

Who is Project SAGE?

Project SAGE is a program sponsored by the Family Resource Center for Disabilities and Special Needs and funded, in part, by a grant from the Developmental Disabilities Council, Office of the Governor.

Project SAGE activities are guided by an Advisory Committee whose members include educators, local school and SC State Department of Education personnel, a school psychologist, University professors, parents of students with disabilities and self advocates.

Project SAGE training is delivered by an experienced educator and school administrator.

For more information on Project SAGE activities including training workshops, focus groups, and support programs

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Project SAGE

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What is Project SAGE?

Project SAGE is a training & support program offered to students with developmental disabilities that is meant to increase and maximize, to the greatest extent possible, their participation, in the development of their Individual Education Programs (IEP).

Targeted for Middle & High School students in Berkeley, Charleston, & Dorchester Counties, Project SAGE training emphasizes self-determination while providing students with the knowledge base necessary to build an understanding of the process that guides their education. Students are offered the opportunity to learn the basics of special education service delivery with a focus on creating transition programs that reflect their preferences and builds upon their strengths.

Students participating in Project SAGE training will have access to follow-up support and IEP meeting help from the Parent Training and Resource Center Peer Parent Mentors

Why Project SAGE?

Congress recognized the importance of involving the student in the IEP process and included language in the Federal legislation (IDEA 2004) to support this philosophy. It is required that students participate in their IEP educational planning meetings upon their sixteenth birthday. Sadly, the majority of students are unprepared to assume the role of self-advocate and there are few programs available to help them acquire the skills to contribute to the process in meaningful ways.

More often than not, secondary students with developmental disabilities do not actively participate in their IEP meetings. Helping students understand the varied aspects of their special education services should begin well before they are expected to actively participate in the process. Students need a functional knowledge of special education services, including an understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Project SAGE will help them become better prepared participants as they take their rightful roles as equal members of their IEP Teams. However, simply learning the “rules” of special education delivery is not enough. Students must acquire the self-advocacy skills that will assure their voices are heard, and their interests respected, as their post secondary transition plans are developed and implemented.

Project SAGE: The Basics

Available at no charge to Middle & High School Students with Developmental Disabilities in Berkeley, Dorchester, and Charleston Counties

Classes are kept small and held at times & locations convenient to students.

Classes, consisting of about twelve training hours, will help:

- familiarize students with the IEP process and meeting protocol;
- students understand the importance of acquiring self-advocacy skills;
- students improve their ability to communicate their educational needs; and,
- students identify transition goals.

Follow-up support is offered through the Parent Training and Resource Center and specifically identified High Schools.

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