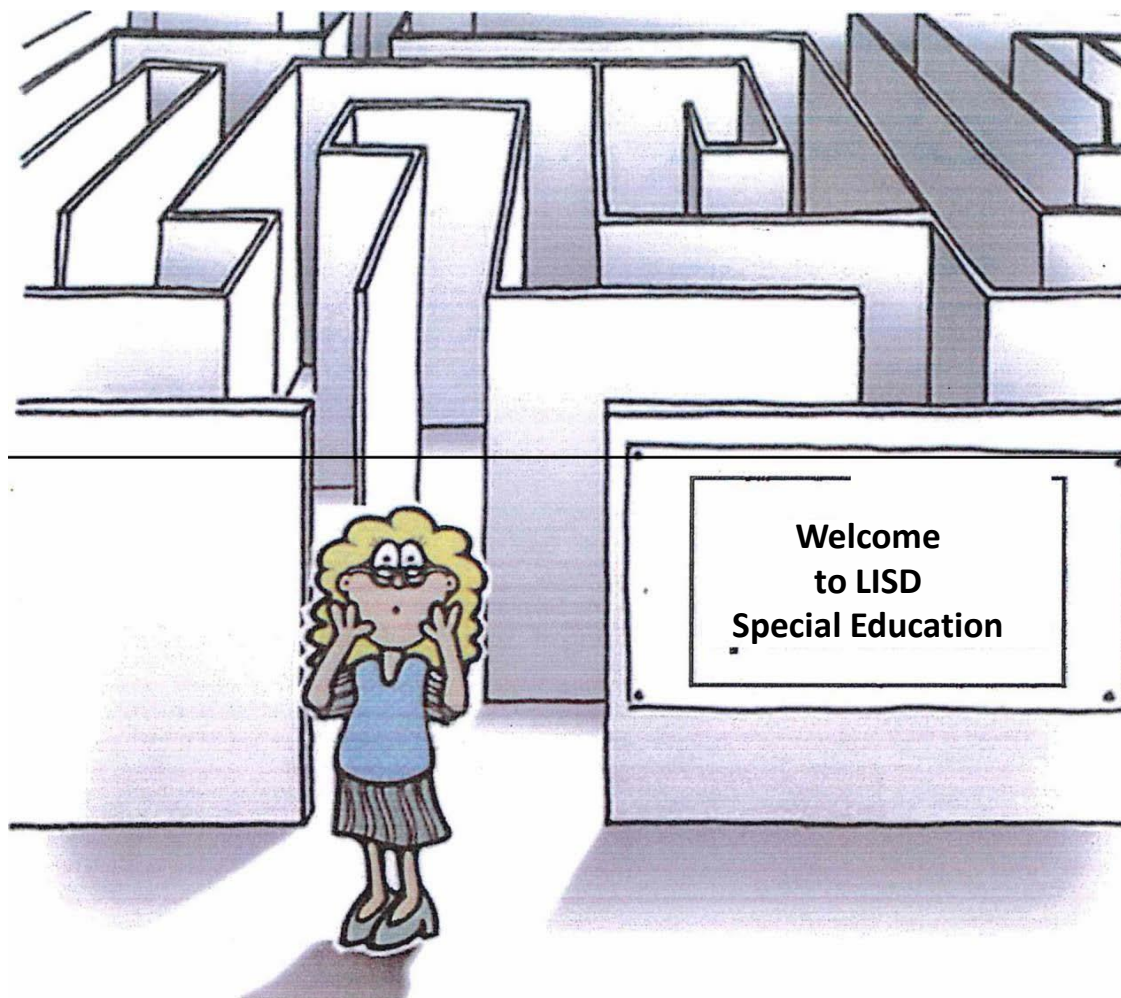


LISD Parent Guide for



Navigating Special Education



What is Special Education?

Special Education is a broad term used by federal law to describe the “specially designed instruction” necessary to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. This means that an individualized plan is developed to address the needs that result from the specific disability of the child in order for them to access their education in public schools.



FYI - The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 2004 is the law that defined Special Education as “specially designed instruction” at no cost to parents

How is eligibility for Special Education established?

To be eligible for special education **a student must have 1) a disability (see the 13 IDEA categories below) and 2) a need for specially designed instruction.** This means the student needs special education to make progress in school and to benefit from general education. With this 2 prong test, it is possible for a student to have a disability (prong 1) but not be in need of special education.



FYI: It does not mean that the student has a need only for related services such as counseling, OT, PT, etc.

What areas are evaluated for Special Education And Related Services?

All students who receive special education services must be evaluated. The law defines several categories of disabilities under which a child may be found eligible for special education and related services. The categories are:

- Autism
- Deaf-blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional disturbance
- Hearing impairment
- Multiple disabilities
- Orthopedic impairment
- Other health impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Speech or language impairment
- Traumatic brain injury



FYI - The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 2004 section 300.304 defines how a child qualifies for special education.

What is an ARD?

“**ARD**” is an acronym for **Admission, Review and Dismissal**. An ARD meeting is a meeting of a group of people who help to determine whether or not a student is eligible for special education and develops the **Individual Education Program (IEP)** for eligible students.

What is an IEP?

An **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** is an **educational plan that addresses the individual needs of a child. It takes into consideration the child’s strengths and weaknesses, parent concerns, assessment results and areas of academic and developmental needs** in order to develop goals and objectives for the school year. The **IEP** is created through a team effort at an **ARD meeting and reviewed at least once a year**



FYI - The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 2004 is the law that defined Special Education as “specially designed instruction” at no cost to parents

Why is the IEP important?

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) **outlines the school’s plan for providing specially designed instruction and related services.**

What is the parent’s role in the IEP development?

IDEA establishes that **parents are equal members of the ARD committee team.** Good communication between parents and teachers are encouraged prior to the ARD committee meeting in developing draft IEP’s. The ARD gives the parents a voice in determining their child’s IEP. **Parents are encouraged to actively participate in the ARD process** by asking questions, sharing their concerns, and speaking on their child’s behalf. It is important for parents and school staff to remember that this is a collaborative process.

What are some words or terms I need to know in the ARD meeting?

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised according to the requirements of IDEA.

General Education Curriculum: The body of knowledge and range of skills that all students throughout a state are expected to master. In Texas, in the general education curriculum is the **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)**

Who attends the meetings?

The **ARD** committee is usually made up of a special education teacher, a general education teacher, the assistant principal or principal of the school, the diagnostician, (a person qualified to interpret evaluations and the instructional implementations), a staff member representing any related services the child might require and of course and most important of all the parents and the student when appropriate.

Where is an ARD meeting held?

An **ARD** meeting is **typically held at the school that the child is attending**. It usually lasts about an hour.

When is an ARD meeting held?

An **ARD** is **held for initial placement or any time the school staff or parents feel a change is needed in a student's special education program. The IEP must be reviewed at least once a year**, but an **ARD** meeting may be held at other times. For example, an **ARD** will need to be held to review additional assessment. Many concerns can be addressed through parent-teacher conferences and do not require a formal ARD committee meeting.



FYI: "Rule of Thumb" - If your concerns for your typically developing child are addressed through parent teacher conference then the same process is appropriate for a child with a disability. If in doubt contact the principal of the school to obtain additional information.

What happens if I disagree with the ARD Committee?

If, as a parent or guardian, you do not agree with the decision of the ARD committee, a 10 day recess is given before any further plans will be discussed and parents are provided with procedural safeguards. At this time a **Special Education Director** might be helpful in assisting parents navigate through the ARD process.



FYI -Contact information can be found on the LISD website.



Acronyms in Special Education

- ABA** Applied Behavior Analysis
- ADA** Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008
- ADHD** Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- AEIS** Academic Excellence Indicator Systems
- AI** Auditory Impairment
- AIP** Accelerated Instruction Plan
- ALS** Academic Life Skills
- APE** Adapted Physical Education
- ARD** Admission, Review and Dismissal Committee
- ASL** American Sign Language
- AT** Assistive Technology
- AU** Autism
- AVLS** Academic and Vocational Life Skills
- AYP** Annual Yearly Progress
- BASE** Behavior Academic Support Environment
- BIC** Behavior Intervention Classroom
- BIP** Behavior Intervention Plan
- BRS** Behavior Resource Support
- CTE** Career and Technical Education
- CFR** Code of Federal Regulations
- COSF** Child Outcome Survey Form
- CPI** Crisis Prevention Intervention
- CPS** Child Protective Services
- CSR** Confidential Student Report
- DAEP** Disciplinary Alternative Education Program
- DB** Deaf/Blind
- DNQ** Did Not Qualify
- DSM-IV-TR** Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - 4th Ed., Text Revision
- EC** Early Childhood - see PPCD
- ECI** Early Childhood Intervention
- EE** Early Education
- ELL** English Language Learn
- ED** Emotional Disturbance
- EOC** End of Course
- ESC** Education Service Center
- ESL** English as a Second Language
- ESY** Extended School Year
- FAPE** Free Appropriate Public Education
- FBA** Functional Behavior Assessment
- FERPA** Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- FIE** Full Individual Evaluation
- FLS** Functional Life Skills
- FOF** Focus on the Future
- GPC** Grade Placement Committee
- HB** Homebound Program
- HI** Hearing Impairment
- HLS** Home Language Survey
- ID** Intellectual Disability
- IDEA** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- IEE** Independent Educational Evaluation
- IEP** Individualized Education Program
- IFSP** Individual Family Service Plan
- IHT** In-Home Training
- ITP** Individual Transition Plan
- JJAEP** Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program
- LEA** Local Education Agency
- LEP** Limited English Proficient
- LPAC** Language Proficiency Assessment Committee
- LRE** Least Restrictive Environment
- LSSP** Licensed Specialist in School Psychology
- MD** Multiple Disabilities

Acronyms in Special Education

MDR Manifest Determination Review
NCEC Non-Categorical Early Childhood
NCLB No Child Left Behind
OCR Office of Civil Rights
OHI Other Health Impairment
OI Orthopedically Impairment
O&M Orientation & Mobility
OSEP Office of Special Education Programs
OSERS Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
OT Occupational Therapy
PBIS Positive Behavioral Intervention Support
PEIMS Public Education Information Management System
PDD-NOS Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified
PGP Personal Graduation Plan
PLAAFP Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
PPCD Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities
PSC Purnell Support Center
PT Physical Therapy
REED Review of Existing Evaluation Data
RPTE Reading Proficiency Test in English
RTI Response to Intervention
SAPP School Age Parenting Program
SDI Specially Designed Instruction

SI Speech Impairment
SITP Student Intervention Team Planning
SLD Specific Learning Disability
SSI Student Success Initiative
STAAR State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness
TAC Texas Administrative Code
TAKS Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (formerly TAAS) Skills Accommodated
TBI Traumatic Brain Injury
TBSI Texas Behavior Support Initiative
TEA Texas Education Agency
TEAMS Teaching for Emotional, Academic and Motivational Success
TEC Texas Education Code
TEKS Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
TELPAS Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment Summary
TSBVI Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
TYC Texas Youth Commission
VAC Vocational Adjustment Coordinator/Class
VB-MAPP Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program
VI Visual Impairment

Related and Instructional Services



FYI: What are related services? Related services are support services schools are required to provide under the [IDEA](#) to students who need them to learn. Not every child who has a disability needs related services, but for those who do, the IDEA requires the services be included on the child's [Individual Education Program](#). Related services may be provided weekly, every other week, and/or specified time frame (i.e. 9 weeks). The people who provide these services are often referred to as **Itinerant Staff** because they go from school to school.

The following service providers will work with your child if they qualify for the services:

Instructional Services

Speech Therapist: In most states speech is a related service, in Texas speech is an instructional service. This means children qualify for speech services must meet the criteria for speech eligibility. A speech therapist (Speech-Language Pathologist) assesses diagnoses and provides therapeutic interventions for students who are experiencing speech, language, and communication difficulties.

Music Therapist: Music Therapy is a program that provides specific methods of learning enhanced by music. Students who receive this therapy require the components of music therapy in order to make progress in their previously determined goals and objectives.

Special Ed. Counselor: Based upon individual evaluations counseling services may be recommended for specific students if necessary for the student to progress on their educational IEP. These services are direct or consult and are implemented by the special education counselors.

Adaptive PE (APE): Adapted physical education teachers promote appropriate participation in a physical education program for students with physical/intellectual disabilities. They work with students, teachers, and paraprofessionals to create a program that ensures physical and motor fitness, as well as social improvement for students.

Auditorially Impaired (AI): The AI program serves hearing impaired students elementary through high school, who qualify for services. Services are provided by either consult or direct services and are directly related to the students hearing loss. A qualified teacher for the Auditorially Impaired works with the classroom teacher to supplement, modify and reinforce materials as needed, but does not replace teaching in the classroom.

Visually Impaired (VI) : The VI program serves blind and visually impaired children aged birth to twenty-one years with visual impairments. An itinerant vision teacher travels to the student's assigned school or home (for infants 0-3 years) to provide direct and/or consultative special education services relating to vision loss. Teachers provide supplementary services that are disability specific for children who may have only a visual impairment or additional disabilities. The VI teacher supplements, reinforces and modifies materials when necessary, but does not replace classroom teaching. VI teachers work closely with the student's teacher(s) to ensure a successful education program.

Related Services

Transportation as a related service is included in an eligible student's IEP if the IEP team determines that such a service is needed in order for a student to access education.

Transportation includes: travel to and from school

Occupational Therapist (OT): An occupational therapist works with students to facilitate full access and success in their learning environment. Occupational Therapists work with children who have fine motor delays, handwriting issues, self care deficits, and sensory difficulties which interfere with their access to the school curriculum. This often includes working with the teacher to modify the classroom and/or adapt learning materials to help the student successfully participate.



FYI: "Sensory Diet Plan" – An Occupational Therapist is the person who designs a sensory diet plan. A "sensory diet plan" is an individualized list of sensory strategies and activities designed to help the student with sensory difficulties stay focused and organized throughout the day.

Physical Therapist (PT): A physical therapist provides services to students to facilitate their ability to participate in the educational setting. Physical therapy services focus on providing a student with the motor skills and assistive technology necessary for functional mobility and positioning in all areas of the school building, as well as safe access to the playground setting. Services are provided using either a direct or consult model. Direct services allow the physical therapist to work on the development of specific gross motor skills, e.g. walking. Consult services allow the physical therapist to assist the classroom staff, through training and with recommendations, with the implementation of IEP objectives. Physical therapists have knowledge of and access to a wide variety of positioning and mobility options to meet student needs. Successful physical therapy outcomes are the result of collaboration between the physical therapist, the classroom staff and the parents.

In Home Trainer (IHT): In-home trainers work with parents and classroom teachers to provide the transition of mastered skills from school to the home and community.

Instructional Settings

The **law (IDEA)** states that each student must be provided an education in the **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** appropriate for the student and that the first consideration must be given to the general education classroom and curriculum. Special Education services and **placements are based on identified student needs and not on categories of disability**. LISD takes steps to ensure that the students with disabilities have available to them the variety of educational programs and services available to non-disabled students served by the district. The following are just a few of the examples of service delivery models provided through a variety of instructional setting.



FYI: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) - means that a student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers, to the greatest extent appropriate. They should have access to the general education curriculum, or any other program that non-disabled peers would be able to access. The student should be provided with supplementary aids and services necessary to achieve educational goals if placed in a setting with non-disabled peers.

Mainstream- The Mainstream setting is an instructional setting where students with disabilities receive instruction in a core content area or other curricular area in the **general education classroom**. The student does not receive any push in or pull out services for instruction from the campus based special education teacher in that particular content. The student may receive IEP accommodations and/or modifications. These are provided by the general education teacher in consultation with the special education contact teacher.

Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) In-Class Support- SDI In-Class is for students who access TEKS through accommodations and/or modifications in the general education setting. A student's IEP must include the provision of specially designed instruction such as teaching prerequisite skills, pre-teaching vocabulary and key concepts, or re-teaching. Routine use of strategies that change the way content is accessed and different ways that students can demonstrate their learning. **Minutes on the schedule of service page are documented as weekly minutes and only serviced by a special education teacher (SDI Strategist).** The SDI Strategist will collaborate with the general education teachers on a regular basis in order to effectively implement specially designed instruction and provide the necessary support for students. SDI services are individualized according to the needs of the student and based on ARD committee recommendations.

Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Pull-Out Support- SDI Pull-Out is for students to receive intensive direct instruction from a special education teacher (SDI Strategist) in a separate setting from the general education classroom. SDI must address specific goals in the student's IEP. IEP goals should be aligned to the grade level TEKS and identified deficit skills based on assessments. Students who receive a direct teach program should have pull out services daily. Some students may need to be pulled out once or twice a week to address prerequisite skills, pre-teach vocabulary and key concepts, etc.

BASE (Behavior Academic Support Environment)- BASE is for students who have a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), social skills, organizational or study skill IEP goal that requires interventions and academic instruction. Interventions could include social skills groups, a morning check in and afternoon check out, direct teach on organizational and study skill goals, etc. BASE may also be used as an administrative discipline placement. **If students are placed in BASE for discipline, they will still receive academic instruction and other services.**

- Students could receive a combination of SDI In-Class, SDI Pull-Out and BASE services. SDI and BASE services are individualized according to the needs of the student, and based on ARD committee recommendations.

Instructional Settings

Life Skills

Life Skills classes provide intensive instruction using a **functional approach in areas of academic, self-help, vocational, socialization as well as daily community living skills that promote independence**. Students in the Life Skills class have a cognitive disability that requires them to access the TEKS through prerequisite skills that are linked to the grade-level curriculum.

In addition to specialized academic instruction, students need support throughout the day in areas such as expressing his or her needs, getting from place to place, eating lunch, negotiating social situations, and/or taking care of personal needs.

Life Skills instruction focuses on the following:

- Assisting each student in experiencing success in academic and/or elective subjects at his/her ability level, integrating academic instruction into meaningful age appropriate functional activities.
- Assisting each student in securing functional/self-help, vocational and job-related skills as appropriate.
- Assisting each student in obtaining socialization skills to be used in daily and community living.
- Increasing skills that lead to independence within the community.

Academic Life Skills (ALS) Students in ALS exhibit significant academic needs, which are pervasive in all core academic areas.

Academic and Vocational Life Skills (AVLS) Students in the AVLS setting exhibit severe needs in all off the following areas communication, daily living skills, social skills, and vocational skills. AVLS classes provide a more intensive instructional environment for functional-based skill to promote independence to the maximum extent possible in the areas of academic, self-help, vocational, socialization and daily community living.

Functional Life Skills (FLS) The FLS program provides instruction for students with severe to profound delays in the area of cognition and are generally non ambulatory and/or medically fragile. Instruction in the FLS classroom emphasizes basic life skills with the integration of functional prerequisite academics. FLS classrooms focus on the following: 1) establishing skills to tolerate environments, communicate needs, and independent self-care skills (dressing, grooming, etc.); and 2) the instructional environments promotes opportunities for sensory stimulation and social interactions.

Behavior Intervention Class (BIC)

Behavior Intervention Classes are for students with severe emotional/behavioral concerns that adversely affect the student's learning or the learning environment for other students. The needs of students in the Behavior Intervention Class cannot be met appropriately in other settings, such as, general education classroom, a combination of general education classes and special education supports, or other special education settings. The BIC classroom provides an educational environment with a high level of structure and individualization to address the student's social and behavior skills that are needed to be successful in the general education setting. Students behavior and social skill needs are supported through positive behavior supports and the principle of applied behavior analysis (ABA) focusing on teaching deficits skills through the use of explicit instruction, modeling, practice/role play and feedback of appropriate behaviors.

Communication (COMM)

COMM classes are designed to provide a highly structured instructional program for students with significant deficits in communication skills. Comm classrooms support the development of academic and communication skills based on the individual needs of each student focusing on the following:

Instructional Settings

- A verbal language (behavioral) approach to language acquisition (assumes students do not acquire language “incidentally” (i.e., just by being around others)
- A high degree of classroom structure – physical, academic and behavioral
- Emphasis on the acquisition and development of effective communication skills through specialized, direct instruction based on the principles of applied behavior analysis and Skinner’s analysis of verbal behavior. This includes, but is not limited to, high rates of reinforcement, fast-paced instruction, discrete trial training and a behavioral approach to the acquisition of language. The daily schedule of activities includes intensive teaching trials with carefully arranged contingencies (prompting, fading, careful shaping, transfer of stimulus control use of motivating operation, differential reinforcement, etc.)
- Management of behavior through an individualized Behavior Intervention Plan recognizing that many children with Autism or other developmental disorders exhibit strong and persistent negative behaviors that impede teaching and learning.
- Social skills development recognizing the importance of language development in the demonstration of social skills. It is important to note that a significant component of social behavior involves verbal behavior, and if a child cannot mand (request), respond with intraverbal answers to the mands of others, or serve as the listener, social interactions will be limited.

Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD) Classroom Setting

PPCD is a program for students with disabilities ages 3, 4 and some 5 year olds. These classes are designed to provide instruction for students with delays in cognition, communication, psychomotor, self-care and social-emotional areas. Options for the PPCD program include self-contained, inclusive/blended classrooms, and kindergarten with special education support through specially designed instruction.

Teaching for Emotional, Academic and Motivational Success (TEAMS)

The TEAMS program, located at the Purnell Support Center, focuses on the instructional and behavior management/social adjustment needs of students who have become persistently disruptive to the educational process despite reasonable attempts in less restrictive settings to help them learn behaviors appropriate for school. These students require very high levels of structure, behavior management procedures that are more restrictive than found on general education campuses, and concentration on learning to function positively in social situations requiring cooperation, compliance with rules and directions and ability to control impulses.

Focus on the Future (FOF)

FOF is a community-based transition program for students with disabilities who are between 18 and 21 years of age. Individual supports for a successful transition to adult life are provided in the areas of employment, recreation activities, social relationships and independent living. Each young adult’s schedule is based on IEP goals and objectives that have been developed after extensive coordination and collaboration with the student, his/her parents, agencies and other stakeholders.

Homebound

Homebound is a setting for providing special education and related services to eligible students who are served at home or hospital bedside. The students are expected to be confined for a minimum of four(4) consecutive weeks as documented by a physician who is licensed to practice in the United States. Homebound instruction may also be provided to chronically ill patients who are expected to be confined for a period of time totaling at least four (4) weeks throughout the school year. The students ARD/IEP Committee shall determine the amount of services to be provided in this instructional arrangement/setting in accordance with federal and state laws, rules and regulations. Homebound services may also be provide to infants and toddlers (age birth through 2) and young children (ages 2 –5 years) when determined by the child’s Individual Service Plan (IFSP) ARD committee or IEP/ARD Committee. Homebound students are generally unable to participate in extra curricular or co-curricula activities, work programs, outside jobs and other activities away from home and under normal circumstances. Ability to participate in activities outside the home could affect the ARD determination of the need for homebound instruction.



LISD Resources

- LISD's web site on Transition is a great resource for all parents with children of all ages. It contains information on agencies, waiver programs, guardianship and much more.
- Information on **Special Education Services** in LISD can be found on the LISD website by clicking on "Resources", then "Parents", then "Special Education" under "Parents" on LISD's main page. There are links to information on staff, programs and resources within the district.

Texas Parent Resources

- This web site created by TEA (**Texas Education Agency**) helps to assist educators, parents, and other stakeholders to better understand the federal regulations (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), State Law (Texas Education Code), and State Rules (Texas Administrative Code: Commissioner's and State Board of Education Rules concerning Special Education). The site can be found at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>
- On the **Texas Project First** web site you will find helpful tools that explain the special education process. The goal in developing Texas Project FIRST was to provide families with accurate and consistent information, understanding the process and knowing where to find more information when needed. Their web site can be found at: <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/index.html>
- **Texas Parent to Parent (TxP2P)** is committed to improving the lives of Texas children who have disabilities, chronic illness, and/or special health care needs. TxP2P empowers families to be strong advocates through parent-to-parent support, resource referral, and education. In addition, TxP2P educates professionals about the unique needs of our children with the goal of improving care and opportunities for our children. Lastly, TxP2P is dedicated to championing the efforts of a diverse set of parent support groups and advocacy on behalf of our children's well-being. Their web site can be found at: <http://txp2p.org/index.html>
- **Partners Resource Network (PRN)** is a non-profit agency funded by the US Department of Education. PATH, provides training, education, information, referral, emotional support, and individual assistance in obtaining appropriate services. **Procedural Safeguards** for parents can be found here.

Agencies/Waiver Programs

Medical Waiver Programs help to ensure that people with intellectual disabilities receive the services and supports they need to lead self-determined and valued lives within their communities. Services are based on the income of the person with a disability and provide funding for a personal attendant, respite, therapies, adaptive aids, home and vehicle modifications, etc. The demand for community-based services and support is greater than the allocated services, therefore there are long lists for those interested in receiving services. These lists are up to 10 to 12 years, it is important to get on the lists as soon as possible!

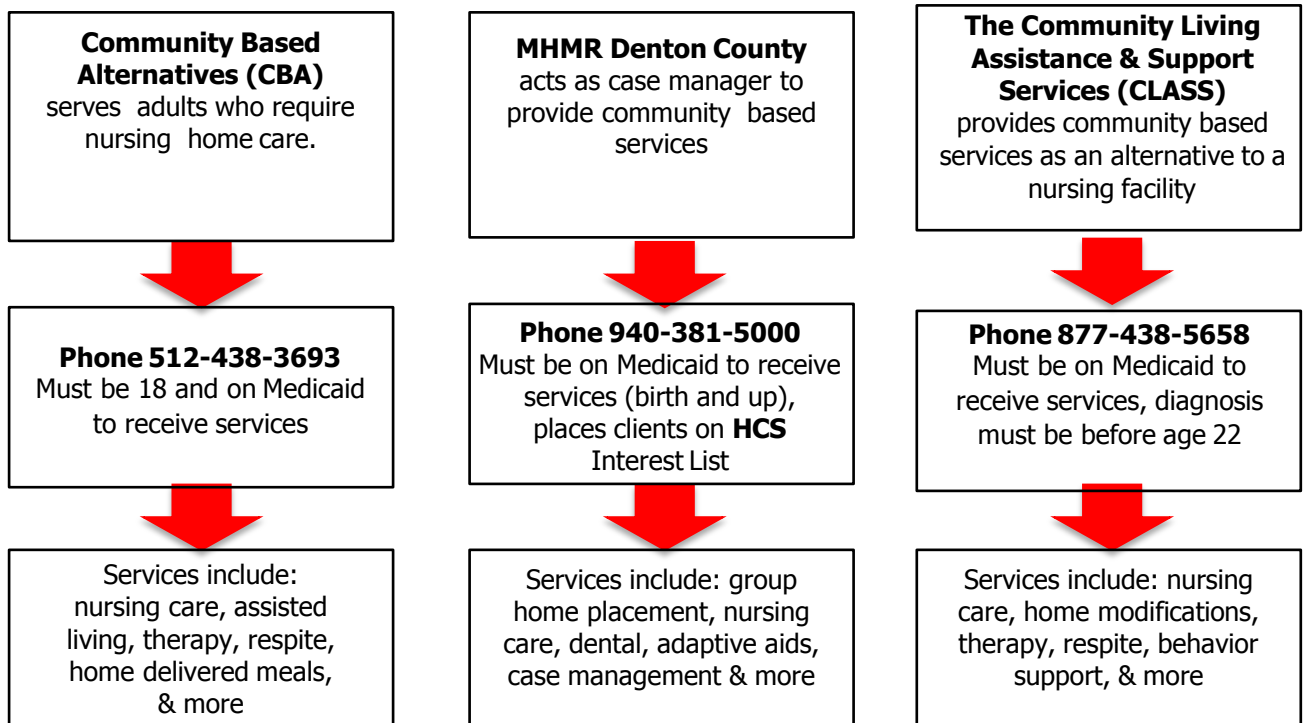
- **Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)** is administered by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. DADS coordinates an array of aging and disability services, supports, and opportunities in local communities to provide the following; respite, vocational, habilitation, In-Home & Family Supports, Residential Services and addition Community Based Services. More information can be found on their web site at: <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/>
- **Mental Health & Mental Retardation (MHMR)** is a local agency that is administrated through **DADS** and offers services to individuals who have an intellectual disability or a related condition that occurred prior to age 18, (IQ below 75). Services cannot be refused due to an inability to pay. If a person is deems eligible MHMR will assist in applying for Medicaid. To apply you must go to your local agency for an in-take evaluation. A case worker will be assigned and help with applying for or scheduling the following services; respite funds, supported employment, group homes, HCS waiting lists, and other supports. The Denton County MHMR agency's web site is: <http://www.dentonmhmr.org/>
- The **Home and Community-based Services (HCS)** program provides individualized services and supports to people with intellectual disabilities who are living with their families, in their own homes or in other community settings, such as small group homes where no more than four people live. To sign up for the HCS list, parents should contact MHMR. There is no age limit. Individuals must be Intellectually Disabled or have a related condition that results in deficits in adaptive behavior, a full scale IQ of 75 or below and be eligible for Medicaid. More information can be found on their web site: <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/providers/HCS/>
- **The Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS)** program provides home and community-based services (i.e., respite, home modifications, adaptive equipment, behavioral supports) to people with related conditions as a cost-effective alternative to a care facility for individuals with an intellectual disability. A related condition is a disability, other than an intellectual disability, that originated before age 22 that affects the ability to function in daily life. More information can be found on their web site: <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/>
- **The Community Based Alternatives (CBA)** program provides home and community-based services to people who are older or who have disabilities as a cost-effective alternative to a nursing home. More information can be found on their web site: <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/cba.html>

Agencies/Waiver Programs

- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** is a federally funded income supplement program that provides cash in the form of a monthly check to meet the basic needs for food clothing and shelter for people with disabilities. Any person who receives at least \$1.00 of SSI will receive full benefits from **Medicaid** which provides for health services and medications. More information can be found at: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/ssi.htm>
- Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services serves youth and students with disabilities to help prepare for post-secondary education and employment opportunities. Students may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services if they 1) have a disability which results in substantial barriers to employment, 2) require services to prepare for, obtain, retain or advance in employment, or 3) are able to obtain, retain or advance in employment as a result of services. Services are based on eligibility and individual need, to help the student prepare for post-secondary education and employment opportunities. More information can be found on their website at <https://twc.texas.gov/>

Agencies/Waiver Programs

When your child is diagnosed with a disability that might prevent them from living independently in the future, it can be very overwhelming to know where to start to get help. It is important to start early and learn what is available in your area. Services are on a first come first serve basis and eligibility is based on income and disability. Before the age of 18 services are based on the parent's income, but after 18 they are based on the income of the person with the disability. In order to qualify for most services the person with the disability must be on Medicaid. To receive services the person with a disability must be on the **HCS Interest List**. To get on the Interest List you must contact the agency and go through the intake process. Below are the 3 agencies to contact and their contact information:



Transition Services

What are Transition Services?

Transition Services refers to a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within an outcome oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities including, but not limited to:

- Post-Secondary Education
- Vocational Assessment and/or Training
- Integrated Competitive Employment (including supported employment)
- College/Adult Education Support Services
- Work and Volunteer Experience
- Independent Living Skills
- Linkage to Community Agencies

When does Transition begin?

While children and families experience many transitions over the years, three predictable transitions occur when:

- Reaching school age
- Approaching adolescence
- Moving from public school toward adulthood.

The law mandates that the school focus on transition must begin by the age of 16, but preparing for successful transition actually begins the moment a student starts school.

When does Transition end?

Students with disabilities can remain in school through age 21, if there are continuing transition needs. These may include the need to acquire skills necessary for independent living or employment. These needs must be stated in the IEP and must include community-based instruction, learning experiences and other adult objectives.

Who is involved with Transition?

Various individuals such as the student, parents, family members, school staff, and agency personnel, work together as a team to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) based on the student's interests and preferences as outlined in the student's transition plan

What is the purpose of Transition?

The purpose of transition services is to incrementally prepare students with disabilities to live, learn and work within the community by providing them with career and life skills, knowledge and experiences. Transition planning focuses attention on how the student's educational program can be planned to help the student make a successful transition to his or her goals for life after high school, including:

- Providing instruction and courses of study that are meaningful to the student's future and will motivate the student to complete his or her education
- Teaching students the skills and knowledge needed in adult life (including career development and occupational skills)
- Providing contacts (linkages) with adult agencies to provide a smooth transition

What are Transition activities?

Some of the activities LISD staff will use to support, encourage and assist students as they make the transition into adulthood are:

- Conducting strength and interest-based aptitude and career assessments
- Coordinating and conducting transition planning meetings that include the student, parents, agencies and other stakeholders
- Conducting classes and activities that promote self-advocacy and self-determination
- Taking students on college tours
- Providing job shadowing opportunities, resume and interviewing skills, training experiences, and additional work-based learning opportunities
- Taking parents on group home, sheltered workshop and day program tours
- Advocating for student and parent's needs
- Aiding students and parents in the completion of necessary forms to obtain services
- Informing parents and students of training and employment opportunities
- Holding parent workshops for college bound students to provide information regarding accommodations and access
- Hosting the Transition Open House

Where can I get more information on Transition?

LISD's web site on Transition is a great resource for all parents with children of all ages. It contains information on agencies, waiver programs, guardianship and much more!

NOTES