

The Legal Center's successful challenge of Cherry Creek School District drives systemic change throughout the state

In September 2010, The Legal Center was contacted by a distraught mother whose child's school placement was being changed following an episode of difficult and disruptive behavior. The mother was justifiably angry that her son's school failed to follow the law by limiting her full participation in his "manifestation determination review."

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides that all children with disabilities have a right to a free appropriate public education, including children who are suspended or expelled. The IDEA has specific procedures for school administrators to follow when disciplining children with disabilities. These procedures balance the need to keep schools safe with the right of children with disabilities to receive an education. There is a process to determine if a student's misconduct is a manifestation of his or her disability, and this prevents children from being punished for "misbehavior" that is related to their disability. The manifestation determination is made by a group that includes the child's parent and the relevant members of the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. The group meeting is not a hearing and The Legal Center believes it is intended to be collaborative and non-adversarial, with participants focused on the child's best interests.

After studying all the facts in this case, Elizabeth Collard, an attorney/investigator in The Legal Center's Special Education Program, was convinced that the school had acted improperly. The case was undeniably complex, as the child had exhibited serious behavior and criminal charges were pending. However, the boy had serious disabilities, and the law is clear that the manifestation review should have included his parent. The law also states that parents be allowed to select other representatives from their child's IEP team. This was not done.

The Legal Center filed a state complaint against Cherry Creek School District with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and we are pleased to report that in January we received a decision in our client's favor. The state complaints officer found that the district violated the IDEA and significantly impeded the parent's opportunity to participate in the child's manifestation determination review.

The state complaints officer also found that the district's discipline policies were defective as they did not use the manifestation determination language that the manifestation determination team is selected "as determined by the parent and the LEA" (local education agency), did not advise the parent orally or in writing of the district/school IEP team members who would be attending the meeting, and did not notify the parent orally or in writing of her right to invite relevant members of the child's IEP Team.

The district and the parent disagree on whether the school provided the mother with the Colorado Department of Education's Procedural Safeguards Notice, but even if they did, this would not have supplied her with adequate notice concerning the IEP team members from the district/school who would be attending the meeting. Since the mother did not have this information, she could not make an informed decision as to other relevant IEP Team members who should attend the meeting.

Finally, the state complaints officer

Continued page 2

With the help of The Legal Center a determined deaf student pursues her dreams



Rachalla Ortig on graduation day

Education Office for Civil Rights. We also contacted the Attorney General's Office, which represents the Colorado Department of Education. The Legal Center argued that teacher licensing standards, like all the college's rules and policies, are subject to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires that agencies make reasonable accommodations as needed for people with disabilities, as long as the accommodations do not cause a fundamental alteration of the program or an undue financial burden. The Attorney General's Office agreed with The Legal Center's view and wrote to the college informing them of their need to follow the ADA. As a result of these interventions, The Legal Center was able to ensure that the students would get the accommodations they needed to complete school, including all of the academic requirements needed to become a teacher in Colorado. We are proud to announce that Rachella Ortiz, one of the students in the case, graduated from Metropolitan State College of Denver in May 2010 and earned her teaching certificate. She will begin working as a Deaf Plus teacher (teaching students who are deaf and have additional disabilities) at the Rocky Mountain Deaf School in the fall and is also looking forward to pursing her Master's Degree in Deaf Education. She is unstoppable! The Legal Center wishes Ms. Ortiz the best of luck in fulfilling her dreams. We hope that her story of overcoming obstacles will inspire other men and women with disabilities who are reaching for that shining star.



Congratulations to Faith Gross and Just Vote!

On May 17, at their 32nd Annual Awards Celebration, the Colorado Lawyers Committee presented a Special Recognition Award to Faith Gross for her work on the Just Vote! Colorado Election Protection Team.

Rachella Ortiz on graduation day. Congratulations, Rachella!

Back in Spring 2009, we introduced you to two college students from Metropolitan State College of Denver who were pursuing degrees in special education, hoping to become teachers. These two students sought the assistance of The Legal Center when they learned that the college intended not to recommend them for teacher licensure – even if they met all the academic requirements because the students were deaf. The college argued that being deaf meant that they could not pass the standards set for teachers by the Colorado Department of Education. Failure of the students to get this recommendation meant that they would be unable to become teachers in Colorado. The Legal Center gladly stepped in to help.

As we told you in 2009, The Legal Center attempted unsuccessfully to remedy the situation through informal negotiations, and was eventually forced to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of "Voting is the right from which all other rights spring."

Thomas Paine

he Legal Center is a nonprofit organization protecting the human, civil and legal rights of people with disabilities and older people. As Colorado's Protection and Advocacy System, The Legal Center has authority under federal law to gain access to facilities and records in order to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect. The organization also helps people obtain state and federally funded services, such as special education, mental health services, developmental disabilities services, and vocational rehabilitation. The Legal Center specializes in civil rights and discrimination issues.

The Legal Center promotes systemic change to sustain or improve the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities and older adults. The Legal Center provides direct legal representation, education, advocacy, and legislative analysis to promote the independence, self-determination, empowerment and community participation of its clients. Similar organizations exist in every state and territory as part of a national protection and advocacy network.

The Legal Center has played a pivotal role in advancing disability law in Colorado and nationally. We are proud of our success in breaking new legal ground. However, we usually resolve our clients' objectives without litigation. Some of our most satisfying legal advances have come through empowering people to advocate for themselves.

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Advocating for the right of people with developmental disabilities to leave institutions and live in the community

Since 1976, The Legal Center has advocated moving individuals with disabilities out of large congregate care institutional settings. Historically those institutional settings in Colorado's Developmental Disability System were the three state home and training schools (now called regional centers) in Pueblo, Wheatridge and Grand Junction. In 1977, there were more than 1,500 individuals living in those institutions; today there are fewer than 100 persons living in the regional centers. However, with 260 individuals with developmental disabilities living in nursing homes, Colorado has more people with developmental disabilities institutionalized in nursing homes than in regional centers.

In August of 2010, Colorado drafted the State Olmstead Plan to align with the 1999 U.S. Supreme Court's Olmstead decision, which requires that services be provided in the most integrated setting possible. The plan, which includes data on the numbers of individuals of all ages living in nursing homes throughout the state, highlights the many barriers keeping people with disabilities from living a fully integrated life.

As the Protection and Advocacy System (P&A), The Legal Center

believes individuals with developmental disabilities should not be living in nursing homes, and we have created a new priority for 2011 to examine the use of institutional care for people with developmental disabilities in our state. With our authority as the P&A System, we have secured the names and locations of people with a developmental disability living in nursing homes from the Division for Developmental Disabilities. Of the 260 individuals placed in nursing homes, 51 are between the ages of 20 and 50. We will focus initially on these younger individuals. We plan to work in conjunction with the Colorado Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to reach out to each of these individuals to identify why they have been placed in a nursing home setting, their views regarding where they are living, and their wishes regarding where they would like to live. If an individual prefers not to live in a nursing home, The Legal Center will do what we can to assist the individual in finding a new home.

This effort is based on the fundamental belief that people can and should live within their community as independently as possible.

Cherry Creek

Continued from front page

stressed the collaborative, non-adversarial nature of the manifestation determination process. She noted that the Cherry Creek School District's policies, which refer to the meeting as a "hearing," demonstrate a fundamental misunderstanding of the law. The district is required to hold another manifestation determination review (MDR) with the right participants, review and change its policies, and train staff in the appropriate MDR process.

The Legal Center has long advocated for schools to use their limited resources to train staff in how to better address the needs of children with disabilities, instead of spending money unnecessarily on attorneys because the law is not followed. Many of the cases of difficult behavior that result in MDR, suspension or expulsion of students with disabilities could be diffused or de-escalated if staff were provided with the resources to support the children in their care.

This decision underscores the right of all children with disabilities—even those whose behavior is extremely difficult and disruptive-to a free appropriate education. The Legal Center always tries to work informally with schools and school districts to address cases before litigation becomes necessary. In this case, legal action was imperative to protect the rights of the child, and we believe the decision by the Colorado Department of Education will forge systemic change in school districts throughout the state. The decision titled State Level Complaint 2010:516 Cherry Creek School District #5 can be found on CDE's website at www. cde.state.co.us/spedlaw.

Welcome to Stephen Rickles & Dr. Jacque Phillips

The Legal Center is proud to announce that Stephen Rickles has joined our Board of Directors.

An attorney with Berenbaum Weinshienk PC, Steve's practice focuses on the representation of businesses, tax exempt organizations, governmental entities and individuals in employee benefits, estate planning, business and charitable giving matters. He specializes in business continuity and succession planning for business owners and purchases and sales of businesses.

Steve received his undergraduate degree from Boston University in 1970 and went on to receive his law degree from the University of



Stephen P. Rickles, Board Member

Denver in 1975. Steve is listed in The Best Lawyers in America in the areas of employee benefits law, trusts and estates and tax law, and was named a "2010 Colorado Superlawyer" in Employee Benefits / ERISA.

Mainstream Spring 2011 © The Legal Center Randy Chapman, Esq. Mary Anne Harvey Editors Denver Office 455 Sherman Street, Suite 130

455 Sherman Street, Suite 130 Denver, CO 80203-4403 303.722.0300 303.722.3619 TTY

Jacque Phillips, Esq., *Attorney, Special Education Program*

Mary Catherine Rabbitt, Esq., Colorado Legal Assistance Developer for the Elderly; Coordinator, Assistive Technology Protection & Advocacy

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Jacque Phillips, Attorney

Dr. Jacque Phillips is no stranger to The Legal Center and we are delighted that she is joining our staff. Jacque is an attorney who also has a doctorate in special education. She has over 20 years of teaching

experience in special education, both in the K-12 classroom and as a professor in higher education. While in law school at the University of Denver, Jacque interned at The Legal Center and at the Office for Civil Rights within the U.S. Department of Education. She has extensive experience as a trainer and co-authored with Randy Chapman the Preventing Litigation in Special Education Workbook. Jacque's passion is helping children with disabilities obtain a free appropriate public education. She will be working in The Legal Center's special education program and our P&A Program for Individual Rights.

303.722.0720 FAX Toll Free 1.800.288.1376

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Grand Junction Office 322 North 8th Street Grand Junction, C0 81501-3406 970.241.6371 Voice/TTY 970.241.5324 FAX Toll Free 1.800.531.2105 Voice/TTY

Email tlcmail@thelegalcenter.org www.thelegalcenter.org

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The Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People



Colorado's Protection & Advocacy System

📚 2010 Annual Report 🗺

In FY 2010, as The Legal Center celebrates its 35th year, our staff and volunteers accomplished significant results on behalf of people with disabilities and older people across Colorado.

- *Direct service* to 1,355 Coloradans statewide in housing (145 clients), employment (246 clients), mental health services (214 clients) and education (313 clients).
- Of these, 520 individuals received direct legal representation from The Legal Center, including direct legal assistance on behalf of 13 special needs students experiencing severe restraint in public school special education settings across Colorado.
- For those clients' cases that were closed with a resolution, the outcome was in the clients' favor 89% of the time.
- We provided more limited information and referral to 4,851 callers.
- Our educational programs reached 2,470 people.

- We launched Facebook and Twitter sites and began online fund raising efforts through the Community First Foundation's Giving First Day and Giveo.
- Our Long-Term Care Ombudsman and Legal Assistance Developer Programs use a service model comprised of local ombudsmen, pro bono and paid attorneys. The collective effort of this statewide network provided legal services to 4,120 older persons. Local ombudsmen visited 218 nursing facilities with a total of 20,235 beds, and 550 assisted living residences with 15,836 beds.
- Our website received over 72,000 visits, and Randy Chapman's Ability Law blog received 15,003 hits.
- We sold 1,709 copies of our three major publications.

Our donors make the difference! Thank you!

Legacy Society

The following donors notified The Legal Center that they included a gift in their estate plan.

Alexander R. Aitken Anonymous (2) J. Fern Black Randy Chapman Merle Greear Paul Hunter Mary Anne Harvey Thomas Stamm Louise Todd & Gerald Stoll

Legacy Society

The Center for Legal Advocacy, our legal and corporate name, is usually known as The Legal Center for **People with Disabilities & Older** People. We are very fortunate to have many friends and supporters who have included The Legal Center in their estate plan, and we would like to again thank those donors in the 'Legacy Society' section of this publication. As a result of their planned and future gifts, whether by a bequest, trust, gift of life insurance policy or beneficiary designations on retirement accounts (to name but a few), they are members of our Legacy Society.

May we invite you into our Legacy Society? If you have remembered The Legal Center with such a gift, we invite you to let us know. As a member of the Legacy Society, you become part of a group whose shared commitment is to ensure a future in which the promise and protection of the law is available to older people and people with disabilities. Please contact Joshua Anderson, Director of Development, at 303-722-0300 ext. 216 or email at janderson@thelegalcenter.org, if this is something you have done or have an interest in pursuing. Thank you in advance for your interest in the future of The Legal Center.

Burt Foundation

Community First Foundation Equal Justice Works Foundation #Mesa Medical Supply Mile High United Way Jay & Rose Phillips Foundation Pikes Peak Community Foundation Louis & Harold Price Foundation Schramm Foundation Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation #Venture II, LLC

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Individual Donors

- * The Presidents' Circle includes individuals making gifts of \$500 or more in a year or annual gifts in any amount for over a decade.
- # These gifts all contributed to a matching grant that the Anschutz Foundation matched 1:1 for every dollar that these

The Legal Center at 35 years

by Mary Anne Harvey

The mission of The Legal Center is to protect and promote the rights of people with disabilities and older people in Colorado through direct legal representation, advocacy, education and legislative analysis.

In providing legal services and advocacy for people with disabilities and older people, The Legal Center recognizes the inherent value of all people and will represent our clients' wishes. The Legal Center embraces the values of empowerment, self-determination, independence and inclusion.



Executive Director Mary Anne Harvey has been at the helm of The Legal Center since 1980

These concepts have guided The Legal Center's work for 35 years.

When a small group of parents and lawyers came together to seek equal rights for children with developmental disabilities living in an institution in 1974, they had a vision for all people with disabilities—to have access to legal assistance and advocacy expertise not generally available in the legal system. They also knew that even when laws are passed, it takes time and work to implement them.

Today, The Legal Center is recognized as a leader in the National Disability Rights Network made up of Protection and Advocacy programs from all the states and territories. These organizations have unique federal and state authority to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect, to have access to records and programs serving people with disabilities, and to help individuals obtain appropriate services from state and federal programs.

The Legal Center was established as a nonprofit corporation in 1976 by founders who had the remarkable foresight to create an organization serving people with all types of disabilities, and that vision has served us well, not only because it was the right thing to do, but as the Protection and Advocacy System has expanded nationally it has enabled us to expand our services in Colorado. In 1977 The Legal Center was designated as Colorado's Protection and Advocacy System for individuals with developmental disabilities. In 1986, The Legal Center participated in the creation of the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness program, and in 1987 received the designation as Colorado's Client Assistance Program for people receiving services from vocational rehabilitation.

with HIV/AIDS.

In 1992 the Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights program was funded. Additional Protection and Advocacy programs were added in 1995 for assistive technology, in 2002 for beneficiaries of Social Security and survivors of traumatic brain injury, and in 2004 to protect voting access for people with disabilities. We call it the VOTE! Program.

In 1995 we opened our Grand Junction office to have a presence on the Western Slope.

Although there have been significant changes in both public attitudes and in laws and regulations, The Legal Center still receives calls daily from people who have been notified that they or a family member are no longer eligible for services. In recent years we have witnessed a disturbing increase of incidents of seclusion and restraint of children in public schools. The recession has further taken a toll on funding for state and federal programs.

The Legal Center responds by investigating and reporting on incidents of seclusion and restraint, challenging employers who discriminate against people with disabilities, assisting individuals to get training and support so they can work, testifying before legislative committees, and addressing systemic issues in every system serving people with disabilities and older people in Colorado. In all settings we work to assure that people are safe and treated with dignity.

We develop information on relevant laws, regulations and systems and provide training in all aspects of our work. Our award-winning publications provide tools for individuals, parents and professionals to understand special education law and support aging parents in the community.

We have touched the lives of many thousands of people in Colorado throughout our history. We are proud of our achievements and determined to continue making a difference for the people we serve.

By the Numbers:

A recap of our 35 Years

Legal & administrative cases - 17,313

Helping people be their own

advocate - 58,225

Information & Referral – 103,215

Presentations/Workshops - 2,007

Giving Opportunities

Thank You in Advance for your generous support of The Legal Center for People with Disabilities & Older People!

Workplace Giving—The Legal Center belongs to two giving campaigns:

• Caring Connection—with 58 nonprofit organizations that serve the needs of Colorado's most vulnerable people, Caring Connections is the federation we joined in 2010 to allow participation through the combined campaigns for Denver, Colorado and the Federal Government, along with many private companies. Visit www.caringconnection.org for more information and please designate The Legal Center, #1094, when reviewing your options for the year.

• Mile High United Way—you can simply visit www.unitedwaydenver. org, and designate The Legal Center for People with Disabilities & Older People

Online Giving

You can visit our website, www. thelegalcenter.org and make an online donation any time of day or night OR... check out our recently launched Giveo charitable site at www.thelegalcenter.giveo.com and contribute to our latest campaigns by supporting our Special Education Program and/or Attorneys' Night Out.

Your Dollars Make an Impact at The Legal Center – Consider Contributing ...

• \$18 buys the book "*But I Don't* <u>Want Eldercare</u>" for someone in need of this resource and unable to afford it. This is ideal for adult children caring for their elderly parents, community advocates, and providers of long-term care.

• \$38 buys one hour of information and referral specialist services to people with disabilities (and their family members) in need of support and direction.

• \$50 buys one hour of legal services for a person with disabilities (and their family members) in need of our services.

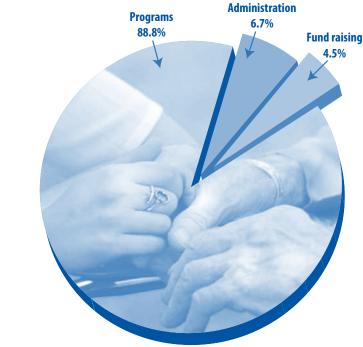


The Legal Center is pleased to be a Better Business Bureau (BBB) fully accredited charity. To achieve this, The Legal Center has met all 20 of the BBB Standards for Charity Accountability based on a review of materials we provided that show how we are governed and how we spend our money. As a BBB charity, we undertake to truthfully present information about The Legal Center and to disclose basic information to the public.

The BBB Wise Giving Alliance Standards for Charity Accountability assist donors in making sound giving decisions and foster public confidence in participating charitable organizations. The standards encourage fair and honest solicitation practices, promote ethical conduct by charitable organizations and encourage philanthropy.

Financial Summary FY 2010

According to Center for legal Advocacy's Audited Financial Statements for the year ended September 30, 2010:



In 1988 The Legal Center took over responsibility for two programs funded by the Older Americans Act the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and the Legal Assistance Developer Program.

During that same time period, The Legal Center was the first organization to provide legal assistance to people

4

Presentation attendees - 51,143

Books sold/distributed:

The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law - first edition - 3,870

The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law - second edition - 3,928

The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law - second edition, reprint - 394

Guía de la Ley de Educación - 2,147

Preventing Litigation in Special Education Workbook - 147

"But I Don't <u>Want</u> Eldercare!"Helping Your Parents Stay As Strong As They Can As Long As They Can - 1,087

Income % of total income Government grants & contracts \$1,907,842 88.0% Charitable contributions \$226,901 10.5% Publications sales and fees \$33,960 1.5% **Total Income:** \$2,168,703 Expenses % of total expenses 88.8% **Programs:** \$1,936,388 Fund Raising: 4.5% \$98,443 Administrative: \$144,530 6.7% \$2,179,361 **Total Expenses:** Net: (\$10,658) Ending Net Assets: \$594,191

THIS INFORMATION MEETS THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU CHARITY STANDARDS.

Training Opportunity!

Preventing Litigation in Special Education Training

Legal conflicts between parents and schools use resources that are better used for supporting students. Unfortunately, teachers and administrators receive very little training in special education law, and so schools spend money unnecessarily for attorneys because the law is not followed. Let us help prepare and train your school staff for these issues. This training provides the information needed to reduce the time, energy and money spent on preventable legal conflicts. For more details or to schedule a training, please contact Anna Dubnikov at (303) 722-0300 x 211 or adubnikov@thelegalcenter.org.

Two programs working together to protect and promote the rights of older adults

The Colorado Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and the Legal Assistance Developer Program have just released their combined annual report for 2010. The two programs, administered by The Legal Center under a contract with the Colorado Department of Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services, have a shared mission to protect and promote the rights of Colorado's older adults and to improve their quality of life.

The program directors, Colorado Long-Term Care Ombudsman Shelley Hitt and Legal Assistance Developer Mary Catherine Rabbitt, work closely with the state's 16 regional Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to coordinate services statewide.

Colorado's ombudsmen:

Help resolve complaints about the facility or individual staff members, such as

- physical or verbal abuse
- poor quality of care

Help protect residents' rights under the law—including the right to

- privacy in care and treatment
- voice grievances without retaliation

Help older adults

- understand their options for long-term care
- choose the long-term care facility or community living arrangement that is right for them

Legal assistance providers help older adults with a variety of legal concerns including

- foreclosure or eviction notices
- harassment by a collection agency for unpaid bills
- financial exploitation by a relative or caregiver

for residents in a welcoming, homelike atmosphere. We believe that culture change efforts by facilities, supported by state and local ombudsmen, have improved quality of care and reduced routine complaints.

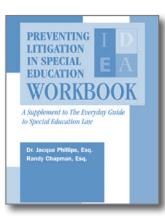
Protecting quality of life for older adults

The local ombudsman received complaints that a sidewalk bordering the nursing home was in disrepair. Many residents of the nursing home who use a wheelchair depended on that sidewalk. The walk was also shared by many senior citizens in the neighborhood. The city was experiencing a \$20 million plus budget shortfall, but when contacted by the ombudsman about the urgent need for the repair, they moved the sidewalk up in priority, but said they could not begin work for a year or more. With some gentle nudging on the ombudsman's part, the sidewalk is now repaired, allowing residents to utilize the transit system stop and access community stores.

Complaints about admission, discharge and eviction saw a 16 percent reduction from 2009, a tribute to the efforts of ombudsmen to educate residents, families and facility staff about the regulations that protect residents during an involuntary discharge. Sadly, many involuntary discharges result from misuse of the resident's funds by family members or guardians with power of attorney, and here the picture for 2010 is much more worrisome. Financial exploitation of older adults, whether living in nursing homes or their own homes, has intensified in the past couple of years as the economy has worsened. In 2010, local legal assistance providers worked together with local ombudsmen to handle numerous cases of residents being evicted from long-term care facilities for nonpayment due to the failure of their relatives to send the senior's Social Security or other income to the facility. In most instances, we are able to find a solution, but these cases take up many hours of the legal providers' and ombudsmen's time and cause untold distress to the older adults. In one case an older woman was represented in a court action to recover funds improperly transferred from her bank account by her granddaughter, and in another case an older adult needed legal assistance in responding to a foreclosure due to a fraudulent transfer of the home by a relative with a Power of Attorney.

B**OOKSHELF**

Preventing Litigation in Special Education WORKBOOK



Published in January 2011, the WORKBOOK is an indispensable companion to The Legal Center's bestseller *The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law.* Dr. Jacque Phillips, an experienced special education teacher and recently licensed attorney, joins forces with Randy Chapman, author of *The Everyday Guide*, to help parents and teachers understand the likely outcome of special education cases so that parents and school districts can avoid unnecessary legal entanglements. In addition to a wealth of practical in-

formation, the book features actual cases presented in a concise, storytelling format. Each case gives the views of the players stated as arguments, together with brief explanations of the special education law relevant to that specific issue. Readers can try to predict the outcomes based on what they have learned—answers are provided at the end of each case.

The *Preventing Litigation in Special Education WORKBOOK* can be purchased for \$19.95. *The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law* is available for \$24.95, **BUT both books can be purchased together for only \$35.00**.

The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law, Second Edition

by Randy Chapman, Esq. has been updated to include the most recent changes in federal law including:

 the IDEA requirements for services plans for children placed in private schools

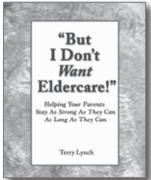


- how to file complaints with State Education Agencies for violations of the IDEA including obtaining compensatory services
- timelines for resolving disputes under the IDEA and how to use "mediation" and the new "resolution process"
- the evaluation process and response-to-intervention (RTI)

This edition has been so popular, it is now in its second printing.

The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law is available for \$24.95. The *Preventing Litigation in Special Education WORKBOOK* can be purchased for \$19.95 (see above) **BUT both books can be purchased together for only \$35.00**.

Guía de la Ley de Educación Especial, the Spanish translation of *The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law*. The Spanish and English texts are included side-by-side on every page. \$29.95. **Purchase Guía de la Ley and the WORKBOOK together for \$40**.



"But I Don't <u>Want</u> Eldercare!" Helping Your Parents Stay As Strong As They Can As Long As They Can is the guide the author wishes he'd had before his mother's medical crises changed each of their lives. Terry Lynch draws on

Relping Your Durents Sury As Strong As They Can Terry Lynch Terry

- or caregiver
- unwanted guardianship action
- family members or professional care givers trying to force them into a facility against their will
- denials, reductions, or terminations of public assistance benefits
- home modifications or services to allow them to continue living independently

We were pleased to see a reduction across all categories of complaints in nursing homes and assisted living residences, and attribute the decline to the hard work and dedication of Colorado's ombudsmen. The Colorado Long-Term Care Ombudsman program is a part of the Colorado Culture Change Coalition (CCCC) whose mission is to "transform the culture throughout the long-term care continuum by affirming the dignity and value of each individual who lives and works in these settings." Culture change promotes flexibility and choice

For a copy of the full annual report, please call or email The Legal Center or download it in PDF form from our website.

The Colorado Long-Term Care Ombudsman & Legal Assistance Developer Programs Annual Report 2010 was published in January and is available free of charge by colling

and is available free of charge by calling or emailing The Legal Center or by downloading from www.thelegalcenter.org. The two programs work together to protect and promote the rights of Colorado's older adults and to improve their quality of life. The Ombudsman Program protects the rights of all people in nursing homes and assisted living residences in Colorado.



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