



**S**TEP is a non-profit organization that provides training and support for families and parents that have a child with a disability from birth to age 26. STEP's mission is "to empower parents through information, training and support to become effective partners with professionals in planning appropriate educational programs for their children."

### What services or resources does this agency provide?

STEP provides training, professional development, in-service sessions, workshops, and information to families and schools. Some of the workshop topics include basic rights in Special Education, early childhood services, creating an instructionally appropriate IEP, finding an inclusive and least restrictive environment, RTI, literacy, transitioning to adulthood, information on Section 504, and much more. Additionally, STEP has launched an initiative in the state of TN to improve transition outcomes for individuals with disabilities. TIME (Transition Information Made Easy) provides training, resources, modules, webinars, and one-on-one support to families going through the transition process.

### What areas of Tennessee do they serve?

STEP serves all of Tennessee with three regional offices. They offer workshops and training series all throughout the state. Check out their calendar to



see if there are events near you.

### Is there a cost and, if so, who pays?

All training and information is available free of charge to parents and family members of a child with a disability. Some in-service training and professional development workshops provided to schools might have a fee associated with them.

### For which students might this organization be appropriate?

This would be appropriate for the families of students with disabilities who need assistance in creating a strong IEP for their child and want to better understand the transition process. STEP can bridge a connection between the school and family to help families advocate for themselves in meetings.



## **Who is eligible to receive their services/ supports and when?**

These services are available to all families with a child with a disability from birth to age 26.

## **What is the referral process? What documents are needed?**

There is no referral process to receive resources or training from STEP TN.

## **What is the family's responsibility?**

The family should reach out to STEP if they want to learn more about the following topics: basic rights in Special Education, early childhood services, creating an instructionally appropriate IEP, finding an inclusive and least restrictive environment, RTI, literacy, transitioning to adulthood, information on Section 504, and much more.

## **What is the responsibility of an educator?**

The educator can share information with the family about STEP, especially any programs or trainings that are specific to transition.

## **How (and when) do you involve them in the transition planning process?**

STEP should be involved with the transition process when the student turns 14. They can help the student and family become stronger advocates for themselves so that the transition planning process is successful. Here are some suggestions on how you could involve STEP:

- The family could invite a STEP representative to attend the IEP and transition meetings to help provide information on local opportunities

## **Where can I learn more?**

Visit their website at: <http://www.tnstep.org/>

and services that will be available to the child after leaving school

- Teachers can share the information about the two large transition trainings that take place in TN each year with the family. Attending these trainings will help the parents prepare for the transition process and learn how to advocate for the services needed for their child
- A school administrator can request a professional development or in-service from STEP to ensure teachers are aware of most recent evidence-based practices related to transition

## **What questions should I ask of STEP TN?**

- I have looked at the calendar, and the workshop I would like to attend is not offered in my area. Can I request the workshop?
- How often does STEP change the topics of the workshops given, and can I suggest a topic?
- Does STEP provide disability evaluation services?

## **Additional contact information:**

- Give them a call at: 1-800-280-7837
- Send them an email at: [information@tnstep.org](mailto:information@tnstep.org)