings of accomplishment and self-esteem.

- **Outsmarting Worry-An Older Kid’s Guide to Managing Anxiety**
  - Down Huebner, Ph.D.

  This book teaches 9-13 year olds and the adults who care about them specific skills that make it easier to face, and overcome, worries and fears.

- **Child Mind Institute**
  - Agoraphobia in Children-When Kids Avoid Certain Locations Because of a Fear of Something Bad Happening

  - What is Separation Anxiety?-Extreme Worries about Something Happening to Parents When You’re Apart

  - What is Social Anxiety?-When Fear of How You Appear Gets in the Way of Functioning

- **Helping Students Overcome Depression and Anxiety**
  - Kenneth Merrell

  This book provided strategies for addressing depression, anxiety, and other internalizing disorders creatively and effectively with students grades k-12.

- **The Educator’s Guide to Mental Health Issues in the Classroom**
  - Frank Kline

  This resource prepares readers to understand numerous mental health disorders and help improve student’s chances for social and academic success.

To borrow these items free of cost go to: [www.fmptic.org/library](http://www.fmptic.org/library)
Students with Disabilities and Bullying

Top Five Things for Parents, Educators, and Students to Know

https://www.pacer.org/bullying/info/students-with-disabilities/

- The impact – bullying affects a student’s ability to learn
- The definition – bullying based on a student’s disability may be considered harassment
- Advocating for yourself and others has a significant impact
- Law and policy – there are legal protections and provisions for students with disabilities who are being harassed
- The resources – students with disabilities have resources that are specifically designed for their situation

PACER’S NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION CENTER

https://www.pacer.org/bullying/

Illinois Law Related to Bullying

Illinois School Code 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in all school districts, charter schools, and non-public, non-sectarian elementary and secondary schools. No student shall be subjected to bullying:

(1) during any school-sponsored education program or activity;
(2) while in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities;
(3) through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network; or other similar electronic school equipment; or

(4) through the transmission of information from an activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

Each school district, charter school, and non-public, non-sectarian elementary or secondary school shall create, maintain, and implement a policy on bullying which includes procedures for promptly informing parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, inappropriate, or mean content about someone else. The 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System indicates that an estimated 15.7% of high school students were electronically bullied in the 12 months prior to the survey.

StopBullying.gov suggests parents can support their children by recognizing a change in mood or behavior around their use of digital devices, asking questions, seeking the support of peers and trusted adults, keeping a record of what is happening and taking screenshots of harmful posts, and reporting activity to social media platforms and the school.

Conversations about cyberbullying between parents and youth allow parents to establish rules for appropriate online behavior. StopBullying.gov offers resources that describe cyberbullying and common cyberbullying tactics video examples of situations to learn how you and your child should respond, tips on how to talk to your child about appropriate online behavior, and how to report occurrences of cyberbullying.

October is National Bullying Prevention Month (NBPM)

Unity Day is Wednesday, October 19, 2022

On October 19th, plan to wear and share the color orange — as a tangible representation of the supportive, universal message that our society wants to prevent bullying, and is united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion.
**TOT SPOT**

**Early CHOICES**
By Emily Ropars

Inclusion is about community. And for the past two years, three communities in Illinois have participated in a project to examine how to create sustainable inclusive systems. Illinois was one of two states (along with Oregon) selected to pilot resources and tools created by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Project. These three communities created teams that were led by school districts: Mannheim School District 83, Collinsville Community Unit School District 10 and Springfield School District 186.

The community inclusion teams assessed their systems to identify strengths and challenges and then developed action plans to improve inclusive opportunities for young children with disabilities. The project included intensive training for leaders regarding the practices that contribute to inclusive early education systems, and training for classroom coaches who supported teachers in inclusive classrooms. Despite the project starting at the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic, the leaders, coaches and community partners continued to explore new partnerships and new practices. Their commitment to improving inclusive opportunities is commendable.

The communities will continue this work, with support from Early CHOICES. Our hope is to expand to other communities, in partnership with other early childhood systems. For more information about the project, please visit our website.

And, for resources and all things early childhood inclusion, follow us @earlychoicesorg on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Our Early CHOICES profile can also be found on LinkedIn.

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**Free Speech and Language Kits Available at the Early Intervention Clearinghouse**

Did you know that most children with disabilities and delays have speech and language impairments? There are many resources to help address speech and language among children. At the Early Intervention Clearinghouse, we have 50 speech and language kits (available in English and Spanish) that we will loan to families across the state of Illinois. Each kit includes: two books for caregivers with information and activities to promote communication and two books to be shared with children to encourage communication.

To learn more about our speech and language kits, visit: [https://eiclearinghouse.org/everyday/speech-kits/](https://eiclearinghouse.org/everyday/speech-kits/)

To request our speech and language kits to be shipped to you, you can contact the Early Intervention Clearinghouse by:

Completing our materials request form at: [https://eiclearinghouse.org/contact/](https://eiclearinghouse.org/contact/)

- E-mailing us at: Illinois-eic@illinois.edu
- Calling us at: 877-275-3227
- Visiting us at: Children’s Research Center, Room, 20, 51 Gerty Drive, Champaign, IL

You do not need to have a child in early intervention to borrow the speech and language kits.
Family Matters is recruiting volunteers who would like to become educational surrogate parents

WHAT IS AN EDUCATIONAL SURROGATE PARENT?

An Educational Surrogate Parent is an individual who has been appointed to represent the educational interests of a child with disabilities when:

- No parent (as defined under 34 CFR 300.30) can be identified;
- The parent cannot be located;
- The child is a youth in care; or
- The child is an unaccompanied homeless youth.

What are the responsibilities?

- Learns about the student’s educational needs by getting acquainted with the student, communicating with personnel involved in the student’s education and/or care, and observing the student at school;
- Acts as the student’s advocate for educational matters;
- Provides or withholds consent for assessment and services/placement;
- Attends educational meetings on the student’s behalf;
- Works with school staff to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for the student;
- Negotiates for appropriate services on behalf of the student;
- Abides by the laws of confidentiality when sharing information about the student;
- Requests complaint, mediation or due process procedures, if necessary;
- Reports services twice a year (also basis for reimbursement).

By volunteering as an educational surrogate parent, he/she becomes an important member of a team in determining and ensuring a child receives a free and appropriate public education. The educational surrogate parent must:

1. Complete the entire training (An educational surrogate parent application must be completed during the training.),
2. Pass the training exam, and
3. Complete and pass a background check.

Is there reimbursement for expenses?

An educational surrogate parent (ESP) is eligible to receive a flat fee ($50) stipend for expenses incurred while providing services. To be eligible for the stipend, the ESP must have provided at least one of the following services:

1. Observed the student at school
2. Met with personnel involved in the student's education
3. Met with personnel involved in the student's care
4. Attended meetings in person (virtually during Covid) to develop or review the student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP)

ESPs submit a form twice a year to request the stipend for each service provided to each student the ESP serves. An ESP can also choose to forego the stipend and volunteer their time.

See training options available on page 10.
Family Matters Provides Training for the Illinois State Board of Education’s Educational Surrogate Parent Program

If you are interested in serving as an educational surrogate parent for children in Illinois who need representation, or if you are already serving as an educational surrogate parent and need a refresher training, contact our office for more information. The required training on the special education process is six hours in length. Want to learn more about what Educational Surrogate Parents do? Read more in the article on page 9. Our office number is 866-436-7842

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<td>9am to 4pm</td>
<td>Achieving Independent Living (AIM-CIL)</td>
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<td>October 12, 2022</td>
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**Educational Surrogate Parent Virtual Training**

**November 10, 2022 from 9am to 4pm**

**Register now!**

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

**View System Requirements**

**Educational Surrogate Parent Virtual Training**

**March 1, 2023 from 9am to 4pm**

**Register now!**

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

**View System Requirements**
Speech is one of the most complex human movements. A person first has an idea and wants to communicate it. The brain must formulate the idea in the form of words, send that message to the mouth, tell the mouth what sounds to make, and send the correct signals to the muscles that control the tongue, lips, jaw and palate. The muscles in the face must have the strength and coordination to do what the brain is asking. The respiratory system must be able to orchestrate airflow, use abdominal muscles to drive the diaphragm and direct air with enough force so the vocal cords vibrate. The auditory system needs to hear correctly and monitor what comes out of the mouth. An interpersonal connection must be made to have a conversation.

Leslie Lindsay explains this process in her book *Speaking of Apraxia—A Parents’ Guide to Childhood Apraxia of Speech*, a neurologically based condition that is characterized by difficulties planning and producing intelligible speech. She notes that children with Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) have normal facial tone and musculature. Their reflexes are typically normal, yet they can’t coordinate their internal thoughts, shape them into verbal communication, and produce it in a manner all can understand. She explains that the problem with CAS occurs when the brain tries to tell the muscles what to do and the message gets scrambled somehow.

Throughout the book, Lindsay describes her emotions as the parent of a daughter with CAS. She shares her feelings about her daughter’s lack of speech, her emotions after the diagnosis, what it felt like to seek help, and how important it was to connect with other parents.

Lindsay walks parents through the components of a speech-language evaluation to determine the cause of speech delays. She includes observing how a child engages in play; evaluating how a child responds to vocalizations from others and whether they make eye contact and point; watching how a child gestures and uses toys; determining how a child attends to spoken language; looking to see if a child uses any verbalizations and how those sound; and listening for how a child imitates utterances.

She introduces parents to the theories and methods of speech therapy for kids with apraxia and what speech sessions will look like. She shares what it was like to hear her daughter say “mama” after repeating the word over and over while she was swinging during a therapy session. Her speech therapist had told her that motion activates the vestibular system which helps with coordination that might make her daughter Kate say more. This set Lindsay on a journey of continued discovery of best practices for CAS and the variety of interventions that can be provided in formal settings and at home. She explains the Early Intervention system of services for infants and toddlers and what services a child might be eligible for through the school district starting at age three. She notes how to understand and navigate these systems.

This book is a resource filled with real life experience, advice, and research for parents whose children experience speech difficulties. It is available in the Family Matters lending library.
ABLE Account Information from School Districts

Persons with disabilities rely on public benefits for health care and income. In some programs, individuals are limited to having $2,000 or less in assets. The Achieving a Better Life Experience Act (ABLE) is a federal law that establishes tax-advantaged savings programs so persons with disabilities can save money without losing public benefits.

Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, schools districts must provide informational material about the ABLE account program to parents of student’s with disabilities at the student’s annual individualized education program (IEP) meeting.

Public Act 102-0841 105 ILCS 5/14-8.02i

Want to help make a difference while you shop in the Amazon app, at no extra cost to you? Simply follow the instructions below to select "Family Matters Parent Training And Information Center" as your charity and activate AmazonSmile in the app. They’ll donate a portion of your eligible mobile app purchases to us.

How it works:
1. Open the Amazon app on your phone
2. Select the main menu tap on "AmazonSmile" within Programs Features
3. Select "Family Matters Parent Training And Information Center" as your charity
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to activate AmazonSmile in the mobile app

Donate to Family Matters each time you order from Amazon. Just shop at http://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-5808691. You will have access to the same merchandise and pricing as you do when shopping at amazon.com.

Family Matters’ Board of Directors

If you have an interest in serving as a Board member, please visit our website and complete an application.
http://www.fmptiic.org/sites/default/files/prospective%20board%20member%20questionnaire2.pdf

We welcome parents that fulfill demographic needs including geographical locations; parent representation of disability types; representation of age ranges, gender, and diversity; related professional interests; and volunteer experiences.

During the school year, our hours of operation at Family Matters are:
Wednesday and Thursday 8:00AM to 6:30PM
Monday, Tuesday, and Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM
The TIES Center and IRISCENTER have developed a self-paced module on supporting students with significant cognitive disabilities in the general education classroom.

The module explains:

- The core values and principles of inclusion
- Access to the general education curriculum
- Alternate achievement standards
- Educational goals, services and supports
- Incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and high-leverage practices to address instructional needs
- Use alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) to support students’ communication needs
- Collaborate with paraeducators and related service personnel

Speak Up and Speak Out Summit

My Choice, Our Voice!

Funded by the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

October 19-21, 2022

Hybrid Event

In-person event in Springfield plus virtual option

This is a 3 day conference of speakers that will show people with disabilities that they have a voice and they have choices in what they do with their life. Speak Up and Speak Out is committed to empowering persons with disabilities to reach their highest potential in education, employment and community living.

Session topics include:

Never Give Up! Using Your Passion to Change the World...One Person at a Time

Creating Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

It’s Our Time! Together We Can Take on Challenges the World Gives Us

Making Your Own Decisions

Supportive Housing

Your Vote Matters

Brochure and Registration
Questions:

1. When a youth reaches the age of 21 in Illinois, they legally become an adult and have the right to make their own decisions. **True or False?**

2. According to the IDEA, at least one year before a student reaches the age of 18, the school district must inform the parent(s) and student of the rights under federal and state regulations that will transfer from the parent to the student upon turning 18. **True or False?**

3. Unless other arrangements have been made by the family (e.g., guardianship), the student has the right to make the final decisions about their educational services, upon reaching the age of majority. **True or False?**

4. The school code (105 ILCS 5/14-6.10) allows a student to retain independent legal status while delegating their right to make educational decisions **True or False?**

Answers:

1. **False** When a young adult reaches the age of 18 in Illinois they legally become an adult and have the right to make their own decisions.

2. **True.** On or before your child’s 17th birthday, the IEP must include a statement that you and your child were informed that these rights will transfer at the 18th birthday. Additionally, at this meeting, you will receive a Delegation of Rights to Make Educational Decisions form. Your child may decide to use this form to delegate you or another individual to represent their educational interests upon their reaching the age of majority. This completed form must be maintained by the district in the student’s records.

3. **True.** Unless parents obtain certain types of guardianship, the student will sign their own educational documents upon the age of majority. If a student chooses to sign the Delegation of Rights form, the parent will be able to continue to represent the student’s educational interests upon that student reaching the age of majority.

4. **True.** The school code (105 ILCS 5/14-6.10) allows a student to retain independent legal status while delegating his or her right to make educational decisions. According to this requirement, a student who has reached the age of 18 can choose to sign a Delegation of Rights to choose a parent or another adult to represent their and assist in making decisions about his or her education. This delegation applies only to educational decisions and can be ended by the student at any time. The school district must provide a copy of the Delegation of Rights to the parent and student during the IEP meeting during the year that the student turns 17.

You can find a sample delegation of rights form on the ISBE website at [https://www.isbe.net/Documents/nc_deleg_34-57k.pdf](https://www.isbe.net/Documents/nc_deleg_34-57k.pdf).

**Equip for Equality Resource:**

What is the Delegation of Rights to Make Educational Decisions and do I need one?
[https://www.equipforequality.org/single-faq/delegation-rights-make-educational-decisions-need-one/](https://www.equipforequality.org/single-faq/delegation-rights-make-educational-decisions-need-one/)
Join us on the first Tuesday of every month for a parent-to-parent lunch chat.

You can enjoy a small lunch-time chat hosted by Family Matters staff, Karrie Potter and Abbi Mars on the first Tuesday of every month on the Family Matters’ Facebook page at 12:30 pm. Each month we will discuss a different special education or disability related topic. We welcome suggestions for upcoming session topics. Parents are encouraged to actively participate and provide input and feedback during the Facebook Live event.

https://www.facebook.com/FamilyMattersPTIC/

Family Matters is offering a virtual social skills group for young adults who are 14 through 22 years of age. This virtual group will be held via Zoom on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Upcoming sessions and topics are as follows:

- **October 20, 2022** - Things That Make Me Worry
- **November 17, 2022** - Things That Make Me Angry
- **December 15, 2022** - Shades of Anger
- **January 19, 2023** - Where Do I Feel These Feelings?

**Power in Friendship Toolkit**

The National Inclusion Project offers a Power in Friendship Toolkit. The toolkit seeks to help parents, including parents of children with disabilities, get the tools they need to help friendships bloom.

Planting the seeds of friendship can include these steps:

- Check Your Own Attitude
- Be Real with Your Fears
- Plan Play with Purpose
- Give It Extra Time
- Be Open to Questions and Comments
- Be Forgiving with Yourself, the Children and the Parents
- Let Kids Be Kids

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER**

**CONTACT OUR OFFICE:**

Phone: 1-866-436-7842 or Email: info@fmptic.org
Transition Services Under IDEA

By: Megan Best

While all Individualized Education Program (IEP) team members recognize the importance and value of post-secondary transition goals for youth 14.5 years of age and older, there is another key component to the transition plan: the coordinated set of activities. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004), Section 300.43(a), the coordinated set of activities are defined as, “transition services designed to be a results-oriented process, focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities in employment, post-secondary education and/or training, and independent living.”

The coordinated set of activities encompass five transition services: (a) Instruction, (b) Related Services, (c) Community Experiences, (d) Development of Employment and Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives, and (e) If Appropriate, Acquisition of Daily Living Skills and Provision of a Functional Vocational Evaluation. These are activities your child will engage with at least once throughout the IEP year or as designated. Let’s take a peek at some different activities you might request or find in your child’s coordinated set of activities! You can find many more HERE!

1. **Instruction**: Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) that supports your child in meeting their future goals. Youth will...
   a. Practice self-disclosing their disability
   b. Learn how to share their opinion and participate in a voting experience
   c. Practice time management when working on ___ skill

2. **Related Services**: Services such as Speech, Community Agencies, Transportation, and many others implemented to support your child in post-secondary goals. Youth will...
   a. Any linkages to adult agencies or providers
   b. Apply for eligibility with state transportation system
   c. Identify potential post school providers of related services and funding sources

3. **Community Experiences**: Strategy or instructional method that promotes teaching and use of academic and functional skills in a natural environment, such as a store, recreation activity, vocational and/or travel experience. Youth will...
   a. Purchase a stamp and send a letter at the local post-office
   b. Travel (with staff supervision) to community location using the local bus system
   c. Understand relevant community signs (Restroom, Do Not Enter, Danger)

4. **Employment and Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives**: Activities or strategies listed to support development of work-related behaviors. Youth will...
   a. Shadow a local bakery employee
   b. Research specific industries and develop target list of potential employers
   c. Engage in mock interviews

5. **If Appropriate, Acquisition of Daily Living Skills and Provision of a Functional Vocational Evaluation**: Activities that adults might do every day and/or an assessment to provide information on career interests and skills. Youth will...
   a. Listen to daily weather to create plans for a day or the week
   b. Complete a functional vocational evaluation
Illinois Statewide Transition Conference  
November 3-4, 2022  
Hybrid Event  
In-Person event in East Peoria plus virtual option

This is a conference for transition-aged youth and young adults with disabilities, their family members and teachers, vocational professionals, caregivers, health care professionals, college students pursuing careers in special education, resident physicians, and community advocates.

Conference sessions are organized into 4 tracks:
Education, Health Care, Community, and Employment

Registration

Illinois Report Card

The Illinois Report Card, released annually by the Illinois State Board of Education, offers a snapshot of school performance in order to inform and empower educators, families, and communities as they support their students. The report card will include:

- **Equity Journey Continuum**: A tool for districts to track progress toward closing gaps in student achievement, opportunities, and supports. Learn more at [www.isbe.net/equity](http://www.isbe.net/equity).

- **Annual Summative Designation**: Each school will receive a designation of Exemplary, Commendable, Targeted Support, or Comprehensive Support based on multiple measures of school performance. Learn more at [www.isbe.net/summative](http://www.isbe.net/summative).

- **Career and Technical Education (CTE)**
  - **Perkins V Measures**: Includes graduation rates, academic proficiency rate in reading/language arts, academic proficiency rate in math, academic proficiency rate in science, postsecondary placement rate, nontraditional program enrollment rate, program quality – attained postsecondary credits rate, and program quality – work-based learning rate. Learn more at [www.isbe.net/perkins](http://www.isbe.net/perkins).
  - **CTE Participant**: A grade 9 to 12 student who has enrolled in at least one Career and Technical Education (CTE) course during the school year and has a course outcome of Pass, Fail, or Incomplete.
  - **CTE Concentrator**: A program concentrator in at least one Classification of Instructional Program in the CTE cluster during the student’s high school career.
Assessment:

- **Students Not Tested (No Participation Rate):** The number of students who did not receive participation credit for the state assessment divided by the number of students who were required to participate.
- **Proficiency Rate Accountability:** Calculated using the 95% Participation Rate denominator, using the various levels of performance for each test and subject area.

Teachers:

- **National Board Certified Teachers:** Teachers who have achieved National Board Certification.
- **Teachers with Gifted Endorsement:** The total headcount of teachers who hold a gifted education endorsement.


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Transition Series for Those with Complex Support Needs

Presented by Megan Best

Wednesday, October 12, 2022 Student Involvement in IEPs

Registration for 12:00-1:00 PM OR Registration for 6:30-7:30 PM

All students with disabilities should have an active and meaningful role in their IEP development, including those with significant support needs. This session will focus on ways to increase student participation and leadership during IEP meetings, as well as strategies to increase student voice in decisions related to transition services.

Wednesday, November 9, 2022 Transition Assessments

Registration for 12:00-1:00 PM OR Registration for 6:30-7:30 PM

One key component of transition planning for youth with disabilities is providing access to meaningful and appropriate transition assessments. This session will provide examples of transition assessments for youth with significant support needs and strategies to implement them.

Wednesday, January 11, 2023 Instructional Practices to Support Implementation of the IEP

Registration for 12:00-1:00 PM OR Registration for 6:30-7:30 PM

Under IDEA, all students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum in their least restrictive environment. For students with significant support needs working on both academic and functional skills, what does this look like? This session will provide an overview of planning for instruction that is aligned to both academic and transition goals, progress monitoring, and fostering opportunities for inclusion.

Wednesday, February 8, 2023 Post-Secondary Outcomes for Youth: Real Stories

Registration for 12:00-1:00 PM OR Registration for 6:30-7:30 PM

What goals and dreams does your child or student have for the future? Do you feel unsure or curious about the opportunities available? This session will focus on real stories of youth and adults with significant support needs pursuing fulfilling opportunities across employment, post-secondary education, training, and independent living.

Wednesday, March 8, 2023 Supported Decision Making

Registration for 12:00-1:00 PM OR Registration for 6:30-7:30 PM

There are many important decisions to make alongside youth with disabilities as they become adults. In this session, we will explore Supported Decision Making (SDM). We will define what SDM is, how it compares to Guardianship, and what tools and resources are available to your child and family or your students and their families as they transition to adulthood.

Megan received a Bachelors in Special Education from Michigan State, as well as an Ed.M. in Special Education with a specialty focus in Autism Spectrum Disorder. She has worked in the field for the last 10 years to instruct students with moderate to significant support needs. She has experience as a high school special education teacher, a Special Education Administrator, an adjunct professor at DePaul University, and as a Diverse Learner Specialist. Megan is currently in the second year of her PhD pro-gram at the U of I Urbana-Champaign and serves as a Research Assistant at the U of I Chicago adapting a mental health intervention for transition-age youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
Assistive Technology Webinars offered at no cost by Infinitec

https://www.at4il.org/infinitec-provides-four-free-statewide-assistive-technology-training-options/free-at-webinars/

AT for Math and Early Learning 10-07-22 12:00-1:00
Making Reading and Writing Solutions 10-12-22 3:30-5:00
Assistive Technology for Anxiety 10-17-22 3:30-4:30
Foundations for Reading and Writing from Science Applied to Students with Complex Learning Needs 10-26-22 3:30-4:30
Making Communication Supports 10-31-22 3:30-5:00
AT for Math for Elementary and Middle School Students 11-04-22 12:00-1:00
Tips for Increasing Family Involvement & Supporting Follow Through with AAC at Home 11-14-22 3:30-4:30
Making AT to Maximize Independence at Home and Work 11-30-22 3:30-5:00
Making Solutions for Sensory, Relaxation, and Self-Regulation 12-06-22 3:30-5:00
AT for Math for High School Students 12-09-22 12:00-1:00
Universal Design for Learning is Where It’s AT: Making Inclusion Work with Related Service Providers 12-12-22 3:30-4:30
Practical Applications with Goals and Progress Monitoring 12-14-22 3:30-4:30

Taking Care of Family Caregivers

Supporting family members with developmental disabilities can take a toll. Multiple government agencies have worked together to address the needs of caregivers by putting forth an action plan that will take place over the next three years. The goals of the plan are to increase awareness and outreach, build partnerships and engage with family caregivers, strengthen services and supports, ensure financial and workplace security and enhance data, research and evidence-based practices.

If you are a caregiver and in need of supports like flexible and accessible respite care, you have an opportunity to tell your story and express your needs so that the people who are making policies and appropriating funds are aware of what would help you the most.

Starting October 1, 2022, public comment will be open for 60 days.

Public Comment
**Supported Decision Making for Health Care**

The National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making offers information on using supported decision making in health care and medical treatment decisions. With a supported decision approach, persons with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities, can make decisions for themselves and remain independent. In health care decisions, a supporter can help the person understand complex medical language, information about medications, and options related to medical procedures.

**Supported Decision Making in Health Care & Medical Treatment Decisions (8 minute video)**

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**Join Us in Peoria to Influence Change**

IDEA is the federal law that governs special education. This law is reauthorized periodically and parents and youth can influence change in that law. Are there rules about evaluations, individualized education programs (IEPs), transition services, placement decisions or other topics that you feel need to be addressed? You are welcome to participate in a focus group held in Peoria on changing special education policy. Once you complete the consent and pre-survey form, you will be assigned to attend a session on either **October 8, 2022** or **April 15, 2023** and will receive an email confirming the arrangements. You will receive a $25 gift card for completing a survey at the end of the in-person training, and then another $25 gift card for completing a survey six months later. Youth and young adults **ages 14-26** may also participate and get the same gift cards.

Complete the consent forms for participating by **October 5, 2022**. The trainings will be held at 2400 W. Northmoor Rd., Peoria, IL 61614.

**Parent Consent to Participate and Pre-Survey**

**Youth Consent to Participate and Pre-Survey**
Inclusive Education Series for Families

Topics & Dates

Understanding Inclusion
October 20, 2022
6:30pm-7:30pm
Registration

Building Relationships
November 10, 2022
6:30pm-7:30pm
Registration

LRE & Inclusive Practices
January 19, 2023
Registration

Benefits of Inclusion
February 16, 2023
Registration

Inclusive Settings & Goal Writing
March 16, 2023
6:30pm - 7:30pm
Registration

Implementing Inclusion & Next Steps
April 20, 2023
6:30pm - 7:30pm
Registration

Who: Families of young children with disabilities or developmental delays

What: This series includes topics that explore key ideas about inclusion in early childhood education for children ages birth to five. Topics range from defining inclusion to understanding the benefits of inclusion.

How: Each session will include a topic guide, a guest speaker, and resources for attendees to reflect and apply what has been learned so the experience can be personalized.

Where: All sessions will be held virtual on Zoom.

When: Six dates, each session 6:30pm - 7:30pm. Register for each date individually.

Whether you attend all or a few, this series will support you on your journey of inclusion and provide resources to support your child.

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