



### For more information:

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### What does a parent mentor do?

- Guides families through the special education process;
- Helps families understand their rights and responsibilities;
- Provides information and resources to families and schools. This includes education laws and district programs.
- Engages community services and other resources to support schools and families;
- Attends Individualized Education Program meetings and other meetings at the requests of the parents or staff members;
- Listens and supports both the families and teachers on an individual basis;
- Hosts information sessions or workshops for families and professionals;
- Connects families, schools and the community to benefit students with disabilities.



# Ohio's Parent Mentor Project

## Home and School

Guiding Families Through the Special Education Process



## Definition

Parent mentors provide information and support to families of children with disabilities and their school districts. Each mentor is a district employee and also is a parent of child with a disability.



## Goal

School districts develop and provide meaningful educational programs for all students. A parent mentor works to support the relationship between the school and the family of a child with a disability. The school and family work together to provide a pathway for the child's success. By working closely with the parents and teachers, the parent mentor is an important part of the student's educational team.

The Parent Mentor Program is offered by school districts. Mentors provide information and support to families about special education issues. Additionally, they make sure the district receives perspective and input from families.

## No Cost For Services

All parent mentor services are free of charge to families. The Ohio Department of Education provides the funds for Ohio Parent Mentor projects.

## Background

The Ohio Department of Education recognizes the need for parents to be able to communicate with their children's schools. Parents of children with disabilities are in greatest need of this help.

Created in 1990, the Parent Mentor Project promotes communication between families and schools. Parent mentors provide resources, guidance and support to families. They work with the schools, families and the community to find the best possible options for the children.

Currently, there are approximately 75 Parent Mentor Projects in Ohio. They serve nearly one-third of the schools and families in Ohio's school districts.