



WHAT IS STEP?

Support and Training for Exceptional Parents, Inc. (STEP) is a statewide program in Tennessee, established in 1989 by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of STEP is to support families by providing free information, training, and support services to parents of children eligible to receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). STEP houses the Parent Training Information Center (PTI) and operates a number of grants and initiatives to meet our mission.

WHOM DOES STEP SERVE?

STEP services are available FREE to any parent or family member of a child or youth, birth through age 26, with a disability that has or may need special education services under the I.D.E.A. Our training and information, is made possible through grants from the U.S. Department of Education, the TN Department of Education, donations, foundations, other grants and the generous contributions of volunteers. STEP provides in-service training and professional development to school systems, community agencies, and disability organizations. Depending on the funding source, there may be a fee for professional development services. Training events hosted by schools where families are invited are always FREE. STEP also provides referral services to disability organizations, support groups, and community agencies.

WHAT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?

STEP services are designed to help parents, family members, and youth become knowledgeable and effective participants in planning special education programs and how to use the information effectively. Training is provided through:

- Workshops on topics related to special education, equal access to education, and effective communication
- Videos, webinars and a website full of resources
 - *How to communicate effectively at meetings.*
 - *How to prepare for life after high school.*
 - *How to develop an education plan that addresses social skills, behavior, academics and classroom settings.*
 - *How to become more involved in your child's education and ensure your child has equal access to educational services.*
 - *How to prepare for entry into the school system and transitions from grade to grade.*
 - *How to request evaluations and services.*
 - *How to discuss the need for related services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy or transportation.*

STEP offers support services designed to help families and youth build skills to become effective participants in meetings where decisions are being made related to special education and access to an appropriate education. Our services are “customized” to align with the needs of the parent or youth we are serving.

WHO PROVIDES SERVICES?

- Karen Harrison.....Executive Director & Project Director
- Donna Jennings.....Business & Personnel Manager
- Lisa GosnellData, Research & Information Coordinator
- Beth SmithDirector of East TN Services
- Patricia Valladares.....Director of Middle TN Services & Multicultural Liaison
- Shuntea Price.....Director of Urban & West TN Services
- Joey EllisFamily and Youth Educator & Mentor, Post Secondary Transition Specialist
- Dorca Rose.....East TN Bilingual Community Outreach and Education Specialist
- Ned Andrew Solomon.....Communications Support
- Stephanie Willis.....Director of Content & Branding

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Parent Information Line (Toll free in TN):

(800) 280-STEP (English)
(800) 975-2919 (Español)
Fax: (423) 636-8217
TDD/TTY/Text: (423) 639-8802

E-mail: information@tnstep.org
Website: www.tnstep.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/tnstep
YouTube: www.youtube.com/TNStep
Twitter: @tnSTEP twitter.com/tnstep
Instagram: @stepntn www.instagram.com/tnstep

Main Office:

1113 Tusculum Blvd., #393, Greeneville, TN 37745 (*mailing address*)
113 Austin Street, Greeneville, TN 37745 (*physical address*)

STEP's vision is to ensure a brighter future for children and youth in Tennessee, with an emphasis on those with disabilities, special health care needs, and mental health needs.

Examples of Parent Workshops

Communication and Conflict Resolution

Basic Rights Training on IDEA: Parent's Introduction to Special Education

Parents as Collaborative Leaders

Understanding & Using Evaluations

RTI²: What Parents Need to Know

Literacy is for ALL and Literacy in the IEP

Next STEP: IEP Planning

Inclusion & Least Restrictive Environment

Early Childhood Transition

Transition to Adulthood: (for students, parents & teachers)

Understanding Section 504

Spanish Workshops and Multicultural Conferences



Examples of Services to School System Personnel

Identification of emerging issues & planning solutions

Transition Institutes: Preparing for life after High School

Facilitation at IEP meetings

Partner on school events and inform families of events

Parent Involvement and Engagement

Distribute Surveys to Families

Age Appropriate Transition Assessments

Train the Trainer: RTI What Parent's Need to Know

Literacy: Strategies for students with disabilities

Building Effective Communication with Parents

Training Families on Impact of Common Core State Standards

NOTE: Workshops or trainings where families are invited are FREE.

RTI & Literacy Trainings are FREE. Other in-service trainings may require a fee.

Collaborating with Systems and Agencies to Improve Results:

Increase Parent Participation

Improve Transition Outcomes for Students

Ensure smooth transition from Early Intervention Programs

Promote Effective Communication

Reduce Special Education Referrals

Advance RTI Initiatives and Reading/Math Improvement

Identify and Resolve Areas of Non-Compliance

Stretch Resources through Partnerships



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