



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

**Each workshop is worth 1.25 hours of CLE credit, for a maximum of 3.75 hours available.

8:30 am - 9:15 am	Booths Open	Registration / Continental Breakfast			
9:15 am - 9:30 am		Introductions and Conference Overview			
9:45 am - 11:00 am		Advocacy Workshop Kristin Tassin, Father's Joy	Representing Students in Class C Misdemeanor Cases Dustin Rynders, Advocacy, Inc.	Parent Driven ARD Goals For Your Successful Student: Focus on Hearing Impaired and/or Medically Needy Children Gabriella Marshall-Mackin, Parent Advocate	Financial Planning for Families with Special Needs Children Adam Blumberg, Strategic Financial Group
11:00 am - 11:15 am		Pick Up Lunch			
11:15 am - 12:30 pm		Attorney Q&A Session Sarah Bellinger, Advocacy, Inc. Dustin Rynders, Advocacy, Inc. Kristin Tassin, Father's Joy			
12:45 pm - 2:00 pm		The Basics of Special Education Law (1.25 hours of CLE Ethics credit available) Kristin Tassin, Father's Joy	School Discipline and Students with Disabilities Dustin Rynders, Advocacy, Inc.	Breaking the Barrier to Eligibility: How to Obtain Special Education Services for Your Child Sarah Bellinger, Equal Justice Works Fellow, Advocacy, Inc.	Special Needs Trusts and Estate Planning Mara Purcell, Purcell & Saucedo, PLLC
2:15 pm - 3:30 pm		Legislative Changes and Advocacy Efforts Jeff Sell, Autism Society	Behavior Plans Mara Purcell, Purcell & Saucedo, PLLC	Education, Training, and Accommodations for College Students with Disabilities Karen O'Connell Taylor, PhD, LCSW	Income Tax Issues and Opportunities for Families with Special Needs Children Edward N. Goldsbury, CPA Director, Tax, PKF of Texas, P.C.
3:30 pm		Conference Ends			



CONFERENCE TOPIC SUMMARIES

**Each workshop is worth 1.25 hours of CLE credit, for a maximum of 3.75 hours available per participant. The Basics of Special Education Law workshop (Session 2) is worth 1.25 hours of ethics credit.

SESSION 1

1. **Advocacy Workshop**, Kristin K. Tassin, Father's Joy

This workshop is ideal for attorneys, advocates, parents and educators, as it presents a team approach to advocating in the ARD process. Learn what it means to be an advocate in the ARD process, why children with disabilities need advocates on both sides of the table, and how to be an effective advocate. Learn what "least restrictive environment" in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) really means and how to use IEP's, modifications, and accommodations effectively to help a child with transitions, behaviors, and academic and social barriers inside and outside the classroom. This workshop teaches about planning, preparation, the ARD process, developing IEP's, legal considerations, advocacy techniques, and how the IEP team can work together to obtain the most appropriate services for a child in the least restrictive environment.

2. **Representing Students in Class C Misdemeanor Cases**, Dustin Rynders, Advocacy, Inc.

This presentation will include an overview of the elements and defenses for each of the Class C misdemeanors that are frequently given to students with disabilities within the school system. Participants will also receive practical advocacy tips for justice of the peace and municipal courts and an overview of the promise and limitations of using various provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) to help defend a student.

3. **Parent Driven ARD Goals For Your Successful Student: Focus on Hearing Impaired and/or Medically Needy Children**, Gabriella Marshall-Mackin, Parent Advocate

This presentation will provide tips for parents on how to obtain services and draft IEP's for their medically needy and hearing impaired child.

IEP goals for hearing impaired children should be written by parents first and the school district second. It is the parents who know their child the best, and know what he or she is capable of achieving. Parents of a hearing impaired child should draw from a variety of resources to write IEP goals. This presentation will set out important considerations when writing IEP goals and steps that should be taken and resources available to parents to help in drafting IEP goals before their child's ARD meeting.

Participants will be presented with considerations of whether a medically needy child is best served in their home environment, on homebound education, or whether the child can attend

the school of their choice. Includes a review of the Supreme Court case, CEDAR RAPIDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL DIST. V. GARRET F. (96-1793) 526 U.S. 66 (1999).

4. Financial Planning for Families with Special Needs Children, Adam Blumberg, Strategic Financial Group

Financial planning - including asset protection, wealth accumulation and tax savings - is important for any family. Families with a Special Needs situation have several more factors to take into consideration when planning for their present and their future, creating the need for greater efficiency. In this presentation we will discuss ways to make your money as efficient as possible - including maintaining government benefits, assuring cash or income in most circumstances, and planning for two generations. We will even discuss the ways to start small with financial planning so you can feel good about moving in the right direction.

SESSION 2

1. The Basics of Special Education Law, Kristin K. Tassin, Father's Joy

This presentation will provide attorneys, parents, advocates, and educators with a basic knowledge of Special Education Law and its principles, how the law applies within the IEP process and ethical considerations related to dispute resolution. Includes an overview of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (504), No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and a review of applicable state and federal case law.

2. School Discipline and Students with Disabilities, Dustin Rynders, Advocacy, Inc.

This presentation will provide an overview of federal and state laws and regulations impacting discipline of students with disabilities, including those protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) as well as those protected by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Practical tips for advocating for effective positive behavior supports will be provided, as well as available federal and state administrative remedies. In addition, the presentation will explain how behavior goals, supports and services fit into the IDEA requirements that students receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

3. Breaking the Barrier to Eligibility: How to Obtain Special Education Services for Your Child, Sarah Bellinger, Equal Justice Works Fellow, Advocacy, Inc.

This presentation will address the barriers parents face when attempting to obtain special education services for their children. Such barriers include schools' use of Response to Intervention to deny initial evaluations and children not testing "low enough" to be found eligible for services. The speaker will provide a practical approach to securing special education services through a discussion of advocacy tips and strategies parents and advocates can use to ensure schools make an appropriate determination of eligibility.

4. Special Needs Trusts and Estate Planning, Mara Purcell, Purcell & Saucedo, PLLC

This presentation will address what documents are essential for parents when planning for the future of their children. We will discuss why a Will, Medical Power of Attorney, Statutory Durable Power of Attorney, Directive to Physicians, Declaration of Guardian for Minor Child and

Declaration of Guardian in the Event of Later Incapacity are necessary, what the purpose of each document is and what could happen if they are not a part of a parent's estate plan. Additionally, we will explain what Special Needs Trusts are, why you need one if you have a disabled child and how they prevent eligibility problems with government assistance programs.

SESSION 3

1. Legislative Changes and Advocacy Efforts, Jeff Sell, Autism Society

From educational policies affecting children with disabilities, to federal funding for key disability programs like respite care and employment, to Medicaid reform, meaningful insurance reform and other policy initiatives, the political spectrum in the United States today directly impacts the autism spectrum. Jeff will present an update on legislative initiatives that affect the autism community and, the broader intellectual disability community by discussing several priorities both inside the Beltway and, in Austin. These priorities include:

- The Autism Treatment Acceleration (ATAA) Act
- The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act
- The Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act
- Environmental Health Issues
- State autism insurance reform measures

2. Behavior Plans, Mara Purcell, Purcell & Saucedo, PLLC

Unfortunately for parents of special needs students and their children, Behavior Intervention Plans, or BIPs, are often either missing from a child's Individual Education Plan or are not appropriate, which can result in unnecessary punishment of the child and the worsening of problem behaviors. This presentation will cover what procedures are followed when creating a BIP, including Functional Behavior Assessments, what necessary elements are required to be included in the BIP and what elements should be in the BIP.

3. Education, Training, and Accommodations for College Students with Disabilities, Karen O'Connell Taylor, PhD, LCSW

This session will feature an explanation of college level classes, training and section 504 accommodations for students considering the Houston Community College System. The VAST Program (Vocational Advancement in Social Skills Training) and information about certificate programs available at Houston Community College will be discussed. Colleges handle accommodations in a different way from prior educational experiences. Prepare for a new orientation, and a new set of rules and guidelines. Many types of technology can assist students with their accommodations, but this is different from IDEA and 504 in the lower schools.

4. Income Tax Issues and Opportunities for Families with Special Needs Children, Edward N. Goldsbury, CPA Director, Tax, PKF of Texas, P.C.

A survey of Federal income tax law regarding tax deductible medical expenses for education and treatment of children with special needs. Topics to include school tuition and fees, travel and transportation, documentation requirements, expenses eligible for medical expense cafeteria plan reimbursements, and possible tax-advantaged means for funding medical expenses using qualified retirement plans and IRA's.