

Family Engagement Newsletter

Preparing for the Age of Majority (Legal Adulthood)

By Wendy Overturf

At the age of 18, in the eyes of the law, your child will reach legal adulthood. This means that all rights under special education law go to your child. There are certain steps that a school district needs to take prior to your child reaching 18. Beginning at least one year before the child attains the age of 18, parents and the child both get notices of this transfer of rights to the child. The full legal requirements can be found in [Special Education in Plain Language](#) in the "Transfer of Rights" section.

While this transfer of rights information is important for all parents who have a child with a disability it may be of particular importance for parents who have a child with an intellectual disability. Parents of a child with an intellectual disability may also want to consider some of the following options.

Guardianship

Some parents might want to consider the legal process of guardianship. Guardianship is a process that should be thought about long before the child's 18th birthday. Guardians are appointed for persons who are unable to make decisions about their health, finances and well-being. Parents may need to seek legal assistance for help with the process as only a court can appoint a guardian. If you are seeking more information on guardianship, the State Bar of Wisconsin publishes a detailed [booklet](#) which is available for four dollars. Another resource is an [online informational brochure](#) on The Department of Health Services website that has extensive information about guardianship and the process.

Supported decision-making

Some parents of a child with an intellectual disability may want to investigate supported decision-making. Supported decision-making agreements are an alternative to guardianship and provide an additional option for individuals and families seeking assistance with life decisions. Supported decision-making is a process of supporting and accommodating an adult with a functional impairment to enable the adult to make life decisions, including decisions related to where the adult wants to live, the services, supports, and medical care the adult wants to receive, whom the adult wants to live with, and where the adult wants to work, without impeding the self-determination of the adult. (Wis. Stats. §52.01[6]) Additionally, [Section 115.807\(4\), Wis. Statutes](#), requires the LEA (school district) to provide students and their parents with information on supported decision-making and other alternatives to guardianship. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has developed an [Information Update Bulletin 19.01](#) which may answer some questions related to supported decision-making and the role of the LEA related to this process. The bulletin also has links to additional resources.

WI FACETS has two archived webinars related to supported decision-making. Each webinar offers somewhat different perspective on the topic. Click link to register: [Supported Decision-Making](#) and [Legal Options for Decision Making at Age 18](#).

The Board for People with Developmental Disabilities is sponsoring a free [day-long training](#) on February 28, 2020 in Madison, WI, on supported decision-making.

* This article is for informational purposes only and not intended as legal advice.



Statewide Events

[Supporting Neurodiverse Students Professional Learning System](#)

Regional training sessions, webinars, online discussion groups, book clubs, website resources, a needs assessment with accompanying toolkit and other professional learning opportunities to support educators serving students with disability-related needs in the areas of social and emotional learning including self-regulation, social communication, flexibility, resilience, sensory processing, and executive functioning.

The training system is beneficial to educators supporting students with autism. These trainings are offered at no cost to parents of students with disabilities.

See [flyer](#) for all dates and locations. Upcoming Training Workshops:

[Social Communication Training](#)

Date: February 4, 2020

Location: CESA 5, Portage, WI

[Social Communication Training](#)

Date: February 18, 2020

Location: CESA 2, Whitewater, WI

[Flexibility and Resilience Training](#)

Date: February 25, 2020

Location: CESA 1, Pewaukee, WI

[2020 Adolescent Health Symposium](#)

Annual gathering of educators, youth workers, and health and human service professionals to focus and address key topics in the areas of health education and adolescent wellness. Hosted by UW-Oshkosh and UW-La Crosse.
Date: February 6-7, 2020
Location: Madison, WI

Statewide Events

[Reaching High Expectations: Success for ALL. Technology Rich Solutions for Supporting Inclusive Practices](#)

In collaboration with WI DPI, this conference will feature expertise from CAST trainers and educators who are implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL), who share the mindset and the design principles that are working in professional learning and classroom environments. (CAST is a nonprofit education research and development organization that works to expand learning opportunities for all individuals through UDL). This premier UDL conference will inspire participants to advance, amplify, and accelerate UDL in Wisconsin and in the multi-state region. An assistive technology component will be featured. While assistive technology for students with disabilities is decided by an IEP team, many times the technology can be provided as a universal support for any learner.

Date: February 6-7, 2020

Location: Kalahari Resort, WI Dells, WI.

[Webinar Opportunity for Paraprofessionals Supporting Students with on the Job or Work-based Learning](#)

Transition Improvement Grant staff will share technology supports that are currently being utilized on worksites to create positive outcomes for youth. These include low and highly technical accommodations that will increase independence on the job and provide consistent documentation between school and the worksite.

Date: February 11, 2020, 11:45 p.m.-12:30 p.m.

[Save the Date-Wisconsin's Collaborative Leadership Forum Promoting Early Childhood Conference](#)

Date: March 3-5, 2020

Location: Green Bay, WI

[Save the Date!](#)

[Endless Possibilities Conference 2020: A Closer Look at Invisible Disabilities](#)

Date: Friday, August 7, 2020

Location: UW-Whitewater

Registration opens in April.

**Learning
Opportunities**



At Home Learning Strategies

Happy Groundhog's Day—February 2, 2020

[Groundhog Day word search](#) to do with your child.



Valentine's Day is not just a day for your child to show friends and family how much they mean to him — the holiday also provides your little one with wonderful opportunities for authentic reading and writing. Here are several simple and engaging ways to create holiday fun with your child while also building literacy skills.

1. Set Up a Card-Making Station

Encourage your child to easily create — and write — cards for all family and friends by establishing this simple, special space. Begin by gathering card-making supplies and arranging them neatly on a table or desk. You could include:

Colored cardstock pieces, folded to form cards ~ Envelopes ~ Heart stickers ~ Sheets of Valentine's gift wrap or scrapbooking paper ~ Scraps of colored Paper ~ Felt tip marker pens ~ Glue sticks ~ Scissors

For early writers, add some word card prompts including words like "To," "Love," "From" and "Happy Valentine's Day," writing each word clearly on an index card. You might also like to include a checklist of names to help your child spell the names of family members or classmates and assist in future name recognition.

2. Write Acrostic Poems

Acrostic poems are one of the simplest forms of poetry, most are made by using the initial letters of a word as prompts for words or short sentences that describe the word being used. Encourage your child to have a go at creating an acrostic poem with a friend's name your child is giving his Valentine's card to. Here's an example:

Brave
Loyal
Athletic
Kind
Enthusiastic



3. Read to Your Child—[39 Books to Celebrate Valentine's Day](#)



Valentine's Day Math

Check out this [website](#) on how to use boxes of candy hearts to help teach valuable math skills, including counting, sorting, comparing, graphing, fractions, decimals, and percentages.

President's Day—February 17, 2020

Presidents' Day is a public holiday in most US states. This [website](#) has numerous activities that might appeal to a child in the upper elementary grades or middle school.



Online Resources: Intellectual Disabilities



[Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

This website has fact sheets on intellectual disabilities. It also includes links to resources related to infants, toddlers, and school-age children. It offers tips for parents and educators. It also has links to other organizations that support individuals with intellectual disabilities.

[Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#)

This site has information related to eligibility criteria, programming and services, and assessment for students with intellectual disabilities. The website also has a link to alternative testing (essential elements) for students with the most significant intellectual disabilities.)

[Exceptional Parent \(eParent\)](#)

This website had many resources related to children with disabilities. eParent is a 42-year-old, award-winning publishing and communications company. eParent provides practical advice, emotional support, and the most up-to-date educational information for families of children and adults with disabilities and special healthcare needs as well as to the physicians, allied health care professionals, and educational professionals who are involved in their care and development.

[National Down Syndrome Society \(NDSS\)](#)

The mission of the NDSS is to be the national advocate for the value, acceptance, and inclusion of people with Down Syndrome. The vision of NDSS is a world in which all people with Down Syndrome have the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations and become valued members of welcoming communities. Their website gives facts about Down Syndrome, has a section that dispels common misperceptions, and also has numerous links related to advocacy.

[Disability Scoop](#)

According to their website, Disability Scoop is one of the premier sources for Developmental Disability News. While the website provides news related to many disabilities, this link is specifically related to Intellectual Disabilities. There is also the ability to sign up to receive frequent email updates.

[Arc](#)

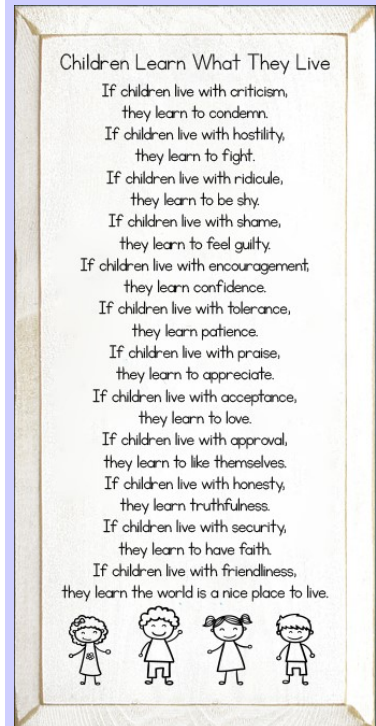
The mission of Arc is to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes. Local chapters provide individual advocacy, programs, services, and supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Information on local, state and national programs is available on the website.

[American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities \(AAIDD\)](#)

AAIDD was founded in 1876, making it the oldest inter-disciplinary professional society with a focus on intellectual disability in the world. Since its inception, AAIDD has produced guidelines naming, defining, and diagnosing the condition known today as "intellectual disability." There are also archived [free webinars](#) on the website.

[National Fragile X Foundation](#)

The National Fragile X Foundation serves all those living with Fragile X with a focus on community, awareness, and research in the pursuit of treatments and a cure. Fragile X syndrome is the most common inherited intellectual and developmental disability.



WI FACETS

Webinars
Trainings
Workshops

Event title links to information & registration for WI FACETS FREE workshops & webinars:

By phone, Sandra: 877-374-0511

All webinars 12:00—1:00 PM
(unless otherwise noted)

[WSEMS-Facilitated IEPs](#)

Date: February 3, 2020

Presenter: Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA 7 and Courtney Salzer, WI FACETS

[Tribal Community and School Liaisons:](#)

[How They Are Helpful](#)

Date: February 5, 2020

Presenter: Eva Kubinski, WI DPI

[IEP 3: Evaluation and Eligibility in the IEP Process](#)

Date: February 11, 2020

Presenter: Jan Serak, Serak Consulting

[Addressing Homelessness & Poverty in the Schools](#)

Date: February 12, 2020

Presenter: Kristine Nadolski and Karen Rice, WI DPI

[Programa De Educación Individualizado \(IEP\) Parte - 1](#)

Date: February 13, 2020

Presenter: Samson Srok, WI FACETS
To register, contact Samson Srok (414) 374-4645, ssrok@wifacets.org

[IEP 4: Reevaluation & Independent Educational Evaluations](#)

Date: February 18, 2020

Presenter: Jan Serak, Serak Consulting

[ABLE Accounts and Financial Advising for Families with Special Needs Children](#)

Date: February 19, 2020

Presenter: Kathleen Oberneder . Crescendo Wealth Management., LLC

[The Importance of Educating At-Risk Youth & Alternate Educational Programming](#)

Date: February 26, 2020

Presenter: Sherry Holly, WI DPI



WEBINAR!

“What’s New and Trending in Special Education Law and Why It Matters”

A free webinar hosted by The Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education ([CADRE](#)).

About the webinar: Tracking court decisions on various special education issues is not easy. For example, what’s been the impact on other courts, if any, of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Endrew F.*? Are courts starting to allow parents, like school districts, to unilaterally change a student’s stay put to a “comparable” placement and, if so, what are the potential implications? When are electronic records “maintained” so as to be deemed “educational records” under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and has technology gotten ahead of FERPA? Presenter [Deusdedi Merced](#) will discuss how courts have addressed these and other issues with an eye towards what trends, if any, appear to be developing and their implications for the field.

Date & Time: February 11, 2020 – 1:30 pm-2:45 pm.

[Register](#) for this *free* webinar!

Research to Read

Stress Among Parents of Children with Intellectual Disability

Gupta, A. and Singhal, N. (2004). Positive Perceptions in Parents of Children with Disabilities. *Asia Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal*, 15(1), pp. 22-35.

[Article Link](#)

ABSTRACT: Diagnosis of intellectual disability in a child provokes a period of disequilibrium followed eventually by an adjustment to life with or without undue stress. There are various stresses which emerge and reemerge over time. Discrepancies between expectations and the performance of the developmentally disabled child continue bringing feelings of grief. The present study examines stress among parents of children with intellectual disability. 102 parents formed the sample of this study, 30 of whom had children without disability. A stress assessment test with internal validity of 0.608 was utilized. This test has two parts: physical and mental, former with 19 items and latter with 21 items. T test was applied to check differences in stress, gender differences, and differences in mental and physical stress. Results show that, most parents of children with intellectual disability experience stress, physical and mental stress are significantly correlated, gender differences in stress experienced occur only in the mental area, and parents have higher mental stress score as compared to physical stress.



Resources for Parents of Special Needs Children

[How Smooth is Your Ride—The Importance of Self Care](#)

- WI FACETS archived webinar

[Dreaming and Re-dreaming with Your Special Needs Child](#)

- An UPCOMING WI FACETS webinar on 3/4/20

This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. *If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, contact: Wendy Overturf at woverturf@wifacets.org.*



Contributions to the Newsletter

Upcoming newsletter topics: March: Early Childhood

April: Autism Spectrum Disorders

May: Mental Health

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources, you may use the attached word document. Send submissions to woverturf@wifacets.org. If unable to access form, you may send information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

***The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter
can be found online at:***

<https://servingongroups.org/resources>



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