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**“Toolbox Essentials”**

**Informed Families = Successful Students**

**Always be Prepared, Polite, & Persistent:**

* + **Connections with other families are like gold!**
	+ **Seek first to understand, knowledge is empowering.**
	+ **Develop respectful, professional, and collaborative relationships with your student’s school team.**
	+ **You are part of the “team” and your student’s best advocate.**

**Join the Clayton PAC.ED (Parent Advisory Council for the Education of Students with Disabilities):** Connect with other families, administrators, and have a “seat at the table”. **Click** [**HERE**](https://www.claytonschools.net/Page/23381) **for more information.**

**“All About..” Your Student Presentations:** A great way to help build and strengthen a collaborative home/school partnership is by preparing an **“All About….”** document to share with your student’s teachers, staff, and administrators. Depending on your preference you can use a multiple-page presentation form or a single page summary. These can be helpful when sharing out information to camps and other programs**! Click** [**HERE**](https://www.claytonschools.net/Page/23390) **for templates!**

**Participate in Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC):** The core belief of CtLC is that **ALL** people have the right to live, love, work, place, and pursue their own life aspirations. Charting the LifeCourse is about encouraging high expectations, self-determination, having and expanding different conversations, having life experiences to move the trajectory in the desired direction, and integrating multiple types of support. **For more information about CtLC** [**HERE**](https://www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/lifecourse-framework/)**.**

**St. Louis County & St. Louis City Resources:**

**IDD Gateway Resource Guide:** The IDD Gateway Resource Guide is a one-stop-shop for developmental disability resources in the St. Louis region. It was developed as a resource for service providers, individuals, and families to have access to information about regional resources in one place.

This tool is designed to be interactive and will often link users to other agency sites to gain a deeper understanding of their services. Click [HERE](https://sites.google.com/view/plb)

This tool is owned and operated by the Productive Living Board of St. Louis County.

**Family Navigation Support & Community Resources:** Family Navigation is a **FREE** “Concierge” type service to assist families and individuals with disabilities to “navigate the system”. **Whether you live in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, or surrounding counties, they can assist you!** Click [HERE](https://www.claytonschools.net/Page/23393) for more information.

**St. Louis ARC Workshops & Webinars:** Among the many other resources available through the St. Louis ARC there are FREE workshops & webinars! They cover many topics of interest to individuals and families and are recorded so if you missed one, you could watch it at you leisure! Click [HERE](https://www.slarc.org/resource-library/review-educational-workshops/)

**Special School District (SSD) Resources:**

* **Explore website: ssdmo.org:** There is great information for families and the community! **Partner District: Information Specific to Clayton:** [**HERE.**](https://www.ssdmo.org/Page/185)
* **The Family & Community Engagement (FACE) Department’s** mission is to partner with students, families, and staff to support students' specialized academic, social, and emotional needs to promote self-determination, equitable opportunities, and authentic inclusion. The professionals serving families in this department have years of experience not only working with families of students with disabilities, but also as parents of students with disabilities. **Click** [**HERE**](https://www.ssdmo.org/domain/481)to explore all the information, videos, and workshops that are available to you online. **If you have any questions, please contact Emily Laboube, FACE Liaison at** **eclaboube@ssdmo.org** **314.989.8431.**

**Special School District (SSD) Resources continued:**

* **Participate in Family Leadership Institute (FLI):** Participants have the opportunity to: Build an understanding of future planning and problem-solving using Charting the LifeCourse tools. Learn to effectively participate in their student's education and improve the educational climate for all children. Learn how to positively interact and collaborate with other families and school personnel. Discover new resources and network with other families. **Click** [**HERE**](https://www.ssdmo.org/Page/509)**.**
* **Family & Community Resource Center (FCRC)**: Contains a vast array of special education and disability-related tools and resources for families and the community at large. **Click** [**HERE**](https://www.ssdmo.org/Page/490) **to explore the FCRC’s collection that includes thousands of books, journals, videos, and more.** Materials may be sent home through school mail to families whose children receive SSD services.
* **Instructional Resource Center (IRC):** Is where families and students can comb through aisles of cutting-edge instructional tools and resources for use in their home for FREE! Click [**HERE**](https://www.ssdmo.org/Domain/138) for more information.
* **Transition – Planning for Adult Life (also Transition Planning by Age):** Whenever a student receiving services from SSD reaches age 16, the District’s staff – in collaboration with the student and his or her family – develop a transition plan as part of the IEP process. However, it is never too early to starting planning! **For more information click** [**HERE**](https://www.ssdmo.org/Page/164) **Transition Effective Specialist can help you and the school team with Charting the LifeCourse tools.**
* **Join the SSD PAC (Special School District Parent Advisory Council):** The SSD PAC collaborates with and advises its stakeholders (including parents/guardians, the SSD Board of Education, Governing Council, SSD administration and staff) in order to improve the educational, self-efficacy, and social outcomes of each student served by SSD. . **Click** [**HERE**](https://www.ssdmo.org/Page/159) **for more information.**

**State of Missouri Resources:**

**Missouri Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE):** Click [HERE](https://dese.mo.gov/governmental-affairs/dese-administrative-rules/incorporated-reference-materials/IDEAPartB-2014) for Missouri State Plan (Regulations) effective 07/30/2023.

**Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH):** Click [**HERE**](https://dmh.mo.gov/dev-disabilities)for more information regarding case management, services, EMAP (Eastern Missouri Autism Project) funding.

**Legal Resources:**

**Wrightslaw.com - free newsletter & online resources.**

**MPACT (Missouri Parents Act):** Missouri Parents Act is a non-profit. They have been Missouri’s federally funded Parent Training and Information Center since 1988. Their mission is simple: To empower families to advocate for themselves so that children with special education needs can reach their full potential in education and life – through support, training, and education.[**www.missouriparentsact.org**](http://www.missouriparentsact.org)