



Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

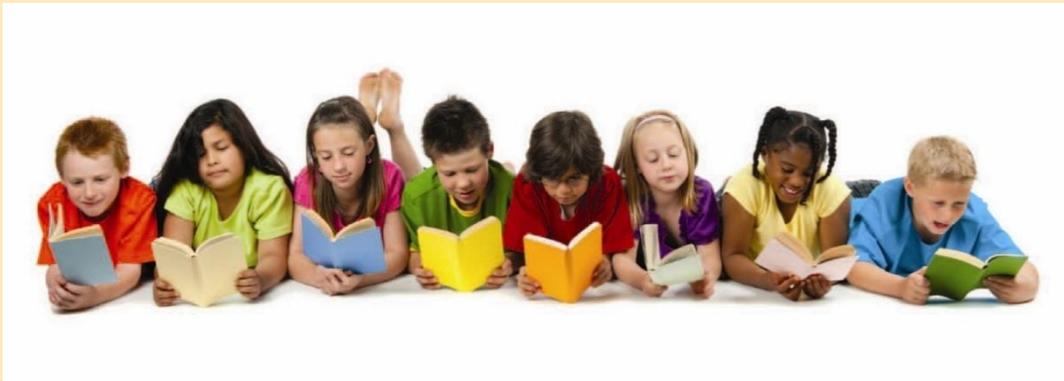
**ENGAGING FAMILIES IN
BUILDING LITERACY SKILLS**

**EVERYONE READING CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 4, 2020**

Today's Agenda



- Introduction
- Making parents partners
- Encouraging reading at home
- Providing support and information for families
- Students with disabilities and literacy





What is Advocates for Children (AFC)?



AFC is an independent agency that protects the rights of all NYC students

- Dedicated to protecting every child's right to an education
- Focusing on students from low-income backgrounds who are struggling in school or experiencing school discrimination of any kind.

www.advocatesforchildren.org

Populations AFC Serves



Early
childhood

Students
who are
over-age for
their grade
level

Students
facing
disciplinary
issues

Students
involved in
the child
welfare
system

Students
with
disabilities

Immigrant
students and
English
Language
Learners

Youth
involved in
bullying
incidents

AFC Services



Helpline: 1-866-427-6033
(Mon-Thurs, 10am – 4pm)

Workshops and trainings

Free legal services to low-income families

AFC Guides and Resources



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the website for Advocates for Children of New York. The browser's address bar shows the URL https://advocatesforchildren.org/get_help/guides_and_resources. The website header includes the AFC logo (a yellow pencil with 'AFC' written on it) and the text 'Advocates for Children of New York Protecting every child's right to learn'. A navigation menu below the header includes links for Home, Get Help (highlighted), Who We Are, Who We Serve, Litigation, Policy & Initiatives, News & Media, and Support Our Work. A search bar is also present.

The main content area features a sidebar on the left with a 'Helpline' section and a 'Guides & Resources' section. The 'Guides & Resources' section lists various topics: General School Rights, Early Childhood Education, Students with Disabilities & Special Education, Older Students, Graduation Requirements & Transition, Immigrant Families & ELs, Suspensions & School Discipline, Students in Foster Care or Temporary Housing, and Trainings & Workshops. Below this list are social media icons for RSS, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.

The main content area has a large orange banner with the text 'Get Help Guides & Resources' and a photograph of a young boy with a backpack. Below the banner, the text reads: 'Advocates for Children of New York (AFC) offers free know-your-rights guides, tip sheets, and other resources to help you understand New York City's public school system. Click on the links below to view resources in your area of interest.'

Below the banner, there are three sections with blue headers:

- General School Rights**: Learn about bullying, charter schools, enrollment, transfers, transportation, literacy, parent/teacher conferences, promotion policy, the rights of LGBTQ students, and the rights of students in the juvenile or criminal justice system.
- Early Childhood Education: Ages 0-5**: Learn about Early Intervention, pre-K and 3K, preschool special education services, kindergarten admissions, and the transition from preschool special education to kindergarten.
- Students with Disabilities and Special Education**: Learn about special education evaluations, IEP meetings, impartial hearings, Section 504, assistive

At the bottom of the page, there is a 'Need Help?' section with a red background and white text: 'Call AFC's Education Helpline (866) 427-6033 Monday to Thursday 10 am to 4 pm'. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows various application icons and the system clock indicating 12:10 PM on 10/17/2018.

AFC's Literacy Corner: Resources on Learning to Read & Write



The screenshot shows the AFC website's Literacy Corner. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the AFC logo (a pencil with 'AFC' written on it) and the tagline 'Advocates for Children of New York Protecting every child's right to learn'. The navigation bar includes links for Home, Get Help, Who We Are, Who We Serve, Litigation, Policy & Initiatives, News & Media, and Support Our Work. There are also social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The main content area is titled 'Literacy Corner: Resources on Learning to Read & Write'. It features three main sections: 'Need Help?' with contact information for the Education Helpline, 'Donate Now' with a call to action, and 'RESOURCE LIBRARY' with a link to view guidebooks. The library section highlights two reports: 'A is for All: Meeting the Literacy Needs of Students with and without Disabilities in the New York City Public Schools' and 'The Advocate: Special Edition on Literacy'. The 'A is for All' report is dated March 2016 and discusses literacy needs for students with disabilities. 'The Advocate' is the Winter 2019 issue of the newsletter for parents and professionals.

Español اردو বাংলা Pycckий Français 한국어 اللغة العربية 中文 Kreyòl Ayisyen

Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

Contact Us
Search

Home Get Help Who We Are Who We Serve Litigation Policy & Initiatives News & Media Support Our Work

f t i y

Need Help? ▶
Call AFC's Education Helpline
(866) 427-6033
Monday to Thursday
10 am to 4 pm

Donate Now ▶
Help Advocates for Children assist
more New York City students!

RESOURCE LIBRARY
View AFC's guidebooks, fact
sheets, and more ▶

Literacy Corner: Resources on Learning to Read & Write

A is for All: Meeting the Literacy Needs of Students with and without Disabilities in the New York City Public Schools [PDF]
In March 2016, AFC released this report documenting the need for urgent and sustained action to address the particularly low literacy levels for low-income students with disabilities. The report discusses the key elements for teaching reading effectively to all students, reviews research and case stories indicating that students with a wide range of disabilities are capable of learning to read if they receive appropriate instruction, highlights a number of promising programs in New York City, and provides recommendations for implementing systemic and lasting change.

The Advocate: Special Edition on Literacy [PDF]
The Winter 2019 issue of AFC's newsletter for parents and professionals, *The Advocate*, is a special

<https://advocatesforchildren.org/literacy>



Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT LITERACY: A Fact Sheet for Families of Students Who Need More Help Learning to Read and Write

How can I get help for my child?

If you think your child may be having trouble learning to read and write, ask for help right away! Learning to read is not easy, and many children struggle with these skills. You know your child better than anyone, and it is better to intervene early than to “wait and see.”

Start with your school. When you first talk to staff at the school about your child's progress reading and writing, they may tell you about Response to Intervention (RTI). RTI is an approach that schools use to figure out what students need and match them with an appropriate level of support. There are 3 levels, or “tiers,” of intervention under RTI. They are described in the box on the right.

Some students may benefit from special education

Response to Intervention (RTI)

TIER 1 — Over the course of a few months, all students are tested to figure out their individual strengths and needs. Students who are struggling then receive extra instruction in their classrooms.

TIER 2 — Students who don't make enough progress in Tier 1 will move to Tier 2 for more help. Students in Tier 2 get more intensive instruction in small groups based on their needs.

TIER 3 — Students who show too little progress in Tier 2 must be provided



Parent-Teacher Conferences: Questions to ask your child's teachers about how well he or ... 1 / 2



Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES: Questions to ask your child's teachers about how well he or she is learning to read and write

Learning to read is one of the most important skills your child will develop while in school. It's important for you, as a parent, to know how that's going. With that in mind, we've come up with some questions you may want to use when you meet with your child's teacher for parent-teacher conferences. There's no need to ask every one of these, but it's a good idea to think about the questions below, and ask the ones that make the most sense given your child's development.

Sometimes information about literacy can be confusing, so don't be afraid to ask follow-up questions! If the teacher says something you don't understand or that doesn't seem to fit what you know about your child, ask the teacher to explain in more detail or to give examples.

Also check out
Advocates for Children's
*Questions & Answers about
Literacy: A fact sheet for
families of students who
need more help learning to
read and write*, available in
English and Spanish at
http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/get_help/guides_and_resources.

Start with the following questions...

- What should my child be able to do by the end of this year with respect to reading and writing? Is he/she on track to do that? How do you know?
- What formal or informal reading assessments are you using to track student progress during the year? Is there anything I should know about those assessments?
- Can you give me more information about how my child is doing in reading and writing?
 - Is he/she learning to decode (sound out words)?
 - Does my child understand what he/she reads?
 - Is his/her reading fluent (does it flow well)?
 - Are there any skills he/she seems to be struggling with?

5:15 PM
9/10/2018



The Advocate

Winter
2019

Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

Special edition on LITERACY

MISSION STATEMENT

Advocates for Children of New York's mission is to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. AFC achieves this through four integrated strategies: free advice and legal representation for families of students; free trainings and workshops for parents and professionals, to equip them to advocate on behalf of students; policy advocacy to effect change in the

Julius' Story

Julius is a sweet 10-year-old fifth-grader who is diagnosed with dyslexia and ADHD. Julius struggled in his public elementary school, especially with reading, despite having been identified as a student with a disability early on. Though Julius has the intellectual ability to achieve on grade level, he made minimal progress in first through third grades because he did not receive appropriate instruction. When his mom, Julia, reached out to Advocates for Children for help, Julius had become anxious, discouraged, and self-conscious about his academic difficulties. A special education evaluation halfway through third grade showed that Julius' reading skills were severely delayed and he was falling further and further behind academically.

After attending an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting where the school



Students with dyslexia typically have problems with reading because they have trouble mastering the relationships between the sounds of spoken language and the letters that represent those sounds in print. When Julius was

The ARISE Coalition



Parents, educators and other supporters of students with special needs seeking to improve day-to-day experiences and long-term outcomes and options for all students.



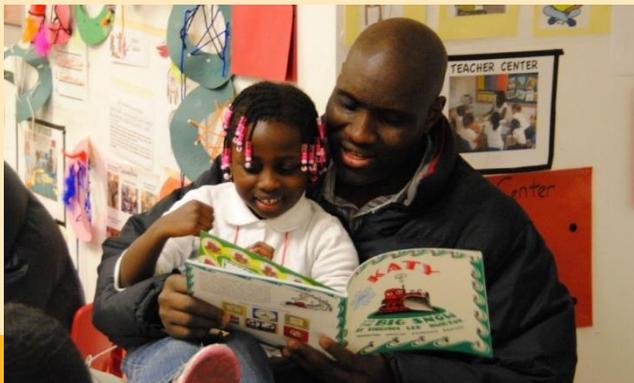
www.arisecoalition.org

Making families partners in literacy



Schools must make families real partners in literacy work.

- Some parents can supplement or reinforce instruction received at school
- Parents can create a home environment that encourages reading
- Parents may need to work with the school to obtain additional support if it's needed



Research – on the importance of parent involvement



Multiple studies have demonstrated the importance of involving families and communities in efforts to help struggling readers.

Students whose families are involved in their education learn to read sooner than their peers whose families are less involved.

Parental involvement in children's literacy development is more powerful than other family background variables, including social class, family size, and parental education levels.

Research – Initiative Home-School Partnerships



Parents are more likely to become involved when teachers initiate home-school literacy partnerships.

Schools with high success rates with struggling readers have HIGH levels of family and community involvement.

Making Parents Partners



We urge school staff to make parents partners in efforts to improve literacy. Some ideas to this end may include:

- Visiting at home or school to discuss reading plans for individual students
- Providing engaging at-home activities to support reading progress
- Sharing information, resources, and fun facts about learning to read with families
- Encouraging families to engage with their children around literacy through conversations, daily activities, books, and audio books, Etc.
- Organizing family workshops, literacy events for families, and opportunities for family members to visit the classroom during literacy activities
- Bringing PTAs and SLTs into efforts to reach families
- **YOUR TURN.....**

Communicating With Families



Any family engagement strategies need to consider families’:

Reading levels

Languages spoken

Access to the internet

Work schedules

Need for accessible online content under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act

Encouraging Reading At Home



To support students' reading for pleasure at home teachers can send students home with:

- Literacy bags
- Student written books
- Favorite books from the school day
- What else?



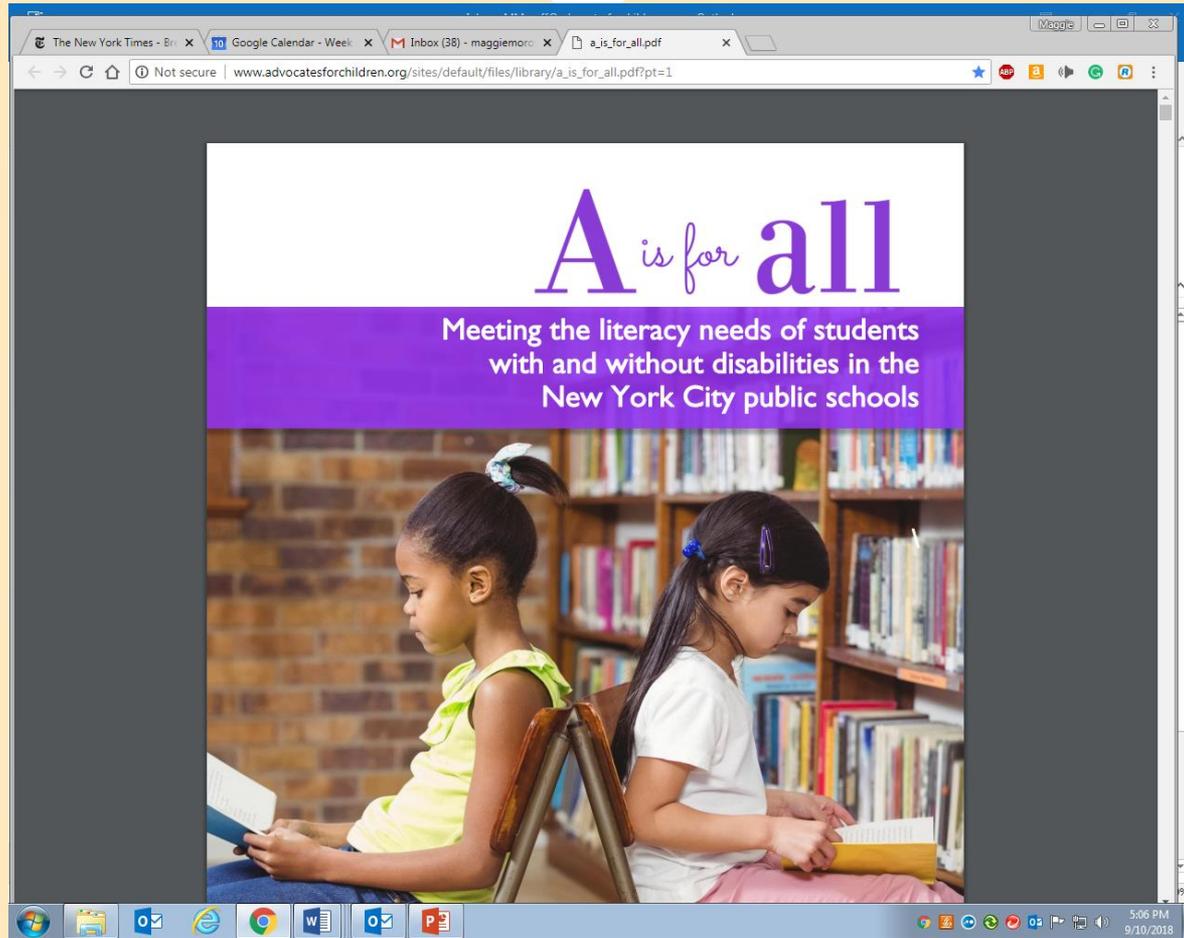
Providing Support And Information For Parents Of Children Struggling To Learn To Read



Families of students struggling to read will have questions and school staff can help answer those questions. Staff can sponsor and lead parent workshops and distribute information on a variety of subjects including:

- How reading instruction is delivered in individual schools
- How parents can support instruction at home
- Where parents can turn for help
- Information about reading disabilities
- Other thoughts?

Literacy and Students with Disabilities



http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/a_is_for_all.pdf?pt=1

NYS Law: Students with Disabilities resulting from Dyslexia



Under law, students with disabilities must receive special education supports and services to help progress in school.

Two years ago, NYS amended the Education law to require CSEs to include information about students' dyslexia in IEPs.

Students with Disabilities, continued



Teachers who believe their students are struggling to develop literacy skills because of Dyslexia or other learning differences should help connect families to special education resources and supports.



Identifying Specific Methodology on the IEP



In order to ensure that students receive specific, direct instruction in the foundational reading skills (the 5 pillars):

- It is sometimes appropriate to identify specific methodology for an individual student.
- Where specific methodology is needed, school staff delivering that instruction must have training to do so.

Technology as a Support - Instructional Technology (IT)



➤ IT uses technology to support curriculum, instruction and assessment for all students in the classroom.

➤ Examples include:

- Tablets and computers
- Smart Boards
- Online learning



Technology as a Support – Assistive Technology (AT)



- AT is any device or support for using that device that helps an individual student with a disability to learn.
- Provides alternative ways of accessing material
- Does not teach new material.
- Examples include:
 - Individually assigned computers and tablets
 - Writing aids
 - Screen reading software
 - Speech-to-text and text-to-speech applications



Accessible Educational Materials (AEM)



Accessible Educational Materials are designed to be used by a variety of students in a variety of formats.

Materials are made available to students in print, digital and graphic formats, by audio, video or visual presentation.

Braille



Large Print



Audio



Digital Text



Technology at Home



Make sure that students who use assistive technology and require accessible educational materials to access curriculum during the school day have access to both for homework and reading for pleasure after the school day.



Accommodations and Modifications



Some students need accommodations or modifications in order to participate in the general curriculum.

- Accommodations change the way the students approach the curriculum.
- Modifications change the material actually presented.



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

Questions?

