



# Enhancing Family Engagement and Parent Advocacy



# Today we will

- Learn about the Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD)
- Define Family Engagement and Parent Advocacy:
- Discuss Barriers to Family Engagement and School Partnerships:
- Exploring Additional Ways to Support Families

LET'S  
DO IT!

# Our Mission

Our mission at The Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD) is to empower families as advocates and partners in improving education and health outcomes for children with disabilities and special healthcare needs with a commitment to diversity and equity.



# Who is PPMD?

- Maryland's Special Education and Health Information Center
- Established in 1990
- Governed by parents
- Our team is fully made up of parents and family members of children with disabilities and special healthcare needs



# Parent Information Centers

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[ASK RESOURCE CENTER NEWS](#)

ASK (Access for Special Kids) Resource Center is

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/>



# We help families...

- Better understand their children's disabilities, education, and healthcare needs
- Communicate more effectively with school and health teams
- Understand their rights and responsibilities under special education law
- Understand their rights and benefits in healthcare systems
- Obtain services for their children
- Resolve disagreements with the school or other agencies
- Connect with other community resources

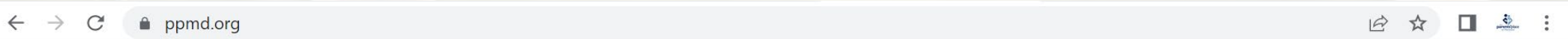


# Our Services

- One-on-one assistance to families
- Resource sharing
- Topical trainings
- Leadership trainings
- Military outreach



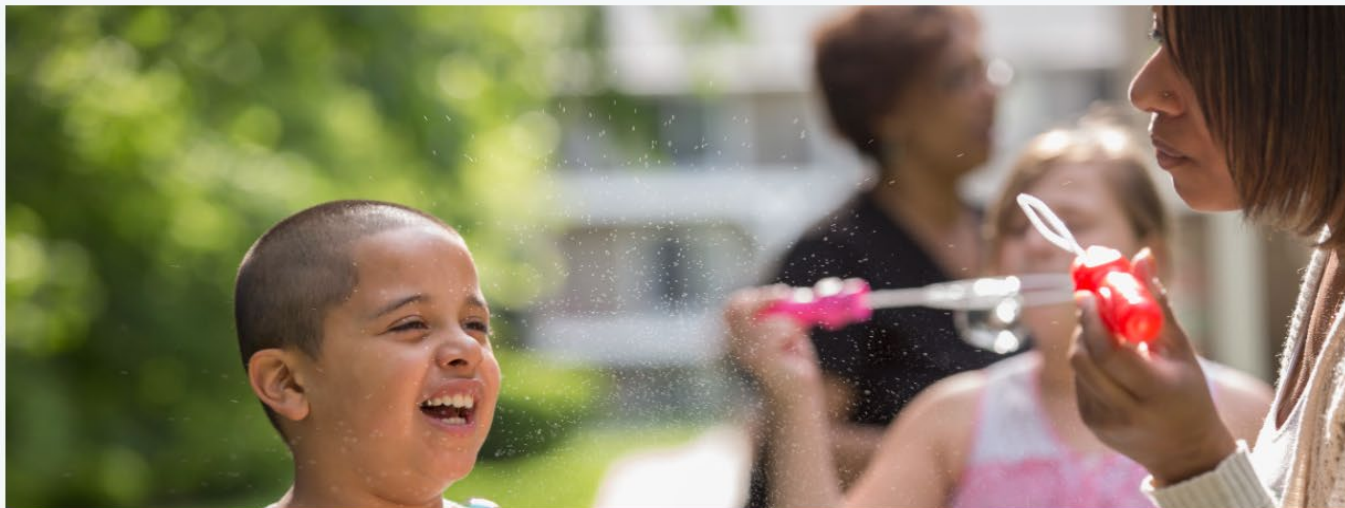
# [Click here to visit ppmd.org](http://ppmd.org)



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## CONTACT AN EXPERT

Looking for information on how to attain education and/or health care services for a child with a disability? Contact an expert who can connect you with resources and information to support your needs.



Busca información sobre cómo obtener educación y / o servicios de atención médica para un niño con una discapacidad? Póngase en contacto con un experto que pueda conectarlo con

## SIGN UP TODAY

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# CONTACT

First Name / Primer nombre \*

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- Home/Casa
- Mobile/Móvil
- Work/Trabajo



## The Parents' Place of Maryland

802 Cromwell Park Drive  
Suite H  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

phone | 800.394.5694 or 410.768.9100  
fax | 410.768.0830

### Office hours

Our staff are all working remotely. Please call us and leave a message or enter an online help request and a staff member will get back to you as soon as possible.

### What if I'm not sure if The Parents' Place of Maryland can help me?

Contact us anyway! We have many resources, so chances are we can help or we can refer you



# Family Engagement and Family advocacy



# Defining Family Engagement

- Families and professionals working together
- Shared responsibility
- Meaningful involvement
- Active support with commitment

## Key Components:

- Communication
- Shared Decision-Making
- Support and Resources



# Benefits of Family Engagement

Improved student achievement, better behavior, and enhanced social skills.



# Define Family Advocacy

- **Definition:** Actions taken by parents to support, represent, and advocate for their child's educational needs and rights.

**Components:** Understanding educational policies, speaking up for necessary resources, and partnering with educators.



ADVOCACY

# Benefits of Advocacy

- **Benefits:** Ensures students receive appropriate support and resources tailored to their needs.



You are your child's best  
Advocate!!

# Why Family Engagement and Parent Advocacy Matter

**Student Success**

**School Improvement**

**Equity**

**GOOD NEWS**

# Barriers to Family Engagement

- Lack of Information
- Relationships
- Inconsistent treatment of students
- School not welcoming
- Availability of Childcare
- Health
- Finances
- Time
- Others?



# Strategies to Overcome Barriers

- **Time Constraints:** Offer flexible meeting times and virtual participation options.
- **Language Barriers:** Provide translation services and bilingual staff.
- **Cultural Differences:** Create culturally responsive programs and offer training for staff.
- **Lack of Resources:** Utilize community resources and provide necessary materials.
- **Negative Experiences:** Build trust through transparent communication and consistent support.



# Exploring Additional Ways to Support Families

- **Innovative Methods:**
  - **Community Partnerships:** Collaborate with local organizations to provide additional support.
  - **Family Workshops:** Offer training on topics like academic support, technology use, and advocacy skills.
  - **Digital Platforms:** Use apps and online portals to keep families informed and involved.
  - **Family Resource Centers:** Establish centers where families can access information and support.
  - **Feedback Mechanisms:** Regularly solicit and act on family feedback to improve engagement efforts.

# Home & School Partnerships

- Makes a difference
  - Positive impact on learning
  - Empowers parents
- Connect
- Engage
- Sustain



# What's on our website?

We have HUNDREDS of resources around special education, healthcare, transition, early intervention, and more on our website.

## RESOURCES

Check out our great resources! To find a resource you need, use the left column to filter by topic and/or language. Still not finding what you need? Use the search bar to search for key words.

If you are having trouble finding relevant resources, please [contact us](#) so we can assist you.

### Topics

- Back To School
- Behavior
- Early Childhood
- Health
- Military
- Section 504
- Special Education
- Transition

SEARCH

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RESOURCE TITLE

FORMAT



**METAS INTELIGENTES (S.M.A.R.T. IEPS)**

¿Qué es S.M.A.R.T.? ¡Lea para aprender más!

[VIEW RESOURCE / VER RECURSO](#)

Factsheet

# Resources/Factsheets

- Parent Meeting Worksheet
- IEP Timelines Chart
- Factsheets on the differences between IEPs and 504s
- Information about Child Find
- Factsheet on preparing for an IEP meeting
- Common accommodations and modifications in School factsheet
- Model Letters
- Acronyms
- IEP Meeting Tips factsheet

# Extended Early Intervention Services

Early Intervention Services

## Extended Early Intervention Services

Early Intervention from Age 3 until the Beginning of Kindergarten



The Maryland State Department of Education offers families the option to extend early intervention services through an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) after the child reaches age 3 until the beginning of the school year following the child's fourth birthday, if they are eligible. If they are eligible, you can choose to continue services through an extended IFSP or move to an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Extended IFSP	IEP
For this option, you must have a current IFSP through a local Infants and Toddlers Program <b>and</b> your local school system. They both have to determine that your child is eligible for preschool special education	For this option, your local school system determines that your child is eligible for preschool special education
Service coordination to support IFSP being done across all agencies	IEP team process to support IEP being done
Services done in the natural environment	Services done in the least restrictive environment
Continuous year round services	Extended school year services, if child is eligible
Family support and training through IFSP outcomes	Parent education through services and programs
Includes an educational component to continue child's school readiness skill development	Child receives preschool special education and related services to continue school readiness skills
At any time you may choose termination of IFSP services and consider preschool special education through an IEP. IFSP services continue until services through an IEP are scheduled to begin	Through written notice to the local Infants and Toddlers Program to terminate services of an IFSP, you may no longer return to the IFSP. Now, services begin through an IEP
Individualized Plan: an IFSP is a plan for providing early intervention supports and services to an eligible child and the family. IFSP is reviewed every six months and revised at least annually by the team which includes the parent. IFSP includes family resources, priorities, concerns, present levels of development, measurable child and family outcomes, and early intervention services. IFSP requires the service coordinator to ensure appropriate implementation and coordination of the plan. <b>IFSP focuses on both the child and the family within their daily routines</b>	Individualized Program: an IEP is a plan for providing special education and related services to a student with a disability. The IEP is developed, reviewed, and revised at least annually by the team which includes the parent. The IEP includes present levels of academic achievement and performance, measurable annual goals with short term objectives, special education and related services and supplementary aids, program modifications and supports, and individual accommodations. <b>IEP focuses on how the child's disability affects the child's participation in their education.</b>
Natural Environment: Children are serviced in their natural settings at home or other public or private settings such as child care centers, public preschool programs, libraries, or parks.	Least Restrictive Environment: Children are educated with students who are not disabled to the maximum extent possible. Examples include the home, private/public community programs, libraries, or residential schools.



### Extended IFSP

Types of Early Intervention services include but are not limited to:

- Assistive technology
- Audiology services
- Early identification, screening, assessment services
- Family training, counseling, home visits
- Health services
- Medical services for diagnostic or evaluation
- Nursing
- Nutrition services
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Psychological services
- Service coordination
- Sign language and cued language services
- Social work services
- Special instruction
- Speech and language pathology services
- Transportation
- Vision services

Continuous year-round services to children

### IEP

Types of Special Education services, if determined necessary, may include:

- Assistive technology
- Audiology services
- Early identification, screening, assessment services
- Family training, counseling, home visits
- Health services
- Medical services for diagnostic or evaluation
- Occupational therapy
- Parent counseling and training
- Physical therapy
- Psychological services
- Recreation, therapeutic recreation
- School health services
- School nurse services
- Social work services
- Speech and language pathology services
- Student counseling services including rehabilitation counseling
- Transportation
- Vision services, including orientation and mobility services

Available during the school year. Extended school year services (ESY) are available if IEP team determines eligibility

#### Source

- Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services, Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program/Preschool Special Education Services  
[https://marylandlearninglinks.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/NextStepsBooklet\\_English.pdf](https://marylandlearninglinks.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/NextStepsBooklet_English.pdf)



# Coffee and Conversations

- Share ideas
- Share frustrations
- Get Resources
- Meet new friends



# Join us for Coffee and Conversations!

Join our virtual groups to share ideas, share frustrations, get resources, and make new friends!

- [Families of children ages Birth-Kindergarten](#)
- [Families of children in Elementary School](#)
- [Families of children in Middle & High School](#)
- [Spanish Speaking Families](#)



Scan the QR code with your phone or [click here](#) to see our calendar and sign up for Coffee and Conversations!



# Are you receiving our newsletters?

Subscribe to always get the latest news affecting Maryland families of children with disabilities and special healthcare needs!

- Monthly English Newsletters
- Bi-Monthly Spanish Newsletters
- Special Bi-Monthly Newsletters for our LEADers Training Graduates



Scan the QR code with your phone or [click here](#) to sign up on the homepage of our website!

# Follow us on Facebook for daily resources!



The Parents' Place of Maryland

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4K likes · 4.5K followers


Our mission is to empower families as advocates in improving their children's education and health!

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The Parents' Place of Maryland

4d ·

Pathfinders for Autism has lots of resources about wandering, elopement, and safety. Let's work together to keep our children an... See more

About this website

pathfindersforautism.org

Safety – Pathfinders for Autism

2

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Join us virtually on August 14th for Ducks in a Row!

Let's get prepared for the upcoming sc... See more

**Ducks in a Row**

When: A new school year can



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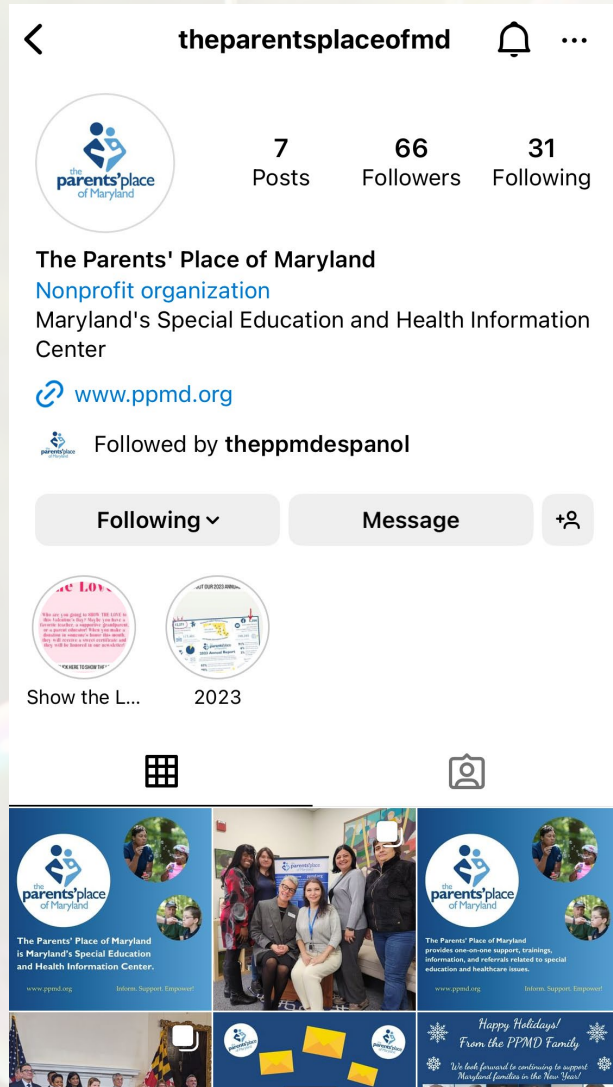
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Parents Place of Maryland comenzó en 1990 como un esfuerzo de base de familias, profesionales y líder

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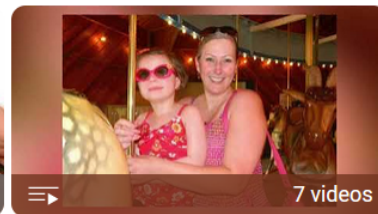
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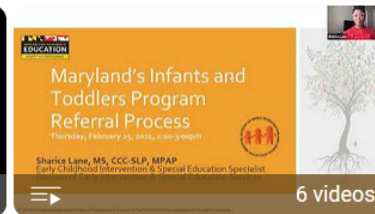
Genetic Journey Stories with  
PPMD and NYMAC

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Early Childhood

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Every child deserves a  
*champion*

An adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best they can possibly be.

-RITA PIERSON-

Please let us know how we did today!



Scan the QR code  
with your phone  
or [click here!](#)

# THANK YOU!

For more information, or if you have questions, contact us!

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# Questions?

