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ALABAMA DISABILITIES ADVOCACY PROGRAM
October 28, 2014

The Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP) is part of the nation's federally-funded protection and advocacy (P&A) system. ADAP provides legal services to Alabamians with disabilities to protect, promote and expand their rights. ADAP's vision is one of a society in which persons with disabilities are valued and exercise self-determination through meaningful choices, and have equality of opportunity. ADAP is part of the [National Disability Rights Network \(NDRN\)](#).

Find us on the Web
www.adap.net

ADAP Finalizes Priorities for FY15 - FY17

ADAP has finalized its advocacy **priorities** for FY15 - FY17 after soliciting input through focus groups, a web survey, and public meetings.

October Is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a campaign to raise awareness about disability employment issues. This year's theme is "**Expect. Employ. Empower.**"

If you have questions about how to get help with your job search, on-the-job accommodations, employment programs for Veterans with disabilities, or where to find vocational rehabilitation services near you, read Disability.gov's [Guide to Employment](#).

If you are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) and you want information about how returning to work will affect your benefits, or you are having difficulty obtaining vocational rehabilitation or support services to secure or regain employment, contact [ADAP](#) for help.

October is National Bullying Prevention Month

As October comes to an end, so does National Bullying Prevention Month. According to [PACER](#), nearly 1 in 3 students report being bullied during the school year. Research suggests that children with disabilities are 2-3 more times likely to be victims of bullying than their peers without disabilities.

Following up on guidance it has released in past years, the U.S. Department of Education issued a “Dear Colleague” [letter](#) to school officials this week advising them of measures they must take to prevent and respond to bullying of students with disabilities. In cases where students with disabilities are believed to be experiencing bullying, schools must take immediate and appropriate action to investigate the issue and, as necessary, take steps to stop the bullying and prevent it from recurring. Schools must act to ensure that bullying, whether it’s based on a student’s disability or not, does not interfere with the student’s ability to receive special education or other disability-related services.

To learn more about bullying and what you can do to stop your child from being bullied, including Alabama-specific resources, visit ADAP’s [bullying webpage](#).

State Special Education Task Force to do Long-Range Planning

A task force charged with developing a multi-year state special education improvement plan met on Wednesday, October 22 in Montgomery. The State Department of Education must submit this plan to the federal government by April 2015.

Task Force members include members of the state's Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP), educators, parents, and advocates for children with disabilities. ADAP is one of the identified Task Force members. If you have comments or concerns you'd like to share, contact ADAP staff attorney [Nancy Anderson](#). ADAP will share news of the Task Force's work via ADAP's newsletter and website.

To read more about the SSIP, see this [document](#) prepared by the [Center for Parent Information and Resources](#).

Olmstead Decision 15th Anniversary Video

The 15th Anniversary of the Olmstead decision is celebrated in a [video](#) put out by the U.S. Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services. The video features interviews from disability rights advocates, including Sue Jamieson, the lead attorney in the Olmstead case, and people with disabilities who live independently and fully participate in their communities.

In Olmstead, the Supreme Court ruled that states must eliminate unnecessary segregation of persons with disabilities and ensure that persons with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.



Special Education in Alabama: A Right Not a Favor



ADAP is pleased to announce the publication of the newest edition of its popular special education parent manual – “Special Education in Alabama: A Right Not a Favor” (RNF).

RNF helps families and child advocates understand how to access special education services and ensure that eligible children with disabilities are provided the free, appropriate public education to which they are entitled. The manual is written in lay-friendly terms and is filled with helpful advocacy tips and resources.

Publication of RNF was underwritten by a generous grant from the [Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities](#).

The first edition of RNF was published in the mid-80’s. Since its last revision and printing in 2007, 50,000 free copies have been distributed across the state.

To view the manual on-line, click [here](#). To order copies, click [here](#).



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