



VFN's Family Support Program Workshops and Consultation Services

Who are we?

Vermont Family Network (VFN) is a statewide family support organization committed to ensuring all Vermont families of children with special needs are empowered to have a voice in the care and services they receive. We are the federally-designated [Parent Training and Information Center](#), the [Family-to-Family Health Information Center](#), and the Vermont chapter of both [Family Voices](#) and [Parent-to-Parent USA](#). We have been serving Vermont families and the professionals who work with them for more than 30 years.

What do we offer?

VFN workshops are approximately two hours in length and include a presentation and discussion among participants. Customized workshops are also available. Consultation services are based on the individual's needs and are provided in-person, by email, or over-the-phone.

Who are the trainers?

VFN Family Support Consultants have more than ten years of experience at VFN and "lived experience" parenting a child with special needs. We combine technical knowledge with practical experience and suggestions in a family-friendly way. VFN employees are not attorneys and do not provide legal advice. Our ultimate goal is to empower families through education and support thereby increasing their capacity to be engaged and effective in every aspect of their child's life.

What type of consultation services do we offer?

Consultation services are based on the individual's needs and preferences. We hear from many families that services are frequently not coordinated or helpful. As such, here are examples of how we can help:

- Assist with developing family-friendly communications such as emails, procedures, or website content.
- Provide a comprehensive overview of VFN's programs and share resources at your staff meeting.



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- Arrange for parents from our [Family Faculty program](#) to share their stories as part of an in-service training for your employees.
- Train family members on your advisory council, board, or committee, to be more effective members of your group; for example, your agency could sponsor a parent’s attendance at the [Vermont Leadership Series](#).
- Conduct a focus group or listening session with the families you serve to get input and improvement ideas.
- Coach your organization in creating your own parent match or parent-to-parent support program.

How can I learn more?

Please contact us to discuss your needs and for information about our fees: email info@vtfn.org or call 1-800-800-4005 and ask for the Training Specialist.

What topics do workshops cover?

Workshop topic examples: We address the questions parents and professionals frequently ask us.		
Special Education & Individualized Education Programs (IEP); 504 Plans; Other Education Programs, Services, and Supports	Family-Centered Thinking and Planning; Building a Medical Home for Your Child; Caring for the Caregiver; Planning the Future Using Life Course Tools	Transition to Adulthood for Youth with Disabilities: Independent Living, Health Care, Employment, Post-Secondary Education, Social Life, and Community Living
Advocating for Your Child; Effective Communication and Collaboration Skills; Making Changes at the Legislative or Systems Level	Children’s Challenging Behaviors; School Behavior Supports; School Discipline; Bullying & Harassment	Resources, Services, and Supports to Help Families of Children with Special Needs, which is 1 in 4 Families in Vermont