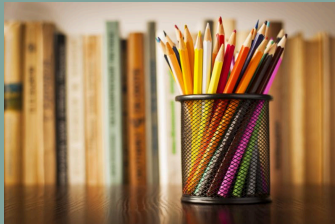




Welcome to the Table Talk newsletter from The Arc of New Jersey's Children's Advocacy Program. Our January edition is filled with valuable advocacy resources as well as exciting opportunities and experiences for your family. For more information, please visit our [webpage](#).



Advocacy with Adara on Facebook Live Update

Season three is back! Don't forget to view our archived episodes on Facebook.

New to the series? Each episode offers a friendly 10-15 minute chat on special education or services for children with IDD and their families. Tune in every other Monday during the school year at 12 pm on our Facebook page. No sign-ups needed, just drop by, watch, and don't forget to share your thoughts in the comments. We look forward to having you join us!

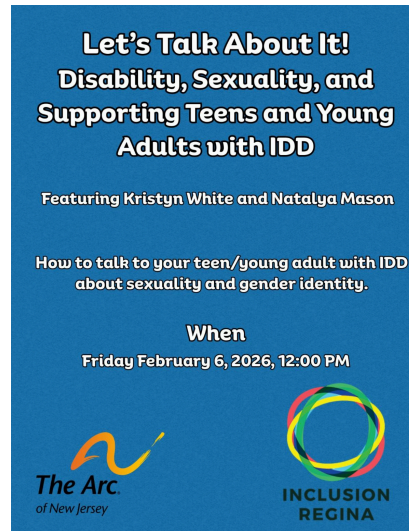
[Follow us on Facebook](#)

Upcoming Webinars



Lost in Transition: Understanding Failure to Thrive in Teens and Young Adults with IDD

Join us on January 21st, 2026 at 12:00 PM for an empowering webinar featuring Lisa Ford, the Senior



Let's Talk About It: Disability, Sexuality, and Supporting Teens and Young Adults

Director of the Family Institute at the Arc of New Jersey. Sometimes it feels like a teen or young adult with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) just... stops moving forward. Maybe they've lost interest in things they used to enjoy, struggle with motivation, or seem stuck in routines that no longer work for them. We'll look at why this happens, how to spot the signs early, and ways families, educators, and support teams can help young people re-engage, build confidence, and find new paths forward.

[Register Here](#)

Join us for this informative webinar on Friday February 6, 2026 at 12:00 PM featuring Kristyn White from Creative Options Regina and Natalya Mason from the Division of Social Accountability of the University of Saskatchewan. They will share a presentation on disability, sexuality, talking with families and caregivers about sexual identity, pronouns, and gender, as well as supporting teens and young adults with comprehensive sexual health education.

[Sign Up Here](#)

Upcoming Events



Stronger Together- An Inclusive Martial Arts Series

The Firth Youth Center and Tri County Care Management Organization are excited to welcome back Stronger Together: An Inclusive Martial Arts Series with a Family Focus starting in March! This free program offers adapted martial arts instruction for differently-abled youth ages 8–12, while encouraging parent/guardian and sibling participation in a fun, supportive environment. Each session also includes family dinner and games, fostering connection, confidence, and community for the whole family. Register [here](#).

We Can Do That! Challenge

Join our social media campaign with Community Access Unlimited (CAU) with a 5 to 10 second video featuring individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities teachers, parents and guardians showing off their talents and showing what they can do!

Send your video to

helpdesk@planningforadulthood.org

Want to show the world exactly what people with disabilities can do when entering adulthood?

Join our social media campaign with Community Access Unlimited (CAU).ORG with 5–10-second videos featuring teachers, parents, guardians, and especially individuals with developmental disabilities showing off their talents and showing what you can do!

Some examples include:

- "I can ride the bus!"
- "I can create a sculpture with clay!"
- "I can take a college class!"

Send in your WE CAN DO THAT! to helpdesk@planningforadulthood.org

Welcome to EDGE at The Arc, Ocean County Chapter!
 (Employment, Development, Business, & Engagement)

EDGE
 Empowering youth with disabilities

In partnership with the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, EDGE (Employment, Development, Business, and Engagement) supports blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired high school and college students in the transition to independent living, self-advocacy, and career development.

With former EDGE members you can staff and/or volunteer. You can also be a job coach. You have opportunities for an "internship" or "mentorship" in moving towards independence and career development.

This year-round program consists of two parts: EDGE 1.0 and EDGE 2.0. Both have a double layer of support, via blind and vision impaired staffers and mentors, who will collaborate with enrollees to plan for success and assist in reaching it.

EDGE 1.0 CORE KNOWLEDGE PROVISIONS
 Includes: self-advocacy, independent living, and career development.

EDGE 2.0 CHALLENGE PROVISIONS
 Includes: self-advocacy, independent living, and career development.

For more information, email edge@arcocean.org or visit our website at www.arcocean.org.

EDGE at The Arc of Ocean County

This year round program, in partnership with the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) supports blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired high school and college students in the transition to independent living, self-advocacy, and career development. For more information, email edge@arcocean.org.

Parent Training

JDK Social Station presents The ABCs of Behavior and How to Support Your Child. This session will be held on February 17th at 6:00 pm. Here you will learn simple proactive strategies to help prevent challenging behaviors before they start, and how to use positive reinforcement to encourage the behaviors you want to see more of. For more information and to register, visit: www.jdksocialstation.com

JDK SOCIAL STATION
PARENT TRAINING

The ABCs of Behavior and How to Support Your Child
 Presented by a BCBA

TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 6:00-7:30PM

Join Us for Parent Training: Understanding Why Behaviors Happen & How to Prevent Them

Ever wonder why your child does certain behaviors or how to help them make better choices? This training will give you some practical tools you can use at home every day. We'll talk about the functions of behavior—the real reasons behind what your child does—and show you how small changes can make a big difference.

You'll learn simple proactive strategies to help prevent challenging behaviors before they start, and how to use positive reinforcement to encourage the behaviors you want to see more of. No previous knowledge of ABA is needed—everything will be explained in clear, parent-friendly language with real-life examples.

Come learn how to make your home calmer, more predictable, and more enjoyable for you and your child. We're here to support you every step of the way!

For More Information REGISTER www.jdksocialstation.com
 (201) 330-0569 JDKsocialstation@gmail.com



Special Education Resources

To learn more about the special education process and current issues, take some time to explore the resources below. Gaining a deeper understanding of the process can help us better support students with disabilities. Click the links for helpful information

and guidance.

- [Special Education Staff Decimated After Shutdown Firings](#)
- [Abuse in Schools](#)
- [FASD Respect Act Signed into Law](#)
- [Parents Sue After Teen with Autism Sexually Assaulted on NJ School Bus](#)
- [20 Best Self-Advocacy IEP Goals](#)
- [The Arc of the US Blog](#)



Take Action! Cuts to Special Education are Happening NOW

The rights of students with disabilities are at serious risk following cuts to the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), which enforces IDEA and supports youth with disabilities. Without proper enforcement, states may neglect their responsibilities, putting millions of students in jeopardy. Tell Congress to protect OSERS—students with disabilities can't afford to lose these critical services.

Children's Advocacy Zoom Office Hours

Do you have questions about your student's IEP or 504 plan? Do you need help getting started? Join us on Thursday, May 18th from 12-2 pm. Due to the anticipated volume of participants, we will be offering 20 minute sessions with Adara Heilmann, Director of Children's Advocacy. Sessions will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis, ensuring we can accommodate as many families as possible.

Please scan the QR Code to register!

732-248-4897 education@arcnj.org



Scan me



Children's Advocacy Virtual Office Hours

Virtual office hours are here to stay! Due to anticipated volume, sessions will be limited to 20 minutes and given on a first come, first served basis to ensure that we can accommodate as many families as possible.

Upcoming Virtual Office Hours :

January 15th, 22nd, & 29th 12-2 pm

February 5th, 11th, & 19th 12-2 pm

[Click to sign up](#)



Missed our kick off meeting? No worries- we still have room!

Are you a teen or young adult with a disability who's passionate about making a difference? We invite you to become part of our Youth Advisory Board — this is a space where your voice matters!

Our board will meet monthly, with our first information sessions kicking off in the new year. Together, we'll focus on building advocacy and leadership skills, and influencing systems that truly support youth with disabilities.

By joining, you will:

- Gain confidence in self-advocacy and community leadership.
- Collaborate with other motivated peers.
- Provide valuable input to improve resources and initiatives for youth with disabilities.

Come learn, lead, and make your voice heard. Your perspective can help create real change!

To join our Youth Advisory Board, please fill out this [form](#).





Try email marketing for free today!