

GEORGIA CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates

[GEORGIA CASA](#)

SURROGATE PARENT ORIENTATION



THIS RESOURCE IS PROVIDED THROUGH COLLABORATION BETWEEN

- [Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocates](#)
- Georgia Department of Education
 - [Division for Special Education Services & Supports](#)
- [Georgia Learning Resources System](#)

AGENDA

- Surrogate Parent
 - Role
- Procedures for DFCS Involvement
- Liability Considerations
- Special Education Processes
 - Individual Education Plan
 - Least Restrictive Environment
 - Transition
 - Extended School Year
 - IEP Procedures

AGENDA

- Special Education References & Resources
 - Federal Statutes
 - Disability Programs
 - Related Services
 - Agencies/Professional Organizations
 - Legal & Mediation Services

ACRONYMS & TERMS

- DFCS – Department of Family & Children Services
- ESY – Extended School Year
- FAPE – Free Appropriate Public Education
- IEP – Individual Education Plan
- LEA – Local Education Agency
- LRE – Least Restrictive Environment
- SOP – State Operated Program
- SST – Student Support Team

Role of Surrogate Parent

- General responsibilities
- Purpose for surrogate designee
- Definition of “parent” for special education
- Requirements & Criteria
- Educational responsibilities
 - Exceptions to rule

Procedures for DFCS Involvement

- For students with disabilities under the protection of DFCS (“custody”)...
- School personnel are responsible for:
 - taking steps to ensure student & parental rights are protected under IDEA regulations

DFCS PROCEDURES for SCHOOL PERSONNEL

- Contact DFCS case worker to determine custody
- TEMPORARY CUSTODY
 - Confirm with DFCS if parents retain rights to make educational decisions
 - If court order revokes parental rights, parent may still participate in IEP process

PROCEDURES for DFCS PERSONNEL

- Contact district special education department to notify them of custody
- TEMPORARY CUSTODY
 - Explain parental circumstances of student in question
 - Determine if surrogate parent is needed

PROCEDURES for DFCS PERSONNEL

- PERMANENT CUSTODY – parental rights have been voluntarily surrendered or terminated by court action
 - Child becomes ward of the state
- Surrogate parent should be appointed

ROLE OF DFCS

- DFCS caseworkers are not allowed to serve as surrogate parents for students under the care of their agency.
- DFCS caseworkers may:
 - Enroll children in general education
 - Make other decisions (medical care)

LIABILITY

- Georgia Law 20-1-.5
- Any individual appointed to act as a surrogate parent for a student pursuant to federal law and federal regulations, as such law and regulations existed on January 1, 1985, shall not be liable for any civil damages for any action or actions done while performing duty as a surrogate parent, except for acts or omissions to act constituting gross, willful, or wanton negligence.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

- Academic or Behavioral Issue Identified
- Referral to SST/Parent Notified
- Educational Accommodations/Modifications
- Progress Evaluated/Referral for Evaluation
- Consent for Evaluation/Parents Notified
- Parent Permission
- Evaluation
- Eligibility/Parents Notified

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

- Placement Meeting/Parents Notified
- Instruction/Services
- Annual Review/Parents Notified
- Re-Evaluation/Parents Notified

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

- What is an IEP?
- IEP Team Members
- IEP Team Considerations
- IEP Components

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

- Definition
- Placement Options

TRANSITION

- Requirements
 - Age 14
 - Age 16
 - Age 18

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

- Definition
- Considerations

IEP CHECKLIST for SURROGATE PARENTS

- Before the IEP Meeting
 - Confirm attendance
 - Review parental rights
 - Identify topics for discussion

IEP CHECKLIST for SURROGATE PARENTS

- During the IEP Meeting
 - Share information from parent perspective
 - Listen to staff observations & suggestions
 - Ask for clarification, if needed
 - Request summary of decisions made & confirm understanding of final recommendations

IEP CHECKLIST for SURROGATE PARENTS

- After the IEP Meeting
 - Maintain contact with school personnel
 - Receive updates on student's progress
 - Be supportive
 - Attend any follow-up meetings, if necessary

FEDERAL STATUTES

- For further review...
- Included in the Surrogate Parent training manual are key federal statutes affecting the education and civil rights of children and youth with disabilities

DISABILITY PROGRAMS

- Autism (AU)
- Deaf/Blind (D/B)
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH)
- Emotional Behavior Disorder (EBD)
- Intellectual Disabilities (ID)
- Orthopedic Impairment (OI)
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Significant Developmental Delay (SDD)
- Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)
- Speech-Language Impairments (SI)
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Visual Impairment (VI)

RELATED SERVICES

- Assistive Technology
- Audiology Services
- Counseling Services
- Early Identification & Assessment
- Educational Interpreter
- Medical Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Orientation & Mobility
- Parent Counseling & Training
- Physical Therapy
- Psychological Services
- Rehabilitation Counseling Services
- School Health Services
- Social Work Services
- Speech/Language Pathology
- Recreation
- Transportation

AGENCIES/PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- For further review...
- Included in the Surrogate Parent training manual are agencies and professional organizations that support parents, children and youth with disabilities.

LEGAL & MEDIATION SERVICES

- For further review...
- Included in the Surrogate Parent training manual are legal and mediation services available to parents, children and youth with disabilities.

ADDITIONAL PARENT RESOURCES

- [Georgia Parent2Parent](#)
- [Special Education Rights & Responsibilities](#)
- [Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership](#)
- [Georgia Learning Resources System](#)

Disability & Special Education ACRONYM RESOURCE

[ParentCenterHub](#)

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