



Texas Parent to Parent

What is Texas Project FIRST?

www.texasprojectfirst.org

Has your child recently been diagnosed with a disability or been referred for special education services? Maybe your child has been receiving special education services and it's time to figure out the next steps. Wherever you are in the process, the Texas Project FIRST website provides accurate and consistent information to help you navigate the special education maze and become a more effective participant in your child's educational programming.

Launched in September 2006, the Texas Project FIRST website is a project of Family to Family Network under a grant from the Texas Education Agency and Region 9 Education Service Center. Texas Project FIRST stands for "Families, Information, Resources, Support and Training." The website contains a wealth of information on special education, written in a way that's easy for parents to understand.

On the home page you will find a list of age ranges (0-3, 3-5, 5-11, etc.). By clicking on the age range of your child, you will pull up an index of topics relevant to that age group. All age range pages list some common topics at the top of the page, including links to:

- Education Service Centers
- Family to Family Network trainings and articles about the Special Education Process (Portfolios, ARD Agenda, Special Ed 101, etc.)
- Community Services (Medicaid Waiver Programs, Social Security, DADS, DARS, HHSC, etc.)

After Community Services, you will find information on a variety of topics, in alphabetical order. Most of these topics provide "links" that will take you to more information on that specific topic. Some examples of topics you will find there are:

- Accommodations
- Autism
- Autism Supplement
- Diagnosis vs. Disability – Defining Eligibility
- Dispute Resolution Process
- Planning for the Future (i.e., Self Advocacy, Self Determination, Transition, and Alternatives to Guardianship)
- Individualized Education Plan Development
- Graduation
- Statewide Assessments

Each of the age range pages also includes items that are relevant to that age group. For example, in the 0-3 and 3-5 areas, we have information on:

- Preparing to Transition to Preschool
- Preschool Options

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- Preschool Curriculum

In the 11-16, 17-21 and Post Graduate age ranges, we have information on:

- Employment
- Independent Living
- Post Secondary Options

On the left-hand side of every page, you will find links to:

- Texas Education Agency (TEA) – here you will find information on Curriculum (TAKS), Statewide Assessment (TAKS/STAAR), State Guidance documents, and Data Reports (region and district)
- Federal and State Laws
- Texas Statewide Parent Training and Information Center
- A Listing of Statewide Conferences
- Glossary and Acronyms - these were removed from TEA’s Guide to The ARD Process in the most recent update
- Other Parent Training Resources

The Other Parent Training Resources page allows parents to access FREE online trainings on a variety of issues; as well as find out what training is available at their local Education Service Center. The Other Parent Training Resources page also has a link to the Directory of Community Resources where parent can enter their zip code to find local organizations that may provide support or training.

Many of the Texas Project FIRST articles are also available in Spanish – click on “en español” at the top of the page. There is a place on the website for you to register for updates so that we can send you quarterly e-mails to notify you of any additions or updates to the site. If you cannot find what you are looking for, there is a Search box, as well as a place to “Contact Us” with specific questions.

Whatever stage of the education process your child is experiencing, we encourage you to spend time on the Texas Project FIRST website. If you don’t have internet service or a computer in your home, many public libraries and community centers have computers that you can use and someone there who can help you log on. With knowledge of the ARD process, you as a parent can be more involved and better prepared to take an active role in your child’s education.

Texas Project FIRST is an activity of the Texas Continuing Improvement Process (TCIP) under the auspices of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Region 9 Education Service Center, and is focused on helping to fulfill the goals of TEA and the Parent Training Committee. Texasprojectfirst.org is a project of Family to Family Network, dedicated to providing accurate and consistent information on the special education process.



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