

How Can I Get Help For My Child?

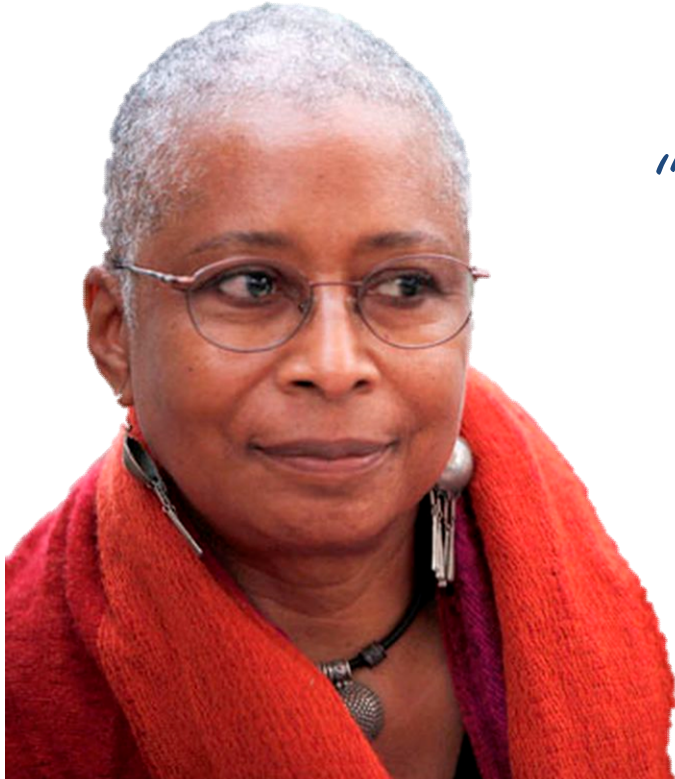
Part One: Skills for Effective Advocacy

A curriculum created by the
National Family Advocacy Support and Training (FAST) Project,
a project of PACER Center: fastfamilysupport.org



4440 N. First St. Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 229-2000 TOLLFREE: (844) 445-0305
www.epuchildren.org

Use Your Power



"The most common way
people give up their
power is by thinking
they don't have any."

—Alice Walker

Parents as Partners

Parents and professionals can be partners!

Work together

Appreciate each other

Share with the team

What is an Advocate?

Advocates speak up for themselves or others to make things better.

Have you ever...

- **Met with your child's teacher about any issue?**
- **Spoken about any issue you care about?**
- **Told a cashier that an item was not ringing up correctly?**

Why be an Advocate?

You have...

Connection
Experience
Knowledge

Your Child is an Advocate

Discover with the help of your child:

What is working for your child?

What isn't working?

Encourage self-advocacy



That's Advocacy!

Nothing about me without me

Let your child's voice be heard

**Tool: Create a
One Page Profile
to share with others
what works and
what doesn't work**



Six Skills

To be an effective advocate:

- 1. Understand your child's disability or challenge**
- 2. Know who you need to talk to**
- 3. Know your rights and responsibilities**
- 4. Become well organized**
- 5. Work together - Collaborate**
- 6. Know how to resolve disagreements**



Understanding the Disability or Challenge

Understanding helps you:

- **Know which services are appropriate**
- **Find the right resources to meet your needs**
- **Have high expectations**

Who Do I Need to Talk to?

Understanding the system helps you:

- **Know the chain of command**
- **Talk to the right people**



Know your Rights & Responsibilities

Learn about them by:

- **Attending workshops**
- **Visiting online resources**
- **Finding organizations to help**
- **Joining online or in person parent groups**

Become Well Organized

Don't forget to:

- **Keep records & documents**
- **Put it in writing**
- **Keep a log or journal**



Use Clear & Effective Communication

- **Focus on needs of the child**
- **Listen and ask questions**
- **Problem solve together**
- **Turn negatives into positives**
- **Speak clearly**
- **Show respect and expect it from others**

Tips for Written Communication

Letters should:

- **Be sent to person who can make a change**
- **Be dated and signed**
- **Focus on one or two issues – 1 page**
- **Set a deadline if a reply is requested**
- **Include your contact information**

Remember to keep a copy for yourself!

How to Resolve Disagreements

When you disagree:

- **Disagree without being disagreeable**
- **Apologize if needed**
- **Separate the person from the problem**
- **Realize NO ONE has all the answers**
- **Make sure your facts are correct**
- **Choose your battles**

How to Resolve Disagreements

Informal Processes:

- Talk to people first

Formal Processes:

- Mediation
- Complaints
- Appeals



Skills Checklist

Inventory:

What have you learned?

Is there a skill you hope to improve?

Do you need more resources?

Do you need more support?

Summary

"I am only one, but still I am one.

I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

—Helen Keller



How Can I Get Help For My Child?

Part Two:
Tools for Navigating the Regional
Center system



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What is a Developmental Disability?

A condition which causes major limitations in three or more of the following areas:

- ☐ Self-care
- ☐ Self-direction
- ☐ Learning
- ☐ Mobility
- ☐ Receptive and expressive language
- ☐ Capacity for independent living
- ☐ Economic self-sufficiency

A Developmental Disability...

- ☐ Starts before the age of 18
- ☐ Continues, or can be expected to continue, indefinitely
- ☐ Has a major impact on the life of the individual

Qualifying Diagnosis and Services

- ☐ **Early Start Services Ages 0-3**
- ☐ **Lanterman Services Ages 3+**
 - ☐ **Intellectual Disability**
 - ☐ **Cerebral Palsy**
 - ☐ **Epilepsy**
 - ☐ **Autism Spectrum Disorder**
 - ☐ **5th Category: Condition closely related to Intellectual Disability, or requiring supports and services like those for individuals with an intellectual disability**

The Lanterman Act

The Lanterman Act is the result of

PARENT ADVOCACY!

The Lanterman Act

- ✓ Recognizes that people with developmental disabilities may need help to live full, productive lives.
- ✓ Gives people with developmental disabilities the right to the services and supports they need to remain in their homes and live a more independent and typical life.
- ✓ States that it is very important that each person get the services and supports that meet their needs and choices.

Three Goals for Eligible Individuals

- ☐ Help infants and toddlers
to catch up to same age peers
- ☐ Help individuals
to remain in the family home
and in their community
- ☐ Help adults
to be as independent as possible



Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC)

Serves: Fresno, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, Kings, and Tulare

www.cvrc.org

Fresno office 4615 N Marty Ave. Fresno, CA 93722 Ph. (559) 276-4300 Fax (559) 276-4360	Visalia office 5441 W Cypress Ave. Visalia, Ca 93277 Ph. (559) 738-2200 Fax (559) 738-2265	Merced office 3172 M Street Merced, CA 95348 Ph. (209) 723-4245 Fax (209) 723-2442
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Inland Regional Center (IRC)

Serves: Riverside and San Bernardino counties

www.inlandrc.org

Riverside County Intake – (951) 826-2648

San Bernardino County Intake – (909) 890-3148

Kern Regional Center (KRC)

Serves: Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties

www.KernRC.org

BAKERSFIELD (661) 327-8531

DELANO (661) 725-2127

RIDGECREST (760) 375-9512

TAFT (661) 763-7974

BISHOP (760) 873-7411

LAMONT (661) 327-8531

SHAFTER (661) 746-3918

TEHACHAPI (661) 822-1288



Tri-Counties Regional Center (TCRC)

Serves: San Luis Obispo, Ventura, and Santa Barbara counties

<https://www.tri-counties.org/>

Santa Barbara (805) 962-7881 Santa Maria (805) 922-4640

San Luis Obispo (805) 543-2833 Atascadero (805) 461-7402

Ventura (805) 485-3177



Referral to the Regional Center

Referral (contact) can be made in many ways:

- ☐ **Parent / Legal Guardian**
- ☐ **The Individual**
- ☐ **Doctors**
- ☐ **Community Agency**
- ☐ **School System**

Service Coordinator

Service Plan Creation and Coordination

- ☐ IFSP/IPP plan creation
- ☐ Advocacy (May attend meetings with you)
- ☐ Support navigating needed service systems
- ☐ Coordinates services (Payer of Last Resort)



Tip: Partner with your worker and use your Advocacy skills

Person Centered Planning

...is a mindset and a planning tool that keeps the person central to the goals and plan.

... focus is the individual's strengths, needs, and desires for their life.

...involves planning as a team or circle of support

...keeps the individual's wishes, culture, language, community, and values the priorities.

Self Determination

A person centered program

Self Determination allows individuals and their families to have more control in developing their plans and selecting the service providers to better meet their needs.

Common Regional Center Supports and Services

Behavior and Psychological Services
Independent Living Services
Supportive Day Care Services
Community Access
Crisis Intervention
Medical Specialists
Durable Medical Equipment
Early Start
Employment

Residential / Health Care Facilities
Assistance with Copay/Deductibles
Respite
Companion / Foster Grandparent
Supported Living Services
Evidence - Based Therapies
Interpreter/Translator
Transportation / Mobility Services
Home Health Services



REGIONAL CENTER WILL NOT DUPLICATE
EDUCATION PROVIDED SERVICES

How to Request a Service: The Purchase of Service (POS) Process

- ☐ **Know your rights**
- ☐ **Do your homework!**
**Use your advocacy skills and
knowledge of the Lanterman Act**
- ☐ **Get help if you need it**

How to Request a Service: The Purchase of Service (POS) Process

Identify your needs

- ☐ How does your child's disability impact their daily life? In what ways?
- ☐ How does your child's disability impact your family's life? In what ways?
- ☐ Will the request allow the individual to be more independent and productive in their community?

How to Request a Service: The Purchase of Service (POS) Process

Take Action:

- ☐ Request service in writing or in a meeting with the Service Coordinator
- ☐ Ask what options are available to meet your needs and discuss which option is best for you
- ☐ POS process can take several weeks
 - ☐ follow up with the Service Coordinator
 - ☐ a decision should be provided in writing (Notice of Action)

Denials of Eligibility or Services

- ✓ **Disagree without being disagreeable**
- ✓ **Lanterman Act has a process to handle disagreements**
- ✓ **If you disagree with a notice of action/denial, act quickly to start the appeals process**

Thank you for coming!

Please fill out an
evaluation before you leave.

How can we help?

Reach out to us:

559-229-2000

