

*If you have any questions you may
contact the Part C Coordinator
in your area:*

For further information call or write:

*Family Network on Disabilities
of Florida, Inc.*

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Making A Difference

**A Family's Guide to
Rights under
Part C of the
Individuals
With Disabilities
Education Act**

Family
**NETWORK ON
DISABILITIES**
OF FLORIDA

Parents and families are very important. You have rights, called "Procedural Safeguards" that will let you be an equal partner in planning what happens for your child and family.

You have a right to...

Written prior notice:

This means

- You must be told in writing before your child is tested, and also before any services are changed or refused for your child and family.
- The notice must be given in the language you understand best.
- The notice must tell you about what is being changed or refused and why.
- You must be given information explaining all of your rights.

You have a right to...

Informed Consent:

This means

- Your child will be tested and get services for the first time only if you agree to it in writing.
- You must be given information in your language so that you can understand it.
- The consent form must say to what you are agreeing, list any information being sent out about your child, and who will get that information.
- You must understand to what you are agreeing. If you don't, it must be explained to you before you sign.

- You may take away your permission for your child to have any service.
- Your child will get only those services for which you ask.

You have a right to...

Review Records:

This means

- You may not be charged for copies if you can't afford it.
- You may not be charged for someone to look for or get the information for you.
- You may ask that someone explain the information to you.
- This information must be given to you before a family support plan meeting or hearing if you ask for it.
- You may also ask that the information be changed if you feel it is wrong.
- You may have your opinion included in your child's record.

You have a right to...

Impartial Hearing:

This means

- If complaints about services can't be settled between you and the people giving services, you have a right to a meeting held to hear your complaint. You must ask for this meeting in writing.
- Outside people must be picked to listen to both sides and settle the problem as quickly as possible.
- Complaints must be heard where and when you can be there.
- You have a right to have a lawyer with you and people who know about services for children.
- You must be told where you can find free or low cost legal help.
- You may open the meeting to the public if you wish, and you may also bring your child.

- You may give information, ask witnesses to come, and talk to witnesses.
- You may forbid the use of information that you don't know about at least 5 days before the meeting.
- You have a right to written or tape recorded, word-for-word records of the meeting.
- A written decision must be mailed to you no later than 45 days after they get your complaint.

You have a right to...

Appeals:

This means

- If you are still not satisfied with the decision you can go to the District Court of Appeals so that your complaint may be heard again.
- While all this is going on your child must continue to get the services to which you have agreed.

Children have a right to...

Surrogate Parents:

This means

- If a parent of a child can't be found, then someone with the knowledge and skills needed to represent the child, will be chosen to protect that child's rights. This person is called a surrogate.

Knowing your rights can help you make a difference for your child and family.