

A LOOK AHEAD

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2024

The **A Look Ahead** conference series brings together expert speakers for training that focuses on improving the quality of life for individuals living with disabilities and the people that support them.

A Look Ahead partners include:
The Arc of DFW Area, FEAT-North Texas, The Self-Determination Group and
First United Methodist Church of Arlington

Website: <https://thearcofdfw.org/a-look-ahead-series/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/alookaheadseries/>

#alaseries



Welcome to the A Look Ahead Quarterly Mini Conference Series!

A Look Ahead is brought to you by four partnering agencies: The Arc of DFW Area, FEAT- NT, The Self-Determination Group and FUMC-Arlington. We have gathered today to offer a half-day conference for individuals with disabilities, their families and friends and the professionals who work with them. We offer you a day filled with important information, resources, and strategies to help you look ahead and create a plan with hopes and dreams for the future.

Independence

is not the measure by the number of tasks
we can do without assistance, but by
**the quality of life we can
lead with assistance.**

American with Disabilities Act of 1990

Our knowledgeable and engaging lineup of speakers, panelists and topics is sure to help fill your toolbox of strategies and ideas. Take advantage of these sessions and learn all you can and leave here with a renewed determination to create a good life for your child, friend, family member, student, or yourself.

We have a great group of exhibitors today. Please visit their tables. You will find valuable information and can connect with resources in our community.

While passing in the hall or visiting the exhibitor tables, be sure to meet other conference attendees. This conference offers some great networking opportunities.

Thank you to our volunteers that made today possible. It takes a lot of hard work and commitment to pull off an event of this size and frequency.

If you would like to receive information about further A Look Ahead events, be sure to sign up with the conference planning partner organizations so that you will be added to the email distribution lists.

Enjoy the conference - you are in for a real treat!

The A Look Ahead Conference Planning Partners

CEU's AVAILABLE FOR TEXAS EDUCATORS AND TEXAS SOCIAL WORKERS

To receive CEU credit for attendance, you **MUST** complete **ALL** the following requirements:

- **SIGN IN** and **SIGN OUT** at the **CEU table** located near registration.
- **SIGN IN** to **each session** on the sheets provided in each classroom.
- **COMPLETE** and **RETURN** an evaluation form for **each session** to the facilitator.

Certificates will be **emailed** after the event if **ALL** requirements are met.
CEU's are provided by The Arc of DFW Area

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Registration 8:30 am – 9:00 am

Welcome 9:00 am – 9:20 am

1st Set of Breakout Sessions 9:30 am – 11:00 am

- Considering Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) in Placement Decisions | Rm #152
- Estate Planning, Guardianship, and Alternatives Overview | Rm #155-156
- Smart Home Technology: What Is it and How Can It Increase Independence, Autonomy, & Safety | Rm #151
- Soft Skills for Workplace Success! | Rm #154

2nd Set of Breakout Sessions 11:10 am – 12:10 pm

- Children with Disabilities and Divorce: What A Texas Parent Needs to Know | Rm #151
- My Disability Roadmap: Documentary Film Screening & Discussion | Rm #152
- Step Up to Self-Advocacy | Rm #155-156
- Supporting Victims and Defendants with IDD: Updates from The Arc's NCCJD | Rm #154

Lunch (on site) 12:10 pm – 12:55 pm

3rd Set of Breakout Sessions 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

- I'm Meeting with A Financial Planner: How Do I Prepare for My 1st (& maybe 2nd) Meeting | Rm #155-156
- Sexual Violence and What to Do About It: Let's Talk | Rm #154
- Smart Home Technology: What Is it and How can It Increase Independence, Autonomy, & Safety | Rm #151
- Transition Planning: Paving the Way to Positive Post-School Outcomes for Students | Rm #152

To Access Session Presentation Handouts:



Scan the QR code or visit the link <http://bit.ly/43Mg6kx> to access session handout.

Please note: Some presenters do not make handouts available

Please turn in your conference and session evaluation forms.

Your compliments and suggestions are important to us. Each form is reviewed and considered in future planning.

Considering Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) in Placement Decisions

Presenter: Kathryn Hogan, J.D., M.Ed.; Disability Rights Texas
Room #152

Special Education is a service not a place. Placement decisions should not guide the development of the IEP goals and objectives or supplemental aids and services. In fact, it is the opposite. Once the ARD/IEP team has formulated a list of IEP goals and reviewed supplementary aids and services to be provided, it will use those same goals and services to make placement decisions. Need more information? This is the session for you. During her session, Kathryn Hogan will explain what least restrictive environment (LRE) is, how decisions about LRE are made, what's required to change a student's placement, and how to advocate for your child to be in an inclusive setting.

Estate Planning, Guardianship, and Alternatives Overview

Presenters: Heidi Angel, Trust & Estate Attorney, & Lynn Kelly, Probate & Guardianship Attorney
Room #155-156

Families of children with disabilities must take extra care when creating their estate plans. This is true whether the disabled child is still a minor or now an adult, and particularly so when the child is or in the foreseeable future will be — receiving needs-based public benefits such as SSI or Medicaid. During this session Attorneys, Heidi Angel and Lynn Kelly, will present an overview of the legal documents and processes involved with planning for a loved one with a disability including an overview of the guardianship process and guardianship alternatives.

Smart Home Technology: What Is It and How Can It Increase Independence, Autonomy, & Safety

Presenters: Alexa Brill, Self-Advocate, & Wendy Davis, PATF
Room #151

For a person with a disability smart home technology can be life changing. It can increase independence and autonomy, productivity, connection, safety and security, and joy! Want to know how? Join Wendy and Alexa as they explore various forms of smart technology and their benefits. Alexa will also share her lived experience with smart technology and how it has changed her life.

Soft Skills for Workplace Success

Presenter: Robin Kuntz, M.Ed., R.P.E.D, Transition Consultant, Certified Employment Service Provider
Room #154

Soft skills are personal qualities that can help you get a job, keep a job, and become a more well-rounded person. They are important. During this session Robin Kuntz, Owner/Director of Achievable Employment Solutions, LLC will explore some of the most common soft skills employers look for, where you can receive training to enhance your soft skills, and how soft skills underpin workplace success.

A Look Ahead

Quarterly Conference Series
2025 Schedule



Children with Disabilities and Divorce: What A Texas Parent Needs to Know

Presenters: Mike Day, Family Law Attorney, & Mary Ann Hughes, Certified Divorce Coach

Room #151

So, what happens when you and your spouse decide to end your marriage? Divorce is hard enough as it is, with or without children, but having a child with a disability adds an extra level of complexity. It requires unique planning, patience, and knowledge. During this session Board Certified Family Law Attorney Mike Day and Mary Ann Hughes, Certified Divorce Coach, will review information and special considerations to examine. Information is designed to help you get the best outcome and better deal with the overwhelming issues, and more effectively advocate for yourself and your child. If these special considerations are not appropriately addressed, it could be disastrous for ALL.

My Disability Roadmap: Documentary Film Screening & Discussion

Presenters: Michelle Lunday, M.O.M. & AAC Advocate, & Cindi Paschall, M.O.M. & Disability Rights Advocate

Room #152

In the award-winning documentary film "My Disability Roadmap," Samuel Habib is a typical 21-year-old itching to move out, start a career, and find love, but no one tells you how to be an adult, let alone an adult with a disability. Can a community of disability activists help him follow his dreams? My Disability Roadmap steers clear of any of the old tropes around disability. Michelle Lunday and Cindi Paschall will introduce and then screen My Disability Roadmap (a 23-minute award-winning short film), followed by a lively discussion.

Step Up To Self-Advocacy

Presenter: Amy Litzinger, Self-Advocate & Public Policy Specialist

Room #155-156

Self-Advocacy does not just happen. It is something many need to step up to. During this interactive session, Amy will explore small steps to consider when building your own self-advocacy with confidence. Participants will share ideas of small things that can be done now that might add up to more independence later. Or that might help you relax when asking for what you need to make sure life has more of what you want in it. What works for one might not work for all, but it might provide some ideas of where to start.

Supporting Victims and Defendants with IDD: Updates from The Arc's NCCJD®

Presenter: Leigh Anne McKinglsey, The Arc's NCCJD®

Room:154

The Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability has been advocating for people with IDD for 10 years and continues to add new projects every year. Join Leigh Anne to learn more about the center, key projects they are working on and how you can get involved in this area of advocacy. Learn about new training tools for law enforcement, findings from a new project about helping victims with disabilities report abuse, the use of locative technology and unique issues facing people with both IDD and mental health disabilities.

INCLUSION

should be viewed not as an option but rather as a
fundamental human right.

Heidi M. Feldman

I'm Meeting with a Financial Planner: How Do I Prepare for My 1st (& maybe 2nd) Meeting

Presenter: Curtis Klieger, ChSNC® Financial Planner

Room #155-156

Children, youth and adults with disabilities or complex medical issues often require specialized care. Care that may extend beyond your ability to care for them after an unexpected event, as you age or when you are no longer here. And the cost of that care? It can escalate quickly. Considering any of these situations can be overwhelming. Having a financial plan in place may help reduce concerns. But where do you start? What needs to be considered? During this session, Curtis will review important factors to consider when creating a plan that makes sense for you and your family. He will discuss topics such as:

- available benefits and resources for individuals with disabilities
- things to consider when developing a comprehensive budget tailored to your family's needs
- planning for future care and housing options
- strategies for long-term financial security and independence
- and more!

Sexual Violence and What to Do About It: Let's Talk!

Presenters: Leigh Anne McKingsley, The Arcs NCCJD®, & James Meadours, Self-Advocate, Civil Rights & Sexual Assault Prevention Advocate

Room #154

It is time we talk about Sexual Violence! People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are sexually assaulted at seven times the rate of people without disabilities. We can no longer be silent. During this session you will hear directly from survivors of sexual violence. They will discuss why it's so important to talk about sexual violence, tips on how to talk to your health care provider about this hidden epidemic for people with IDD and ways to speak out on the topic to raise awareness and encourage prevention. Together, we can support survivors, help prevent future victimization and empower people with disabilities.

Smart Home Technology: What Is It and How Can It Increase Independence, Autonomy, & Safety

Presenter: Alexa Brill, Self-Advocate & PATF, & Wendy Davis, PATF

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For a person with a disability smart home technology can be life changing. It can increase independence and autonomy, productivity, connection, safety and security, and joy! Want to know how? Join Wendy and Alexa as they explore various forms of smart technology and their benefits. Alexa will also share her lived experience with smart technology and how it has changed her life.

Transition Planning: Paving the Way to Positive Post-School Outcomes for Students

Presenter: Kathryn Hogan, J.D., M.Ed; Disability Rights Texas

Room #152

Transition planning is a process designed to help students with disabilities make a smooth transition into adulthood – life after school. It requires the IEP team to gather information from the student and their network of support, develop transition goals, identify needed supports and services, and create a plan to achieve them. During this session, Kathryn will review the transition planning process, when it starts, and how students and families can advocate for an individualized transition plan.

MODELS OF DISABILITY

THE MEDICAL MODEL vs THE SOCIAL MODEL

Which one are you practicing?

What is a "model" of disability?

For this discussion, model means a certain way of thinking about disability.

What is the "social model" of disability?

To understand the "social model" of disability, it is helpful to compare it to the "medical model" of disability.

Medical Model	vs	Social Model
<p>Disability is a condition that limits a person's abilities – a tragedy.</p> <p>Disabled people are incomplete, broken and need to be changed, "fixed", and/or cured.</p> <p>A person's disability prevents them from functioning adequately – they need to be in segregated environments with "their own kind".</p> <p>Professionals and caregivers know best. Disabled people need all decisions to be made for them – they need to be kept safe.</p>		<p>Disability is the experience that arises from social oppression.</p> <p>Disability is a natural part of the human experience – disabled people are valued just as they are.</p> <p>Disabled people have access to society – inclusion is the natural state. Man-made biases and barriers must be adjusted.</p> <p>Disabled people have autonomy, choice, and free uncoerced informed consent in their own lives. There is dignity in risk.</p>

The social model of disability matters!

Self-determination is a natural part of life. All people have a right to autonomy, no matter the amount or types of support needed to communicate their choices.

"Individual liberty and interdependence are both essential for life in society." Gandhi

A Look Ahead Conference Presenters Are The Best!

Our presenters are amazing! Please let them know how much they are appreciated! They are here to share their knowledge and experiences with conference participants; to offer hope and to empower and encourage you as you look ahead.

PRESENTERS:

Heidi Angel, Trust & Estate Attorney

Heidi Angel is a Trust and Estate attorney at Jackson Walker LLP law firm in Fort Worth. She is a former teacher with a master's degree in Linguistics from UNC-Chapel Hill. Her law practice focuses on trust and probate administration as well as estate planning which includes special needs planning and guardianship. Heidi serves on the Guardianship Committee for the Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law Section for the State Bar of Texas. She has two pre-teen daughters, one of whom has Down Syndrome, so Heidi is active in the Down syndrome community having previously served as a board member and as President of the Down Syndrome Partnership of North Texas. She currently serves as Treasurer of the Fort Worth ISD Special Education PTA.

Alexa Brill, Self-Advocate

Alexa Brill, BA graduated with a bachelor's degree in Sociology from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania in 2013. She has worked for The Arc of Pennsylvania since 2014 as their Social Media and Website Manager. Alexa serves as the President on the Board of Self Advocates United As 1 (SAU1). She also serves on the Smart Home Advisory Committee through the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF). Alexa is very passionate about advocating for the rights of people with disabilities, as well as helping to make sure they have access to the right technology. She wants to help people learn about and access the technology they need to be as independent as possible.

Wendy Harkins Davis, PATF Marketing and Outreach Director

Wendy Harkins Davis is PATF's Marketing and Outreach Director. She is responsible for developing and implementing PATF's marketing plans, outreach activities, managing PATF's smart home technology projects, and working to educate both professionals and Pennsylvanians about PATF's programs and services.

Wendy brings to PATF her marketing and product management skills from her years in healthcare, telecommunications, and consumer products. Her children's and husband's hearing loss led her to advocate for the Deaf/deaf/hard-of-hearing community. She served for over two years on PATF's Board of Directors before joining the staff. She is the Entertainment Chair for the HLAA's Pennsylvania Walk4Hearing. You may recognize Wendy and her daughter, Caroline, as the Mother-Daughter-Duo-Advocates social media influencers. Dr. Caroline Davis, OTD, and Wendy work together, attending events to advocate for accessibility and inclusion.

Mike Day, Family Law Attorney

Born in New Orleans, Mike got to Texas as quickly as he could. Mike began his legal career by serving as a small-town felony prosecutor. From 2008 through the present, Mike has successfully represented family law clients in jury trials, bench trials, arbitrations, depositions, mediations, appeals, and hearings. In 2021, Mike became Board Certified in Family Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. When he is not practicing law, Mike enjoys spending time with his family, reading, and traveling.

“I don't want to depend on my parents so much. Someday I want to move into my own place, get married and maybe have kids.”

Samuel Habib, The Road Ahead

Kathryn Hogan, J.D., M.Ed., Attorney

Kathryn Hogan, JD, MEd is a Staff Attorney on the Education Team at Disability Rights Texas where she has advocated for students with disabilities to get appropriate services in Texas Public Schools for over six years. She has filed due process hearing requests and attended ARD meetings, disciplinary hearings, Manifestation Determination Reviews, and mediations on behalf of Texas Public School Students. Her original position at DRTx was as an Education and Children's Mental Health attorney where she worked on behalf of foster children in psychiatric facilities throughout Texas who were being denied education services from local school districts. Ms. Hogan is a graduate of Texas A&M University School of Law in Fort Worth. She is a certified educational diagnostician and a certified principal and has taught in Texas public schools for fourteen years, including four years as a teacher in the Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities.

Mary Ann Hughes, Certified Divorce Coach

Mary Ann Hughes started Special Family Transitions to help families navigate the overwhelm and complexities of special needs divorce to get the best possible outcome, with as little time, money, and stress as possible. As a Certified Special Needs Divorce Coach, member of National Association of Divorce Professionals and Co-Director of the NADP Special Needs Chapter, LoneStar LEND Fellow, MBA, and years of special needs advocacy, Mary Ann is committed to help guide families with loved ones with disabilities through divorce challenges, through her work as a Special Needs Divorce Coach, Consultant, and Mediator.

Lynn Kelly, Probate & Guardianship Attorney

Lynn Waller Kelly, J.D., Partner, received her law degree from Pepperdine University School of Law where she was awarded a full academic scholarship. She has practiced law in North Texas since 1989 and has advocated for clients in front of hundreds of Texas juries.

As Associate Judge of Tarrant County Probate Court 2 from 2017 – 2023, she presided over more than 6,000 probate hearings. Her current practice focuses on representing clients in probate matters, estate litigation, and guardianship proceedings throughout North Texas. She also serves as mediator in contested probate litigation matters, bringing her judicial and advocacy experiences to the table to resolve conflicts.

Lynn has been a featured speaker for the Texas Guardianship Association, Baylor Law School, Texas A&M Law School, Tarrant County Bar Association, North Texas Probate Bar Association, and support groups for parents of children with special needs.

Curtis Klieger, ChSNC®

Curtis Klieger, Chartered Special Needs Consultant (ChSNC®), is a founding partner and planner at Stonewater Financial. For over 11 years, he has focused on helping families create a clear roadmap and holistic approach to work toward their financial goals.

Robin Kuntz, M.Ed., R.P.E.D, Transition Consultant, Certified Employment Service Provider

Robin is the Owner/Director of Achievable Employment Solutions, LLC. She has worked in the field of special education for over 40 years, serving as a Special Education Teacher, Educational Diagnostician, Transition Specialist and Transition Coordinator. She is currently working as a Transition Consultant for local school districts and as an Employment Service Provider contractor for the Texas Workforce Commission.

Amy Litzinger, Self-Advocate & Public Policy Specialist

Amy Litzinger, self-advocate, has worked as a Public Policy Specialist with Texas Parent to Parent since 2011. She helps families and individuals with disabilities with their advocacy goals. This may include advocacy with agencies, legislators, and advocacy committees. Amy chairs the Texas Education Agency's Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education. She serves as a member of HHSC's Texas Council of Consumer Direction and is the Vice Chair of the IDD Systems Redesign Advisory Committee (IDD-SRAC). Amy also serves on the Austin seminary Alumnae Board. Amy holds degrees in English and Political Science from Southwest University, and a Master of Arts (Theological Studies) and is a 2019 Texas Partners in Policymaking Graduate.

Michelle Lunday, M.O.M.

Michelle Lunday is wife to James and mom to 10-year-old Luke. She is a 2018 graduate of Texas Partners in Policymaking. Michelle is an advocate for Luke in all areas of his life, and she has a special passion for helping families understand Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and the process. In her spare time, she enjoys travel, musicals, and baking.

Leigh Anne McKingsley, The Arc’s NCCJD®

Leigh Anne McKingsley is Senior Director of Disability and Justice Initiatives at The Arc of the United States where she founded and directs The Arc’s National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability (NCCJD®), the first national center in the U.S. to address both victim and suspected/defendant issues concerning people with intellectual/developmental disability (IDD). She has worked at the intersection of IDD and criminal justice for 27years, authored numerous publications and presents nationally and internationally on a broad array of criminal justice and disability topics. She oversaw the development of NCCJD’s signature training: Pathways to Justice® and seeks to establish NCCJD and The Arc’s 550-chapter network as the go to place for information and training on disability and justice. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Social Work, Master of Science in Social Work, and Master of Public Administration from the University of Texas at Arlington.

James Meadours, Self-Advocate and Disability Rights & Sexual Assault Prevention Advocate

James Meadours is a nationally recognized civil rights and sexual assault prevention activist. As a survivor of a number of sexual assaults throughout his life, he is dedicated to educating others about the high rate of sexual violence in the disability community. He presents at local, state, and national conferences, at rape crisis centers, to disability and child advocates, as well as law enforcement, about this critical topic. Mr. Meadours provides consultation on sexual violence and disability-related projects to federal agencies and non-profits, such as The Arc’s National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability’s (NCCJD) National Advisory Committee. In 2017, he was interviewed by NPR’s Joe Shapiro for the Abused and Betrayed series that uncovered the high rate of sexual assault among people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He serves on the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disability. James resides in San Antonio, Texas but travels willingly to wherever his message still needs to be heard.

Cindi Paschall, M.O.M. and Disability Rights Advocate

Cindi Paschall is a parent passionately involved in advancing the human rights of persons with disabilities. She has dedicated the past 27 years to advocacy, applying her personal experience and knowledge in helping others. Over the years Cindi has worked and also volunteered for various organizations dedicated to helping persons with disabilities live their desired lifestyle. She currently serves as a volunteer for The Arc of DFW Area and is a Regional Partner for the Navigate Life Texas website project. Cindi is also a 1997 Texas Partners in Policymaking graduate.



**When diversity
and universal
design are
embraced,
everyone can be
themselves and
feel like they
belong while
doing it.**

~ Disability Across the Lifespan

**We have a wonderful group of exhibitors today!
Please stop by and visit them, they
welcome your questions.**

Be An Angel DFW
Disability Rights Texas
Green Oaks Education and Support, Inc.
My Health My Resources of Tarrant County
REACH Inc.
The Arc of DFW Area
The Self-Determination Group



**We look forward to seeing you in
February as we continue
celebrating our 10th Year!**

Attendees, exhibitors, presenters, and sponsors, please join us February 8th, 2025.
There is something for everyone!



The February 8th **A Look Ahead Conference** registration is open. Scan the QR code or use the link <https://bit.ly/FEB25ALA> to reserve your spot today!

Sponsors and Exhibitors, expand your presence within the DFW Community.
For more information about sponsorship packages and exhibitor space,
please contact Michelle at alookahead@thearcofdfw.org.



Wi-Fi connections are available in all rooms.
The Wi-Fi password is JohnWesley.