

Has your child been diagnosed with a disability?

Is specialized instruction needed for them to make effective progress?



As a student goes through the Special Education process puzzling questions and serious concerns may arise. When parents do not feel they can glean enough information on their own, an advocate may be an appropriate choice to help navigate academic jargon, clarify academic testing, and verify if the student's rights are being implemented according to state and federal laws.

- How do I find an advocate?
- What does an advocate do?
- How long will it take to resolve my issues?
- Do I have to hire an attorney too?
- Do advocates go to Team meetings and Hearings?

To answer these, and many other questions, visit our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) at www.spanmass.org

WHAT IS SPaN?

For over twenty-five years, the Special Needs Advocacy Network has provided continuing professional development and support for advocates and other professionals in the field of Special Education across Massachusetts. Collaboration exists with other professionals as well as with parents of children with disabilities.

SPaN is an organization for advocates, professionals, and parents, providing a better understanding of the role of an advocate and acts as a resource for advocacy services.

Where can I find an Advocate?

Check out our online professional listing at



SEARCH OUR
ONLINE LISTING

www.spanmass.org. You will find information on each advocate's professional background, experience and geographic location. SPaN advocates,

educational consultants and other professionals are available to work with families, schools, and individuals. *Areas of expertise and fees will vary since they are determined by individual advocates, and are not regulated by SPaN.* Potential clients are encouraged to make thoughtful, informed decisions based on their own needs.

The Special Needs Advocacy Network is not responsible for the performance of individual advocates or service providers.

SPaN Ethics and Standards of Practice

The advocate's primary responsibility is to represent the best interests of the student in the educational process.

The advocate will empower, inform, guide and educate parents/guardians and students to strengthen their own advocacy skills.

The advocate will continue to upgrade skills and knowledge through attendance at relevant training sessions, courses, and conferences.

The advocate will confer with other appropriate professionals as required. The advocate will refer to other appropriate professionals when the client's needs require training, knowledge, or skills outside of the advocate's experience or expertise.

The advocate will advise the client to seek legal counsel or representation as needed and appropriate

The advocate will clearly detail any contractual issues prior to being engaged for services.

The advocate will not discriminate against any client on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, or disability.

Advocates may have individual approaches, however, members of the Special Need Advocacy Network (SPaN) practicing as advocates, have pledged to adhere to the SPaN Ethics and Standards of Practice.