

Spring Newsletter



Message from the Executive Director Linda Thrift

Hello WarmLine Families,

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2024! Spring is personally my favorite time of year. We get to cultivate relationships and watch them bloom for the rest of the year. That is a goal I've been working on here at WarmLine. As a non-profit, we are working on empowering families at a grassroots level to grow and elevate every family with a child on an IEP in the 6 counties that we cover. More in person workshops on Special Education with a deeper understanding of the IEP documents is a fundamental priority for us. The impact of a well written and followed IEP does and can have lasting change to one student. WarmLine wants to be able to bring positive change to ALL students starting by empowering parents, caregivers, and family members involved in that students journey.

Let's not forget we are also working with Early Intervention organizations by supporting families with children between the ages of 0-3 with a new diagnosis by demystifying the process from Part C to Part B of IDEA. I welcome you to attend our Transition to Pre-school workshops in Spanish and English coming up this spring.

I also encourage you to stay connected with us via social media and via our newsletter. Here you will be up to date on where we will be next in the community. It could be your home school or local district!!

Finally, I'd like to send out a special thanks to all the people involved with WarmLine at any level. Thank you and lets make this year the best one yet!

Many thanks,
Linda Thrift
Executive Director



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Community Navigator News

WarmLine's Community Navigator Program serves families with children birth to 22 and individuals 22 and older.

Our Community Navigators help you figure out your goals and how to reach them. They are from the same community and have extensive knowledge of the resources available. The program is flexible and based on your needs and availability.

Want to know more? Know someone who might benefit from the program? Watch and share WarmLine's new Community Navigator Program video at warmlinefrc.org/what-we-do



Family Empowerment Center News

Spring is a time for Transition Fairs! These events are put on by local schools and organizations to get information about transitioning out of K-12 education for disabled students.

Go to warmlinefrc.org and scroll down for Community events, including Transition Fairs in your area.

Email warmline@warmlinefrc.org if you'd like to have WarmLine come to an event for your organization.



Early Start News

Did you know WarmLine has all our Early Start-Early Intervention publications online?

Go to warmlinefrc.org/what-we-do and choose "Early Start/Early Intervention" from the menu to download:

- Early Start Resource Guide (in English & Spanish)
- Turning 3 (in English & Spanish)
- Frequently Asked Questions (in English & Spanish)

From One Parent to Another

WarmLine staff answer the question, “What is 1 thing from your program you wish all parents/caretakers knew?”



A Flexible Program

The Community Navigator Program is designed to inform, educate, and empower families to advocate for needs and support to improve their loved one's overall quality of life. Together, we will implement a plan to help you move toward self-defense.

You can cancel services at any time and that's okay.

If you decide to revisit the program, you can reach out to us any time!



Take Your Time

A parent doesn't have to sign an IEP document during the IEP meeting.

Parents have a right to take the draft of the document home and sign after they feel comfortable. Parents can also consent to parts of the IEP with which they agree so those services or placement can be implemented as soon as possible. If they disagree with certain components of the IEP, those cannot be implemented, and may be resolved in due process proceedings.



A Misconception

There's a misconception I keep seeing that the IEP is written by the school, then explained to the parents.

In the IEP process, the school initially drafts the plan, which is then presented and discussed with the parents. Under federal law (IDEA), parents hold full and equal membership in their child's IEP team. This means that the parents have a significant say in shaping their child's IEP. While they may not be specialists in special education, a parent's expertise in understanding his child's needs is invaluable.



Reach Out as Early as You Can

The most important part of Early Intervention is knowing how fast children develop in all of their areas and how fast they can learn. This is why parents need to look for help as soon as they feel that something is not right and insist on having their child evaluated. As time goes by, they are losing some valuable time of developing.

From One Parent to Another, CONTINUED

WarmLine staff answer the question, “What is 1 thing from your program you wish all parents/caretakers knew?”



Rely on Your SELPA

As I'm just coming from our State SELPA conference, I'd want parents to know about utilizing SELPA more often to assist in issues related to special education issues. It's what they're there for. They are passionate about the work they do; therefore, trust that they will uphold their values and principles of being that mediator in times of need.

You can find out more about your Special Education Local Plan Area at cde.ca.gov/sp



Nothing Set in Stone

Something I frequently feel from families is this sense that the IEP document/program is something set in stone once consented to, when actually the document and program are always works-in-progress.

When families feel something is not working—progress is not being made on goals, provisions or services are not being provided with fidelity—families have the right to request an IEP meeting where they can go back to the drawing board to discuss and collaborate with the IEP team to modify and improve the child's program. Many smaller changes to the IEP can also be made by amendment, which is something that a teacher and parent can initiate without the necessity to call together the whole IEP team.



Things Change!

As an Events Coordinator, I get to attend a lot of resource fairs. Despite it being part of my everyday job, I never leave an event without learning something I didn't know before.

Laws, resources, and even best practices change all the time!

I wish parents and caretakers would all have all the information they need at their fingertips all the time. However, until we live in that ideal world, I suggest asking all the questions you have and sharing your knowledge with families like yours.



Volunteer with WarmLine!

WarmLine is excited to welcome back our volunteer team!

Before the COVID pandemic, WarmLine relied heavily on Community Parents and general volunteers to connect with the community and support our events. We have now officially re-opened up our volunteer pool this Spring!

Interested? Here are the steps to volunteer with WarmLine:

- 1** Sign up for a volunteer orientation.
Online through Zoom
2nd Friday of each month 6- 7pm
Register at warmlinefrc.org/news-events
- 2** Fill out the Volunteer Contact Form.
- 3** Respond to volunteer-related emails



Thank you for reading!

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