

Resources about advocacy, evaluations and services for children with special needs

Advocacy organizations

- Advocates for Children of New York provide free legal and advocacy services to families with children with disabilities. <https://www.advocatesforchildren.org/>
- ADAPT Community Network provides education, health, technology, residential and recreational services to individuals with neurodisabilities. <https://adaptcommunitynetwork.org/>
- AHRC New York City is an organization serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in New York City. <https://www.ahrcnyc.org/>
- Autism Speaks provides advocacy, resources, and services for individuals with autism and their families. <https://www.autismspeaks.org/resource-guide>
- IncludeNYC provides resources to enhance quality of life for those with disabilities and their families. <https://includenyc.org>
- Sinergia provides advocacy, support, workshops and services to culturally and linguistically diverse individuals with developmental disabilities in New York City. <https://www.sinergiany.org/>
- Parent to Parent NYS empowers families who care for those with developmental disabilities to navigate the systems of care. <https://www.parenttoparentnys.org/>
- YAI offers a comprehensive range of services to children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. <https://www.yai.org/>

Legal Assistance Groups

- The Legal Aid society defends the rights of New Yorkers who need legal support. They help people with disabilities obtain and maintain the benefits to which they are entitled. <https://legalaidsnyc.org>
- The New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) offers comprehensive free civil legal services to individuals and families who are in crisis or face legal challenges. They help parents of children with disabilities who need guidance navigating the legal complexities of the special education system. <https://nylag.org>

Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

- The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) is a state agency that provides services to people of all ages with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Many children with IEP classifications of Intellectual Disability (ID), Multiple Disabilities (MD), or Autism qualify for OPWDD services. <https://opwdd.ny.gov>
- The Front Door is the way OPWDD connects families to services. The first step is to attend an informational session to learn about available supports. <https://opwdd.ny.gov/get-started/information-sessions>

Early Intervention

- The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) manages services for children with special needs from birth to 3 years of age. Parents and practitioners who are concerned about their child's or patient's development can use the Early Intervention Program referral form to refer this child to the Early Intervention Program. <https://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-5775.pdf>
- Early Intervention Action Kit provides tools for clinicians, child care providers and offers educational materials about the Early Intervention Program in New York City. <https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/resources/public-health-action-kits-early-intervention.page>

- The parent basic guide to the Early Intervention Program explains the steps from the initial referral to the transition to preschool.

<https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/0532/>

- New York State Early Intervention Program website offers information about early intervention services for children with special needs from birth to 3 years of age.

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/early-intervention.page>

- An impartial hearing is a way to settle disagreements with the Early Intervention Official about the child's services as stated on the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).

https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/0532/your_rights_as_a_parent.htm#:~:text=An%20impartial%20hearing%20is%20another,for%20services%20by%20an%20evaluator

Preschool and School-Based Services for Children with Special Needs

- The Department of Education (DOE) Committee for Preschool Special Education (CPSE) manages the services for children from 3 to 5 years of age who have special needs.

- The Early Intervention to Preschool transition guide provides information about the transition from the Early Intervention Program to preschool for children with special needs.

<https://infohub.nyced.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/doe-guide-to-the-ei-to-preschool-transition---second-edition.pdf>

- Moving to Kindergarten information on the NYCDOE website explains the turning 5 process and services in place to support children with special needs in the public school system in New York City.

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/preschool-to-age-21/moving-to-kindergarten>

- NYC DOE Specialized program link provides information about specialized programs and school settings for children with special needs.

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/school-settings/specialized-programs>

- ASD NEST Support Project website provides a list of schools in NYC with NEST programs that integrate children with Autism with typically developing peers.

<https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/asdnest/nyc-public-schools-asd-nest-program>

- NYC DOE District 75 website provides information about specialized instructional support for students with significant challenges.

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/school-settings/district-75>

- NYSED Special Education website offers information about private and state funded preschools and schools for children with disabilities.

<https://www.nysed.gov/special-education/approved-private-special-act-state-operated-and-state-supported-schools-new-york>

- An impartial hearing is a legal proceeding held under the special education laws that can be requested by a parent whenever a parent disagrees with any aspect of a child's evaluation, Individualized Education Program (IEP), school or special education and related services. Parents can fill out the impartial hearing request form and submit to the address written on the form.

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/impartial-hearing-request-english.pdf>

- InsideSchools is an organization that provides independent reviews of NYC schools based on visits and school data and offers resources available to children.

<https://insideschools.org>

Note: If any of the links do not open for you at a later time and you cannot find the information by searching under the name of the organization, email us at Lendparents@gmail.com for an updated link.