

Parent's Perspective

Pennsylvania ConsultLine

No one knows your child as well as you. Whether you are new to special education in Pennsylvania or an old pro, sometimes the system seems confusing, especially when you have a question or a concern. The ConsultLine is designed to assist parents and advocates of children with disabilities or children thought to be disabled. The ConsultLine provides information about school-related concerns, special education regulations, procedural safeguards, and parents' rights. If you have questions concerning your child's disability, special education program, or the laws relating to the provision of services in your child's IEP (Individualized Education Program), the special education specialists at ConsultLine may be able to assist you.

The ConsultLine is designed to assist parents and advocates of children with disabilities or children thought to be disabled. ConsultLine provides information about school-related concerns, special education regulations, procedural safeguards, and parents' rights. If you have questions concerning your child's disability, special education program, or the laws relating to the provision of services in your child's IEP (Individualized Education Program), the special education specialists at ConsultLine may be able to assist you. The ConsultLine provides a direct link to a special education specialist who will:

- ◆ Explain Federal and State laws relating to special education
- ◆ Describe the options that are available to parents
- ◆ Inform parents of procedural safeguards
- ◆ Identify other agencies and support services
- ◆ Describe available remedies and how parents can proceed
- ◆ Provide resources to help parents learn more about their child's disability.

PA ConsultLine 1 800 879-2301

The *Parent Support Center*
of the Northwest Tri-County
Intermediate Unit
(814) 734-5610, ext 7070 or
(800) 677-5610, ext 7070
www.iu5.org/parentsupport
michele_kulesza@iu5.org



Dear Parents,

The Parent Support Center is staffed by myself, Michele Kulesza. I am a parent of a child with special needs and can serve as a facilitator between parents and educators. I have been through many of the same concerns that other parents of children with special needs have been through.

If you need support or have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the Parent Support Center, (814) 734-5610, ext. 7070 or toll-free (800) 677-5610, ext 7070

Michele Kulesza

It is the policy of the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit not to discriminate on the basis of age, religion, sex, race, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, or non-job related disability (including sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), in the admission or access to, or in the provision of services, programs, or employment in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 1604 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 and 11375, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. For information relevant to this policy statement, contact: Dr. Dean Maynard, 504 Coordinator and ADA Coordinator, or Abigail Stafford, Title IX Coordinator 252 Waterford Street, Edinboro, PA 16412 Phone (814) 734-5610 TDD (814) 734-1098

ABLE ACT

On December 19, 2014, President Obama signed the “Achieving a Better Life Experience Act” (ABLE Act) into law, paving the way for people with disabilities to open tax-free savings accounts. Modeled after 529 college savings plans, under the new law qualified persons can save up to \$100,000 without risking eligibility for Social Security, Medicaid, and other government programs. Funds can be used to pay for community living expenses including education, health care, transportation, housing and other expenses.

To be eligible, individuals must have a disability that occurred before the age of 26 and each person may only open one ABLE account. Under current gift-tax limitations, as much as \$14,000 could be deposited annually.

Regulations for The ABLE Act are expected from the US Department of Treasury by June 19, 2015 and each state will have to choose whether or not to offer ABLE Accounts. The Social Security Administration will be developing more details on who qualifies for ABLE Accounts and those eligible should be able to sign up under any state’s plan. The Arc of PA is working with legislators to enact the ABLE Act in Pennsylvania and ensure people with disabilities have access to the accounts.

From The Arc Pennsylvania Message

Winter 2015



ATTENTION PARENTS

If you would like to join the Parent Support Center’s e-mail list, please forward your name, email address, child’s name, child’s disability and school district to michele_kulesza@iu5.org, or call me at (814) 734-5610, ext. 7070. This will enable me to send you any current parent trainings, information, etc. specific to your child’s disability. All information will be used strictly for email purposes.