

*"Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by strengthening the role and responsibility of parents and ensuring that families of such children have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home."*

*- Excerpt from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*

**The Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) at the Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF) is staffed by Education Advocates who are parents of children with disabilities or who have a disability.**

DREDF's Education Advocates help parents, caregivers, and youth with disabilities (or suspected disabilities) understand and use important disability and civil rights laws, participate effectively in the special education process, advocate for needed support and services, and solve school problems.

Funded in part by the U.S. Department of Education, PTIs serve families of children with disabilities from birth up to age 26. The PTI also supports professionals who serve children. The PTI does not provide legal advice. Services are free and language access and disability accommodations are available.

The PTI helps families of children with disabilities in 30 Northern California counties:



- |              |           |             |            |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Alameda      | El Dorado | Placer      | Stanislaus |
| Alpine       | Glenn     | Plumas      | Tehama     |
| Amador       | Humboldt  | Sacramento  | Trinity    |
| Butte        | Lake      | San Joaquin | Tuolumne   |
| Calaveras    | Lassen    | Shasta      | Yolo       |
| Colusa       | Mendocino | Sierra      | Yuba       |
| Contra Costa | Modoc     | Siskiyou    |            |
| Del Norte    | Nevada    | Sutter      |            |

# Youth Advocacy



## Information is power.

Students with disabilities get ready for their transition to adulthood by learning about their rights, helping set goals that matter to them, finding out who can help them on their journey, and through opportunities to practice these skills early. They need to be included in decision making and taught how to let others know what matters to them, so they can make decisions for themselves as adults.

The PTI can help by talking directly with youth and their caregivers, providing training on many topics, and connecting them to help with things like finding a job, getting support in college and living in the community. Together with their parents and support team, disabled youth can reach their educational goals, open the doors of future opportunities and sharpen their self-advocacy skills.

## Empowering Families & Students with Disabilities

The PTI empowers students with disabilities and those who support them to:

- Become effective advocates.
- Learn and share important information about their strengths, challenges, and goals with the education team.
- Navigate the process to make sure students are held to high expectations and learn in inclusive schools and classrooms.
- Understand their rights and the protections and opportunities they provide.
- Identify options when an agreement can't be reached.
- Connect to community resources.
- Boost the success of children and youth with disabilities as they make their way into the world.
- Get involved with local, state, and national efforts to improve the special education system and outcomes for students with disabilities.



To find the PTI in your area, for the Spanish language version of this information and more, visit:  
[www.dredf.org/special-education](http://www.dredf.org/special-education)

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