

ParentLink Parent Mentor Training Program

LifeLine, Inc.

2017



The purpose of this project is to train volunteer mentors to provide instrumental and affective support to parents of children with disabilities as they advocate for the educational needs of their children.



**Reaching Families of Those
with Special Needs**

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ParentLink Parent Mentor Program

LifeLine offers a ParentLink Parent Mentor Certification which consists of about 40 hours of training provided by STEP and LifeLine. This certification can be completed almost like college credits. You can begin anytime by attending our Basic Special Education Rights Workshop and then attend other workshops as you are able until you have collected certificates from each workshop on the list. Once you have completed the training, you will attend IEPs and one-on-one meetings with parents alongside a trained mentor until you are prepared to mentor another family through the process.

Join our growing number of mentors who are learning to advocate for their own child while preparing to help other families. Mentors have up to two years from start date to complete this certification. At the end of the training, each participant will shadow a mentor at a special education meeting as well as an IEP Consultation. Following graduation, participants will be linked with a family of a child with a disability

The training will include a large binder of materials including passages from IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, State law and regulations, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Additionally, the participants will be given copies of each training session's powerpoints along with relevant supporting materials and instruction on mentor responsibilities. The training will be offered throughout metro Chattanooga and northwest Georgia. **There is a \$100 charge per mentor to cover the cost of materials and meals, payable to LifeLine, Inc. for the ParentLink Parent Mentor Program.**

LifeLine's ParentLink Parent Mentor Program is separate from Vanderbilt's Volunteer Advocacy Project, though the following application may be used if you would like to apply for VAP training as well. Just be sure to X the Volunteer Advocacy Project when you fill out the form. Check with us for cost and location of Volunteer Advocacy Project Training if you would like to apply for that series.

LifeLine has already certified more than 50 Parent Mentors over the last several years. We look forward to receiving your application to the ParentLink Parent Mentor Program. You may email your application or questions about this training to lisa.mattheiss@LifeLineFamilies.org If we receive applications outnumbering the available spots, we may encourage those not participating in this training session to attend a future training session.

Thank you,

Lisa Mattheiss, Executive Director

ParentLink Parent Mentor Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ County: _____ Zip: _____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Present Occupation: _____

Please list your children's names and ages: _____

I am applying for (X which way you would like to receive your training)

- ParentLink Parent Mentor Training
- Volunteer Advocacy Project

In which area would you like to attend the sessions?

TN (Chattanooga): _____

GA (If available): _____

Please answer all of the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. What interests you about becoming an mentor for families of children with disabilities?

Why do you want to participate in this project?

2. What is your personal connection to the disability field?

3. Have you had any experience mentoring families of children with disabilities?

4. What do you think are necessary attributes to be a successful mentor?

5. How would you describe yourself and your family?

6. What would you like to get out of participating in this project? How do you think you will apply the skills and knowledge you will have gained from this project?

7. How did you learn about Parent Mentor Training?

Letter of Commitment

The ParentLink Parent Mentor Training lasts for 6 weeks (or 13 if weeknights) and requires participation at each session. The rigor of this curriculum requires energy and commitment from its participants. Along with these 6/12 sessions, the participants will shadow an advocate from LifeLine to understand the proceedings of special education meetings. After completing this training, each participant will work as a volunteer advocate with, at least, four families. LifeLine or STEP will link the volunteer advocate with these families. Please mark your responses to the following questions.

- I will attend all of the 6 weekend (or 13 weeknight) sessions.

Yes____ No____

- I will be on time to all of the sessions.

Yes____ No____

- I will complete all of the homework and readings prior to the training session.

Yes____ No____

- I will shadow one IEP meeting with an advocate.

Yes____ No____

- I will shadow one IEP Consultation with an advocate.

Yes____ No____

- I will attend at least one STEP or LifeLine workshop (3 hours) each year to stay current on Special Education Law. (Some workshops are free. For some there is a minimal cost for materials.)

Yes____ No____

I commit to all of these requirements.

Name: _____

Date: _____