

**WHAT IS TNSTEP?**

TNSTEP is a statewide program in Tennessee, established in 1989 by a U.S. Department of Education grant. The purpose of TNSTEP is to support families by providing free information, training, and support services to parents of children eligible to receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). TNSTEP houses the Parent Training Information Center (PTI) and operates a number of grants and initiatives to meet our mission.

**WHOM DOES TNSTEP SERVE?**

TNSTEP services are available FREE to any parent or family member of a child or youth, birth through age 26, with a disability that has or may need special education services under the I.D.E.A. Our training and information are made possible through grants from the U.S. Department of Education, the TN Department of Education, donations, foundations, other grants, and volunteers' generous contributions. TNSTEP provides in-service training and professional development to school systems, community agencies, and disability organizations. There may be a fee for professional development services depending on the funding source. Training events hosted by schools are FREE when families are invited. TNSTEP also provides referral services to disability organizations, support groups, and community agencies.

**WHAT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?**

TNSTEP services are designed to help parents, family members, and youth become knowledgeable and effective participants in planning special education programs and how to use the information effectively. Training is provided through:

- Workshops on topics related to special education, equal access to education, and effective communication
- Videos, webinars, and a website full of resources
  - *How to communicate effectively at meetings.*
  - *How to prepare for life after high school.*
  - *How to develop an education plan that addresses social skills, behavior, academics, and classroom settings.*
  - *How to become more involved in your child's education and ensure your child has equal access to educational services.*
  - *How to prepare for entry into the school system and transition from grade to grade.*
  - *How to request evaluations and services.*
  - *How to discuss the need for related services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or transportation.*

TNSTEP offers support services designed to help families and youth build skills to become effective participants in meetings where decisions are being made related to special education and access to an appropriate education. Our services are "customized" to align with the needs of the parent or youth we are serving.

**WHO PROVIDES SERVICES?**

- Karen Harrison.....Executive Director & Project Director
- Donna Jennings.....Business & Personnel Manager
- Lisa Morelock Gosnell .....Data, Research & Information Coordinator
- .....Director of East TN Services
- Patricia Valladares.....Director of Middle TN Services & Multicultural Liaison
- Bernadette Gray.....West TN Family and Youth Education Specialist
- Katherine Williams.....Director of West TN Services
- Joey Ellis .....Director of Youth Services
- Dorca Rose.....Bilingual Community Outreach & Education Specialist
- Ned Andrew Solomon.....Communications Support
- Stephanie Willis.....Director of Communications
- Tanya Willis.....Director of Development

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

**Parent Information Line (Toll free in TN):**

(800) 280-STEP (English)  
 (800) 975-2919 (Español)  
 Fax: (423) 636-8217

**Main Office:**

1113 Tusculum Blvd., #393, Greeneville, TN 37745 (mailing address)  
 113 Austin Street, Greeneville, TN 37745 (physical address)

**E-mail:** [gethelp@tnstep.info](mailto:gethelp@tnstep.info)  
**Website:** [www.tnstep.info](http://www.tnstep.info)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/tnstep](http://www.facebook.com/tnstep)  
**YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/TNStep](http://www.youtube.com/TNStep)  
**Twitter:** @tnSTEP [twitter.com/tnstep](https://twitter.com/tnstep)  
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**TNSTEP's vision is to ensure a brighter future for children and youth in Tennessee, with an emphasis on those with disabilities, special health care needs, and mental health needs.**

### Examples of Parent Workshops

**Communication and Conflict Resolution**

Basic Rights Training on IDEA: Parent's Introduction to Special Education

**Parents as Collaborative Leaders**

Understanding & Using Evaluations

**RTI<sup>2</sup>: What Parents Need to Know**

Literacy is for ALL and Literacy in the IEP

**Next TNSTEP: IEP Planning**

Inclusion & Least Restrictive Environment

**Early Childhood Transition**

Transition to Adulthood: (for students, parents & teachers)

**Understanding Section 504**

Spanish Workshops and Multicultural Conferences



### Examples of Services to School System Personnel

**Identification of emerging issues & planning solutions**

Transition Institutes: Preparing for life after High School

**Facilitation at IEP meetings**

Partner on school events and inform families of events

**Parent Involvement and Engagement**

Distribute Surveys to Families

**Age Appropriate Transition Assessments**

Train the Trainer: RTI What Parent's Need to Know

**Literacy: Strategies for students with disabilities**

Building Effective Communication with Parents

**Training Families on Impact of Common Core State Standards**

**NOTE: Workshops or trainings where families are invited are FREE. RTI & Literacy Trainings are FREE. Other in-service trainings may require a fee.**

### Collaborating with Systems and Agencies to Improve Results:

Increase Parent Participation

**Improve Transition Outcomes for Students**

Ensure smooth transition from Early Intervention Programs

**Promote Effective Communication**

Reduce Special Education Referrals

**Advance RTI Initiatives and Reading/Math Improvement**

Identify and Resolve Areas of Non-Compliance

**Stretch Resources through Partnerships**



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