



A Parent's Perspective

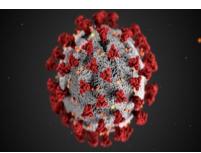
TxP2P Quarterly Newsletter



Texas Parent to Parent (TxP2P) provides support, information and education for families of children and adults with disabilities, chronic illness, mental health and other health care needs.

TxP2P Update

By Laura J. Warren, Executive Director, TxP2P

 If you feel like you might have missed a newsletter, you didn't!! We had the newsletter almost ready to go out the door in March when COVID-19 (C19) hit.

Our ideas on school, social gatherings, summer camps and activities no longer applied. Just as anxiety about C19 subsided and we had just started to adjust to our new reality, George Floyd was killed in front of our eyes and protests continue today. Then, C19 ramped up and came back with a vengeance. Just a note, TxP2P embraces Black Texans with disabilities, their families, friends and loved ones.

**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**

We stand with you and offer our support and ear.

Needless to say, our newsletter articles on summer camps and activities seemed ridiculous when we got back to it. We've started over and tried to give you more of what you need – info on how to decide what to do about school, telemedicine, emergency preparedness and a new feature where you will hear from our two TxP2P self-advocate staff members.

Please feel free to reach out to us if there is anything we can help you with—if we don't have the answer, we'll find someone who does.

You can reach me at laura@txp2p.org
Stay safe!!

Volume 20, Issue 1

Summer 2020

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TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

*Early Childhood
Intervention*



Telehealth

The Texas Health and Human Services Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program serves children birth to 36 months with developmental delays or disabilities and their family. ECI may now provide services to children and their family through telehealth.

Telehealth is the delivery of early intervention services using distance technology when the ECI provider and family are not in the same physical location. Telehealth services can be provided when in-person visits pose a health risk,

travel is difficult or locations are difficult to access. By using videoconferencing technology, the ECI provider shows parents how to help their child learn new skills, answers any questions the parents may have, and is able to watch parents practice the activities with their child. Telehealth helps parents improve their skills to increase their child's communication and skills by helping parents work with their child.

Each ECI contractor may offer different services through telehealth. Check with your local

agency to learn more about options available to families in your area. To find your local ECI program, visit the ECI Program Search page or call the Health and Human Services Commission Ombudsman office at 877-787-8999 (choose option 3).

Research has shown therapies delivered through telehealth may be as effective as those delivered in person. The American Physical Therapy Association, American Occupational Therapy Association, and American Speech-Language-Hearing Association all support telehealth.

TxP2P Now has Weekly Calls via Zoom - please join us!

Topic Calls

Tuesday: 1:30 p.m.

Email

Cynda.Green@txp2p.org
to register

Thursdays: 2:30 pm.

Email

Cynda.Green@txp2p.org
to register



Parents' Only Chats: Wednesdays

11:00 a.m. - English

Email

Cynda.Green@txp2p.org
to register

2:00 p.m. - Spanish

Email

Rosalba.Calleros@txp2p.org

Advocacy topics:

Wednesdays, 7:30 pm

Email

Linda.Litzinger@txp2p.org
to register

TxP2P Weekly Zoom Calls

All TxP2P Conferences for 2020 have been canceled.

Big hopes for getting back together in 2021!

Join us for our Zoom Conference Speakers Series in September

Page 4 has the titles of each of our sessions:

Tuesdays: 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Thursdays: 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Go to www.txp2p.org home page and search on the right hand sidebar for additional information.



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**Thank you to our
Wonderful Conference
Speaker Series
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Back to School Decision Making Tool

We might find this helpful in assessing your decision about sending your child to school.

Back to School Decision Making tool

Note: these questions address your views about how your school is preparing for school year 2020-2021. If you answer “unsure” to any items regarding your school’s plan, consider reaching out to your school administrator for more information.

	Does Not Apply	Disagree	Unsure	Agree
I feel comfortable with my school’s reopening plans for reducing risk of spreading COVID-19.				
I believe my school has the resources needed to effectively implement their reopening plan (e.g., staffing, supplies, training).				
I feel comfortable with my school’s plan if a student or staff member test positive for COVID-19.				
I believe my school has a plan to provide an effective program of instruction every day of the regular school week (generally five days).				
I am satisfied with how my school communicates with families about the changes it is considering.				
I am satisfied with how my school is addressing parents’ or caregivers’ concerns and questions.				
My child knows how to properly wear a cloth face covering and understands the importance of doing so.				
My child can wear a cloth face covering for an extended period of time, if required by the school.				
My child has a reliable mode of transportation to and from school (e.g., school bus, carpool, walk/bike, public transit).				
I am comfortable with how my child’s mode of transportation to and from school is reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19 (e.g., decreased bus/transit capacity, wearing masks, increased cleaning and disinfecting practices).				

Virtual/at-home learning feasibility

Note: The questions in this section assess whether learning would be feasible for you and your child.

	Does Not Apply	Disagree	Unsure	Agree
I am able to work while my child is not in school (i.e., can still successfully do my job or I am able to telework).				
I have access to reliable internet and a device, such as a computer or tablet, which my child can use for virtual learning.				
I can supervise or identify someone who can supervise my child during periods of virtual/at home learning.				
My child has a space where I live that is free of distractions during school hours.				
My school provides a virtual learning option that allows students to have real-time interactions with their teachers (e.g., have live instruction).				
My child’s learning style and needs are compatible with digital modes of learning.				
Academic and Social-Emotional Wellbeing				
My child will be able to keep up academically through virtual/at-home learning.				
My child will receive quality education through virtual/at-home learning.				
My child will be sufficiently engaged during prolonged periods of virtual/at-home learning.				
My child will be able to stay socially connected during prolonged periods of virtual/at-home learning.				
If my child needs specialized adaptive communication devices, equipment, or learning aides, I am able to have them where I live.				

For more information go to [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Self Advocate Corner:

Introducing Amy Litzinger

Amy Litzinger, Self-Advocate and TxP2P Staff



We thought it would be a good idea to have a regular column from self advocates now that there are two on staff at TxP2P. We wanted to share our perspective and give you an idea of how we see the world.

Our first introduction is Amy Litzinger. Amy has been on staff since 2011. She has life experience in living with cerebral palsy, using a power wheelchair, higher education, transition to healthcare for adults and employment, as well as self directing services across multiple systems.

Her current position at TxP2P is Public Policy Lead on our Advocacy team. She serves on multiple committees in Health and Human Services and education agencies.

Creative projects are her usual form of self-care. She also participates in several fine arts groups around Austin.

She would like parents and other supporters to know that the more self-determination they can encourage in the early years, the better, even if only in small choices. Being encouraged to make decisions about small things can add up to bigger choices and build self-esteem as kids learn how their choices can affect their world.

Conference Speakers Series in September

Please join us! Go to www.txp2p.org home page and search on the right hand sidebar to register via Zoom.

Date	Webinar Title	Location	Registration Information
September 1, 2020 1:30—3:00 p.m.	Personal Networks: Creating Community for People with Disabilities	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org
September 3, 2020 2:30—4:00 p.m.	Safer Sexuality and Healthy Relationships for Young Adults	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org
September 8, 2020 1:30—3:00 p.m.	Grief and Stages of Adaptation	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org
September 10, 2020 2:30—4:00 p.m.	When it Rains, it Pours: Resilient Choices When We Feel We are Drowning	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org
September 15, 2020 1:30—3:00 p.m.	Navigating Special Education: COVID-19 Fast Facts 3.0	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org
September 17, 2020 2:30—4:00 p.m.	Families Planning Together: For Now and the Future	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org
September 22, 2020 1:30- 3:00 p.m.	Introduction to Mindfulness	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org
September 24, 2020 2:30—4:00 p.m.	Want to Learn More About the Upcoming Use of EVV in CDS?	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org
September 29, 2020 1:30—3:00 p.m.	Special Needs Planning - Key Steps to Achieving Financial Success	Via Zoom	www.txp2p.org

Advocacy, Resources and COVID-19

Linda Litzinger, TxP2P Staff



Here are 3 websites to have on hand in case you need them on COVID-19:

- 1) HHSC's website on Medicaid health care and long-term care services during COVID-19.

<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/health/coronavirus-covid-19/medicaid-chipinformation-people-receiving-services>

- 2) TEA's list of educational documents related to COVID-19:

<https://tea.texas.gov/texasschools/health-safety-discipline/covid/covid-19-support-special-education-0>

And

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/covid-19-support-specialeducation-and-special-populations>

In my opinion, TEA's two most important documents are:

- a) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) explaining Special Education in response to COVID-19

https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/covid19_special_ed_qa_updated_may_7.pdf

- b) A discussion of Extended Year Services (EYS) services vs. compensatory services next fall

<https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/covid19-compensatory-services-andextendedschool-year-guidance.pdf>

A couple of issues that we have heard from parents:

- a) School districts saying they can't serve 3 and 4 year olds currently graduating from ECI because they cannot test them properly. Many of the tests have been rewritten to be administered via telehealth.
- b) School districts offering to withdraw the child because their disability is 'so involved'. (Just say no!)
- c) School districts saying they are unprepared for tele-education. TEA is writing a tele education version of each course for every grade level, to be rolled out in August to aide a district that feels they are too small or spread too thinly to be prepared.

- 3) If your child is not getting what they have a right to and need, Disability Rights Texas

(<https://www.disabilityrightstx.org/en/category/covid19/>) reminds you that they are here for you, at no charge. As always, you can contact me at linda.litzinger@txp2p.org



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Texas Parent to Parent
1805 Rutherford Ln., Suite 201
Austin, TX 78754

Toll Free: 866-896-6001
Local: 512-458-8600
Website: www.txp2p.org
Email: txp2p.org

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