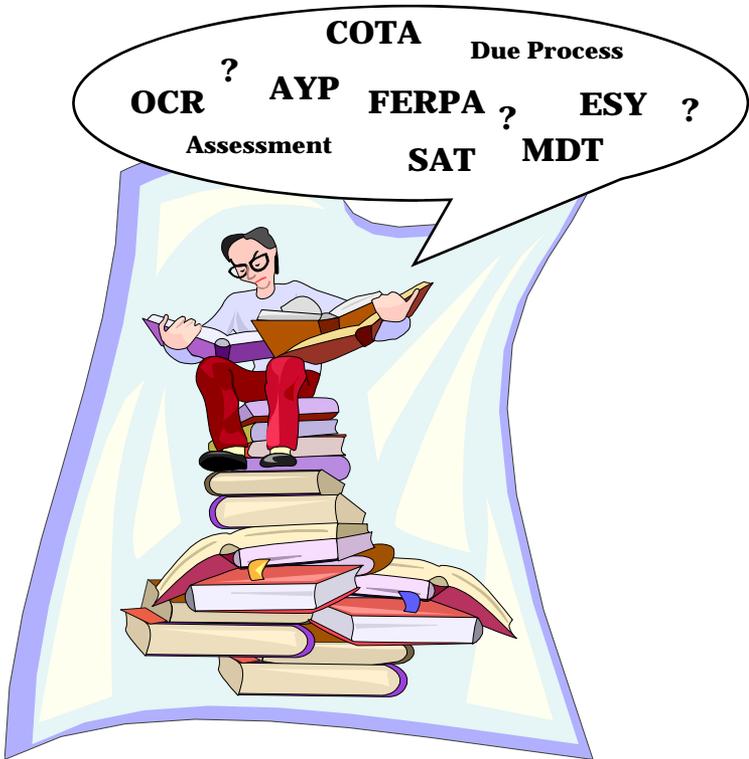


Acronyms Abbreviations and Definitions



Greetings!

Welcome to the world of Systems that touch our lives!

It doesn't matter whether you are trying to navigate the health care, early intervention, education or special education system, you are entering a world that has a language all of its own. This language is often referred to as "acronyms". It may seem like a foreign language, but it is really just a language of initials.

Often times, during meetings or as you fill out forms, you will find that acronyms are used frequently. Systems and those that are employed by systems assume that everyone is familiar with or fluent in this "language". If you're in a meeting or completing a form that uses acronyms that you don't understand, we encourage you to ask:

"What does that term mean?"

This booklet has been designed to give the definitions of the most commonly used acronyms & abbreviations. In addition, this booklet also provides many other useful definitions for words that you may come across as you navigate systems. We have also added a section at the end of this book that is focused on the Health Care system.

This booklet does not include every acronym you may hear—new acronyms are "created" by someone somewhere every minute of every day. We do hope that it will help unlock some of the jargon used in the systems of our world. The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHY) website: <http://www.nichcy.org> is a great link for locating acronyms or other resources

The Parents Reaching Out Staff



Quick Reference Guide

AAC	Augmentative and Alternative Communication
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
APE	Adapted Physical Education
ASHA	American Speech Language Hearing Association
ASL	American Sign Language
AT	Assistive Technology Device
AUT	Autism
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BIP	Behavioral Intervention Plan
BMS	Behavior Management Specialist
CD	Cognitive Delay
CEC	Council of Exceptional Children
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIMP	Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Process
CMS	Children Medical Services
COTA	Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant
CP	Cerebral Palsy
CSPD	Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
CYFD	Children Youth and Families Department
DD	Developmental Disability
DDPC	Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
DOE	Department of Education
DOH	Department of Health
DVR	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
EA	Educational Assistant
ECSE	Early Childhood Special Education

EDGAR	Educational Department General Administrative Regulations
EI	Early Intervention
ELP	English Language Proficiency
EPSS	Educational Plan for Student Success
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESY	Extended School Year
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavior Assessment
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
FIT	Family Infant Toddler Program
GATE	Gifted and Talented Education
HI	Hearing Impaired
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEE	Individual Education Evaluation
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IFSP	Individual Family Service Plan
ISP	Individualized Service Plan
LD	Learning Disability / SLD: Specific Learning Disability
LEA	Local Education Agency
LLP	Limited Language Proficiency
LOC	Level of Care
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
LTSD	Long Term Services Division
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
OCR	Office of Civil Rights
OHI	Other Health Impaired
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OT	Occupational Therapy

P & A	Protection and Advocacy
PED	Public Education Department
PBDC	Parents for Behaviorally Different Children
PBS	Positive Behavior Supports
PCP	Primary Care Physician
PDD	Pervasive Development Disorders
PL	Public Law
PLP	Present Levels of Performance
PRO	Parents Reaching Out
PT	Physical Therapist
PWN	Prior Written Notice
Rtl	Response to Intervention
RRC	Regional Resource Center
SAT	Student Assistance Team
SBE	State Board of Education
SDE	State Department of Education
SEA	State Education Agency
SID or SI	Sensory Integration Disorder
SIG	State Improvement Grant
SIP	State Improvement Plan
SLD	Speech Language Disorder
SLP	Speech Language Pathologist
SPED	Special Education
SPP	State Performance Plan
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
TDD	Telecommunications Device for the Deaf
TTY	Telecommunication Teletypewriter
USDOE	United States Department of Education
VI	Visually Impaired

Adapted Physical Education (APE) - A component of the educational curriculum in which physical, recreational and other therapists work with children who exhibit delays in motor development and perceptual motor skills. It is a related service some children might need in addition to or in place of physical education.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) –No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that each state measure yearly progress toward achieving state academic standards. “Adequate Yearly Progress” is the minimum level improvement that states, school districts and schools must achieve each year. The report is done annually.

Advocate - An individual who represents or speaks out on behalf of another person's interests. A parent speaking out on behalf of his/her child is an advocate.

American Sign Language (ASL) - A method of communicating by using hand signs. Each sign represents either one word or a concept that is typically expressed with several spoken words. For words that do not have a sign, finger spelling is used.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
A national professional and credentialing organization organized for speech-language pathologists and audiologists. As of January 1997 the full name is American Association of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - A law that took effect in 1992 which defines “disability” and prohibits discrimination by employers, by any facility open to the general public, and by state and local public agencies that provide such services as transportation. (Public Law 101-336)

The Arc of NM – State-wide advocacy organization for families and individuals of all ages with disabilities. Contact them at 1-800-358-6493.

Aphasia - A communication disorder that is characterized by partial or total inability to produce and/or understand speech as a result of brain damage due to injury or disease.

Assessment – Information gathered by qualified personnel on a child's development, and on the needs and priorities of the family. It is used in planning the Individual Family Service Plan. Assessment is also a collection of tests that look at the strengths and challenges of a person to plan appropriate services and supports for school age children, youth and adults through state, local and federal programs. Assessments help determine eligibility for these programs.

Assistive Technology Device (AT) - Any item, piece of equipment, or product system (acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized) that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Public schools are required to consider the assistive technology needs of students with disabilities.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) - A neurobiological disorder. Typically children with ADD have developmentally inappropriate behavior, including poor attention skills and impulsivity. Characteristics arise in early childhood, typically before age 7, are chronic and last at least 6 months.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) - A neurobiological disorder. Typically, children with AD/HD have developmentally inappropriate behavior, including poor attention skills, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. These characteristics often arise in early childhood, typically before age 7, are chronic and last at least 6 months. Children with AD/HD may also experience difficulty in the areas of social skills and self esteem.



Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) - Any method of communicating without speech such as using signs, gestures, picture boards, or electronic or non-electronic devices. These methods can help children who are unable to use speech or who need to supplement their speech to communicate effectively.

Autism (AUT) and Pervasive Developmental Disorder NOS (PDD-NOS*) - Developmental disabilities that share many of the same characteristics. Usually evident by age three, autism and PDD-NOS are neurological disorders that affect a child's ability to communicate, understand language, play, and relate to others. *NOS = not otherwise specified.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) - A plan that is put in place to teach a child proper behavior and social skills. It should be positive in nature, not punitive.

Behavior Management Specialist (BMS) - An individual who has knowledge or training in behavioral theory, experience conducting functional analysis of behavior, experience developing and implementing written positive behavior intervention plans.

Behavioral Assessment - Gathering (direct observation and by parent report) and analyzing information about a child's behaviors. Frequency and duration of behaviors are noted. Information helps identify the "function" of behavior plan ways to reduce or replace unwanted behaviors.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) - Government agency that oversees and assists the affairs of Native Americans.

Cerebral Palsy (CP) - A disorder of movement and posture control resulting from non-progressive damage to the brain during fetal life, the newborn period, or early childhood. Both genetic and acquired factors may be involved. It may be caused by a lack of normal fetal brain development or by injury to the brain.

Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA) - Works under the direction of occupational therapists to provide rehabilitative services to persons with mental, physical, emotional, or developmental impairments.

Child Find - A federal program which requires states to actively locate children, birth to age 21, with developmental disabilities or who are at risk for developmental disabilities. Child Find particularly focuses on children not enrolled in school programs.

Children Youth & Families Department (CYFD) – An agency that is dedicated to enhancing the safety, dignity, and well-being of the children, youth, and families of New Mexico. They protect children and adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. They hold juvenile offenders accountable for their actions and rehabilitate them; and they seek to prevent abuse, reduce juvenile crime, promote quality child care, and support healthy families.

Children’s Medical Services (CMS) – A Title V (federal and state funded) program for children with special health care needs requiring specialized medical care in a community-based, family-centered, culturally-sensitive, comprehensive manner. CMS assists families to coordinate health care, educational needs, transportation services, etc.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) - Every time a law is passed by congress, regulations are developed by the US Department of Education these regulations are always assigned a CFR code.

Cognitive Delay (CD) - (Formerly known as mental retardation) Some common conditions include development from childhood at below average rate, and/or difficulty in learning and social adjustments; range from mild to profound with vast majority being mild.



Comprehensive Educational Evaluation – Tests and/or observations by public school staff to determine whether a child has a disability and requires special education and related services. The school district's multi-disciplinary team is required to do this evaluation and hold a meeting with the parent to discuss the results. A parent may choose to share any evaluation and assessment information done by the child and family agency or by other qualified persons.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) - The department of education is required to have a comprehensive plan of how to keep educators current with best practices regarding education.

Continuous Improvements and Monitoring Process (CIMP) - Each state is required to have a plan of how they will monitor and improve education based on continually improving process.

Council of Exceptional Children (CEC) - International professional organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities students with disabilities, and/or the gifted.

Deaf (D) - Having nonfunctional hearing, with or without amplification, for the ordinary purposes of daily living. An individual formerly referred to as being deaf is now classified as having profound hearing loss.

Consumer – A term commonly used by professionals referring to a person receiving services.

Deficit Based Assessment – A system that is based on finding all the things the person cannot do in order to determine eligibility for services. These limitations and challenges must be documented thoroughly as part of the process of applying for and receiving services.



Department of Health (DOH) The government agency that promotes health and sound health policy to prevent disease and disability, improve health services systems and assure that essential public health functions and safety net services are available.

Developmental Disability (DD) - Any physical or mental condition that begins before the age of 18 years, causes the child to acquire skills at a slower rate than her peers, is expected to continue indefinitely and impairs the child's ability to function in society.

Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) - The New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council is one of 54 national councils established by federal law. They engage in systemic change, advocacy and capacity building that contribute to a coordinated system of services that are centered on and directed by persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

Disability - A substantially limiting physical or mental impairment, which affects basic life activities, such as: hearing, seeing, speaking, walking, caring for oneself, learning or working.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) – Agency that is part of the NM Department of Education supported by state and federal funds. DVR helps people with disabilities to achieve a suitable employment outcome. DVR should be explored as your child begins the transition to adulthood as early as age 14 but not later than 16 so that plans can be made in the IEP to meet your child's vocational needs.

Due Process A legal process for resolving a dispute between the family and the child and family service agency related to the delivery of early intervention services. In special education, Due Process refers to a legal process for resolving a dispute between the family and the public school related to the identification, evaluation, or placement of a child with disabilities.

Dyslexia – A learning disability in which the child has difficulty with reading due to difficulty distinguishing written symbols. Example: transposing letters and words such as reading “top” as “pot”.

Dyspraxia – Difficulty with planning and performing coordinated movements, although there is no apparent damage to the muscles.

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) – The NM Special Education Bureau oversees programs that assist three to five year old children who have developmental delays, funded by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B, 619, and the State of NM.

Early Intervention (EI) - Specialized services provided to families of infants and toddlers ages birth to three, who are at-risk for or are showing signs of developmental delay provided by the NM Department of Health Family Infant Toddler Program (FIT).

Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) - Parts 74-86 and 97-99 of Title 34 of the code of Federal Regulations (CFR); that govern US Department of Education discretionary grants.

Educational Assistant (EA) – This is a person hired by the school district that provides assistance to students under the supervision of the classroom teacher.

Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS) - The NM Public Education Department requires every school district to develop a long range strategic plan to promote student success and continuous school improvement. EPSS is a *written* guide for the district and schools based on measurable goals and strategies. Resources, community partnerships and staff development activities must be aligned to these goals. All stakeholders, including parents, are involved in the development and implementation of the plan.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) (PL 89010) - A federal law designed to strengthen and improve educational quality and opportunity for the nation's elementary and secondary students, particularly for economically underprivileged children. This act paved the way for direct federal support for the education of children with disabilities and was the statutory basis for addressing special education. The No Child Left Behind Act is the reauthorization of the ESEA.

Emotional Disturbance (ED) - A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance:

- a. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
- b. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
- c. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
- d. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
- e. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

English as a Secondary Language (ESL) - Instruction in language arts for LEP students, it explicitly teaches listening comprehension, oral expression, pronunciation, reading and writing while supporting the skills and concepts presented in the regular English curriculum.

English Language Proficiency (ELP) - Language assessment scale, which determines the level of proficiency of the child; limited English proficient or non-English proficient or fluent English proficient.



Extended School Year (ESY) - Delivery of special education and related services during the summer vacation when the child needs those services in order to prevent significant loss of previously learned skills. The IEP team must consider the need for Extended School Year at each meeting and must describe those services specifically with goals. Not all special education students, nor all special education services in the IEP, require an extended school year. ESY services must be individually crafted. Contact Parents Reaching Out for information about ESY services.

Family Education Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) - A Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and the parent's right to review their child's files.

Family Infant Toddler Program (FIT) – A program of the NM Department of Health that provides early intervention services to families who have concerns about the development of their young child (birth to three).



Fidelity – The unfailing fulfillment of one's duties and obligations and strict adherence to vows or promises. *Fidelity means to implement a program as it was intended;* to insure that all services are delivered correctly (Ex: that a reading program is implemented correctly).

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) – IDEA 2004 requires that agencies provide special education and related services at no cost to the parent in order that a child with disabilities may benefit from public education. It requires that an Individualized Education Program (IEP) be developed for each child with a disability with measurable goals based on the child's needs and present levels of educational performance.

Functional Behaviors - Behaviors (basic skills, such as meal-time skills) the child has mastered, or needs to master, in order to get along as independently as possible in society.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) – A process that looks at why a child behaves the way he or she does, given the nature of the child and what is happening in the environment. Data is collected to determine the possible causes of problem behaviors and to identify strategies to address the targeted behaviors.

Gifted - Gifted Education in New Mexico is under the umbrella of Special Education. A gifted child in this state is defined as a school-age person who intellectual ability paired with subject matter aptitude/achievement, creativity/divergent thinking, or problem-solving/critical thinking is so outstanding that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) team decides special education services are required to meet the child's educational needs.

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) - A coordinated program of scientifically based research and innovative strategies designed to enhance the ability of elementary and secondary schools in meeting the special education needs of gifted and talented students. The major emphasis is on serving students traditionally underrepresented in gifted and talented programs.

Head Start - A federal program focused on providing a comprehensive preschool program for children ages (3-5) of low-income families. Activities address individual needs and to help children attain their potential in growth and mental and physical development before starting school. 10% of children enrolled are required to be children with disabilities.

Hearing Impaired (HI) - Loss or auditory ability ranging in degree from slight to profound. Hearing impairments are generally categorized as conductive (involving the middle and outer ear) or sensorineural (involving the inner ear or the auditory nerve). Hearing impairment can also be classified as congenital (existing at or dating from birth).

Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) – Evaluation by a qualified examiner not employed by the school district responsible for the education of the child.

Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) - The written document which defines the early intervention services provided to the child and family. The program is designed to meet the needs of the child and the family, and is based on family-identified priorities.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) - A written statement of a child's current level of development and an individualized plan of instruction, including the goals, specific services to be received, the people who will carry out the services, the standards and time lines for evaluating progress, and the amount and degree to which the child will participate with typically developing peers (Inclusion / Least Restrictive Environment). The IEP is developed by the child's parents and the professionals who evaluated the child and/ or are providing the services. IDEA requires an IEP for all children in special education, ages three years through twenty-one.

Individualized Service Plan (ISP) – A plan developed by the individual, their family, their case manager and other people who know and care about the person receiving services through the NM Home and Community Based Waivers (DD, D&E and Medically Fragile).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - The federal law that provides the legal authority for early intervention and special educational services for children birth to age 21. **Part B** outlines services for children ages 3-21. **Part C** outlines services for children birth to 3.

Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) - This is the term to describe universities and colleges.

Interagency Agreement – This refers to a document that is signed by the authorized representatives of at least two agencies outlining mutually agreed upon responsibilities to perform certain duties under specified conditions.

Learning Disability (LD) - A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) – This term means that the placement that is as close as possible to the regular education environment. This is the educational setting that permits a child to receive the most educational benefit while participating in a regular educational environment to the maximum extent appropriate. LRE is a requirement under the IDEA law.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) - When a student's first language is other than English then the education system must recognize that the student although may sound like they are good at English may not actually understand what is said therefore the answers may appear inappropriate.

Local Education Agency (LEA) – This term means the public schools operating as independent districts in accordance with statutes, regulations, and policies established by the State Department of Education.

Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC) – Funded by the U.S Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs funded project to help build the capacity of State Education Agencies and Lead Agencies in improving programs and services for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) – This team generally consists of the principal, the student's general education teacher, parents, special educators, and special services ancillary staff. They arrange for evaluations, consider evaluation results, and make recommendations to the Individual Education Plan Team (IEP Team).

Music Therapy - A therapeutic service provided to meet recreational or educational goals for a child. Music therapy includes playing instruments, moving to music, creating music, singing, and listening to music. It is utilized in a variety of applications in schools, hospitals and private settings through both individual and group approaches, often in conjunction with other types of therapy.

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) – A national organization dedicated to providing services to state education agencies to maximize educational outcomes for children with disabilities.

Natural Environment – The natural or everyday settings for your child. They are places where they would be if they didn't have a special developmental concern. It is where all children would be, for example, home, childcare, parks, etc. For youth or adults with disabilities, this would be living in their own home instead of an institution or other setting.

Natural Supports – People and organizations from the community that persons without disabilities might have for support, e.g. friends, family, neighbors, church organizations, club members, sports team members, etc.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) - The latest amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). NCLB is the name for the strict accountability changes made to the law in January 2002.

Occupational Therapy (OT) - A health and rehabilitation professional that helps people regain, develop, and build skills that are important for independent functioning, health, well-being, and security.

Office of Civil Rights (OCR) – A Federal agency that enforces civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. These laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin, sex, disability, and on the basis of age.

Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) – Federal agency dedicated to improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities ages birth through 21, by providing leadership and financial support to assist states and local districts. OSEP administers the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Other Health Impaired (OHI) - An educational classification that describes students who have chronic or acute health problems which cause limited strength, vitality, or alertness that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Parents for Behaviorally Different Children (PBDC) - A nonprofit organization in New Mexico formed by families of children and adolescents with neurobiological, emotional and behavioral differences.

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) - A statewide nonprofit organization that enhances positive outcomes for families and children in New Mexico through informed decision making, advocacy, education, and resources.

Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD) - This refers to the overall category of Pervasive Developmental Disorders that includes; Autism, Rett syndrome, Asperger's syndrome, PDD-NOS, and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder. Please contact Parents Reaching Out for more information and refer to NICHCY Briefing Paper FS20.

Physical Therapist (PT) - A professional who is devoted to improving a person's physical abilities through activities that strengthen muscular control and motor coordination.

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) - A behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective interventions that improve the environments in which teaching and learning occurs. Strategies focus on school wide, classroom and individual systems of prevention and support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, and recreation) for all children and youth.

Preschool Special Education - An educational program designed to meet the unique developmental needs of an individual child with a disability who is three, four, or five years of age. It is a child-focused educational effort.

Present Levels of Performance (PLP) - Statements written in the IEP that accurately describe the student's strengths, weaknesses and learning styles.

Prior Written Notice (PWN) – This is a part of the IEP process requiring Districts to inform parents of their rights. It is a form that the school must use to tell parents why they're doing what they're doing, or why they're not doing what they're not doing. This must be done in writing.

Protection and Advocacy (P & A) - The NM Protection and Advocacy System is a private, non-profit organization, which protects and promotes the rights of people with disabilities in New Mexico. Each year, after public hearings and comment, P & A sets priorities for the cases and disability problems it will address.

Public Education Department (PED) – State agency that oversees all aspects of education in New Mexico.

Public Law (PL) - This is the term given to laws passed by congress and they are usually followed by a number designation that indicated the session of congress and the number of the bill. Example: PL 94-142 indicates the 94th session of congress - the 142nd bill passed in that session.

Response to Intervention (RTI) - The RTI process is a multi-step approach to providing services and interventions to students who struggle with learning at increasing levels of intensity. The progress students make at each stage of intervention is closely monitored. Results of this monitoring are used to make decisions about the need for further research-based instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education or both.

Screening - The process of quickly looking at a child's development to find out if there are any areas of concern. It is used to recommend children for more in-depth evaluation.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act - A law that provides that a percentage of federal funds spent on vocational education must be spent on the cost of special programs, services and activities for individuals with disabilities. This law is closely intertwined with P.L. 105-17 IDEA. Children with disabilities who are not eligible for special education may qualify for accommodations under Section 504.

Section 619 - The section of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act that provides 3-4 year old programs in the public schools.

Self-Stimulation / “Stemming” - Abnormal behaviors such as: head banging, watching the fingers wiggle, or rocking side to side that interfere with the child’s ability to “sit still” and pay attention or to participate in meaningful activity. Self-stimulation may occur if a child cannot readily participate with people and the objects in their environment.

Sensory Integration Disorder (SID or SI) or Sensory Integration Dysfunction – The inability to process information received through the senses, causing problems with learning, development, and behavior.

Sensory Integration Treatment (SI) - A technique used in occupational therapy services, which provides playful, meaningful activities that enhance an individual’s sensory intake and lead to more adaptive functioning in daily life.

Service Coordinator – A person assigned to coordinate services and supports in the IFSP to ensure timely delivery of *early intervention* services. He/she facilitates IFSP reviews, ensures that a timely transition plan is developed at and facilitates a smooth, effective transition.

Service Providers – The agencies and/or contracted individuals that provide therapies and other services for the person eligible to receive specified services.

Special Education (SPED) - Specialized instruction tailor-made to fit the unique learning strengths and needs of the individual student with disabilities, from age three through high school (to age 22). A major goal of special education is to teach the skills and knowledge the child needs to be as independent as possible. Programs focus on academics and also include therapy or other related services to help the child overcome difficulties in all areas of development. These services are required by IDEA to be delivered in the least restrictive environment.

Specific Learning Disability (SLD) – A disorder that affects the ability to listen, think, speak, read, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

Speech and Language Disorders - Problems in communication and related areas that range from simple sound substitutions to the inability to understand or use language or use the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech and feeding. Some causes of these disorders include hearing loss, neurological disorders, brain injury, mental retardation, drug abuse, physical impairments and vocal abuse or misuse.

Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) - A therapist who provides treatment to help a child, youth or adult develop or improve articulation, communication skills, oral-motor skills and speech errors and/or difficulties in language patterns.

State Board of Education (SBE) - Sets public school and vocational education policy and controls, manages, and directs all public schools under applicable laws.

State Improvement Grant (SIG) - Each state may apply for funding through a grant process to improve services to students with disabilities. Grants are usually focused on pre-service/in-service for educators and systemic change.

State Performance Plan (SPP) – The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 requires States to develop a six-year performance plan. This plan (SPP) evaluates the efforts to implement IDEA and describes measurable plans for continuous improvement. OSEP has identified indicators to be included in the SPP and requires States to report progress on targets set by Federal and State law to determine compliance. *Indicators targeted for improvement in New Mexico include:*

Graduation rates; drop out rates; participation and performance on assessments; suspension/expulsion rates; Least Restrictive Environments, preschool placements with typically developing peers; early childhood outcomes; parent involvement; disproportionality (Race/Ethnicity/Disability); evaluation timelines; preschool transition; high school transition and post high school outcomes.

Student Assistance Team (SAT) – A school-based group of people whose purpose is to provide additional Tier II (classroom level) support to students who are experiencing difficulties that are preventing them from benefiting from general education, because they are either performing below or above expectations.

Supplemental Educational Services (SES) - One of the provisions of No Child Left Behind is called Supplemental Educational Services. This is extra, outside help for students who attend Title I schools. Supplemental educational services must be offered to parents at the district's expense in the second year after a school has been determined to be "in need of improvement". All eligible families are offered these services. Priority for this additional help is given to low-income parents. The district provides money for parents to choose the provider of these extra services from a list approved by the NM Public Education Department. SES provides extra help in reading, language arts or math and must not take place during school hours. Services may include tutoring, extra classes or special programs offered by providers in the community.

Tactile Defensiveness - An abnormal sensitivity to touch, indicated by avoidance or rejection of touching and handling. The child with tactile defensiveness may resist touching or being touched by something that is wet, that is an unusual texture, or that is of an unfamiliar temperature or pressure. It may be the result of processing difficulties.

Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (Teletypewriter) (TDD/TTY) – Communication devices used by individuals with hearing impairments to receive and send messages via telephone. The sender types a message that is transmitted via telephone lines to a visual receiver (display screen or machine that types the message).

Therapy - A treatment for certain physical or psychological conditions. The most common forms of therapy provided through early intervention and special education include: occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech/language therapy.

Transition - The movement from one service, location, or program to another. Young children with disabilities transition at age three from early intervention to preschool special education services or to other community settings and services (early intervention and special education). Adolescents transition from school to adult services.

Transportation - A related service. If it is determined that the child needs this service, the school district must provide the transportation, contract with another agency or contract with the parents to bring their child to school. Transportation means round trip, home to school and school to home services. If a parent has been offered a transportation contract but does not want to transport the child, the school district is still responsible for providing transportation and cannot force the parent to provide transportation.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) – A disability that is the result of sudden, physical damage to the brain that can cause physical, behavioral, or mental changes depending on which area of the brain is injured.

Health Care Access

The acronyms and definitions in this section will help you navigate the health care system.

Aging Caregiver – The primary caregiver (who is 65 or over) of someone waiting to receive services on the Central Registry. The person waiting for services is given priority, and may receive DD Waiver services sooner.



Allocation - As money becomes available, persons who are awaiting services on the Central Registry are offered an opportunity to receive services through the Developmental Disabilities Medicaid Waiver. This chance to receive services is called an “allocation.” Allocations from the Central Registry are made by registration date. There is an eligibility process.

Allocation Letter for the Medicaid DD Waiver - A letter sent by the LTSD Regional Office stating that a position is now available for you or your family member to receive services on the Medicaid DD Waiver. You will need to fill out the enclosed form and take to the ISD office:

Allocation on Hold – When someone is offered an allocation, they may decide they do not want services right now, but would like to stay on the Central Registry. Check the box on the Waiver Refusal form stating that you do not want services right now. Putting your “allocation on hold” saves your place on the waiting list until you decide to be considered for the DD Waiver.

Application/Re-determination of Eligibility for Medical Assistance of Aged, Blind and Disabled Individuals – a fairly lengthy form used to help determine financial eligibility after a funding slot on the DD Waiver becomes available. Complete the form and take to your appointment with an Income Support Division case worker in your area.

Annual Resources Allotment (ARA) – A specified budget amount determined by age, where the person lives (at home or in the community), and the Level of Care (LOC). The ARA allows you and your family member to “purchase” services and supports from a menu of options. Within the ARA amount, you and your Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) can determine how much of each service you would like to included in your budgeted amount.

Authorization to Release Confidential Information – forms you receive in a packet from LTSD after registering. Complete one of these for every professional with documentation of the person’s disability, e.g. doctors, schools, work program staff, therapists, etc. This gives permission for the doctor, hospital, school or others to supply the LTSD Regional Office with the necessary information to determine if the individual meets the criteria for developmental disability (DD). Send these directly to the professional you are asking to provide information to LTSD.

Buck back - A packet submitted to the Medicaid Utilization Review (UR) agent, currently Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BC/BS), may receive a “buck back” when the information that is submitted is incorrect or incomplete and requires clarification and/or additional information. The case manager has two weeks to respond, or BC/BS can deny the requested services. A buck back can delay services.

Central Registry – Known informally as the “waiting list,” a computerized list of all individuals who are eligible for the Medicaid DD Waiver services and awaiting services.

Central Registry Match For Services – a form you receive in a packet from LTSD after turning in your Waiver Registration form. Fill out completely and return to the LTSD Regional Office address. This form is used to help determine if the individual meets the criteria for developmental disability (DD) at the time of application.

Case Manager – The person who works through the Case Management agency you select from the Primary Freedom of Choice form. The DD Waiver case manager will be the one to guide and support you and your family member through the DD Waiver process.

CHUMS – A small, portable booklet for keeping basic medical information that you might need for all doctor visits, developed by the UNM Continuum of Care Project, through the NM Department of Health. Families can request a “CHUMS” by calling 505-272-5215.

Close your Case – Long Term Services Division will “close your case”, if you do not complete and return the paperwork that is sent to you within the time they give you. If you would still like to receive services, you would have to start the application process from the beginning again.

Developmental Disabilities Medicaid Waiver Program (DD Waiver) – Developmental Disabilities Home and Community-Based Medicaid Waiver program. This program helps New Mexicans with developmental disabilities live in their homes. To qualify for services, you or your loved one must have a developmental disability that began before the age of twenty-two, need help with personal care (bathing, dressing, eating, etc), and be a resident of New Mexico.

DD Waiver Individual Budget Plan - A form used by the DD Waiver case manager to help you develop the annual budget. It tells how much each service will “cost” you, per unit, out of your DD Waiver budget. Different types of therapies and services are paid different amounts.

Disabled and Elderly Waiver Program (D & E Waiver) - helps New Mexicans who are elderly or have physical disabilities to live in their homes. To qualify for services, you or your loved one must: either be 65 years of age or older or have a disability; need help with personal care (bathing, dressing, eating) and be a NM resident.

Division of Health Improvement (DHI) - The division of the Department of Health that investigates incidents and completes provider reviews (1-800-445-8542).

Eligibility: Medicaid and/or the DD Waiver Program—The Department of Health, Long Term Services Division will “screen” the applications to be sure the person meets the requirements for DD. After you receive notice that there is an open “funding slot,” or allocation, on the Medicaid DD Waiver, you will be asked to provide documentation showing the individual requires a certain level of care (medical eligibility), and the individual meets the financial requirements (financial eligibility).

Exception – (DD Waiver services) A therapist can ask for more than the standard maximum number of hours. The therapist would develop a report with the justification or reasons for their exception request. The DD Waiver case manager and therapist would submit the paperwork to the LTSD Regional office for approval.

HIV/AIDS Waiver Program - helps New Mexicans with a HIV/AIDS live in their homes. To qualify for services, you or your loved one must have a diagnosis of HIV or AIDS.

Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) – This team includes you and/or your family member, your DD Waiver Case Manager and all of the providers and therapists providing services. The IDT will meet at least twice a year, for an annual meeting and a six-month review meeting.

Income Support Division (ISD) – This is sometimes called the Medicaid or Welfare office. An **ISD Caseworker** is assigned to you and will collect information to determine financial eligibility. They will tell you what forms and documents you need to submit.



Keeping in Touch letter – This is a letter sent by LTSD to people who are waiting on the Central Registry to find out if they are still interested in receiving services when an allocation comes available. Fill out forms and return to LTSD to keep your place on the waiting list.

Letter of Interest - A cover letter sent out with the Primary Freedom of Choice form, asking if you are still interested in receiving services through the DD Waiver. It is usually sent when there is an allocation opportunity available.



Level of Care (LOC) - To determine a Level of Care (LOC), your Case Manager will meet with you to gather information regarding your family member's overall health, developmental disability and the impact of his/her daily living skills, along with information on the current support system.

LTSD – Long Term Services Division - You will usually communicate with a regional office. To locate your regional office, call Parents Reaching Out or visit the LTSD website: <http://www.health.state.nm.us/ltsd>

Medicaid Card – When a person is allocated to the DD Waiver, they also become eligible for a Medicaid card to use for medical purposes, e.g. doctor visits, hospitalizations, dental work, eye glasses, etc.

Medicaid Utilization Review (UR) agent – The UR agency is currently Blue/Cross Blue Shield (BC/BS). They will make the determination, given the information packet that the DD Waiver case manager submits, if an individual is eligible for DD Waiver services or not.

Medicaid Waiver Services Registration Form – a one-page registration form from your local Income Support Division (ISD) office used to begin the application process for services on the DD Waiver or the MF Waiver.

Medical eligibility - The DD Waiver case manager guides you through the process of completing and compiling assessments for medical eligibility. The Medicaid Utilization Review (UR) agent will make the determination based on the information packet submitted by the case manager.

Medical Assistance Division (MAD) – The division of ISD that processes your initial registration form, along with any information regarding financial eligibility. Many ISD forms are called MAD with a number after it, e.g. MAD 381 is the blue form.

Medically Fragile Waiver Program (MF Waiver) - helps New Mexicans with a developmental disability and a medically fragile condition live in their homes. To qualify for services, you or your loved one must: have a medically fragile condition that requires extensive medical treatment and daily skilled nursing care; be at risk for or have a developmental delay or disability that began before the age of twenty-two (22); need help with personal care (bathing, dressing, eating); and be a resident of New Mexico. Application for this program begins with the same Registration form as the DD Waiver.

Notice of Privacy Acknowledgement – a form sent by the LTSD Regional Office stating that they gave you a copy of their Notice of Privacy Practices. Sign and return to LTSD with your Match for Services form.

Personal vision – an overall, very general goal that is developed for the ISP. All other goals developed should look toward and support this goal.

Primary Care Physician (PCP) – the doctor you have chosen as your main doctor. When you begin receiving Medicaid, specify who you want your PCP to be or they will assign someone. Most HMOs will only change doctors effective at the beginning of each month. Call the number on your Medicaid card for more information.

Primary Freedom of Choice – Long Term Services Division (LTSD) Regional office will ask you to sign this form when you have been offered an allocation to the DD Waiver. It lists all the case management agencies that offer services in your area. You place an “X” next to the case management agency of your choice.

Provider – an agency or person who provides services to individuals on the DD Waiver and other programs. They work with the family and individual, keep progress notes, develop goals and work towards ISP goals. To become an approved DD Waiver provider, an agency must fill out a state application package and receive approval.

Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) – This is a person who has graduated from a two year program and certified as a PTA. They are qualified to work only under the supervision of a certified Physical Therapist (PT).

Receipt form – A simple form you fill out at ISD when you turn copies and documents into the ISD office. The receptionist will give you a copy of the receipt form. Your dated copy will serve as a receipt that you turned in paperwork on a certain date. This is important when you need to get a document to them by a specified date. These forms can usually be found at the front desk. They are called by different names, including “Change form” and “Receipt for Proof.” Keep for your records.

Registration – This is the first step in applying for the Medicaid DD Waiver. Go to your local ISD office, get a one page Waiver Registration Form, fill it out and turn it in to the ISD office. There is an eligibility process that follows.

Registration Date – When you turn in the Waiver Registration Form to the ISD office, you will ask for them to stamp all copies with the current date, including your receipt copy. As slots on the Medicaid DD Waiver become available, those with the earliest dates are allocated first.

Secondary Freedom of Choice (DD Waiver) – The DD Waiver case manager will give you this form and ask you to select the service provider agencies and therapists from a list of the agencies available in your area. If you need to change agencies, you would fill out another Secondary Freedom of Choice form and sign at the bottom. The case manager will submit it for approval.

State General Funds – Limited assistance from the NM Department of Health Long Term Services Division for eligible persons. State General Funds may have different guidelines than funds that are used to provide DD Waiver services. Individuals waiting for services on the Central Registry may be eligible for certain programs that use State General Funds.

SSDI – Supplemental Security Disability Income – A cash assistance program for individuals with disabilities, based on medical and financial need. There are limits on what a person can earn while receiving SSDI.

SSI – Supplemental Security Income – A cash assistance program from Social Security based on medical need and income eligibility which includes a Medicaid Card. It is not part of the Medicaid DD Waiver, but individuals may receive both programs. Earnings are limited while receiving SSI.

Waiting List – Officially known as the “Central Registry,” this is the computerized list of all the individuals who have registered and applied for the DD Waiver. They have met the definition Developmental Disability and are awaiting services.

Waiver Refusal Form - You have the right to refuse an allocation to the DD Waiver when you are offered one. To refuse DD Waiver services, check the box stating that you are refusing services. If you changed your mind at some point, you would need to start at the very beginning again. If you do not want services at this time, but would like to continue waiting on the Central Registry, check the box pertaining to putting the allocation on hold.



Parents Reaching Out

Your One Stop Resource for A Stronger Family!

Parents Reaching Out is a statewide non-profit organization that works with parents, caregivers, educators and other professionals to promote healthy, positive and caring experiences for New Mexico families and children. Founded in 1981 by families who had children with special health and developmental needs, we expanded our scope to serve *all families and children* in 1998. Parents Reaching Out has served New Mexico families for over twenty years. Our staff and volunteers in our Family Leadership Action Network reflect the diverse culture and ethnic makeup of the communities across New Mexico.

Children do not come with instructions on how to deal with the difficult circumstances that many families experience. Parents Reaching Out believes that families' needs go beyond the bounds of formal services. *What we can offer to each other is uniquely ours. We have all been there.*

Our Mission

The mission of Parents Reaching Out is to enhance positive outcomes for families and children in New Mexico through informed decision making, advocacy, education, and resources. Parents Reaching Out provides the networking opportunities for families to connect with and support each other. This mission supports *all families* including those who have children with disabilities, and others who are disenfranchised.

Parents Reaching Out achieves this by:

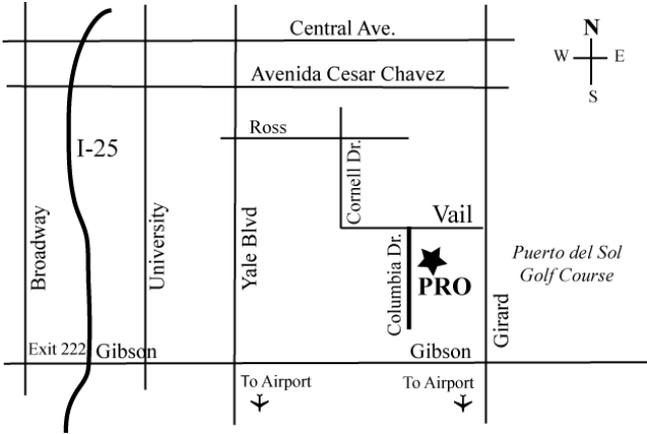
- Developing family leadership
- Connecting families to each other
- Building collaborative partnerships
- Providing families knowledge and tools to enhance their power

We offer support through parent to parent connections in the areas of early intervention, education, children at risk, special education, health care access, and systems change through:

- Workshops for families, parents, educators, service providers and other professionals;
- Encouragement, problem solving and information to help parents make informed decisions;
- Resource Center with free lending library about the programs and systems families use.

Parents Reaching Out

1920 B Columbia Drive, SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106
1-505-247-0192 ♦ Fax: 505-247-1345
1-800-524-5176
www.parentsreachingout.org



From I-25—take the Gibson Blvd Exit and go East on Gibson. Turn left at the third stop light (Girard). Turn left on the first street—Vail. Go one block to Columbia. Turn left on Columbia. Go about a half of a block (past brown apartments). Parents Reaching Out is the concrete building on the left. Welcome!

