

Parent Training & Information Centers (PTIC) and Family Matters PTIC (FMPTIC) Overview





Learning Objectives

- Learn about the key role of a Parent Training and Information Centers
- List 3 key services offered by FMPTIC
- Recognize 3 common barriers that families seek assistance with

What is a Parent Training & Information Center (PTIC)?

- **Purpose**

- Federally funded under the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**.
- Authorized and supported by the U.S. Dept. of Education's **Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)**.
- Provide training, information, and assistance to families of children and youth with disabilities.

- **Scope**

- Every state has at least one PTIC; some have multiple or Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs). Illinois only has one PTIC.
- Services are FREE to families and focused on rights, collaboration, and student outcomes.

Key Partners & Foundations: CPIR, OSEP, IDEA

- **IDEA**

- Federal special education law ensuring FAPE and procedural safeguards.
- Sets requirements for IEPs, evaluations, eligibility, and parent participation.

- **OSEP**

- Office within the U.S. Dept. of Education that funds and oversees PTICs.
- Focus on results-driven accountability and family engagement.

- **CPIR**

- Center for Parent Information and Resources supporting PTICs nationwide.
- Houses curated resources, fact sheets, and training materials for families and professionals.

About Family Matters PTIC (FMPTIC)

- **Mission**
 - Empower families to be effective advocates and collaborative partners in education.
 - Focus on underserved, rural, and under-resourced communities across Illinois.
- **Who We Serve**
 - Families of children and youth with disabilities, birth–26.
 - Students, educators, and community partners seeking inclusive, person-centered supports.

FMPTIC Services — Overview

- 1:1 Assistance and Information
- IEP and Records Reviews
- Eligibility Process Guidance
- Webinars & In-Person Trainings
- COMPASS Asynchronous 8-Week Special Education Basics Program
- Educational Surrogate Parent Program (through ISBE)
- Educational Resources, Newsletters, Vlogs
- Transition Supports & CtLC Education

1:1 Assistance

- **What We Do**

- Listen, clarify concerns, and identify priorities with families.
- Explain rights and processes under IDEA/Section 504.
- Coach families to communicate effectively with schools.
- Help families identify key steps in obtaining needed services.

- **How It Helps**

- Builds family knowledge and confidence.
- Prepares families for meetings and follow-through steps.
- Helps families identify high quality IEPs, supports and services.
- Supports families in asking the right questions during the process.

IEP & Educational Records Reviews

- **What We Do**

- Help families understand IEP components and alignment with needs.
- Review evaluations, progress monitoring, and accommodations for clarity.
- Identify questions families might ask their school teams.
- Help families explore all of their options.
- Provide resources to assist in getting needed services.

- **What We Don't Do**

- We do not write IEPs or dictate services.
- We do not provide legal advice or representation, nor do we make referrals to individual attorneys. Information provided by FMPTIC should never be considered legal advice.

Eligibility Process Guidance

- **Support Includes**
 - Explaining referral, evaluation, and eligibility timelines.
 - Clarifying consent, independent evaluations, and re-evaluation rights.
 - Discussing the difference between IDEA and Section 504.
- **Family Outcomes**
 - Families understand next steps, timelines, and documentation.
 - Improved collaboration and reduced confusion or conflict.

Webinars & In-Person Trainings

- **Topics Examples**

- Special Education Rights, IEP Basics, Eligibility & Evaluation, Progress Monitoring, School-Family Partnerships, Building a Special Education Family Advisory Board
- Secondary Transition planning, Charting the LifeCourse tools, Accessing Community Resources, Youth Empowerment.

- **Access**

- Scheduled sessions posted on our website and social channels.
- Customized sessions available for schools and community partners.
- FMPTIC can do educational programs for parents, students, and professionals.

Reach out to learn more about scheduling training!

Educational Surrogate Parent Program (through ISBE)

- **Overview**

- Recruits and trains volunteers to act as the parent in special education decisions when a student has no available parent/guardian.
- Ensures students' rights are protected during evaluation and IEP processes.

- **FMPTIC Role**

- Outreach, training coordination, and support in partnership with ISBE.
- More on the program: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Special-Education-Surrogate-Parent-Program.aspx>

Interested in becoming an Educational Surrogate Parent? The next training is on November 1st. Reach out to Abbi Mars at **amars@fmptic.org** to learn more.

Educational Resources, Newsletters, and Vlogs

- **Resources**

- Plain-language guides, checklists, Fact Sheets and templates.
- Multilingual materials where available.
 - Need something specific? Let us know!

- **Staying Informed**

- Quarterly newsletters with timely topics and events.
- Short Vlogs by Self-Advocates.

Transition Supports & CtLC Education

- **How We Help**

- Use CtLC tools (Trajectory, One-Page Description, Integrated Supports Star) to amplify student voice.
- Coach families and students to align IEP goals with post-secondary outcomes (education, employment, independent living).
- Help families use CtLC to have robust and meaningful conversations about both school experiences and future planning.

- **Important Note**

- FMPTIC acts as CtLC Ambassadors; we are not a CtLC training/certification center.
- We refer to the CtLC Nexus for formal courses, tools, and deeper learning.

Why Families Call FMPTIC

- Understanding evaluation/eligibility decisions or timelines
- Preparing for IEP meetings and decoding documents
- Concerns about progress, behavior supports, or accommodations
- Navigating transition planning and questions about the process of seeking adult services
- Seeking neutral, plain-language guidance to collaborate with schools
- Assistance connecting with needed community resources
- Seeking information about Conflict Resolution options and processes

Common Barriers Families Face

- Limited understanding of rights and processes under IDEA/504
- Access barriers: language, transportation, technology, time
- Communication breakdowns or adversarial dynamics
- Confusing paperwork and dense technical language
- Difficulty linking evaluations, services, and measurable goals

What We Do NOT Do

- Provide legal advice, representation, or act as attorneys
- Regularly attend IEP meetings on behalf of families
- Write letters or file complaints for families
- Dictate services or placements to school teams
- Act as private advocates for families or students

Our Approach: Building Family Knowledge & Competence

- Teach families how to read and use data (evaluations, progress reports)
- Coach on effective, solutions-focused communication with schools
- Model tools (checklists, CtLC) that families can reuse independently
- Center student voice, strengths, and culturally responsive practices
- Provide education on IDEA, IEPs and 504 plans
- Share information on parent and student rights and responsibilities in the special education process

How to Access FMPTIC Support

- Call or email to request 1:1 assistance
- Register for webinars and trainings
- Subscribe to newsletters and follow vlogs/resources
- Ask about Educational Surrogate Parent training (ISBE)

Phone #: 1-(866)-4FMPTIC or 1-(866) 436-7842

Email: info@fmptic.org

Website: <https://fmptic.org/>

Events: <https://fmptic.org/happenings/event-calendar.html>

•Make an **Appointment with an Educational Support**

Coach:

<https://outlook.office.com/book/FamilyMattersParentTrainingandInformationCenter1@fmptic.onmicrosoft.com/?ismsaljsauthenabed>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FamilyMattersPTIC>

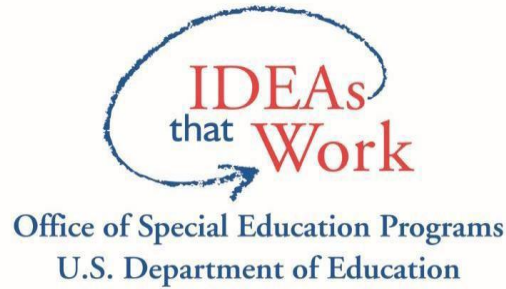
NOTE: To book a 1:1 assistance session with an educational support coach (ESC),
1) Go www.fmptic.org. 2) Click on Ask An Educational Support Coach on the right side of the screen (dark orange tab) 3) Click on Ask An Educational Support Coach in the middle of the page (dark green tab with an envelope icon). This will take you to the Bookings app & show you date & time availability of ESCs.

Key Takeaways

- PTICs (funded by OSEP under IDEA) ensure families have access to rights and resources
- FMPTIC provides free training, resources, and 1:1 assistance across Illinois
- We build family capacity; we do not provide legal services or replace the IEP team
- CtLC tools strengthen student voice and transition planning; formal training available via CtLC Nexus

Please help us serve families by
completing the short survey:





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