

Special Education Family Handbook



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Welcome from the Special Education Advisory Council

Dear Families,

Welcome to Academy District 20! We know that being a parent or caregiver is one of the most important and meaningful roles in a child's life. Parenting a child with unique learning needs can bring incredible joys and insights, as well as challenges that may feel overwhelming at times. Please know—you are not alone.

This handbook was created to help you feel informed, empowered, and supported as you navigate the special education process. Whether you are preparing for your very first Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting or have attended several before, we hope this guide will provide answers to your questions and connect you with resources and people who can walk this journey with you.

We warmly invite you to get involved with the **Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)**. SEAC is a partnership between families, community partners and staff members who are passionate about improving outcomes for students with disabilities. We collaborate with the Academy District 20 Special Education Department to ensure that the voices and experiences of families are included in the decisions that affect our children.

What Does SEAC Do?

SEAC works on a variety of family-centered projects throughout the school year, including:

- Taking ideas and creating plans, making recommendations to Special Education for consideration.
- Hosting open houses that connect families with local organizations and services related to special education and youth support.
- Creating helpful tools and resources for students with IEPs as they move from one grade level or school to another.
- Providing learning opportunities and support for families and staff around key topics in special education.

Our aim is to foster an environment where everyone feels heard and is encouraged to share their recommendations, along with the reasoning behind why they believe those suggestions matter.

These efforts ensure that transitions, whether moving from preschool to elementary school or transferring between schools at the same grade level, are smooth and supportive as possible.

We are so glad you are part of our school community. This handbook is just one way we hope to support you. We also encourage you to reach out, get connected, and consider joining SEAC. Together, we can create a more inclusive, informed, and supportive environment for every child in our district.

Sincerely,

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) 2025-26

Welcome from the Executive Director for Special Education

Dear Families,

Welcome to Academy District 20! We are so glad you are part of our community and remain deeply committed to providing a meaningful, inclusive experience for every student. We strive to create learning environments where all students are supported, valued, and encouraged to reach their full potential.

We understand that navigating the special education process can feel complex at times, and this handbook is designed to serve as a helpful, accessible guide along the way. Whether you are new to special education or have experience with the process, we hope the information provided supports and empowers you.

We know that strong partnerships between families and the school district are essential to student success. By working together, we can build a supportive network that helps every child thrive. Our Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), made up of parents, caregivers, community partners and staff, is an important part of this partnership, and we warmly invite you to participate and share your perspectives.

Our goal is to provide high-quality, individualized support that reflects each student's unique strengths and needs. We continue to learn, reflect, and refine our practices to better serve our students and families. This handbook is a living resource and will be updated regularly to reflect current practices and available supports.

Thank you for partnering with us in your child's educational journey. We look forward to working together to support a positive and successful experience for every student.

Warm regards,

Dr. Belinda Lujan-Lindsey

Executive Director for Special Education
Academy District 20

ASD20 Programming Information

Academy District 20 believes all students, regardless of disability, should be supported and encouraged to reach their potential. We offer a continuum of services and alternative placements (PK-21) that provide students with specialized instruction, while also minimizing the impacts of their disability.

Resource Program

Students served in the resource program are provided individualized instruction and intervention to support the whole child including academics, behavior, communication, social, emotional, adaptive, sensory and physical needs in the least restrictive environment. Our purpose is to provide students with access to general education and grade level standards.

Related Services

Related services are determined by evaluation data and information gathered by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). These services are provided to help students access the general curriculum. Individual service providers serve a variety of schools within Academy District 20. Related services include speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision, deaf and hard of hearing, and mental health.

Preschool

Preschool introduces children to the structure, routine and focus of school. Students also build cognitive, social, emotional and language skills. Preschool gives children, ages three to five (if not yet eligible for kindergarten), and introduction to learning as teachers guide them through play-based programming. Our classes are integrated. Children with developmental delays benefit from typical models that encourage language, cognition and social development. Visit our [Preschool page](#) for additional information.

Bridges

The Bridges Transition Program is Academy School District 20's program designed to support students with disabilities as they transition from high school to the adult world. This dynamic partnership engages young adults, families, staff, community agencies, and the broader community through shared participation and responsibility. The program provides individualized services tailored to each student's needs—determined through the IEP process—until the semester in which they turn 21. These flexible and varied supports connect students and parents with opportunities that promote skill development, self-advocacy, and independence.

Center Based Programs

Center Based programs are specialized classrooms located in many neighborhood schools across the district. These programs provide an intensive level of support based on the individual needs of the student and access to additional resources and support. Students in center based programs can demonstrate deficits in academics, behavior, communication, social, emotional, and/or independence that are impacting their access to general education. These students are unable to get their needs met within the neighborhood school setting alone. The process for a center based program is data driven, an IEP team decision, and the district's Special Education Department must be included in the decision to change a student's placement.

Our Center Based Programs are:

(Please see our website: <https://www.asd20.org/special-education/special-education-contacts/> to get direct contact information.)

Affective Needs Programs

Affective Needs (AN) Programs serve students with social, emotional, or behavioral needs who require specialized programming based on their unique needs. In AN program, we focus on building relationships in a safe and consistent

environment within an academic setting. Students who come to AN programs have frequently had behavior challenges in their previous setting and require more structure and time to build school-ready behaviors.

Schools with the AN program:

- Academy Endeavour Elementary School
- Foothills Elementary School
- Frontier Elementary School
- Eagleview Middle School
- Timberview Middle School
- Air Academy High School
- Liberty High School
- Pine Creek High School

Significant Support Needs Programs

Significant Support Needs (SSN) programs serve students who have cognitive, developmental, physical or orthopedic disabilities, including Traumatic Brain Injuries. Rigorous instruction and programming is designed to address individualized needs to maximize potential including increased communication and independence for further education, employment, and independent living. Instruction is guided by district-approved curriculum and the state modified standards.

Schools with the SSN program:

- Chinook Trail Elementary School
- Legacy Peak Elementary School
- Discovery Canyon Campus Elementary School
- Pioneer Elementary School
- Edith Wolford Elementary School
- Prairie Hills Elementary School
- Explorer Elementary School
- Woodmen-Roberts Elementary School
- High Plains Elementary School
- All middle and high schools

Communication and Social Development Programs

The CSD program supports students who need help building social communication, emotional regulation, and coping skills. Students are typically working at or near grade level, and while academic support is provided as needed, the main focus is helping students develop the skills to successfully and independently access the general education classroom. The program is designed to support students with needs related to autism, but it is not limited to a specific eligibility, and it is not intended for students whose needs are primarily due to broader emotional concerns or for those who qualify for an intellectual disability program.

Schools with the CSD program:

- Academy International Elementary School
- Antelope Trails Elementary School
- Mountain View Elementary School

- Ranch Creek Elementary School
- Rockrimmon Elementary School
- The da Vinci Academy
- Eagleview Middle School
- Discovery Canyon Campus Middle School

High Schools: CSD programming is not available at our high schools, instead, high school CSD supports are provided through IEP services; contact Special Education for placement/questions.

Should my student be evaluated for Special Education Services?

If you think your child may have a disability that is affecting their education, you can ask the District to evaluate your child to determine if they may be eligible for special education. Request the special education evaluation at your child's school. If you request an evaluation, the District must either request your permission to conduct the evaluation or inform you that it will not conduct an evaluation. In both situations, the District must inform you of its decision by providing you with prior written notice within a reasonable time after your request. The District may also ask you at any time for permission to evaluate your child if staff members believe your child may need special education. After the District has received your written permission (informed consent), it must finish the initial (first) evaluation within 60 calendar days unless you refuse or repeatedly fail to make your child available for testing or change school districts.

Navigating the Special Education Process – A Guide for Parents

Give Permission to Evaluate

- Sign consent to begin evaluation of your child
- Ask what tests will be done
- Understand the evaluation process
- No testing happens without your permission

Evaluation & Eligibility Meeting within 60 days

- School team completes evaluations within 60 days from date of consent
- Families are welcome to invite support (family, friends, advocates)
- Parents/guardians meet with school team to review results and determine if your student is eligible for special education within 60 days of from the date you signed permission

IEP Meeting & Plan Within 30 Days if Eligible

- If your student is eligible for special education, another meeting will be held within 30 days to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- The school will schedule the meeting and have a draft IEP ready to discuss and add to during this meeting

Moving Forward

- Your student will start services and monitor progress
- Regular reviews and updates
- Ask for meetings if concerns arise
- Be your student's biggest advocate by being involved throughout your student's school journey.

Key Reminders

- Ask Questions
- Take Notes
- Bring Support
- Stay Involved

To start this process, please contact your school office or call 719-234-1200 and ask for Special Education for further information.

Tips for Meaningful Parent/Guardian Participation

Parents/guardians are an important and integral part of the IEP team. Meaningful parent/guardian participation is every parent/guardian's right. The IEP team includes a special education provider, general education teacher, parents/guardians and individuals they would like to have attend, other professionals and related service providers who know and support the student, and the student with a disability. Each IEP is individualized and proper IEP development and implementation are critical to your student's success. Parents/guardians play a crucial role in the IEP development as they share unique knowledge and perspective regarding their student's needs. It is important to remember that your participation and ongoing involvement are a crucial part of your student's success.

Here are some tips for a successful IEP meeting to help your student reach their fullest potential:

- Be an active participant in your student's educational journey. Collaborate with your IEP team throughout the year on ways to improve your student's outcomes.
- Find ways to be involved with your student's education throughout the year. (Volunteer, join a committee or Parent/guardian Teacher Organization, attend special events, schedule time at home for working on school projects and homework, read to/with the student)
- Communicating with school staff on a regular basis via phone, e-mail, or communication log can help you be aware of your student's progress at school. Your student's case manager will likely be the most helpful point of contact. If your student is being initially evaluated for special education services, please refer to the contact information listed on the consent to evaluate form.
- Be prepared to talk to your team about your student's strengths and interests, the goals you have for your student, and tips for teachers regarding how to support your student's educational needs. These can be recorded in the Parent/guardian/Student input section of the IEP. Parents/guardians can also submit a written document with their feedback for enhancing the education of their child to be included in the Parent/guardian/Student input section.
- Review the draft copy of your student's IEP report. If you have questions, contact the case manager to clarify and gather additional information prior to the meeting. Mark any questions you have.
- Share information from outside providers as appropriate, including copies of outside reports. This information will be considered in the IEP process.
- Bring a person who can be a support to you. This individual can be a friend, relative, community-based service provider, advocate, or other important person. They can help you to navigate the process and to remember to ask important questions and help review what was said in the meeting. If you are going to bring an additional participant, please let the school know so that accommodations can be arranged.
- During the IEP meeting, feel free to take notes and ask questions. Seek clarification about any unfamiliar terms used in the meeting.
- Ask to schedule a continuance of the meeting if time runs out.
- Remember, the goal of the IEP team is to work together to identify the special education services and supports your child needs. This collaborative effort results in a written document, the IEP, which outlines these services and supports. The entire process should be focused on finding solutions to help your child succeed.

- If you have any other questions, please contact your case manager or the school. Don't be afraid to ask for information that will help you become an effective partner in your student's educational program and to appropriately advocate for your student's educational needs.

Child Find

Does My Child Need Special Education Services?

At Academy District 20 (ASD20), we make sure that young learners having difficulties or delays in development get the help they need to be successful in school. Our **Child Find** program helps identify children that have a significant delay in development. The process may begin with a developmental screening and when appropriate, a multidisciplinary evaluation to determine eligibility for preschool through special education.

The **Child Find** program is available to families, at no cost, who live within ASD20 boundaries. If you live outside of this area, please contact your local school district's Child Find office.

Early identification and intervention can significantly improve a child's educational outcomes and overall development. Child Find helps ensure that every child has access to the support they need to thrive in their educational journey.

Who Can Benefit From Child Find?

Child Find is available to all children, from birth to age 21, who reside in Colorado. It is particularly beneficial for children who:

- Have developmental delays or disabilities
- Are struggling academically, socially, or emotionally
- Have been recommended for evaluation by a teacher, doctor, or other professionals

How Does Child Find Work?

Child Find is a program for children from birth to age 21 with developmental delays or disabilities, or those struggling academically, socially, or emotionally. Child Find strives to provide early identification and support to help children succeed in school and beyond.

The Child Find process typically involves the following steps:

- **Referral:** Anyone who suspects a child may have a disability can make a referral. This could be a parent, teacher, doctor, or other concerned individual
- **Screening:** Once a referral is made, the Child Find team conducts a preliminary screening to determine if further evaluation is needed
- **Evaluation:** If the screening indicates potential concerns, a comprehensive evaluation is conducted by specialists to assess the child's needs
- **Eligibility Determination:** Based on the evaluation results, the team determines if the child qualifies for special education and related services
- **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** If the child is eligible, an IEP is developed to outline specific goals, services, and support tailored to the child's unique needs

Getting Started

Children who are not yet in kindergarten, may be referred at any time when a family member, doctor or childcare provider has a concern about their development.

- For children **up to 3 years of age**, referrals can be made to the newly forming Department of Early Childhood or The Resource Exchange, [719-577-9190](tel:719-577-9190), to gather information about your child, provide information about intervention, service coordination, and eligibility determination.
- Children **3 - 5 years old** are evaluated as a part of the preschool special education process.
 - **Contact:**
Kelly Cluxton
Academy School District 20 Child Find Coordinator
kelly.cluxton@asd20.org
[719-234-1755](tel:719-234-1755)
 - Or, use our [online intake form](#)
- Parents or Guardians of children who are entering kindergarten and are **5+ years old** by October 1 of the current school year should contact their student's school, or the ASD20 Special Education Office at [719-234-1331](tel:719-234-1331), if they have a concern about their child's development.

Parent/Guardian Rights and Procedural Safeguards

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Federal law concerning the education of students with disabilities, requires schools to provide parents/guardians of a child with a disability with a notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under the IDEA and U.S. Department of Education regulations. A copy of this notice must be given to parents/guardians only one time each school year, except that a copy must be given to the parents/guardians: (1) upon initial referral or parent/guardian request for evaluation; (2) upon receipt of the first State complaint and upon receipt of the first due process complaint in a school year; (3) when a decision is made to take a disciplinary action that constitutes a change of placement; and (4) upon parent/guardian request. [34 CFR §300.504(a)].

For a full copy of your parent/guardian and child rights in special education, please contact your student's school. You may also find these at:

[English Procedural Safeguards](http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/psn_eng_2024aprl_accessible) www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/psn_eng_2024aprl_accessible

[Spanish Procedural Safeguards](http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/procedural-safeguard-notice_spm_72024) www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/procedural-safeguard-notice_spm_72024

Summary Guide to Parent Rights in Special Education

This guide helps you understand your rights and responsibilities regarding special education. It is not a substitute for the full version of the Parents' Rights outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Rules of the Colorado State Board of Education. View the full Colorado Procedural Safeguards Notice at the [Colorado Department of Education website](#).

Informed Parental Consent

The school district must obtain your written permission before:

- Evaluating or reevaluating your child for special education
- Starting special education services in an initial IEP
- Changing educational placement or services
- Sharing information about your child beyond what is allowed by law

Note: Consent is not required when reviewing existing information or administering assessments given to all students.

Prior Written Notice

You will receive written notice before the district proposes or refuses changes related to identification, evaluation, educational placement, or services connected to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Access to Educational Records

Parents have the right to inspect and review their child's education records held by the school district. You may also authorize someone, such as an advocate or attorney, to review the records on your behalf. Access must be provided within 45 calendar days of your request.

In most cases, the school district must obtain your written permission before sharing education records that identify your child, although certain exceptions exist under FERPA. Parents also have the right to request corrections if information in the record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates student rights.

Evaluation and Eligibility

Parents or school staff may request an evaluation if a child may need special education services. After written consent is provided, the initial evaluation must be completed within 60 days. Eligibility means a student has a disability that impacts learning and requires specialized instruction or supports to benefit from general education.

Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE)

If you disagree with a district evaluation, you may request an Independent Educational Evaluation. The district must either provide information about obtaining an IEE or request due process to show its evaluation was appropriate. Families may also obtain a private evaluation, and the IEP team must consider the results.

Child's Status During Due Process – "Stay Put"

If a due process complaint is filed, your child generally remains in their current educational placement while the disagreement is resolved unless you and the school district agree to a change. The current placement is the one described in the most recently implemented IEP. Stay-put applies only to due process complaints, not mediation or state complaints. Special rules may apply in certain situations.

Disciplinary Procedures for Children with Disabilities

If your child is removed from school for more than 10 school days, the school must continue to provide special education services, even if in another educational setting. Removals exceeding 10 consecutive school days, or a series totaling 10 days in the same school year, are considered a change in educational placement.

Before changing your child's placement for disciplinary reasons, the school must ensure your child is not being penalized for actions caused by their disability and determine if additional behavioral evaluation and supports are needed.

A Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) is a meeting to decide if your child's behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to their disability, or was caused by a failure to implement the IEP. The IEP team must hold this meeting within 10 school days of any decision to change placement.

Dispute Resolution Options

If a disagreement arises with the school district, you have the following rights:

- Mediation: Request mediation to resolve disputes with the help of a trained mediator.
- Due Process Hearing: Request a due process hearing if disputes are not resolved through other means.

- **State Complaint:** File a state complaint if you believe a special education law, rule, or regulation has been violated.

Helpful Terms

FAPE – Free Appropriate Public Education

A free public education designed to meet your child's individual needs and support meaningful progress.

LRE – Least Restrictive Environment

Students learn alongside peers without disabilities as much as possible while receiving needed supports.

IEP – Individualized Education Program

A written plan outlining goals, services, accommodations, and placement, reviewed at least annually.

Accommodations

Remove barriers without changing learning expectations (examples include extended time or assistive technology).

Modifications

Change or simplify learning expectations or curriculum requirements.

504 Plan

Provides accommodations ensuring equal access without specialized instruction.

What is IDEA?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that authorizes special education for children with disabilities in the U.S. It also authorizes early intervention services to infants and preschoolers with disabilities.

What is an IEP?

The Individual Education Program (IEP) is a plan, or road map, developed by parents/guardians and school personnel to help make the student's school journey a success. This yearly plan addresses instruction, goals, identifies services and supports, and includes ways to measure individual student progress.

The focus of the IEP meeting is to determine what services, supports, and accommodations a student needs as well as to determine the best strategies or programming needed to meet the student's particular needs. The team discusses the student's strengths, as well as their weaknesses. The team determines what kinds of support and services are needed to bring about the best results. These decisions are made through a close look at the data and parent input captured in the Present Level section of the IEP. In addition, criteria are established for monitoring the student's progress. It is important to remember that this plan is reviewed annually and adjusted according to a student's individual needs. Parents/guardians always have the right to ask for updates on the student's progress and request an IEP meeting regarding progress if there are concerns.

Eligibility for Special Education Services

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that a multidisciplinary IEP team (a group of qualified professionals and the parents/guardians) determine if a student has a disability that requires special education services.

Evaluation data and information from a variety of sources to include outside information provided by the parents/guardians, are used by the IEP team to determine if the student meets state eligibility criteria. To be eligible simply means that your child has been found to need certain educational services because their ability to learn is impacted by disability in such a way that they cannot reasonably benefit from general education classes without these additional services. To be considered a student with a disability under IDEA, your child must require special education due to their disability in one or more of the following disability categories. You can click on the link below to see the model eligibility checklist that is used for each specific category.

Areas of Eligibility include:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness
- Developmental Delay
- Serious Emotional Disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech and Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment, Including Blindness
- Deaf-Blindness

More information about disability categories and eligibility can be found at:

https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/iep_forms#review: Colorado Eligibility Criteria

Types of Meetings

Eligibility Meeting - This is the initial meeting that takes place once a referral has been made and the testing has been completed. In this meeting the results are discussed, and the team determines whether the child is in need of special education services. If the child is eligible, school personnel and the parents/guardians develop an IEP within 30 days of the eligibility determination, by outlining services, specific goals, accommodations and modifications.

Annual Review Meeting - An IEP must be reviewed annually. This meeting takes place during the school year (within 365 days of the last IEP date) to determine how the student is progressing and what changes need to be made to the IEP. Additional meetings may be requested by the parent/guardian or school staff if necessary.

Triennial Eligibility Meeting (re-evaluation) - Every three years the student's eligibility for special education services must be re-evaluated. The District must have parent/guardian consent to re-evaluate through the Prior Written Notice and Consent Process (PWN/C). The IEP team coordinates with parents/guardians to determine what assessment data is needed. Before the meeting, the appropriate testing will be completed and new information gathered to be placed in an evaluation report. From that information, the team will determine if the student continues to be eligible for special education services and, if so, what adjustments need to be made to their IEP.

IEPs may be amended without a meeting If the parents/guardians and the District agree, minor changes to an IEP may be made without a full and formal IEP meeting through an amendment. This process can save time for parents/guardians and staff when only minor changes to the IEP are being made. Amendments do not change the due date of the next Review/Annual Meeting.

Contacting the Right Person for Your Child's Needs

Knowing who to reach out to can make a big difference. Whether you have questions, concerns, or just need guidance, this quick guide will help you connect with the right person to support your child's success.

1. Case Manager
 - Role: The case manager coordinates and facilitates the IEP process and services for your child, collecting and processing relevant information.
 - When to Contact: Reach out to your child's case manager first if you have questions or concerns about their IEP, services, or general progress.
 - How to Contact: You can find the contact information for your child's case manager in the IEP documentation or by calling the school's main office.
2. Building Principal
 - Role: The building principal oversees special education services within the school, ensuring that all students receive appropriate support.
 - When to Contact: If you feel your concerns are not fully addressed by the case manager, or if you have broader concerns about special education services in the school, contact the building principal.
 - How to Contact: You can contact the principal through the school's main phone line or email, available on the school's website.
3. Principal Supervisor (PSSG)
 - Role: The Principal Supervisor provides oversight and support to the building principal.
 - When to Contact: If your issue is not related to special education and remains unresolved after speaking with the case manager and building principal, contact the Principal Supervisor.
 - How to Contact: Contact information for the Principal Supervisor can be obtained from the school's main office or the District's website.
4. District Special Education Administrator
 - Role: The District special education administrator supports the special education program for their assigned school, ensuring compliance with federal and state laws and District policies.
 - When to Contact: If your concerns regarding special education remain unresolved after speaking with the case manager and building principal, reach out to the District special education administrator.
 - How to Contact: Contact information for the District special education administrator can be found on the District's website or by calling the District's main office.
5. Director Special Education for Compliance
 - Role: The Director for Special Education for Compliance ensures that the District adheres to all legal and regulatory requirements related to special education.
 - When to Contact: If your concern is related to compliance issues and remains unresolved, contact the Director for Special Education for Compliance.
 - How to Contact: You can find contact information on the District's website or by contacting the District's main office.
6. Director Special Education for Instruction
 - Role: The Director for Special Education for Instruction oversees instructional practices and programs within special education.
 - When to Contact: If your concern is related to instructional issues and remains unresolved, contact the Director for Special Education for Instruction.
 - How to Contact: Contact information can be found on the District's website or by calling the District's main office.
7. Executive Director for Special Education

- **Role:** The Executive Director for Special Education provides overall leadership and direction for the District's special education programs.
- **When to Contact:** If all other avenues have been exhausted and your concern remains unresolved, contact the Executive Director for Special Education.
- **How to Contact:** Contact information for the Executive Director for Special Education can be found on the District's website or by calling the District's main office.

By following these steps, you can ensure that your concerns are heard and addressed at the appropriate level. Effective communication is key to supporting your child's educational needs and ensuring their success.

Special Education Team 2026-2027

Leadership

Executive Director for Special Education

Dr. Belinda Lujan-Lindsey

Executive Secretary

BudE Bell

Director for Student Support Services

Julie Cassano

Director for Special Education Curriculum & Instruction

Sarah Ricci

Office Support Staff

Secretary II

Marci Thomas

Secretary III

Lindsay Render

Bookkeeper

Christy O'Hare

Special Education Family Liaison

Carol Green

Medicaid Clerk Typist

Brooke Hite

Special Education Administrators

Jenny Swan

PCHS, CTMS, EWES, CTES, EHES

Lisa Brandt

DCC HS, DCC MS, DCC ES, TdVA, ATES

Jessica Booth-Snyder

LHS, TMS, EXES, PHES, LPES, Bridges

Stacey Randle-Montoya

RHS, MRMS, AEES, AIES, FRES, HPES, PIES

Kendra Boyer-Evers

AAHS, EMS, DVES, FHES, RRES, WRES

TBH

VMS/VHS, RCES, CMS, AVHS, MVES

SPED Programs

Preschool

Beth Tyra – PK Lead Teacher

Kelly Cluxton – Child Find

Bridges Transition Program

Hannah Pryor – Transitions Facilitator

Danielle Horner – Transition Teacher

Dylan McGill – Transition Teacher

Instruction and Program Support

SPED Facilitators: Instruction

Andrea Farley – Elementary Resource

Justin Chidester – Secondary Resource

Kathie Garner – Significant Support Needs (SSN)

Jennifer Esquibel – Communication Social Development (CSD)

TBH – Affective Needs (AN)

SPED Reading TOSA (Teacher on Special Assignment)

Susan DiBlasio

SPED Generalist

Julie Palmer

Statewide Assistive Technology, Augmentative, and Alternative Communication (SWAAAC)

Madeline Zielke

SPED Digital Learning Coach (DLC)

Kim Watts

SSN Tutor

Cindy Jurgens

Emma Lynskey – AN/CSD Tutor

Behavior Team

Behavior Program Facilitator

Brandi Swint

District Behavior Teachers

Kimberly Wilson

Katie Cooley

Behavior Tutors

Laura Anderson – AAHS Strand

TBH – DCC Strand
Amy Cramer – LHS Strand
Danie Calu – PCHS Strand
Meghan Jannicola – RHS Strand

Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) & Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT)

Jayci Ventura – BCBA
Katie Stephens - BCBA
Ashley Palomera – RBT
Sondra Smith – RBT
Brahm Kreb – RBT
Patience Richie – RBT
Sierra Anderson – RBT

Educational Settings

When a student becomes eligible for special education services, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team develops a written plan for that student. This plan will include information about educational goals, services, supports and accommodations and will identify who is responsible for assessing the student in reaching each goal. Additionally, the plan will identify the educational setting where the student will receive these services. Least restrictive environment (LRE) is an important concept to understand when a team is determining how to meet the educational needs of a student. LRE means that the IEP team should design educational supports and services, so the student can be educated in the general education environment with their peers, to the maximum extent appropriate/possible. The IEP team should provide documentation and justification whenever education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Following is a description of possible service options for students, which is captured in the LRE grid and service delivery statement:

Direct Services

Direct special education and/or related services are those services provided directly to the student in a one-on-one, small group, or large group setting by:

- An appropriately CDE-licensed and endorsed special education teacher or special education related services provider;
- A paraprofessional under the supervision of an appropriately licensed and endorsed special education teacher or related services provider;
- A speech language pathology assistant (SLPA) under the supervision of a CDE-licensed speech language pathologist who holds a national certification. SLPAs must possess a credentialing authorization from the CDE.

Indirect Services

Indirect services are those provided by special education staff and/or related service providers on behalf of a student, but not directly to the student. These services could be delivered to educators (who are appropriately licensed, endorsed, or authorized), parents/guardians, and other agencies by a qualified special education teacher or related service provider. Indirect services may also include time spent by these professionals modifying materials.

Least Restrictive Environment

Least Restrictive Environment means that: (1) To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and

(2) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the general educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general educational classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Specialized Programs in the District or in Another District

In some cases, it is not reasonable to provide the support required by the student in a general education classroom. In these instances, the appropriate educational placement for an individual student may necessitate that the student be transported by the school district to another neighborhood school. In some instances, the student's needs may be so specialized that the student may be transported by the school district to a school or facility in a neighboring school district.

Transition Timelines from Elementary-Middle & Middle-High

This accessible document outlines key transition planning steps for students moving from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school. It is organized by time period and includes suggested actions for families to help students prepare for a successful transition.

Elementary to Middle School

October–December (Fall of 5th Grade): Understand Your Path

- Confirm the assigned school based on your address.
- Meet with the current teacher or special education case manager.
- Review the student's strengths and needs.
- Consider whether the neighborhood school is the right fit.

January–March (Spring of 5th Grade): Learn About the Middle School

- Review the middle school website.
- Attend school choice information nights.
- Learn the bell schedule.
- Explore electives, clubs, and other offerings.
- Learn about special education supports.
- Be aware of enrollment or application deadlines, if applicable.

March–May (Spring of 5th Grade): Participate in New School Events

- Attend orientation or welcome nights.
- Indicate preferred electives and additional courses when available.
- Request a tour if needed.
- Meet new staff members.
- If needed, hold a transition meeting to review the IEP and the plan for the first weeks of school.

August of 6th Grade: Prepare for the Start of School

- Complete required forms.
- Set up transportation.
- Apply for bussing if needed.
- Complete special education bussing forms if applicable.
- Check the bus schedule in the parent portal.
- Check supply lists and organize materials.
- Practice routines such as using a locker, following a schedule, and using a computer.

First Weeks of 6th Grade: Settle In and Communicate

- Help your child learn the new schedule and routines.
- Check in with the student about changes.
- Stay in touch with the new school if concerns come up.

Middle to High School

October–December (Fall of 8th Grade): Understand Your School Path

- Confirm the assigned school based on your address.
- Meet with the current teacher or case manager.
- Review the student’s strengths and needs.
- Consider whether the neighborhood school is the right fit.

January–March (Spring of 8th Grade): Learn About the High School

- Review the high school website.
- Attend school choice information nights.
- Learn the bell schedule.
- Explore electives, clubs, and other offerings.
- Learn about special education supports.
- Be aware of enrollment or application deadlines, if applicable.

March–May (Spring of 8th Grade): Participate in New School Events

- Attend orientation or welcome nights.
- Indicate preferred electives and additional courses when available.
- Request a tour if needed.
- Meet new staff members.
- If needed, hold a transition meeting to review the IEP and the plan for the first weeks of school.

August of 9th Grade: Prepare for the Start of School

- Complete required forms.
- Set up transportation.
- Apply for bussing if needed.
- Complete special education bussing forms if applicable.
- Check the bus schedule in the parent portal.
- Practice routines such as using a locker, following a schedule, and using a computer.

First Weeks of 9th Grade: Settle In and Communicate

- Help your child learn the new schedule and routines.
- Check in with the student about changes.
- Stay in touch with the new school if concerns come up.

Student Transition Topics for Families

This guide outlines key topics for families to explore when a student is transitioning to a new school level—whether in general education, with an IEP, or with medical or mental health needs. Use these categories to spark conversations, gather information, and ensure your student is supported as they move into middle or high school.

- A. School Overview & Culture
- B. Daily Routines & Logistics
- C. Academic Support & Communication
- D. Social, Emotional & Behavioral Support
- E. Extracurriculars & Student Life
- F. Questions for Students with IEPs
- G. Medical & Health Needs
- H. After Enrollment

Post Secondary Transition - Bridges

Transition services provide post-secondary and workplace readiness and training for students. Programming prepares students for adult life after exiting high school and can be thought of as a bridge between specialized school programs and the opportunities of adult life, including higher education or training, employment, independent living and community participation. Transition planning begins with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team starting at the age of 15, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team. These services continue through the semester during which the student turns 21 years old. Transition services are based on the student's individual needs while also considering the student's strengths, preferences and interests.

Academy District 20 (ASD20) Bridges Transition Program is designed to provide transition services to students ages 18-21 years old with disabilities to gain access to the available support and services necessary to become as independent as possible. Programming focuses on the student's long-term goals while utilizing a student-centered approach. Eligible students are those receiving special education services and who have met their high school or individual graduation requirements. Students who choose to access the Bridges Transition Program following their 12th grade year will participate in a social graduation with their high school. The social graduation allows students who will continue to receive transition services the opportunity to participate in the traditional graduation ceremony with peers. However, an official diploma will not be granted to these students until they exit ASD20. Transcripts will remain open as students continue to earn credit toward diplomas. The graduation year on the issued high school diploma will reflect the year the student exits ASD20.

Under both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), "Transition Services" are defined as a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities including:

- Post-secondary education
- Vocational training
- Integrated employment (including supported employment)
- Continuing and adult education
- Adult services
- Independent living
- Community participation

The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's qualification for services and needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests and shall include:

- Instruction
- Related Services
- Community experiences
- The development of post-school adult living activities

- The development of employment
- If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and/or functional vocational education

The concept of transition is simple and generally has three major components:

- Coach every student, along with his or her family, to think about goals after high school and to develop a long-range plan to get there.
- Design high school experiences to ensure that the student gains the skills needed to achieve his or her desired post-school goals.
- Identify and link students and families to any needed post-school services, supports or programs before the student exits the school system.

Early and long-range planning are critical in order for the student to receive many post-school programs or services whether they include support services in college or residential services from an adult provider. Students and families may encounter extensive paperwork to meet eligibility requirements and some adult services have long waiting lists. Early, thoughtful planning will help ensure that the student will receive needed services in a timely manner when they exit the school system.

Additional Information

1. Academy District 20 Special Education: <https://www.asd20.org/special-education>
2. Colorado Department of Education: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped>
3. U.S. Department of Education IDEA: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/statuteregulations/>

504s VS. IEPs

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal anti-discrimination law that applies to qualified students with disabilities. To be eligible for the protections noted in Section 504, a student must be determined to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity such as walking, speaking, or learning. Every school in Academy District 20 has a process to identify and provide supports to eligible students. A school counselor or administrator can provide you with more detailed information about Section 504 and 504 Plans.

There are many similarities between Section 504 and IDEA legislation, and there are some important differences. Both laws ensure a free and appropriate education (FAPE) to eligible students with disabilities. However, each act has unique and specific eligibility conditions which may result in a student being eligible under Section 504 but not qualifying for services under IDEA. A special educator, school counselor, or administrator at the student's school is available to answer any questions about these two laws.

Office for Civil Rights:

<https://www.ed.gov/about/ed-offices/ocr>

Colorado Department of Education:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/rules>

Who are all these people?

You may have contact with many of the following individuals at some stage of the special education process. The following information is intended to provide information about their role.

AUDIOLOGIST: The audiologist tests the student's hearing to determine if the hearing is adequate for promoting the highest rate of learning. The audiologist also assists parents/guardians and teachers in managing hearing concerns.

ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION: The Adapted Physical Education (APE) teacher is an educationally trained professional who is able to assess individual students and develop, adapt and implement specialized physical education programs in the motor domain.

DIRECTOR DESIGNEE: A Director Designee in a school district acts as a representative at annual review meetings for students with special needs. This role involves ensuring that all team members, including parents and educators, participate fully in discussions about a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The Director Designee must be knowledgeable about special education services, the general education curriculum, and District resources. They have the authority to commit certain District resources and ensure that the services outlined in the IEP are provided.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR: The school counselor's role will vary across schools. The school counselor may share information on ways to help the student improve their self-concept and communicate more effectively. Some school counselors have responsibility for academic scheduling, academic assessment coordination, transition programs and post-secondary advisement.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST (OT): An occupational therapist is a trained health professional that uses purposeful, goal directed activities and task analysis to enable a child with a disability to benefit from their individualized education program (IEP). Federal law mandates that occupational therapy (OT) in the school system be educationally relevant. The focus of OT services in a school setting is to promote functional independence or participation within the educational environment.

ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY (O&M): Orientation and mobility services means services provided to blind or visually impaired children by qualified personnel to enable those students to attain systematic orientation to and safe movement within their environments in school, home, and community.

EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETERS: Interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing who work as related service providers in a school setting are referred to as educational interpreters. The educational interpreter serves as a communication link and facilitator between deaf and hard of hearing individuals and those who are speaking to communicate (i.e., the teacher, classmates, or other school personnel).

PARENT: Parent means: (a)(1) A biological or adoptive parent of a child; (2) A foster parent, unless State law, regulations, or contractual obligations with a State or local entity prohibit a foster parent from acting as a parent; (3) A guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the child (but not the State if the child is a ward of the State); (4) An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare; or (5) A surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with § 300.519 or section 639(a)(5) of the Act. (b)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, the biological or adoptive parent, when attempting to act as the parent under this part and when more than one party is qualified under paragraph (a) of this section to act as a parent, must be presumed to be the parent for purposes of this section unless the biological or adoptive parent does not have legal authority to make educational decisions for the child. (2) If a judicial decree or order identifies a specific person or persons under paragraphs (a)(1) through (4) of this section to act as the "parent" of a child or to make educational decisions on behalf of a child, then such person or persons shall be determined to be the "parent" for purposes of this section.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST (PT): Physical therapists work collaboratively with a student's IEP team to improve student access and participation in school and community settings. Physical therapists provide professional expertise in the areas of self-help skills, foundational gross motor skills, mobility skills (transfers, walking, and equipment use), posture and positioning, and recreational skills for age-appropriate play. Physical therapy interventions promote skill acquisition and environmental adaptation and are commonly embedded within the context of student activities and routines.

School Administrator: The school administrator, also referred to as the principal or assistant principal, participates as a team member during the meetings. They can also act as the SPED Designee, and provide oversight of the special education program in the building where the student attends school.

GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM TEACHER: The classroom teacher will provide information about the daily social, emotional, and academic performance of the student in the general classroom. This information helps determine eligibility for special education services and reflects the progress of the student in a special education program. The general education teacher is often the grade level teacher in elementary school, and content specific teacher for grades 6-12 (i.e. Science, PE, Choir). They are responsible for teaching the grade level standards to the student.

CASE MANAGER: A case manager is a staff member responsible for coordinating and facilitating the IEP process and services for a student and their family. This includes collecting, monitoring, and processing information related to the individual student to ensure their educational needs are met effectively.

SCHOOL NURSE: School nurses support student success by providing health care through assessment, intervention, and follow-up for all children within the school setting. The school nurse addresses the physical, mental, emotional and social health needs of students and supports their achievement in the learning process. These professionals not only provide for the safety and care of students and staff but also address the need for integrating health solutions into the education setting.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER: The school social worker evaluates the social, emotional, and cultural factors affecting the student's progress at school. The school social worker may work directly with the student or consult with parents/guardians, teachers, or community service providers to improve the student's performance at school.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST: School psychologists lower barriers to healthy learning and behavior through intervention, prevention, assessment, consultation, and advocacy. School psychologists work with parents/guardians, educators, and other mental health service providers to help each child develop resiliency, competence, and self esteem, resulting in improving the lives and learning of children and youth.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER: The special education teacher helps to assess the academic functioning of the student and will design, implement, and evaluate the instructional programming to meet the student's special education needs. The special education teacher may provide instructional and/or consultation services in a general education classroom, a self-contained classroom, or in a center-based program other than the neighborhood school.

SPEECH/LANGUAGE THERAPIST: The speech/language therapist evaluates the student's communication skills and provides direct services to the student to help improve speech, language, and social communication skills. The speech/ language therapist may also assist teachers and parents/guardians in educational programming to improve communication skills.

TEACHER OF THE DEAF/HARD OF HEARING: The teacher of hearing impaired provides evaluation and special programming for students who have an educationally-significant loss of hearing which would affect the ability to communicate with others. The teacher of hearing impaired may provide direct services to students and consultation services to parents/guardians and teachers.

TEACHER OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED: The teacher of the visually impaired provides evaluation and special programming for students who have significant vision impairment. The teacher of visually impaired may provide direct services to students and consultation services to parents/guardians and teachers, including orientation and mobility services.

BRIDGES (TRANSITION) COORDINATOR: The Bridges coordinator assists in developing transition strategies that may be appropriate for the student and family. The Bridges coordinator provides information to staff, students, and family members regarding school/community programs and may assist in the transition from school to adult/community living.

SCHOOL TO WORK ALLIANCE PROGRAM (SWAP): The purpose of SWAP is to assist young adults in making the transition from school to employment, providing successful employment outcomes, increasing community linkages, and new patterns of service for young adults within all categories of disabilities.

Community Resources

ASD20 Resources

ASD20 has a resource directory that can help you find the services you need. Click the link below to find additional resources.

[Community Resource Directory \(English\)](#)

[Community Resource Directory \(Spanish\)](#)

Ad - Advocacy

A - Autism

B - Behavior

G - General

L - Legal

M - Medical

S - Support

T - Transition

Military

Ad A B G M S

ABA Across Environments

<https://www.abaacrossenvironments.com/>

(719) 301-9644

Based in Colorado, ABA Across Environments provides therapy for children and adolescents ages 2 to 18 years in Colorado Springs and Wilmington, Delaware. We support individuals with autism, fetal alcohol and drug syndrome, Down's syndrome, ADHD, and emotional behavioral disorders.

A B S

ACES – ABA

<https://www.acesaba.com/locations/colorado-springs>

(719) 301-4088

Providing expert ABA therapy, ACES Colorado Springs, CO is dedicated to helping children with autism grow in a supportive, individualized environment. ACES Colorado Springs, CO is dedicated to providing ABA therapy customized to fit each child's needs. Established in 2009, this center has been a beacon of support in the community.

Ad M S

Ainsley's Angels

<https://ainsleysangels.org/>

Mission: Together, We Shall educate, advocate, and celebrate inclusive communities while connecting everyone through empowerment and belonging.

Promotes inclusion and community awareness, focusing on providing means for others to participate in endurance events.

A M S

Arthritis Foundation – Southern Colorado

<https://www.arthritis.org/>

(719) 520-5711

Since 1948, the Arthritis Foundation has led the fight to conquer arthritis, which now affects nearly 60 million adults and hundreds of thousands of children in the United States as well as their families and loved ones.

B S

Attain ABA Therapy

<https://www.attainaba.com/>

1 (866) 625-4740

A national provider of ABA therapy, Attain possesses the unparalleled ability to equip parents and therapists with every tool, resource, and advantage needed to help their children unlock their true potential — starting with the most powerful and effective clinical expertise and training.



Autism Society – Colorado

<https://www.autismcolorado.org/>

(720) 214-0794

Our mission: We create connections, empowering everyone in the Autism community with the resources needed to live fully.

Our vision: Creating a world where everyone in the Autism community is connected to the support they need, when they need it.



Autism Vision of Colorado

<https://www.autismvisionco.org/>

(719) 210-5895

Autism Vision of Colorado is a 501(c)(3) founded in June 2018. It is comprised of all volunteers. The mission is to educate the community on autism and autism awareness and create a safe place for individuals on the spectrum and their families to meet one another, support one another and advocate within the community. We will work with families to link them to services and empower them on their journey. We believe that transparency is the key to communication within the community. Every voice should be heard and respected. All ideas are welcome. We are all volunteers and treat one another with respect and compassion.



Best Buddies International

<https://www.bestbuddies.org/>

1(800) 892-8339

Best Buddies is the largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people worldwide with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Our programs empower people with IDD to form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure jobs, improve communication and advocacy skills, and live independently, while also offering support for their families.

Best Buddies serves individuals with IDD and their families. The IDD community includes, but is not limited to, people with Down syndrome, autism, Fragile X, Williams syndrome, and other undiagnosed disabilities.



By Your Side

https://byyoursideac.com/autism-therapy-locations/colorado-springs-colorado/?utm_source=GBP&utm_medium=organic

(866) 429-7543

Autism Therapy Services, offering ABA therapy in Colorado Springs, CO, has been dedicated to meeting the needs of individuals and families on the autism spectrum since 2009. We understand that autism is a complex disorder, and effective treatment requires a comprehensive approach specifically designed to meet the needs of the individual, as well as the family.



Care Options for Kids

<https://careoptionsforkids.com/locations/colorado>

(719) 623-5463

We offer in-home, in-school, and in-community ST, OT, and PT. We also assist parents/caregivers in becoming paid caregivers for their child and provide Private Duty Nursing.



Cerebral Palsy Association

<https://cpfamilynetwork.org/resources/resources-guide/cerebral-palsy-association-of-colorado-springs/>

(719) 638-0808

Is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing resource assistance for individuals with cerebral palsy or other neuromotor disorders and their families. We offer assistance for both children and adults with cerebral palsy in the Pikes Peak region.



Cheyenne Village, Inc.

<https://cheyennevillage.org/>

(719) 592-0200

For over 50 years, Cheyenne Village has been dedicated to providing assistance and support to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Every individual served by Cheyenne Village has a personal service plan tailored to their unique needs.



Child Community Services

<http://www.childcommunityservices.org/>

(719) 440-6445

Individual Therapy, Life Skills, Case Management, Girls Group, Parenting Group, LGBTQ Group

Child Community Services addresses the mental health crisis for children and youth through a variety of progressive programs and initiatives.

At Child Community Services, we believe that every child is unique and should be treated with their own individualized plan. In this era of rising suicide rates fighting mental illness requires truly personalized care delivered by experts trained in the complexities of a difficult disease.

Our team is dedicated to committing their time and talents to treating every stage of child mental illness with a collaborative approach and innovative treatment options. At CCS, a child can have access to a multidisciplinary care team that includes a Therapist, Life Skills Specialist, Mental Health Case Manager, or Equine Assisted Therapist dedicated to treating the mental illness. The team will use evidence-based supportive therapies to help children manage symptoms, teach them coping skills, and promote a healthier quality of life.

Our clinicians will take time to understand a child's unique diagnosis and needs. Then, we'll work together to develop an integrative treatment plan tailored specifically to that child.



Child Development Center

<https://www.cdcrehab.com/>

(719) 574-8300

The Child Development Center of Colorado Springs, Inc has been offering quality pediatric rehabilitation services to the Pikes Peak Region since 1988. Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech/Language Therapy services are all available. Children requiring comprehensive services can receive all disciplines in one setting all on the same day.

Therapists at the Center specialize in pediatrics. That is all we do! The Center is able to offer services for autism spectrum disorders, developmental delays, learning problems, speech difficulties, fine and gross (large) motor problems, challenges at school, ADHD/ADD, sports injuries, sensory integration dysfunction, auditory processing challenges, high risk neonatal follow-up, and oral-motor/feeding difficulties . . . just to name a few.



Children's Hospital – Colorado

<https://www.childrenscolorado.org/>

(719) 305-1234

Specializing in the big things, little things and everything in between.



Colorado Legal Services – C/S ofc https://www.probono.net/oppsguide/organization.135364-colorado_legal_services_colorado_springs_office (719) 471-0380

Colorado Legal Services is a non-profit corporation that has assisted persons with low income and seniors in the State of Colorado for over 85 years. The mission of Colorado Legal Services is to provide meaningful access to high quality, civil legal services in the pursuit of justice for as many low-income persons and members of vulnerable populations throughout Colorado as possible.



Colorado Office of Employment First <https://employmentfirstcolorado.org/> (303) 981-1236

Elevating equitable employment for all people with disabilities through collaboration, systems innovation, and training excellence.

Employment First is an unwavering belief that all people have valuable contributions to offer the workforce, regardless of the type or significance of disability, and have the right to pursue their employment goals.

Employment First is also an effort taken on by states to change systems and shift culture to create a reality of meaningful work for all people with disabilities, including people with significant and complex disabilities. In an Employment First state, the opportunity to work for competitive wages needs to be provided as the first and primary option by taxpayer-funded program staff.



Colorado Peak https://peak.my.site.com/peak/s/peak-landing-page?language=en_US

Colorado PEAK is the place to apply for and manage benefits online
Use PEAK to apply for or manage your medical, SNAP, cash or other State of Colorado benefits.



Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind <https://csdb.colorado.gov/> (719) 578-2100

CSDB currently serves students and their families who are deaf, blind, or both. CSDB also provides outreach services to support students, families, and school districts throughout Colorado and coordinates the Colorado Home Intervention Program (CHIP) that serves deaf and hard of hearing students from birth to three years old within their home.



Colorado Springs Down Syndrome Association <https://csdsa.org/> (719) 633-1133

Providing support and encouragement to families of children with Down syndrome...that is our primary mission here at the Colorado Springs Down Syndrome Association (CSDSA)!

A small group of parents founded the CSDSA in 1989, and more than 30 years later we remain dedicated to encouraging fellowship and sense-of-community amongst our families. We continue our mission to inform and empower our families while promoting community awareness of the dignity, promise, and potential of all people with Down syndrome. The CSDSA is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization serving Colorado Springs and its surrounding communities.



Colorado Springs Therapeutic Recreation Program <https://coloradosprings.gov/trp> (719) 385-6964

The Therapeutic Recreation Program (TRP) provides opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities to acquire skills that enable them to participate in leisure experiences of their choice and enhance their abilities to function within a community setting. The TRP staff provides advocacy and inclusion support for individuals with disabilities to enjoy general recreation activities, as well as specialized therapeutic programs that include opportunities in the following core areas:

- Arts and culture;
- Sports, fitness and aquatics;
- Social enrichment;
- Community integration/leisure education;
- and outdoor adventures.

GMS

Colorado Visiting Nurse Association <https://vnacolorado.org/>

(719) 577-4448

As Colorado's leading home health care agency, we know that caring for a loved one with an illness can take an emotional toll on a family, and we believe that family members, like you, have enough to worry about. You shouldn't have to worry about making the right choice of care provider too.

AdBGST

Common Roots <https://commonrootscos.com/>

(719) 578-1227

Common Roots LLC is an organization committed to supporting people with disabilities living and working in the Pikes Peak region. The focus of Common Roots has been to assist individuals with achieving a true person-centered life. (formerly Community Outreach, Inc.)

BMS

Connections Counseling <https://www.connectionsounselingcos.com/>

(719) 428-5125

We offer in-person and virtual individual therapy to adolescents and adults, as well as couples and family therapy. We provide traditional talk therapy using various modalities, as well as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) . We understand that flexibility is important to our clients, which is why we offer a variety of scheduling options to best fit your needs.

M

Cover All Coloradans <https://hcpf.colorado.gov/coverallcoloradans>

1 (800) 221-3943

Thank you for your partnership in the development and launch of Cover All Coloradans to expand health coverage to children and pregnant people, no matter what their immigration status is. We remain committed to providing pathways to health coverage for all Coloradans.

GS Crossfire Ministries <https://www.crossfireministries.org/>

(719) 447-1806

No-Cost Groceries, clothing and care for the times when life presses in.

AdGMS

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation <https://www.cff.org/chapters/rocky-mountain-chapter>

(303) 296-6610

Have you or your child just been diagnosed with CF? We know it can feel hard to know where to start, so we've collected a few key items to help you. We welcome you to this amazing community.

AdLS

Department of Human Services <https://humanservices.elpasoco.com/>

(719) 636-0000

The Department of Human Services (DHS) strives to protect our most vulnerable citizens while providing efficient access to the services provided by local, state and federal governments. We aim to keep families together and help them to become self sufficient. We work closely with community organizations to stretch the safety net we provide even further.



Disability Law Colorado: <https://disabilitylawco.org> (303) 722-0300 or (800) 288-1376

This organization serves as the state's Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system, safeguarding the legal rights of individuals with disabilities. Their primary focus is ensuring that students with disabilities are treated fairly and protected from discrimination.



Diversus Health (formerly AspenPointe) <https://diversushealth.org/> (719) 572-6100

We provide high-quality mental and behavioral health care and counseling in multiple Colorado communities, one person or family at a time. Our exceptional health care services focus on assisting you with counseling, psychiatry, addiction, and crisis. Feel confident in the care you receive. Contact us to book an appointment and get started today.



Division of Vocational Rehabilitation <https://dvr.colorado.gov/> (719) 635-3585

Are you a person with a disability who wants to work, is looking for a job or needs help keeping your current job? If so, DVR is the right place for you!

We believe that anyone with a disability who wants to work, can work, regardless of the type or severity of their disability. We provide a wide variety of **individualized services** for people with disabilities. These services may allow you to reach your employment goals and live independently.



Dungarvin <https://www.dungarvin.com/> (719) 632-5205

At Dungarvin, we are committed to our mission of "Respecting and Responding to the Choices of People in Need of Supports". Because each individual we support is unique, we strive to provide services that are tailored to each person's own hopes, dreams, goals and needs. Many people need some assistance to live full and productive lives. Even when the person lives with family members, there can be a need for additional support, such as taking the person out into the community or providing assistance with daily personal and household tasks. Dungarvin is a company that specializes in these types of support services.



Empowered Care LLC [Home | EC](#) (719) 465-3905

Our comprehensive range of services are designed to support personal growth, community involvement, and workplace success so that they can lead fulfilling and independent lives.



Envida <https://envidacares.org/> (719) 301-6870

Envida's mission is to promote access and support independent living with dignity. Our vision is to lead the nation in integrating services that connect people to community. We have proudly served the Colorado Springs community for nearly 50 years, providing transportation in our community. The name envida connotes together in life and reflects

our commitment to our clients and their ever-changing needs. Always adapting, we also offer homecare services to more than 100 clients and caregivers.

Ad G M S

Epilepsy Foundation of Colorado/Wyoming <https://www.epilepsy.com/local/colorado> (888) 378-9779

We connect people to healthcare providers, support networks, and a listening ear. We educate schools, employers, and the community at large to reduce stigma and raise awareness. We empower people affected by epilepsy with knowledge, resources, and advocacy to live their best lives.

Military

Exceptional Family Member Program <https://carson.armymwr.com/programs/acs/exceptional-familymember-program> (719) 526-4590

The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) provides comprehensive support to Family members with special needs. An Exceptional Family Member is a Family member with any physical, emotional, developmental, or intellectual disorder that requires special treatment, therapy, education, training, or counseling, and meets the eligibility criteria. EFMP pertains to active-duty Soldiers, US Army Reserve Soldiers in the Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Program, and Army National Guard AGR personnel serving under authority of 10 USC or 32 USC. Department of the Army Civilians do not enroll in the program.

Ad A B G M S

Family Support Center <https://www.fscautism.com/> (719) 540-2108

We are the premier therapy clinic for children with Autism in Southern Colorado. At Family Support Center, we embrace a multidisciplinary approach to care in order to achieve the highest level of support and outcomes for success. Our team of ABA therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists work together in order to come up with the most comprehensive plan for your child. With all of the disciplines working closely on a daily basis, we can ensure carryover of all goals and strategies throughout your child's day.

Ad L M S

Family Voices Colorado <https://www.familyvoicesco.org/> 1(303)-877-1747

Family Voices Colorado understands both the private and public health care and disability systems from both a family experience and professional perspective.

Whether you need help identifying resources or programs, moving beyond red tape through an appeal or grievance process, or accessing additional funding sources to pay for needed therapies, procedures, or equipment, we can provide the information and navigation you need to get answers to your questions.

We work with families, health care providers, professionals and community systems to make sure children with special health care needs have access to the care and the support they need to live life to the fullest.

Call us today if you need help navigating public or private health insurance, primary care or medical specialists, HCBS (Home and Community Based Service) Waivers, Early Intervention, school-based services, Community Centered Boards, guardianship issues, transition from pediatric to adult health care services, or other related systems.

G

Feel the Beat <https://www.feelthebeat.dance/> (303) 816-8683

Feel the Beat is a Colorado-based nonprofit and dance studio dedicated to making the experience of music possible for all including those who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and/or with or without disabilities. With our bone-conduction

dance floor, students are able to feel sound through vibrational energy that embodies the experience of music in an inclusive platform.



Firefly Autism

<https://fireflyautism.org/#>

(303) 759-1192

OUR MISSION

Empowering autistic individuals experiencing access barriers to thrive through personalized programs and fostering supportive community connections.

- Empowering individuals to reach their potential.
- Supporting growth and independence with care.
- Building lasting connections with families and communities.
- Innovating personalized, strength-based programs.



Fitness to Drive

<https://www.fitnessdrive.org/>

(719) 231-6657

Fitness To Drive provides specialized occupational therapy services for driver safety. Each member of our team cares about our mission of finding solutions for personal mobility. All of our driving instructors are licensed occupational therapists who have undergone extensive training to become Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialists. We have decades of experience working with individuals with physical disabilities, cognitive disabilities, and/or learning challenges. We understand that personal mobility enables independence in our society and our goal is to help you find the best outcome for your situation.



Foundation for Successful Living

<https://www.thefsl.org/>

(719) 227-3939

FSL empowers individuals with disabilities to discover their passions, participate in their communities, live their unique purpose, and move toward independence and freedom.

By cultivating personal relationships, creating meaningful opportunities, and providing individual support, we empower our clients and their families to live lives they never dreamed possible.



Goodwill Industries

<https://goodwillcolorado.org/services/>

(719) 635-4483

Goodwill of Colorado offers a wide selection of customized, innovative and supportive programs and services for individuals, families and businesses—whether seeking care for loved ones with developmental or aging challenges, looking for personal job assistance or advancement, or wanting to bolster your business with professional staffing and administrative support.



Headstart (CPCD)

<https://www.cpcdheadstart.org/>

(719) 635-1536

Prepares children for success in school and in life by providing excellent comprehensive early childhood services in partnership with diverse families and the community.



Health Department – El Paso County <https://www.elpasocountyhealth.org/>

(719) 578-3199

Public Health provides a broad spectrum of services to address ongoing and critical public health and safety issues.



Health First Colorado (Medicaid)

<https://www.healthfirstcolorado.com/>

1 (800) 221-3943

- Health First Colorado coverage gives you 3 kinds of basic benefits: 1. Physical health benefits, 2. Dental benefits, 3. Behavioral health (mental health and substance use benefits).
- For some services, you may have a [co-pay](#). A co-pay is a fixed amount you pay when you get a covered health care service. You never have to pay more than the co-pay for covered services.



Help Autism Center

<https://helpautism.org/>

(719) 301-6507

Since 2005: Helping families with autism and other special needs, find the resources for services and therapies. Assist public, private organizations, and companies coordinate services and therapies. Goals: Help Autism Service Dogs program and open the Help Autism Center Ranch



Job Corps

<https://enroll.jobcorps.gov>

1 (800) 733-5627

Generally, Job Corps students:

- are 16 through 24 years old
- are low-income individuals
- meet citizenship, residency, DACA or other approved status requirements
- meet background requirements
- are ready and motivated to succeed



Joint Initiatives

<https://www.jointinitiatives.org/>

(719) 630-0927

Joint Initiatives for Youth + Families (JI) is a nonprofit 501(c)3 located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, serving the Pikes Peak region. JI's work centers on empowering individuals to advance a safe, healthy, and flourishing community by preventing, reducing, intervening, and solving the social problems when families have limited (or fragmented) access to thrive. JI leads the charge to bring over 60 different community organizations, local leaders, and government agencies to the table, working collaboratively to solve data-driven community issues embraced with a collective impact focus.

JI's three primary programs offer a range of services for youth (0-21) and their families, extending from a preventive focus to more intensive intervention services.

JI is the umbrella organization for three statutorily required state councils: the Early Childhood Council (Alliance for Kids), the Interagency Oversight Group (IOG), and the Juvenile Services and Planning Committee (JSPC). The IOG and JSPC have joined to become the REACH Committee.



KPC Respite Center

<https://www.lfsrm.org/KPC-Respite-Center>

(719) 634-5439

Provides temporary crisis and planned childcare for infants and young children at no cost to parents or guardians. KPC Respite Center is available to give parents a break when they need it most. Children are cared for at the KPC

Respite Center by qualified professionals and volunteers. Care is provided for children ranging from 3 months to 6 years old.

A
Lacuna Autism <https://lacuna-autism.com/locations/colorado/colorado-springs-north/> 1 (888) 611-0870

Lacuna Autism Services provides expert ABA therapy in North Colorado Springs, helping children with autism develop essential life skills and thrive in everyday environments. Our experienced clinicians offer evidence-based, individualized care that's responsive to your child's unique needs—right here in your community. ABA services are delivered in a variety of settings—including in-clinic, at home, in schools, and in the community—based on clinical recommendations from a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). This flexible model allows us to deliver services in the setting where they will be most effective for your child's progress and best fit your family's needs. Our individualized ABA therapy is designed to engage children in a meaningful and significant way while supporting long-term developmental progress.

Ad M S

March of Dimes <https://www.marchofdimes.org/> (719) 473-9981

We're committed to ending preventable maternal health risks and death, ending preventable preterm birth and infant death and closing the health equity gap for all families. Learn more about our legacy and impact here.

M S

Memorial Hospital <https://www.uchealth.org/locations/uchealth-memorial-hospital-central/> (719) 635-5000

UCHealth Memorial Hospital Central in Colorado Springs is an award winning, 413-bed hospital that has been recognized nationally for quality, research and outcomes.

We provide a comprehensive list of inpatient and outpatient services at our Central and North facilities, as well as at multiple outpatient locations.

M S

Mentally Strong [Mental Health Care Colorado Springs | Build Mental Strength](#) (719) 493-9555

At Mentally STRONG, we provide top-tier expert mental health care in Colorado Springs that empowers individuals of all ages with tailored treatments.

Created by [Dr. Cristi Bundukamara](#), the Mentally STRONG Method blends Cognitive Behavioral Techniques with an organizational approach to enhance mental strength. This method increases awareness of how thoughts influence behavior and helps challenge negative thinking. It's adaptable, with cognitive and behavioral components, making it useful in various scenarios.

G S

Mercy's Gate <https://mercysgatecs.org/get-help/direct-services/housing-assistance> (719) 277-7470

Housing Assistance

The Housing Assistance program is dedicated to providing aid to individuals and families who are experiencing difficulties in paying their monthly rent or mortgage. Our aim is to ensure that you are able to remain in your home, given the high costs and challenges that come with being evicted. Additionally, we recognize the importance of maintaining stability for children by enabling them to stay in the same school, and helping you avoid the expenses associated with moving into new housing or the anxiety-inducing process of relocating to a shelter.

Military

Military One Source [Support for Military Personnel & Families | Military OneSource](#) 1 (800) 342-9647

It is your 24/7 gateway to trusted information, resources and confidential help. When MilLife happens, it's your "first line of support" — giving service members and military families tools to stay well and thrive.



Muscular Dystrophy Association

<https://www.mda.org/>

1(800) 572-1717

Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) is the #1 voluntary health organization in the United States for people living with muscular dystrophy, ALS, and related neuromuscular diseases. For 75 years, MDA has led the way in accelerating research, advancing care, and advocating for the support of our families.

MDA's mission is to empower the people we serve to live longer, more independent lives.



Need Project

<https://needproject.org/>

We exist to support parents and caregivers of those with special needs with local resources.

As parents ourselves, we understand the unique challenges caregivers face. Many parents struggle to find the right care and services for their children. We work with local service providers to help you understand your options and connect you with the best available care in your community.

S Night Lights

<https://nightlightskids.org/about-us/>

(720) 819-6657

A family may participate in Night Lights if the child(ren) has/have one or more of the following:

- A diagnosis from a medical provider
- Medical documentation including but not limited to
 - An IFSP, IEP, 504 from the county and/or school district
 - Records from a physician
- Developmental, cognitive, emotional, and/or physical disabilities
- A sibling (ages 1 month to 13 years) of a child with special needs that participates in Night Lights
- Night Lights does not require waiver, insurance, or respite vouchers.
- Because it is important that families have access to respite care, there is never any charge.
- Respite care is provided one Friday each month from 6:30 pm to 10:00 pm in a group setting
- The kids enjoy activities such as gross motor, sensory play, free play, arts and crafts, pet therapy, entertainment, movies and snacks.
- Each family does an interview with the Leadership Team prior to attending Night Lights to make sure their needs can be met.
- A registered nurse is present at all Night Lights respite events and all of the volunteers are background checked.
- Night Lights Inc is a Christian-based organization. Families and volunteers of all backgrounds are welcome and encouraged to participate in Night Lights and are valued. At no time is discrimination of any kind allowed.



Our House, Bright Futures

<https://ourhouseinc.org/>

(719) 477-0109

We believe that all individuals with disabilities have the right to be treated with dignity, grow to their full potential, and enjoy personal interests in an atmosphere of safety, respect, and integrity. Day and Residential programs available.



Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP)

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/pep>

(720) 237-4600 or
(303) 866-6943

The Exceptional Student Services Unit at CDE plans conferences throughout the year that are family-centered and designed to offer support, information, and education to parents and professionals who are Colorado residents. Parents Encouraging Parents (abbreviated as PEP,) are non-specific disability conferences based on commonalities, not diagnoses.



Parent Guidance

<https://parentguidance.org/>

We offer education and therapeutic support to empower and give you hope as you support your child's mental health.



Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

<https://coloradosprings.gov/PRCS>

(719) 385-5940

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is the steward of a diverse park system that enriches the community through healthy, active opportunities that engage and inspire.



PBS Positive Behavior Supports Corp.

https://www.teampbs.com/about.aspx?_gl=1*kvws1h*_up*MQ..*_gs*MQ..&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIgdPlopu3lAMVHTuHAX3z1CHNEAAYASAAEgKu_vD_BwE&gbraid=0AAAAADkZ_9aNaTuMpUTPnvfuPvdAKni6- 1(855) 832-6727. ext 5156

With engaging support, Positive Behavior Supports Corp. offers person-centered ABA therapy to help individuals and their families do more activities, go more places, and achieve more goals. PBS Corp. provides the highest standard of care for the client in home, school, and community settings.

We understand that navigating the world of ABA can be confusing which is why Team PBS prioritizes support for our caregivers in addition to the focus individual.



PEAK Parent Center

<https://www.peakparent.org/>

(719) 531-9400

PEAK Parent Center provides training, information and technical assistance to equip families of children birth through twenty-six including all disability labels with strategies to advocate successfully for their children.

Includes an **Early Childhood Resource Library** <https://www.peakparent.org/content/early-childhood-resource-library/>



Pikes Peak Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)

<https://www.ppbores.org/>

(719) 570-7474

We support the educational priorities of school districts and their communities through collaboration, effective innovation and quality services.



Pikes Peak Library District<https://ppld.org/>

(719) 531-333

Thanks to taxpayer funding, the Library cultivates spaces for belonging, personal growth, and strong communities via 14 facilities, mobile library services, and a large online hub of resources and services that are inclusive and welcoming to all. We strive to make our physical and digital spaces safe and respectful for diverse voices, perspectives, and pursuits; to foster community dialogue and connections; and to help people achieve their goals and dreams in life.

**Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center** <https://peakradar.com/organization/pikes-peak-therapeutic-riding-center/>

(719) 495-3908

Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center enhances and improves the lives of people with disabilities and special needs in the Pikes Peak Region through equine-assisted activities and therapy.

**PPSC Aspire program**<https://www.pikespeak.edu/landing-pages/aspire.php> (719) 502-3101

Welcome to the ASPIRE (Achieving Success through Personalized Inclusive Real-World Education) Scholars Program at Pikes Peak State College! Our goal is to foster an inclusive, supportive, and empowering environment where students of all abilities can thrive academically, socially and professionally. We are excited to support you on this journey of personal and academic growth.

**Resonate – Music Therapy**<https://www.resonatemt.com/>

(719) 354-0893

“Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional.”

Resonate Music Therapy offers music services to children and adults in Colorado Springs. We offer music therapy sessions and music lessons for individuals and groups. Music therapy can help clients achieve a wide range of emotional, communication, and social goals. Our music lessons provide a supportive environment for learning a new instrument.

**Riseup Fellowship**<https://www.rup.org/>

(719) 447-9333

Since 1973, Riseup Fellowship, a non-profit organization, has created inclusive residential, academic, and community spaces for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and neurodiversity. With encouragement and affirmation, Riseup helps people improve upon existing skills, develop new skills, and become more independent and self-assured.

Programs are available for young people ages five through twenty-one, and adult programs serve ages twenty-one and over. Given this diversity, we offer a variety of services and support.

**Ronald McDonald House**<https://rmhcsoutherncolorado.org/>

(719) 471-1814

At 25,000 square feet, the fully accessible Ronald McDonald House® provides a warm, safe, clean and friendly environment for up to twenty families per night. With two kitchens, oversized dining and living rooms, laundry facilities and indoor and outdoor play areas for children, our House is a home-away-from-home for families in need.

Best practices are reflected in all of the programs and services provided by the Ronald McDonald House® that serves approximately 650 families annually.

Families are thankful that our House keeps them close to the treating hospitals, while also within walking distance to fitness centers, John Venezia Community Park, markets and area restaurants.



Sandstone Care

<https://www.sandstonecare.com/locations/colorado-springs-mental-health/>

1 (888) 901-8848

When mental health challenges disrupt your daily life, you need treatment that gets results. Sandstone Care's outpatient Mental Health Center in Colorado Springs provides evidence-based treatment services in an outpatient setting, which means you can get high-quality care without putting your life on hold.

Our Mental Health Colorado Springs center serves teens and young adults (ages 18-30) and maintains a low-client-to-high-staff ratio. Here, you'll work closely with experienced behavioral health providers who treat a range of mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

Whether you need 12 weeks of intensive outpatient programming (IOP) or 4 weeks of partial hospitalization programming (PHP), our outpatient treatment center can help. Give us a call today — you'll be feeling like yourself again in no time.



School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP)

<https://www.asd20.org/programs/swap/>

Michelle Casner, (719) 234-1377 - Morgan Markewich, (719) 234-1369

The purpose of SWAP is to assist young adults in making the transition from school to employment, provide successful employment outcomes, increase community linkages, and new patterns of service for young adults within all categories of disabilities. The program's goals include:

- Building on current transition planning efforts;
- Creating a career pathway through pre-employment transition services;
- Filling the case management gap for the targeted population; and
- Supporting collaboration between DVR and local school districts/BOCES.

SWAP is intended to provide employment-related assistance to young adults with disabilities, who are experiencing mild to moderate barriers to employment. Disabilities can include but are not limited to physical, emotional, or learning disabilities. SWAP provides opportunities for young adults to practice and improve workplace skills, consider their career interests, and obtain real world work experience that will lead to competitive, integrated employment in today's high demand industries.



Shriners Children's

<https://www.shrinerschildrens.org/en>

(855) 236-9944 (out of CO)

Shriners Children's has been providing hope and healing to children for more than 100 years. Our compassionate, prestigious doctors and care teams are committed to excellence in pediatric care.



Special Kids Special Families

<https://sksfcolorado.org/>

(719) 447-8983

To PROMOTE, STRENGTHEN and SUPPORT individuals with disabilities, their families and caregivers.

Special Kids Special Families (SKSF) is a Colorado non-profit 501(c)3 organization. SKSF was founded in 1998 to provide respite and care for children and adults with disabilities. Programs offer community support services to families that are designed to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities throughout their life span.

S

Springs Family Respite Care

<https://springsfamilyrespitecare.com/about/>

(719) 354-7560

Providing in-home client respite care services for the Colorado Springs and surrounding areas. Dedicated to helping ensure your loved ones are cared for as family. Respite care staff are non-licensed health care professionals that provide care at the client or caregiver's place of residence.

B G S

Stable Strides

<https://www.stablestrides.org/>

(719) 896-9675

Stable Strides provides equine-assisted mental health therapy for 7 and up. Specializing in depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and drug usage in the home. She also works with the neurodivergent population. Accepts insurance including Medicaid.

Ad G S L

The Arc Pikes Peak Region

<https://www.thearcppr.org/>

(719) 471-4800

We are informed, experienced and passionate defenders of the rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We provide services throughout life, from birth to death. Our services are free of charge. Advocacy Programs, Guardian Program & Education supports.

Ad A B G L S T

The Independence Center

<https://www.theindependencecenter.org/>

(719) 471-8181 TDD (719) 358-2513

Founded in 1987, The IC is a nonprofit organization that helps people with disabilities create independence by leveraging their own unique abilities. We are the home of civil rights for people with disabilities. Working with individuals, their families, and the community, we create independence so that all may thrive.

The IC's Deaf & Hard of Hearing program is designed to help aid the Deaf/HoH community to participate fully in the Pikes Peak region. Our Deaf/HoH Specialist can provide support both on an individual level, helping Deaf/HoH individuals locate resources (including grants, vouchers, or assistive technology such as video phones) and navigate applications or paperwork, and on a systemic level by advocating for policies and programs that remove systemic barriers and facilitate wider inclusion.

Ad A B G S T

The Resource Exchange

<https://www.tre.org/>

(719) 380-1100

It is our honor and privilege to serve approximately 13,000 infants, children, teenagers, adults, and seniors in El Paso, Pueblo, Teller, and Park counties. Advocating for independence and inclusion, TRE partners with children and adults who have a variety of disabilities, delays, mental health or long-term care needs. We do this using a person-centered approach in coordinating care, promoting choices, and collaborating with community partners.

TRE has relationships with over 200 community partners to which we refer our families. Our partners join with TRE to increase opportunities for the people we serve.

**The Resource Exchange - Break Time**<https://www.tre.org/services/break-time/>

(719) 380-1100

3 mos to 21 years

Break Time is TRE's longest-running respite program, providing respite sessions on scheduled Friday nights and Saturday afternoons. Parents and caregivers can rest assured knowing that their children are under direct supervision of a medical professional, experienced behavior specialist, and other professional staff. Each child receives one-on-one care and attention from dedicated volunteers, most of which are cadets from the United States Air Force Academy, students from area colleges, local law enforcement, and other community helpers. All take pride in volunteering their time and efforts to make every Break Time a fun, safe experience.

**The Resource Exchange – Early Childhood Services**<https://www.tre.org/services/early-intervention/>

(719) 577-9190

Based on what is best for your child and your family, our hybrid model provides parent-child coaching using a combination of in-person services within the child's home and telehealth online. Through both methods, TRE promotes learning in comfortable and familiar settings, using your child's activities and routines as tools to learn. Additionally, we connect parents to evidence-based classes to build a strong social-emotional foundation for your child.

**Thrive Psychological Solutions**<https://www.thrivepsychologicalsolutions.net/>

(719) 284-1288

At Thrive, we believe that children's development is interwoven. For that reason, all of our assessments are conducted through a multi-disciplinary team. It is important to us to understand your whole child by considering their environment, personality, genetics, relationships, and experiences. As a team, we have extensive experience working with young children across all of the places they live, learn, and grow. We know that when you nourish the roots of development, your child is able to THRIVE!

**UCCS – Disability Services**<https://disability.uccs.edu/>

(719) 255-3354

Disability Services provides leadership to the University by facilitating equal access to all institutional opportunities for students with documented disabilities, temporary medical and pregnancy-related conditions through accommodations and individual services in line with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) and other current legislation.

We provide institution-wide advisement, consultation, and training on disability-related topics, including legal and regulatory compliance, universal design, and disability scholarship. We collaborate with our campus community to identify and remove attitudinal, physical, and digital barriers.

**UCCS Inclusive Services**<https://inclusiveservices.uccs.edu/>

(719) 255-4214

The Office of Inclusive Services (OIS) at UCCS is committed to providing equitable and meaningful inclusive access to university life for people with intellectual disabilities.

The OIS works toward equal participation in academic, social, independent living, and career experiences on campus and in the surrounding community. Upon completion, students will transfer skills learned at college back into their

community. As students with intellectual disabilities participate with equal access, the communities they engage in will transform to redefine inclusion.



Woven Care (formerly Shandy Clinic)

<https://www.wovencare.com/>

(719) 597-0822

Woven Care is an established leader in pediatric therapy, serving Colorado for more than 15 years, and dedicated to celebrating and empowering children at all stages of development. We're on a mission to change the world by helping every child achieve their full potential.

We provide comprehensive, coordinated, interdisciplinary, pediatric care and therapy services, focused on addressing the unique needs of every child.

S

Zach's Place https://sksfcolorado.org/programs/children-family-services/zachs-place/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=gbp_zachs_place

(719) 447-8983

The Zach's Place Purpose

We serve special needs and typical children. Strong, healthy families are at the core of our goals and values. Zach's Place at the Laurie Hillyard Family Center is the **only** licensed childcare facility in the Pikes Peak Region that offers specialized child and respite care for youth with disabilities ages 2.5 – 18. We provide a break and support that parents need, while giving the child a chance for fun and challenging activities in a learning environment. Moreover, we believe that an inclusive learning environment allows both special needs and typical children to benefit from shared environments and experiences.

Glossary of Terms

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) - A Federal law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in the areas of employment, public transportation, services provided by state and local government, services and accommodations offered by private businesses, and telecommunication access for people with communication impairments. These regulations require that public schools provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all school activities.

ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION - A physical education program designed to meet the special needs of individual students with disabilities who need modifications to the school's regular physical education program, or a specially designed program.

ADVOCATE - A person who speaks on his/her own behalf or on behalf of others to protect their rights and ensure access to services.

ANNUAL GOAL - A measurable outcome that a student can reasonably achieve in one year and written in the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Progress toward meeting each annual goal must be documented and shared with parents/guardians as determined in the IEP.

ANNUAL REVIEW - The annual meeting of the IEP Team to review a student's progress and revise the goals and services listed in the IEP.

APPROPRIATE - Able to adequately address/meet identified needs.

ASSESSMENTS - Tests given to a student by qualified professionals to determine the student's current academic levels in such areas as math, reading, and writing.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (AT SERVICES) - Assist an individual or a family in selecting, acquiring, maintaining, or using assistive technology.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION PLAN (BIP) - A BIP includes practical and specific strategies and positive supports designed to increase or reduce certain behaviors.

CHILD FIND - A system of identifying children birth to age 21 that may have a disability or need special education services.

DUE PROCESS - A legal process to resolve a disagreement about the identification, evaluation, placement, or provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for a child with a disability and which takes place in a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ).

EVALUATION - A review of assessments and other information, collected from a variety of sources to include outside information/evaluations provided by parents/guardians, used to determine a student's eligibility for, or dismissal from, special education services. Evaluations determine what supports and services a student receives to access their educational environment.

EXTENDED EVIDENCE OUTCOMES (EEOs) - These standards were developed for a very small and specific group of students, those who have been identified with a significant cognitive disability.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR SERVICES (ESY) - Services provided to children during summer break when evidence and predictive factors show that a student would otherwise require an inordinate amount of time to regain previously learned skills.

FACILITATED SPECIAL EDUCATION MEETING - A facilitated Special Education meeting is a meeting that includes an impartial facilitator who promotes effective communication and assists an IEP team in developing an IEP based on the student's needs. The facilitator keeps the team focused on the appropriate development of the IEP while working

through conflicts that arise and ensuring the participation of each IEP team member. The facilitated Special Education meeting includes all the required team members. While most often it is an IEP that the team is developing, facilitation also supports Special Education meetings outside of the IEP development process. For more information on facilitation and the benefits, visit [the IEP Facilitation webpage](https://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/fiep). (<https://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/fiep>)

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE) – Students with a disability have the right to a free appropriate public education which meets their specific educational needs as guaranteed by IDEA.

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT (FBA) - An FBA is a way of understanding why your child may behave in a certain way by looking at a variety of factors, such as social-emotional functioning and triggers in their environment. An FBA will provide information about your child that will be directly helpful in developing a behavioral intervention plan and/or other positive behavioral supports.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA) - The name of the federal law that guarantees qualified children with disabilities the right to a free appropriate public education.

INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION (IEE) - Assessment procedures conducted by a qualified individual who is not employed by the public agency responsible for the education of the student.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) - The legally binding, annually revised document that describes what special education and related services a student is to receive.

IEP TEAM - A multidisciplinary team composed of regular and special education teachers, other professionals, and the parents/guardians of the student. The team is responsible for identifying and evaluating children with disabilities who are in need of special education services; developing services, reviewing progress, and revising an IEP; and determining that the student is no longer a student with a disability.

INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN (IFSP) - A legal document that is developed in collaboration with the family and professionals to describe the services provided to an eligible infant or toddler (0 – 3 yrs) and their family.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE) - Least Restrictive Environment means that: (1) To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and (2) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the general educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general educational classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION – A formal decision about whether a student’s conduct leading to a suspension of more than 10 days was a manifestation of the child’s disability or a result of the failure to implement the student’s IEP. A manifestation determination is required if a student is suspended for more than 10 days. This constitutes a significant change to a student’s IEP placement.

MEDIATION - This is the process of having a trained person try to help parent/guardians and the school system reach an agreement.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM - Describes a team approach involving specialists in more than one area, to get a complete picture of a student's needs.

NONPUBLIC PLACEMENT - Parent/guardians may choose to pay for their student with disabilities to attend a private school yet still access some special education services from the local public school system through the IEP process. If appropriate public services as determined by the IEP can't be provided, the school system must attempt to secure services and pay for those services through a private program.

PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE - The Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance statement (PLAAFP, or “present levels”) is a **key part of your child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP)**. The very

first PLAAFP for your child describes their skills and abilities based on their initial special education evaluation. The PLAAFP should cover all areas of development where your child may need support. Some examples are:

Academic skills—counting, pre-reading, pre-writing

Daily living or self-help skills—dressing, eating, using the bathroom

Social skills—playing with friends

Behavior

Sensory skills—hearing, seeing

Communication skills—talking, listening

Mobility—getting around in school and the community

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS - Interventions intended to reduce inappropriate behavior and teach a student appropriate behaviors/skills.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS - Procedural safeguards are a set of legal protections under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that ensure parents of children with disabilities can participate in decisions regarding their child's education. They provide parents with the right to receive prior notice of changes, give informed consent, and challenge decisions they disagree with through dispute resolution processes.

RE-EVALUATION - Once a student becomes eligible to receive special education services, a mandatory reevaluation occurs after three years to determine if the student remains eligible for special education services. A re-evaluation can occur earlier than three years if the student's needs change or if the student has made significant progress. A re-evaluation must occur before exiting a student from Special Education.

REFERRAL - The process of requesting an evaluation to determine if a student is eligible for special education services.

RELATED SERVICES - Services (documented in the IEP) that must be provided for a student who qualifies for special education in order to benefit from their educational program, i.e. transportation, speech/occupational/physical therapy/audiologist/social or emotional skill services, etc.

RESIDENTIAL STUDENT CARE FACILITY SERVICES - Educational services provided to a student in a state licensed residential/school facility where a student is living due to the intensive needs of the student.

SCREENING - Screening is the process of reviewing a student's educational situation to see if interventions should be attempted before initiating a referral for special education.

SECTION 504 - A federal anti-discrimination law that requires public schools to provide educational accommodations and curricular modifications to students with disabilities.

SPEECH THERAPY - A planned program provided by a Speech and Language Therapist/Pathologist to correct or decrease problems with communication, language and/or voice disorders.

SPECIAL EDUCATION – Refers to a range of services, including specifically designed instruction, related services, and supplementary aids, provided to a student determined to have a disability that impacts their access to education. The services are individualized to meet the educational needs of each student.

SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS & SERVICES - Extra aids & services determined by the IEP team to be essential to a student who qualifies for special education services. This could include, but is not limited to, paraprofessional assistance, adapted curriculum, behavior modification program, or assistive technology.

SWAAC - Any device, product, or piece of equipment that improves functional capabilities of an individual with disabilities such as walking, hearing, seeing, speaking or learning.

Acronyms

A

ABA - Applied Behavior Analysis
ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD/ADHD - Attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
ALP - Advanced Learning Plan
AN – Affective Needs
ASD - Autism Spectrum Disorder
AT - Assistive Technology

B

BCBA - Board Certified Behavior Analyst
BIP - Behavior Intervention Plan
BMHC - Behavior Mental Health Consultant

C

CBA - Curriculum-Based Assessment
CBM - Curriculum-Based Measurement
CBP - Center-based Program
CCSS - Common Core State Standards
CD - Conduct Disorder
CDE - Colorado Department of Education
CEC - Council for Exceptional Children
CFS - Community Family Services
CMAS - Colorado Measures of Academic Success
COALT - Colorado Alternate
COTA - Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant
CP - Cerebral Palsy
CPT – Crisis Prevention Team
CSD – Communication and Social Development

D

DD - Developmentally Delayed
DHS - Department of Human Services
DIBELS - Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
DOD - Department of Defense
DOE - United States Department of Education

E

EBR – Educational Benefit Review
ECE - Early Childhood Education
ECSE - Early Childhood Special Educator
ED – Emotional Disturbance
EFMP - Exceptional Family Member Program
EHCA - Education for all Handicapped Children Act, Public Law 94-142

EI - Early Intervention
ESY - Extended School Year

F

FAPE - Free & Appropriate Public Education
FBA - Functional Behavior Assessment
FERPA - Family Educational Rights Privacy Act

H

HI - Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness
HRS - Health and Rehabilitative Services
HI - Hearing Impaired
HIPAA - The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

I

IAES – Interim Alternative Educational Setting
ID - Intellectual Disability
IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP - Individualized Education Program
ILP - Individualized Learning Plan

J

JTPA - Job Training Partnership Act

L

LDA - Learning Disabilities Association
LEA - Local Education Agency (School Districts or Boards of Cooperative Education Services)
LRE - Least Restrictive Environment

M

MD - Multiple Disabilities
MDR – Manifestation Determination Review
MFLC - Military Family Life Consultant
MTSS - Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports

N

NASP - National Association of School Psychologists
NICHCY - National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

O

OCR - Office of Civil Rights
ODD - Oppositional Defiant Disorder
OHI - Other Health Impairment
OI - Orthopedic Impairment
OSERS - Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

OT - Occupational Therapy/Therapist

P

PARCC - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career

PCS - Permanent Change of Station

PIAT- Peabody Individual Achievement Test

PLAAFP – Present Level of Performance

PT - Physical Therapy/Therapist PTA - Physical Therapist Assistant

R

READ – Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development

RTI – Response to Intervention

S

SDI – Specially Designed Instruction

SEAC - Special Education Advisory Council

SED - Serious Emotional Disability

SID - Sensory Integration Disorder

SLD - Specific Learning Disability

SLI - Speech and Language Impairment

SO - Special Olympics

SOP – Summary of Performance

SLP - Speech and Language Pathologist

SLPA - Speech and Language Pathologist Assistant

SRO - School Resource Officer

SSN - Significant Support Needs

SSS - Office of Student Support Services

SST - Student Support Team

SWAAAC – Statewide Assistive Technology Augmentative Alternative Communication

T

TBI - Traumatic Brain Injury

TRE - The Resource Exchange

V

VAC - Vocational Adjustment Counselor

VI - Visual Impairment, including Blindness

Voc Rehab - Vocational Rehabilitation

W

WISC-IV - Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fourth edition

WISC-V -Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fifth edition

WRAT - Wide Range Achievement Test