



## Resources for Special Education Assistance

There are two **Parent Training & Information Centers** in Illinois. These PTICs can:

- Assist parents of children with disabilities to be informed participants in the special education process.
- Assist students with disabilities to understand their rights and responsibilities.
- Supply information to teachers and other professionals who provide special education and related services to children with disabilities.

**1) Family Resource Center on Disabilities (FRCD)** is the Parent Training & Information Center for the Chicago and collar county area. You can find more about their work and their contact information at [www.frcd.org](http://www.frcd.org). For Spanish: <https://frcd.org/category/recursos-en-espanol/>

**2) Family Matters Parent Training & Information Center (FMPTIC)** is the resource available for all other Illinois counties. You can learn more about FMPTIC at [www.fmptic.org](http://www.fmptic.org).

**Equip for Equality** is the Protection and Advocacy Agency for people with disabilities in Illinois. They provide help with special education rights and responsibilities through the information available on their website, trainings, and a Special Education Help Line. You will find their website at <https://www.equipforequality.org/issues/special-education/>

**The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)** has a **Facilitated IEP Program** that is free and available to families. You can learn more about this service at <https://www.isbe.net/pages/iep-facilitation-system.aspx>

The **Parent Rights Handbook** from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is a must-have resource for families of children receiving special education services. Available at the following link in both English and Spanish.

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Special-Education-Parents-of-Students-with-Disabilities.aspx>

**Susy Woods** is an Educational Advocate who works for the Illinois Assistive Technology Program. You can reach Susy by email at [swoods@iltech.org](mailto:swoods@iltech.org) or via phone at 217.638.8411.

**Council of Parent Attorneys & Advocates (COPAA)** is a national organization with a Directory of Parent Attorneys/Advocates that includes Illinois. Look for the Directory tab at the top of the Home Page on their website at <https://www.copaa.org/>

Local **Centers for Independent Living (CILs)** sometimes have special education or IEP support available but this differs from CIL to CIL. You can find the CIL that serves your area at [www.incil.org](http://www.incil.org).

**The Arc@School** – Through The Arc@School, The Arc provides training, and resources to help families and other stakeholders navigate the special education system. <https://thearcatschool.org> In Spanish at <https://thearcatschool.org/en-espanol/>

Loyola University Law School provides **Stand Up For Each Other (SUFE0) Chicago** - a student-run organization that provides **free** information and services for K-12 students facing suspension, bullying, or exclusion from school. SUFE0 law students operate a **helpline**, supervised by attorneys in the *Civitas* Child Law Clinic. After a brief intake, SUFE0 can provide information, referrals, advice, and, in some cases, representation for K-12 students in school-based meetings, on issues such as:

- Suspension appeals
- Bullying complaints and investigations
- Safety planning meetings
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings
- Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDRs)
- Records appeals

Contact: 773-800-0338 (phone) [sufeo-chicago@luc.edu](mailto:sufeo-chicago@luc.edu) (email)

Finally, it is very important to thoughtfully consider your advocacy choices. See the following for advice on **How to Choose a Lay Advocate in Special Education**.  
[https://www.isbe.net/Documents/lay\\_advocate\\_guideline.pdf](https://www.isbe.net/Documents/lay_advocate_guideline.pdf)