



## A Parent's Perspective



**Texas Parent to Parent**

We're celebrating getting back to in-person trainings and conferences. Our West Texas Parent Conference is next month in El Paso and the Statewide Conference is in July in Austin. We can't wait to see everyone so we've added some information on the statewide conference, the Sibshop and Peer to Peer Summit and how to find funding to help you attend the conference. Both are in-person! Hope to see you there. We also added some information on the Disability Book Week and a job posting for Network Facilitators. Enjoy!

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TEXAS  
PARENT TO PARENT  
PRESENTS

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2022  
Annual  
STATEWIDE  
PARENT  
IN-PERSON CONFERENCE

**TOPICS:**

- ADVOCACY ▪BEHAVIOR
- MENTAL HEALTH
- SPECIAL EDUCATION
- TRANSITION AND MORE !

A conference for families of children with disabilities, chronic and mental health conditions or other health care needs, self-advocates, family members, educators, service providers, and other interested community members.

Save **the Date**

HYATT  
REGENCY  
AUSTIN

22.23

July  
2022

REGISTRATION  
OPENS SOON!

For more information: 866-896-6001

[www.txp2p.org](http://www.txp2p.org)



## The TxP2P Statewide Parent Conference is Back In-Person!!

*Greta James-Maxfield, TxP2P Staff  
Laura Warren, TxP2P Volunteer*

It's Texas Parent to Parent Statewide Conference time again. AGAIN! and this time may be a lot like we all remember. Can you believe it?! We are all so excited!! Our 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Parent Conference will be at the Hyatt Regency Austin, and we all have our fingers and toes crossed that there will not

be a COVID surge in July. The date is Friday & Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Think in-person, outta the box and off screen. YOU'RE invited! You and yours and theirs too!

The conference is a lot of work, but it is the most fun we have each year. We have missed it for the past two years. It's a time that we get to meet the parents we have been talking to via email or phone and their families. And it's so much fun to see friends, new and old, come together at the conference. And to watch parents realize that no one is staring at their kids. It's a happy time for us!

Just like before but we'll all be different, we've been through so much.

The game plan will remain much the same – close to 50 different sessions with a keynote session by Dr. Karyn Harvey. Dr. Harvey, Ph.D., will speak Saturday morning on being together after a traumatic 2 years of pandemic and resiliency. We'll also have a Family Fun Night on Friday with dinner and games. Childcare, Sibshop and the Peer to Peer Summit will all return as well.

All are welcome to join us in support of parents and families: community, schools and the children that inspire our efforts to make Texas a place that embraces us all with warmth, understanding, kindness, compassion, innovation, invention and all the resources that a community is capable of creating.

Perhaps the pandemic has helped you recognize the core supportive friend or neighbors and family, there and ready to pick you up, raise your spirits and find your loose ends. Maybe another child, or a supportive sibling can see others like themselves whose vast impact is hard to quantify and yet have an undeniable part in making life better and holding our loved ones dear.

Connections like that really shine in times like these, so bring them in, have them meet more of the TxP2P Family. Because to get community work done the community will need you. Inclusion drives our initiatives and conference so adults of all ages who have grown with us along with those who's parenting skills were forged in the deep end of the parenting pool.

Bring in allies from the professions that serve you such as educators, therapists and more. An array of more resources and a wider range of people to learn from await them at Statewide Conference than are routinely encountered in their workday. And by the way, professional attendees may also be parenting and finding themselves in deeper than they ever imagined, and they are definitely welcome. Y'all means all!

Get ready to share. No doubt reconnecting will be almost brand new, nearly overwhelming and clearly wonderful to look forward to so be sure to tell all that ALL are warmly welcomed.

The Hyatt Regency downtown Austin location gives you easy access to the famous music of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street area as well as the Congress bat bridge, where one of the largest colonies of free-tail bats live during the summer with nightly shows at sunset. You'll also have access to the hike and bike trail around Lady Bird Johnson Lake from the hotel. This may be the only year we'll be at this hotel, so you might want to take advantage of the location while we have it.

This is such an important chance to rekindle or create and reinforce community

ties and watch them grow and change. Of course, children grow up, but they remain ours so they're always welcome. We're including Texas parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, godparents, grandparents, brothers, from another mother, sisters and sister friends, plus professionals such as therapists, teachers and attorneys and more at this noteworthy event - that is how we'll find and nurture the TXP2P tribe.

So please make plans to join us and please spread the links to join our family <https://www.txp2p.org/services/join-our-family> and help us herald the 2022 Annual Statewide Conference.

Registration will be out in May. Hope to see many of you at the conference.

## Getting Help Covering TxP2P Conference Costs

*Laura Warren, TxP2P Volunteer*

We know that our Statewide conference is expensive for our families – we set our prices based on the hotel's cost of the food only. And we ask for stipend funding to help parents attend the conference each year and before COVID had been receiving over \$30,000 a year from Education Service Centers, State Agencies, Managed Care Organizations and some private donors. We know that the costs will be harder for families this year and higher due to inflation and the downtown hotel costs. We're scrambling as much as we can to find new sources of stipends.

We know we cannot fulfill all the stipend requests. So, here are some possible ways to get help in covering registration or other conference costs. These are just ideas and may or may not work out!

If your child receives services from any organization, ask for assistance:

- Managed Care Organization (MCO) (your Medicaid case manager or service coordinator)
- Your Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority (LIDDA) (case manager or service coordinator). <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/contact/la.cfm>
- Your local school district (Special education director, for example)
- Your Texas Workforce Commission representative (a job coach, for example)
- Your Medicaid Waiver case manager (such as CLASS or HCS)
- There is a list of grants for children with disabilities on the Navigate Life Texas website. Go to <https://www.navigatelifetexas.org/en/insurance-financialhelp/funding-grants-for-children-with-disabilities> to see if some of them would be helpful.

The Autism Society of Texas has some funds available for parents of children with Autism to attend conferences. Email at [info@texasautismsociety.org](mailto:info@texasautismsociety.org) or call 512-479-4199. <http://www.texasautismsociety.org/>  
Civic organizations such as:

- Kiwanis Clubs, go to <https://www.kiwanis.org/clubs> to find a club in your area
- Lions Clubs, go to <http://lionsusa.com> (they have a mission to help people who are blind)
- Rotary Clubs, go to <https://my.rotary.org/en/search/club-finder/location?> And then to the website of an individual city or club
- Or ask someone you know who is a member of a civic organization.

Ask your church to help with costs.

Start a GoFundMe at <https://www.gofundme.com>

If you have found other ways to get funding, please share them on our General Listserv or Facebook pages so everyone can learn from your success.



## Sibshops & Peer to Peer Summit Activities

*Laura Warren, TxP2P Volunteer*

**Sibshops** are lively, pedal-to-the-metal celebrations of the many contributions made by brothers and sisters of kids with disabilities. **Sibshops** acknowledge that being the sibling of a person with disabilities or special health care needs is for some a good thing, others a not-so-good thing, and for many, somewhere in between. They reflect a belief that brothers and sisters have much to offer one another if they are given a chance.

The Sibshop model intersperses information, discussion, activities and games. **Sibshops** seek to provide siblings with opportunities for peer support, something TxP2P strongly believes in. Because **Sibshops** are designed primarily for children aged 8 to 12, peer support is provided within a lively, recreational context that emphasizes a “kids-eye-view.” Group is limited to 15 children and will be provided by a trained Sibshop Facilitator on Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**The Peer to Peer (P2P) Summit** is a two-day “conference within a conference”

for teens and young adults, ages 13 to 22, **with and without** disabilities. We are pleased to have Art Spark back to lead the Summit this year. Through a series of varied activities, the teens & young adults will express themselves through art, music, movement, animation...and maybe just a few surprises! Working alongside professionals in their field they will discover their own hidden talents, share with their peers and family members, and bring home some fresh ideas about what is creatively possible!

Each registrant is encouraged to participate as actively as possible, and support is available from Summit volunteers to help each participant “get the most” out of each activity. There are adult volunteers to provide help and supervision, but *P2P Summit is not designed to be a childcare venue. So, if you’re feeling independent, and ready to take the stage, come join us!*



## **Job Opportunities Available: Become a *Network Facilitator* or a *Transition Action Group (TAG) Facilitator!***

**Want to make a difference in someone’s life through a unique part-time job opportunity?** Texas Network Connections, a program of Texas Parent to Parent, helps people with disabilities and their families develop Personal Support Networks and Transition Action Groups. **You can be a part of the process by becoming a network or TAG facilitator!**

**Personal Support Networks** build a community of caring volunteers around a person with a disability or chronic illness; they promote planning and social opportunities in the present, assist with decision-making, work to be sustainable after parents can no longer be available and offer a committed safety net of support.

**Transition action groups** are a collaborative of 5-10 parents/self-advocates who commit to meeting regularly for several months to identify short and long-term goals, and to assist and encourage each other to achieve their goals.

**Successful facilitators are people** who have the ability to engage, listen to and guide a group of individuals who have come together for one purpose: to create a high-quality life and build a strong community and safety net for a person with a disability or chronic illness.

**We are looking for people who:**

- ◆ Enjoy new experiences & building communities
- ◆ Want to earn extra income
- ◆ Enjoy extending hospitality

- ◆ Have excellent communication skills
- ◆ See the “gifts” rather than the “deficits” of others
- ◆ Have good time-management skills
- ◆ Believe that relationships are essential for all people to have a good life
- ◆ Want to help people who are isolated to develop connections in their communities
- ◆ Want flexible schedules

### Expectations and Opportunities:

- ◆ Learn about Networks and TAGs
- ◆ Commit to one year
- ◆ Attend 3 trainings
- ◆ Observe 3-4 network or TAG meetings
- ◆ Attend quarterly TxNC team meetings

### Network facilitation is a great job for:

- ◆ Retirees
- ◆ Graduate students
- ◆ Stay-at-home parents
- ◆ Busy professionals
- ◆ People with disabilities

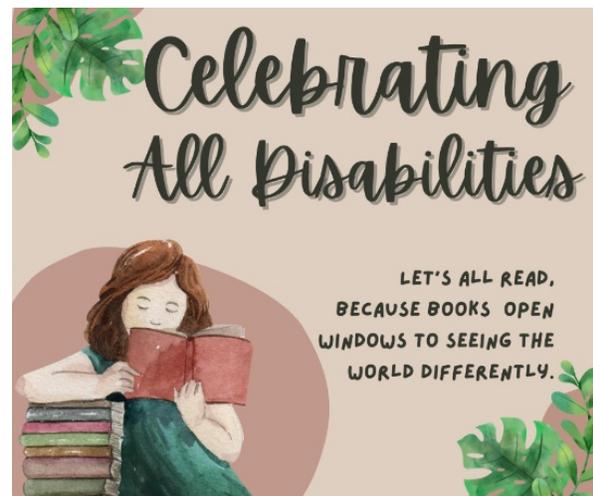
For more information about becoming a Network or TAG facilitator, contact Denise Sonleitner at [denise.sonleitner@txp2p.org](mailto:denise.sonleitner@txp2p.org)

**TEXAS NETWORK CONNECTIONS: *Creating Community for People with Disabilities***

## Disability Book Week

by Kelley Mindrup, Outreach Coordinator

Disability Book Week (DBW) is a nationwide project to promote disability inclusion in literature. Held the last week of April, this event showcases books featuring characters with disabilities, and books written by authors with disabilities.



This volunteer effort seeks to enlist libraries, bookstores and disability organizations to help promote the importance of disability diversity in books and encourage people all over to read these important books during the week of April 23<sup>rd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> in 2022.

The movement was born when our founder realized she did not own (and could not find) many books with characters that resembled her children. DBW soon grew to a panel of 13 advocates and self-advocates who have reviewed over hundred books, many of which can be found in public

libraries. We have listed them on our website <http://www.disabilitybookweek.org>

Please join the movement and read some of these books and leave reviews for the authors. Tag us #AllabilitiesIncluded, #LiteraryEquality, and #disabilitybookweek.

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Visit our  
Website

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REGISTRATION IS OPEN for the **2022 1st Annual West Texas Parent In-Person Conference at El Paso, TX!** Please register by clicking the following link: <https://fs12.formsite.com/txp2porg/kraqzhr5jc/index.html> and join us **IN-PERSON** on **May 14** as we host this conference event at the **Start Light Event Center** in **El Paso, TX!!!**

**SATURDAY MAY  
14, 2022**

**Starlight Event  
Center  
El Paso, TX  
6650 Continental Dr.  
El Paso, TX 79925**



**REGISTRATION IS  
OPEN!  
TO REGISTER  
CLICK [HERE](#)**



# 1st WEST TEXAS PARENT CONFERENCE IN PERSON

**A free conference for families of children with disabilities, chronic and mental health conditions or other health care needs, self-advocates, family members, educators, service providers and other interested community members.**

**EXHIBITOR  
OPPORTUNITIES  
ARE AVAILABLE!**

Contact Melissa Fox at [melissa.fox@txp2p.org](mailto:melissa.fox@txp2p.org)



Topics include:

- ADVOCACY
- BEHAVIOR
- GENETIC CONDITIONS
- MENTAL HEALTH
- SPECIAL EDUCATION
- TRANSITION AND MORE!

Conference Highlights:

- Parents & Professional Presenters
- Simultaneous Breakout Sessions with Different Topics
- Local & State Exhibitors
- Registration and Breakfast will start at 8:00 am
- Conference will end at 3:30 pm

For more information about this conference, contact Rosalba Calleros at [rosalba.calleros@txp2p.org](mailto:rosalba.calleros@txp2p.org) or 512-222-7496



Texas Department of State Health Services

The University of Texas at Austin  
Texas Center for Disability Studies

**TxP2P Weekly Calls**



Parents' Only Chats: Wednesdays  
 11:00 a.m. - English Register [here](#)  
 1:00 p.m. - Spanish Register [here](#)  
 7:30 p.m. - Advocacy Register [here](#)

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