

# Education & Advocacy Related Links

## Debbie Dobbs Advocacy

### [www.debbiedobbs.com](http://www.debbiedobbs.com)

**AbleData** <http://www.abledata.com> 800-227-0216 AbleData provides objective information about assistive technology products and rehabilitation equipment.

**ADA The Americans with Disabilities Act** <https://www.ada.gov/> Information is provided about the ADA as well as a link to file discrimination complaints.

**The Arc of Georgia** <https://ga.thearc.org/> 888-401-1581 The Arc Georgia works to develop programs and advocate for public policy giving people with I/DD the opportunity to learn, live, and work inclusively in their communities.

**All About Developmental Disabilities** <http://aadd.org/> 404-881-9777 or these and all AADD participants, they offer a broad array of support that covers three critical areas including consulting & planning, individual & family support, advocacy & education services.

**Center for Leadership in Disability** <http://disability.publichealth.gsu.edu/> 404-413-1281 The major activities of CLD include:

- Community education and technical assistance to people with developmental disabilities, family members, service providers, educators, and professionals on a range of topics, such as positive behavior support, person-centered planning, autism, individuals services and supports, and the SafeCare® training model
- Research on implementation of evidence-based practices and the policies that support them
- Disseminating information about services, supports, and resources for people with developmental disabilities, their families, professionals, service providers, and families
- Advocacy and leadership training
- Educational opportunities for graduate students, professionals, and advocates

**Citizen Advocacy of Atlanta and DeKalb.** [www.citizenadvocacyatlantadekalb.org](http://www.citizenadvocacyatlantadekalb.org) 404-523-8849 Volunteer citizen advocates are matched with an individual who has a developmental disability for the purpose of providing protection and advocacy.

**COPAA Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc.** <http://www.copaa.org/> 844-426-7224 They are an independent, nonprofit, §501(c)(3) tax-exempt membership organization of attorneys, advocates, parents and other professionals. COPAA members work to protect special education rights and secure excellence in education on behalf of the 7.1 million children with disabilities in America.

**DisABILITY Link** [www.disabilitylink.org](http://www.disabilitylink.org) 404-687-8890 Provides advocacy skills training and support, disability awareness and sensitivity training, information and referrals, community outreach, education and other services.

**Georgia Advocacy Office, Inc.** [www.thegao.org](http://www.thegao.org)

Toll-Free: 800-537-2329 (TTY)

Fax: 770-414-2948

Email: [infor@thegao.org](mailto:infor@thegao.org)

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Georgia Advocacy Office, Inc. (GAO) is a private non-profit corporation. Their mission is to work with and for oppressed and vulnerable individuals in Georgia who are labeled as disabled or mentally ill to secure their protection and advocacy. GAO's work is mandated by Congress, and GAO has been designated by Georgia as the agency to implement Protection and Advocacy within the state.

**Georgia Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)** <http://www.georgiaadrc.com/> 866-552-4464

Georgia's Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is not a place or a program! It is a coordinated system of partnering organizations that are dedicated to:

- Providing accurate information about publicly and privately financed long-term supports and services.
- Offering a consumer-oriented approach to learning about the availability of services in the home and community.
- Alleviating the need for multiple calls and/or visits to receive services.
- Supporting individuals and family members who are aging or living with a disability.

**Georgia's Client Assistance Program** <http://www.georgiacap.com/> Phone/TTY: 404-373-3116

800-822-9727 Fax: 404-373-4110 Email: [rehab@dol.state.ga.us](mailto:rehab@dol.state.ga.us) If you have a problem with your vocational rehabilitation program or application, the Client Assistance Program can assist you in many ways, including:

- Advising you of your rights
- Solving communication problems
- Teaching you how to make requests
- Referring you to other agencies where helpful
- Negotiating for you
- Mediating disputes
- Advocating for you with the agency and others
- Presenting your requests to the agency
- Obtaining legal representation where we think it appropriate

**Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities** <http://www.gcdd.org> 888-275-4233 The Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities is the state's leader in advancing public policy on behalf of persons with developmental disabilities. Our mission is to promote public policy that creates an integrated community life for persons with developmental disabilities, their families, friends, neighbors and all who support them. We achieve this mission by sharing information, coordinating public outreach and implementing strategic legislative advocacy.

**Georgia Department of Education – Special Education**

From their homepage you will find lots of information such as Special Education Rules, Implementation Manual, Eligibility Categories, Dispute Resolution, and DL Updates (which has a tremendous amount of valuable information you should read). <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/default.aspx> 404-656-3963

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#### **Georgia Standards of Excellence**

<https://www.georgiastandards.org/Common-Core/Pages/default.aspx> Links to the public school grade level standards.

**Georgia Learning Resource Systems** <http://www.glr.org/> 404-656-3963 GLRS is a network of 17 centers throughout Georgia that provide training and resources to educators and parents of students with disabilities.

**Georgia Library for Accessible Services (GLASS)** <http://georgialibraries.org/glass/> 800-248-6701

**Georgia Parent Support Network, Inc.** <http://www.gpsn.org/> 404-758-4500 Georgia Parent Support Network is dedicated to providing support, education, and advocacy for children and their families with mental illness, emotional disturbances, and behavioral differences.

**HB 1133** <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Documents/SSO%20List.pdf>  
Under a new Georgia law (HB1133), tax credits will be given for donations to qualified Student Scholarship Organizations that provide scholarships for children in K-12 who are currently in public schools and wish to attend a private school. Tax credits will be issued on a first-come first-served basis up to a statewide annual cap of \$50 million. The contributed amounts are deductible for federal income tax purposes.

**Health Law Partnership** <https://healthlawpartnership.org/> The Health Law Partnership's (HeLP) primary premise is that attorneys can intervene to improve the physical, social, and economic environments in which many low-income children live, resulting in their improved health and quality of life.

**IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/> This is the US Department of Education website dedicated to this Federal law which provides the legal framework for the rights of students with disabilities.

**JF&CS** <https://yourtoolsforliving.org/> <https://yourtoolsforliving.org/> 770-677-9300 A nonsectarian organization that provides services to people with developmental disabilities and their families in the areas of employment, residential services, family support, transportation, information and education.

**LegalAid-GA** <http://www.legalaid-ga.org/GA/index.cfm> LegalAid-GA is a joint project of Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Inc. and the Georgia Legal Services Program. Their goal is to provide the public with easy Internet access to basic legal information and legal resources in Georgia.

**Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped** <https://www.loc.gov/nls/> 800-531-2063  
Applications are available at all public libraries or online-Source for Talking Books & Textbooks on Tape. FREE service from Library of Congress.

**OSEP** <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html> The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is dedicated to improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with

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disabilities ages birth through 21 by providing leadership and financial support to assist states and local districts. You will find some very good guidance letters that they have provided regarding special education.

**Parent to Parent of Georgia** [www.p2pga.org](http://www.p2pga.org) 800-229-2038 Parent's mission is to support Georgia families and individuals from birth to 26 affected by disabilities or special health care needs. They strive to be the source of choice for support, information, education, and leadership development for Georgians with disabilities or special health care needs, ages birth to 26, and their families.

**Parent Mentor Partnership** [www.parentmentors.org](http://www.parentmentors.org) The Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership is an alliance of parents and professionals working together to improve outcomes for students with disabilities by enhancing communication and collaboration between families, educators and the community. The Partnership includes parent mentors, who are parents of children with disabilities hired by the district to support family engagement, as well as special education directors and other administrators, teachers, and support personnel within the district.

**Parents Educating Parents and Professionals** [www.peppinc.org](http://www.peppinc.org) 770-577-7771 PEPP Inc believes by giving families the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary they will grow stronger. PEPP's experience level includes professional collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies, as well as direct level serves to at-risk children, youth, and families. PEPP is currently an ARWB grant recipient under WIA funding for services to youth as an emerging workforce; PEPP has been successful managing these funds since 2008. Other PEPP project funders include Federal grants, CYCC State funding, individual local contracts within a number of Georgia counties, and private and corporate foundation funds.

**SB 10** <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program.aspx> 800-311-3627 Funds received through the GSNS Program can only be used to offset tuition and fees at a private school authorized by the State Board of Education to participate in the program. Funds cannot be used to offset the costs of out of district tuition, charter schools, or other options available under public school choice. Scholarship amounts for students generally range from \$2,500 to \$13,500 with an average amount of about \$6,000. Award amounts for the 2016-2017 school year will typically be posted in June on the website.

To newly qualify for the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program for the upcoming school year a student must meet ALL the following requirements:

- **Student Eligibility Criteria 1-** A student have must a parent/guardian who currently lives in Georgia and has been a resident for at least one calendar year.
- **Student Eligibility Criteria 2-** A student was enrolled and completed the 2016 – 2017 school year in a Georgia public school in grades kindergarten through twelfth.
- **Student Eligibility Criteria 3-** A student was reported as attending a Georgia public school by a school district(s) during mandatory student counts conducted in October 2016 and March 2017.
- **Student Eligibility Criteria 4 -** A student does not need to have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the entire school year to qualify for the GSNS Program. A student must have received special education services at some point during the 2016 – 2017 school year through an IEP. A student must be reported by a school district(s) in either the October 2016 OR March 2017

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student counts OR in final student record as a student receiving special education services by the end of the 2016 – 2017 school year.

At the end of the school year, school systems update student records for students served by an IEP after the March count to reflect that they are special education students. By mid-July the database for the scholarship calculator is updated to include these students.

If a student meets the eligibility criteria for the GSNS Program; a parent/guardian has the right to request a transfer from a student's current public school to:

- Another public school within their district of residence; or
- Another public school district outside their district of residence; or
- One of the three state schools for the blind or deaf; or
- A private school authorized to participate in the GSNS Program. Funds received through the GSNS Program can only be used to pay for tuition and fees at a private school authorized by the State Board of Education to participate in the program.

Funds cannot be used to pay the costs of out of district tuition, charter schools, or other options available under public school choice.

**Southeast ADA Center** <http://www.adasoutheast.org> 800-949-4232 The Southeast ADA Center (formerly known as Southeast DBTAC) is your leader in providing information, training, and guidance on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and disability access tailored to the needs of business, government, and individuals at local, state, and regional levels. They conduct research to reduce and eliminate barriers to employment and economic self-sufficiency and to increase the civic and social participation of Americans with disabilities.

**Tools for Life** <http://www.gatfl.org/> 404-894-0541 Georgia's Assistive Technology Act Program, gives more options for greater freedom by increasing access to and acquisition of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for Georgians of all ages and disabilities so they can live, learn, work, and play independently in communities of their choice. Services within the [TFL Network](#) include:

- Initial Interview
- Information and Assistance on Community Resources
- AT Demonstrations
- Access to the AT Lending Libraries
- AT Evaluations and Assessments
- AT Training
- AT and DME Reuse
- AT Funding Education

**Unlock the Waiting Lists** <http://www.unlockthewaitinglists.com/> 888-275-4233 Unlock has focused its advocacy efforts primarily for people with physical and developmental disabilities. However, the goal of this Campaign continues to be to eliminate and/or reduce waiting lists in Georgia for all home and community-based services that support people with disabilities.

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**Vocational Rehabilitation** <https://gvra.georgia.gov/> 404-232-1998 The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency operates five integrated and interdependent statutory programs that share a primary goal - to help people with disabilities to become fully productive members of society by achieving independence and meaningful employment. The largest of the programs are Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program, Disability Adjudication Services, and Roosevelt Warm Springs/Cave Spring Center. Two other unique programs serve consumers with visual impairments: the Business Enterprise Program and Georgia Industries for the Blind.

**Wrights Law** – [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com) Their website is fantastic and has loads of free information. Consider purchasing their books From Emotions to Advocacy, Special Education Law, and All About IEP's.