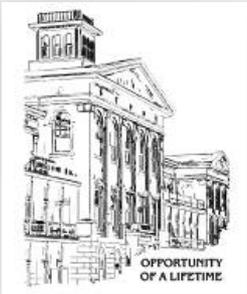


# ILLINOIS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF OUTREACH



**FREE** training and consultation for  
Illinois children with hearing loss

[bit.ly/ISDOutreach](http://bit.ly/ISDOutreach)



**Search for Illinois School for the Deaf Outreach**



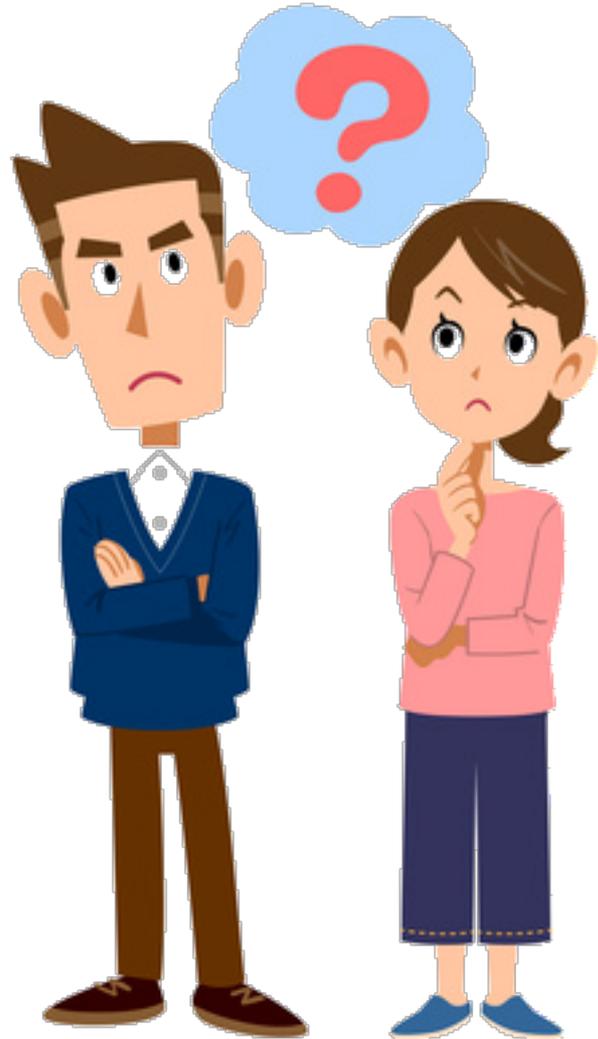
State of Illinois  
Dept. of Human Services  
Illinois School for the Deaf

JB Pritzker, Governor  
James Dimas, Secretary  
Julee Nist, Superintendent

# LEAVITS

*The advocacy training tool any EI or EC provider can use with their families.*

# THE LEAVITS PURPOSE:



- As an IDEA advocacy coach for the past 10 years I noticed a pattern, those prepared were getting better services, in general.
- Many parents enter EC at their district in IL not knowing that a law even exists for the education of their child.
- Knowledge of the system and how to work as a team proves success.
- Often times families will say they know to save face, this will program make sure they know.

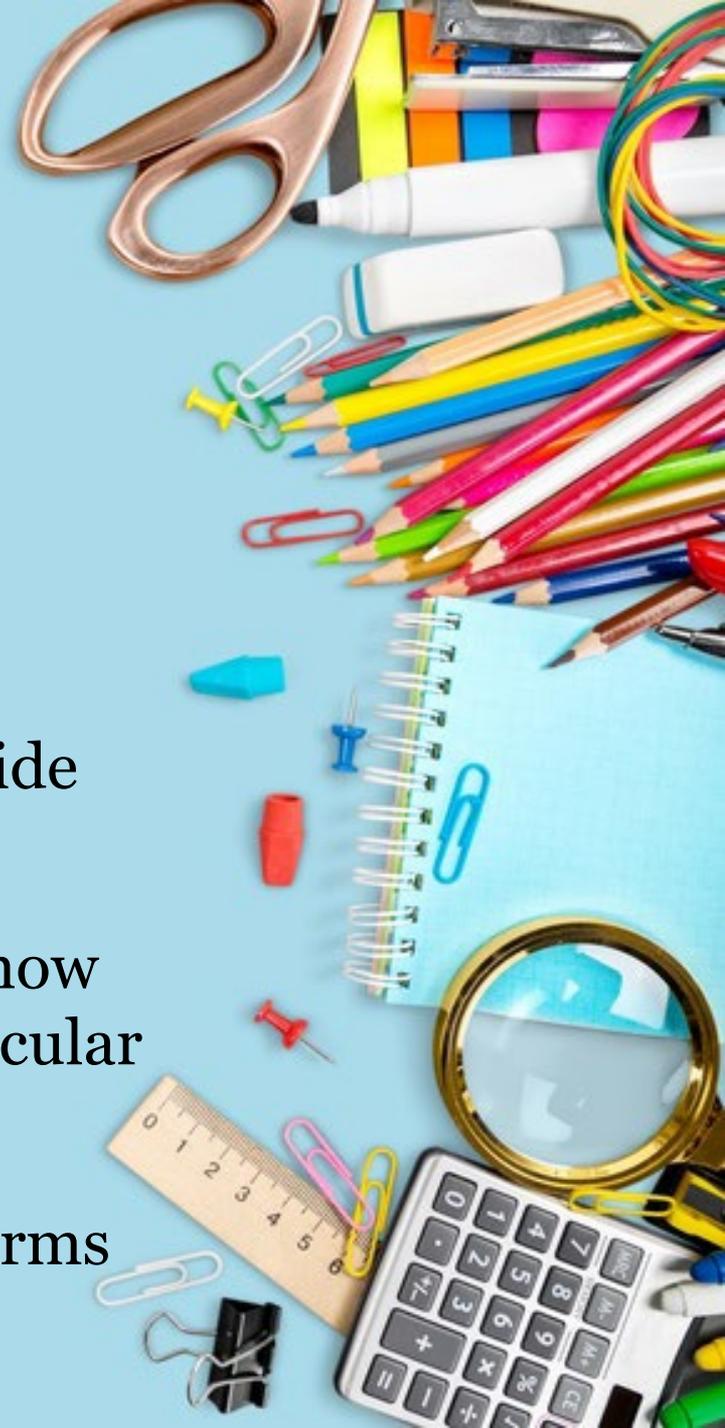
# THE HOPEFUL OUTCOME:

- EI/EC providers will utilize these cards and parents will become aware of the system.
- Parents will learn to advocate for their child.
- Hope that the cards will entice families to research more/learn more.
- Parents will have a foundation of knowledge to work with.



# WHAT THE PROVIDER UTILIZES:

- ✓ .pdf version of the 1<sup>st</sup> segment (16) of LEAVITS cards.
- ✓ Demo of how you could manage your materials.
- ✓ Instructions on how to print and provide the cards.
- ✓ “Talking Points” cards and a letter of how to initiate conversation around a particular LEAVIT
- ✓ Personalized release of information forms to connect the family to me.





## LEAVITS Advocacy Training Program

Thank you for participating in this initial phase of the LEAVITS Advocacy Training Program.

As many of you are aware I have taken a leadership role in providing parent and professional education on the topic of Advocacy. The importance of this aspect of parenting is extremely important for families who have children with disabilities. I find that many families have no idea of what their rights are or that they have to take a more powerful role in their child's development and education. Since my professional background revolves around parenting a child with hearing loss, teaching IDEA and Advocacy and working one on one with families having difficulties within their Local Education Agency I will start this program on those topics. The first (hopefully of many) segment of the LEAVITS program addresses the following topics:

1. Advocating for my child
2. What is advocacy?
3. What is IDEA?
4. Where did all the acronyms come from?
5. What is an IFSP?
6. What is early intervention?
7. What is Transition (Part C to Part B)?
8. What is an IEP?
9. Getting to the IEP
10. What is included in the IEP?
11. What is an accommodation?
12. What is an assessment?
13. What is Least Restrictive Environment?
14. What are "measurable" goals?
15. What is placement?
16. What is ADA?

In this initial phase I will provide you with the 16 initial LEAVITS. You will need to print them. I recommend you print them either on cardstock or if you use regular paper that you laminate them. They are 1 full sheet that you will fold in half. I have made them so you literally have to just fold them in half and you are good to go. You will want to either staple

# WHAT THE PROVIDER HAS TO WORK FROM:

Advocacy/Parent Training LEAVITS

## WHAT IS ADVOCACY

LEAVITS # 1

### What is advocacy and why do I as a parent need to know

- ♦ Advocacy is *"the act of pleading for, supporting or recommending"*
- ♦ Parents are the voice of the special needs child until that child can communicate for themselves.
- ♦ Parents will advocate in many different settings: doctors, therapists, schools, etc. The list is wide. The successful advocate is comfortable in all of these worlds about his child and what needs they have and what a child needs.
- ♦ Advocating for a child starts at birth. All babies and young children need advocates but those with special needs need stronger advocates for life.
- ♦ Parents should educate themselves on their child's needs so they can succeed in the world.

LEAVITS

Andrea Marwah  
Advocacy/IDEA Specialist  
Adv.leavits@gmail.com

## Provider Talking Points

- ♦ Parents who learn advocacy skills from the start have better relationships with their providers and schools regarding their children.
- ♦ Children who have strong Parent Advocates tend to become strong self advocates naturally.
- ♦ In this **LEAVITS** I want you to take a look at some websites about advocacy and what it means for your and your family.
- ♦ I'll touch base with you next week if you have any question.
- ♦ Don't forget your homework!! We'll discuss it at our next session..

# WHAT IS ADVOCACY

## LEAVITS # 1

### **What is advocacy and why do I as a parent need to know about this?**

- ◆ Advocacy is *“the act of pleading for, supporting or recommending action for another”*.
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- ◆ Advocating for a child starts at birth. All babies and young children need advocates but those with special needs need stronger advocates for longer periods of time.
- ◆ Parents should educate themselves on their child’s needs and what they need to succeed in the world.

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# WHAT THE PARENT GETS:

- ✓ Letter of introduction to the program
- ✓ Letter of release so that the EI/EC provider can share family information:
  - Family name
  - Family address
  - Family email
  - Childs age
- ✓ Email contact welcoming them to the program, providing them contact information for future reference.



# PARENT LEAVITS CARD:



Advocacy/Parent Training LEAVITS

LEAVITS # 1

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Define Advocacy:

- ⇒ Illinois Hands & Voices: <http://www.illhandsandvoices.org>
- ⇒ National Council on Disabilities: <http://www.ncd.gov>
- ⇒ The Center for Parent Information and Resources: <http://www.parentscenterhub.org/resources>
- ⇒ The Center for Parent Information and Resources: <http://www.fetaweb.com/101.htm>
- ⇒ Whigslaw's From Emotions to Advocacy

ask questions. Unasked questions only provide the answer "no" ....

There are many online and in text resources to learn about advocacy. Start with one, take your time and

## RESOURCES

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**Your HOMEWORK:** Visit one of the sites below and define advocacy in your own words...

# WHAT THE FAMILY KEEPS:

**Your HOMEWORK:** Visit one of the sites below and define advocacy in your own words...

**LEAVITS**  
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## RESOURCES

... to learn about advocacy. Start with one, take your time and provide the answer "no" ....

... : <http://www.fetaweb.com/101.htm>

... sources: <http://www.paretnscenterhub.org/resouces>

... [www.ncd.gov](http://www.ncd.gov)

... [sandvoices.org](http://sandvoices.org)

Advocacy/Parent Training LEAVITS

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LEAVITS # 1

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**Your HOMEWORK:** Visit one of the sites below  
and define advocacy in your own words...

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## RESOURCES

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- ⇒ National Council on Disabilities: <http://www.ncd.gov>
- ⇒ Illinois Hands & Voices: <http://www.ilhandsandvoices.org>

Define Advocacy: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# ANTICIPATED OUTCOME:

- More educated IEP teams.
- Better management of IEP plans.
- More realistic expectations of what the district can and cannot do.
- Better communication.



# COMMENTS FROM FAMILIES:

- *“This would have relieved a great deal of stress for me when my child was young and I was trying to navigate everything. It has also helped me gain clarity on some things now. I love how this puts the basics in a CONCISE, EASY TO UNDERSTAND flow and format. AND it gives helpful websites for additional info. A must for any newly diagnosed family.”*
- *“This was really helpful as we were gearing up for the IEP process. It taught me things I didn't know yet and reinforced things I'd already read. It also opened the door to ask our therapist for more information. For someone not yet researching or who doesn't know to research these things, it would be even more informative.”*
- *“This is a great program and it has help to understand a lot of things that I didn't know.”*



# COMMENTS FROM PROVIDERS:

## LIKED MOST

- “It is easy for parents to keep these cards together and refer to them as they have questions. They also divide the information into easy to digest amounts with clear explanations.”
- “I liked the information that was shared with families. However, I think it would be more helpful to pick and choose what information I am sharing rather than have to follow in order.”
- “Having a structure to discuss topics related to advocacy.”

## LIKED LEAST

- “Sometimes I found myself printing a lot of paper, between the sheets that were for me, and the ones to leave with the family.”
- “Some of the information was too basic. My more advanced families don't need to know what early intervention is, but could benefit from the transition/IEP info.”
- “I might not give all the cards to all my families. Some cards were too simple for families who had been in EI for some time (What is an IFSP?) and some cards might be overwhelming for parents with a baby (Transition). Maybe there could be different levels of cards to use when a parent is first starting out vs. nearing transition.”



# OTHER PROVIDER INPUT:

- “Just have one sheet that both the family and provider will use...incorporate the talking points into the sheet to be left with the family”
- “Less LEAVITS cards or more information on one card.”
- “I didn't get very far into the program because the families that participated I only saw twice a month.”
- “Like I said before, I think the LEAVITS could be divided into different levels. 1-6 might be good for a new family, while 7-16 might be good to begin when a child turns 2 and families will begin to move toward transition.”
- “More info on transition and less info on what is early intervention.”
- “I like the simple handouts and the bullet point lists, as well as the resources to find out more information. I really like the topics too.”
- “I thought the content and method of delivery were good.”

INTERESTED? CONTACT ME:

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331-702-8944



ILLINOIS  
HANDS &  
VOICES