

Resource Guide for Families of Children with Special Needs/Disabilities

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Advocacy organizations

Advocates for Children of New York is an educational advocacy organization that works to protect every child's right to appropriate education.

<https://www.advocatesforchildren.org/>

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/>

Brooklyn Center for the independence of the disabled is dedicated to improve the quality of life of Brooklyn residents with disabilities.

<https://www.bcid.org/>

Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC) is a nonprofit organization that supports children and adults with autism and their families in achieving greater independence.

<https://www.qsac.com/>

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://legalaidnyc.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>

Early Intervention

Early Help Matters brochure explains the importance of early intervention services for children under the age of 3.

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/earlyint/early-help-matters-brochure.pdf>

Early Intervention Program referral form for parents who are concerned about their child's development.

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/earlyint/ei-referral-form.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 Early Intervention Guide explains the steps in the Early Intervention Program from the initial referral to 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>

Special Education/School Services/ Vocational Programs & Alternative High School Resources

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>

InsideSchools offers quality reviews of public schools in NYC and additional resources for families on how to understand their child's rights and to navigate the educational system.

<https://insideschools.org/>

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>

NYC DOE NEST Program for Children with Autism

<https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/asdnest/new-york-city>

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>

NYC DOE District 79 website provides information about alternative schools and centers for students with special needs to further support them in earning a high school diploma and building skills to help succeed in college and career.

<https://infohub.nyced.org/in-our-schools/programs/district-79>

Generation NYC - Youth with Disabilities offers resources for high school and college students with disabilities.

<https://growingupnyc.cityofnewyork.us/generationnyc/topics/youth-with-disabilities/>

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

<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/appschools.html>

ADAPT Community Networks provides free evaluation, selection, and instruction about assistive technology customized to each individual's unique needs to enhance their communication and independence.

<https://adaptcommunitynetwork.org/service-options/technology/>

PASSNYC is an organization dedicated to broadening educational opportunities for NYC talented underserved students and preparing them for specialized high school admission tests.

<http://www.passnyc.org/our-partners>

NICHE website helps search for special education schools in NYC.

<https://www.niche.com/k12/search/schools-with-special-ed-program/m/new-york-city-metro-area/>

Think College provides resources, technical assistance and training about college options for students with intellectual disability.

https://thinkcollege.net/college-search?f%5B0%5D=tc_state_province%3ANew%20York

<https://thinkcollege.net/>

City University of New York (CUNY) Disability and Accessibility Services provides support and guidance about services available on campus for students with disabilities.

<https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/student-services/disability/>

AHRC College Programs offer higher education programs for people with intellectual disabilities over the age 21 at the college listed for their borough.

<https://www.ahrcnyc.org/services/school/college/>

Summer Camps

DOE NYC Summer rising is the city's free summer program for students in K-8th grade, including those with disabilities.

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/summer/grades-k-8>

Gezoont Inclusive Directory can help search for camp programs for students with disabilities.

https://www.gezoont.com/search_results?sid=13

Hebrew Educational Society (HES) Summer Camp offers summer camps with specialized support.

<https://www.thehes.org/summer-camp/>

Mommy Poppins provides information about specialized summer camps for children with disabilities.

<https://mommypoppins.com/newyorkcitykids/nyc-summer-camps-autism-special-needs-aspergers-adhd-sensory>

New York Family provides information about children with special needs.

<https://www.newyorkfamily.com/camps-for-kids-with-special-needs/>

Very Special Camps is a directory of summer camps and programs for individuals with special needs.

<https://www.veryspecialcamps.com/>

American Camp Association of NY and Nj is an organization dedicated to preserving, promoting, and enhancing the quality of the summer camp experience.

<https://www.acanynj.org/>

The Atlas Foundation for Autism, ADHD and Learning differences offers summer camps, after school programs, adult classes and respite for young adults, adults and families with developmental disabilities.

<http://www.atlasforautism.org/what-we-do/camp.php>

Culture, Leisure & Recreation

Subway Sleuths New York Transit Museum offers a 10-week afterschool program, for students with autism.

<https://www.nytransitmuseum.org/learn/subwaysleuths/>

New York City Ballet Access Program offers visitors with different abilities the opportunity to experience the art of ballet.

<https://www.nycballet.com/educate/access-programs>

Children Museum of the Art Access program offers free weekend art classes for children with autism and their families.

<https://cmany.org/schools-and-community/access-programs/>

Lincoln Center offers accessibility for audiences with autism and other developmental disabilities.

<https://www.lincolncenter.org/series/accessibility-at-lincoln-center>

MoMA Accessibility Program offers workshops about creating arts for individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families.

<https://www.moma.org/visit/accessibility/>

Whitney Museum of American Art welcomes disabled and non-disabled visitors to experience the richness of American art.

<https://whitney.org/education/access>

Intrepid Museum Access Program offers monthly programs for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

<https://www.intrepidmuseum.org/education/access-family-programs>

New York Hall of Science Accessibility Program offers unique STEM learning opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities.

<https://nysci.org/autism-access-initiative>

Mental Health Resources

NYC Well offers free confidential counseling, mental health support and referrals.

<https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/>

This guide provides information about fee or low-cost mental health services to asylum seekers and other vulnerable persons in the NYC area.

<https://humanrights.weill.cornell.edu/resources/mental-health-resources-nyc>

Child Mind Institute is a non-profit organization offering mental health services to children.

<https://childmind.org/>

National Alliance on Mental Health is a mental health organization offering mental health resources.

<https://nami.org/Home>

On Our Sleeves provides mental health resources for children.

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/>

New York Psychotherapy and Counseling Center is a non-profit community mental health organization offering mental health services to their communities.

<https://nypcc.org/>

Mount Sinai Child Behavior Health and Science Center offers mental health services for children and their families.

<https://www.mountsinai.org/locations/child-behavioral-health-center>

Weill Cornell Medicine psychiatrists provide behavioral healthcare services for individuals, couples and families.

<https://weillcornell.org/services/psychiatry>

Columbia Behavioral Medicine Program provide persons of all ages with treatments related to their behavioral and mental health:

<https://www.columbiadoctors.org/specialties/psychiatry-psychology/our-services/behavioral-medicine>

Financial Assistance Resources & Family Reimbursement Programs

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a monthly subsidy from the government to help provide the needs of children with disabilities.

<https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/>

The ABLE Account is a tax-advantaged savings account for individuals with disabilities and their families.

<https://www.ablenrc.org/what-is-able/what-are-able-accounts/>

Adapt Community Network provides financial support to eligible individuals with disabilities and their families.

<https://adaptcommunitynetwork.org/service-options/family-support/family-reimbursement/>

Manhattan DD Council provides reimbursement for the cost of goods or services that are not covered by current programs, entitlements, or insurance. You must apply to an agency

<https://www.manhattanddcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/Directory-Reimbursement-Programs.pdf>

Transportation Resources

Transportation with bussing

Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Access-A-Ride Paratransit Program is a Door to door special needs transportation for the same price of a subway swipe.

<https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit>

The MTA Reduced Fare program for people with disabilities allows eligible customers to pay half the transportation fare.

<https://new.mta.info/sites/default/files/2018-07/disabled.pdf>

NYC DOE School bus provides door to door transportation to Students with Disabilities (SWD).

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/transportation/bus-eligibility>

Medicaid waiver programs (OPWDD)

Coordinating services and supports for New Yorkers with varying disabilities. Parent's income might be waived to give Medicaid funded services to children with various disabilities.

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities is responsible for coordinating services for New Yorkers with disabilities.

<https://opwdd.ny.gov/contact-us>

Front Door Office for People with Developmental Disabilities is how to access services offered by OPWDD.

<https://opwdd.ny.gov/get-started/front-door>

New York 1115 Medicaid Waiver Information Page

https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/medicaid_waiver_1115.htm

Pull-ups and Diapers can be obtained from Medicaid for people with disabilities. Get a script/prescription from a doctor, reach out to a supplier. They will provide a form that the practitioner needs to fill out. The supplier will deliver items to your door.

https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/pharmacy_notices/diapers_liners_incontinence.htm

<https://www.activstyle.com/resources/incontinence-supplies-covered-new-york-medicaid/>

Family Resource Guide

Useful program guide for families to access

Autism Speaks has a database with services and programs for children on the spectrum.

<https://www.autismspeaks.org>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention database offers materials & resources for families & individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/links.html>

Special Education family resources is the NYC Public School information page with events, workshops, & resources for families of children with IEPs.

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/family-resources>

Brooklyn Family Support Guide 2021 is a directory for families of people with Developmental Disabilities.

[BROOKLYN FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES GUIDE 2021-2022](#)

Afterschool Programs & Tutoring Resources

Most programs that provide students with opportunities to learn new skills and explore their interests are free of charge.

Drama of Works Puppet Club is a meeting place for young people who love puppets and who are neuro-diverse.

<https://www.dramaofworks.com/puppetclub>

Tech Kids Unlimited teaches technology to students who learn differently (ASD students).

<https://www.techkidsunlimited.org/>

Dani-mation is an autism positive animation 1:1 class and creative workshop.

<https://danimationentertainment.com/>

Brooklyn Game Lab is a place for fun indoor and outdoor programs.

<https://brooklyngamelab.com/>

Extreme Kids and Crew is a welcoming space where young neurodivergent people, their friends, and families socialize, create, and play.

<https://www.extremekidsandcrew.org/>

KEEN (Kids Enjoy Exercise Now) New York is an organization that provides free programs of recreation and fitness for children with disabilities.

<https://www.keennewyork.org/>

Music for Autism is raising public awareness and enhancing quality of life using music by providing free, autism-friendly, interactive concerts developed specifically for individuals with autism and their families.

<https://www.musicforautism.org/>

Daniel's Music Foundation is a non-profit organization established to empower individuals with developmental and physical disabilities through music.

<https://www.danielsmusic.org/>

Brooklyn Conservatory of Music therapy is an industry that aims to transform lives and build community through the expressive, educational and therapeutic powers of music.

<https://bkcm.org/musictherapy/>

The Art for Autism is an international non-profit that promotes and displays the creative abilities of people on the autism spectrum and others who are neurodivergent.

<https://the-art-of-autism.com>

ProjectArt NYC is an organization that partners with the public libraries to offer spaces where youths engage in enriching after-school visual art class.

<https://www.projectart.org/nyc>

CULIKID is a non-profit dedicated to developing healthy culinary programs for neurodivergent individuals.

<https://www.culikid.org/>

NY City Parks Citywide Adaptive Hubs and Accessibility Programs is designed to provide people with disabilities the opportunity to get active and enjoy it's facilities.

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/accessibility/accessibility-programs>

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/accessibility/accessible-hubs>

Gigi's Playhouse is a playhouse model that aims to change lives through the consistent delivery of free educational, therapeutic-based, and career development programs for individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and the community.

<https://gigisplayhouse.org/>

The Learning Lab Hunter College Learning Lab (HCLL) provides tutoring by graduate students for children and adolescents with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) twice per week throughout the school year in reading, writing, and math.

<https://education.hunter.cuny.edu/about/centers-and-initiatives/the-learning-lab/>

The Reading Room assists and supports students with reading challenges.

<https://www.theonlinereadingspecialist.com/>

Edumate NYC offers free, one-on-one tutoring for children in New York.

<https://www.edumatenyc.org/home>

UPchieve is a free, online tutoring and college counseling program.

<https://upchieve.org/>

Inclusive Services (Brooklyn Public Library) BPL is the library's unique inclusive programs for children and teens with and without disabilities.

<https://www.bklynlibrary.org/inclusive-services>

GallopNYC is a therapeutic horseback riding program.

<https://gallopnyc.org/>

Seaside 4 Therapeutic Riding is a horseback riding program for children with disabilities.

<http://www.s4tr.org/about.html>

CO/LAB Theater Group is a non-profit that offers individuals with developmental disabilities a creative and social outlet through theater arts.

<https://www.colabtheatergroup.com/>

Queens Theater for All program is a community for disabled actors.

<https://queenstheatre.org/programs/theatre-for-all/>

Brooklyn Judo Academy is an academy that works with children with special needs to develop their natural athletic abilities.

<https://www.brooklynjudoacademy.com/>

Adaptive Climbing Group a group creating accessible, affordable, and transformational climbing opportunities for people with disabilities.

<https://www.adaptiveclimbinggroup.org/new-york-city>

Tennis Center Special Aces offers group instruction for children with special needs.

<https://www.prospectpark.org/visit-the-park/places-to-go/tennis-center/special-aces/>

Super Soccer Stars is teaching soccer skills to all ages in a fun, non-competitive, educational environment.

<https://soccerstars.com/>

Brooklyn AYSO Youth Soccer a soccer club where players hone their skills and play games.

<https://www.brooklynayso.org/camps-and-clinics>

Enter Laughing (Social Skills group) is using improvisational play for social/emotional and executive functioning skills development.

<https://enterlaughing.com/>

Uniqkids is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing integrated programming to the special needs community and their families.

<https://uniqkid.org/>

Asperger/Autism Network (AANE) provides individuals, families, and professionals with information, education, community, support, and advocacy.

<https://www.aane.org/>

Teaching Brooklyn is helping students develop communication and social skills through mindfully planned and appropriate activities.

<https://www.teachingbrooklyn.com/groups>

New Alternatives for Children (NAC) is a non-profit providing comprehensive, exceptional care and social services for children with disabilities and their family.

<https://nackidscan.org/>

Block Institute is a non-profit agency dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families.

<https://blockinstitute.org/>

Heartshare Human Services of New York nurtures and empowers individuals with all forms of disabilities and supports their families.

<https://www.heartshare.org/>

Kings Bay Y works with children with special needs.

<https://www.kingsbayy.org/>

Imagine Swimming NYC is offering unique swimming lessons to all individuals.

<https://www.imagineswimming.com/>

Take Me to The Water Swim School offers swimming lessons for all ages and abilities.

<https://takemetothewater.com/>

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 Lendparents@gmail.com for an updated link.