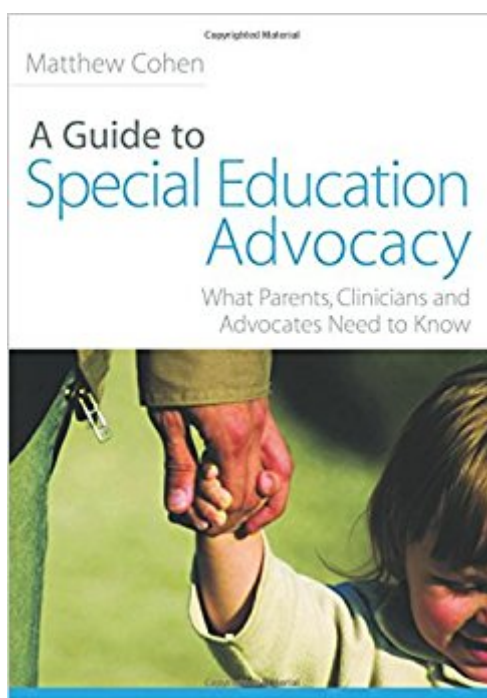


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A Guide To Special Education Advocacy: What Parents, Clinicians And Advocates Need To Know



Synopsis

Disability law can be complex and intimidating, so how can concerned parents use it to ensure their child with a disability receives the appropriate education they are legally entitled to? A Guide to Special Education Advocacy gives strategies for advocating for better provision of special education in schools. Despite the many services and accommodations that have been made for students with disabilities, such as the use of Braille or providing specialized education in a regular or special classroom, many children with disabilities do not get the services they need and are not placed in appropriate programs or settings. Because of this, the perception of disability often remains unchanged. Matthew Cohen's insightful manual gives a practical vision of how a parent or a professional can become an advocate to achieve a more inclusive and rewarding education for the child with a disability. This book will provide parents, people with disabilities, professionals and clinicians thinking about special education advocacy with an overview of current disability law and how it works, identifying practical ways for building positive and effective relationships with schools.

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Customer Reviews

"Cohen, a disability rights expert, attorney, and parent, has written an invaluable guide for parents who must serve as the ultimate case managers for the child and the clinicians and advocates who assist them. Anyone encountering the special education maze should read this book, which describes a complicated and sometimes adversarial process as clearly as is humanly possible....Also invaluable are a list of useful web sites, acronyms used in special education, and sample letters (such as a request for an impartial due process hearing or for an independent

evaluation). Highly recommended." --Library Journal

"Wow! This book is like a "Mapquest" that puts the parent on a journey, making the process clear and concise. But more important, it is sensitive to the emotions a parent feels during very vulnerable times on the journey. As a parent, I would want to keep it within reach by day and under my pillow at night." -- Ellen McManus

"Wilmette, IL, whose daughter has been represented by Matthew Cohen"

"An excellent, very readable explanation not only of what IDEA requires, both substantively and procedurally, but how advocates and parents can make it work. From the convenient outline of the process provided by the table of contents, in the order most parents will encounter it and arranged to properly emphasize substance over process, to the practical pointers highlighted by his "E=MC2" formula, Mr. Cohen has admirably achieved his stated purpose: to help parents (whose children are not experiencing success) identify points of potential conflict and ways to address those conflicts. --S. James Rosenfeld, Founder and Director, The National Academy for IDEA Administrative Law Judges and Hearing Officers at Seattle University School of Law

Matt Cohen's background as a disability rights expert, attorney, and parent insures the practical grasp, sensitivity, and wisdom necessary to distill the substance of the laws and strategies involved in special education advocacy. His expertise is grounded in this brilliant and strategic treatise assisting families and professionals to acquire the best programs and services for children. Having an uncanny insight into the issues that families face on the ground, Matt Cohen's new Guide provides families and professionals alike the most reliable resource yet to navigate the special education conundrum. --Barbara H. Dyer, Staff Attorney, University of Tennessee College of Law; The CAN-LEARN Project; Children's Advocacy Network; Lawyers Education Advocacy Resource Network

Matt has provided a scholarly treatise for parents and professionals written in the engaging and invigorating style that he is so comfortable with. This book in my opinion is the most thorough and well written analysis of the history and application of disability law, and the impact on real life experiences for students, available in print to date." ----Kathryn Dobel, co-chair of CAPCA (California Association for Parent-Child Advocacy) and founding board member of COPAA (Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates)

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A Guide to Special Education Advocacy is a well written text that would find a usefull place on the bookshelves of both clinicians and parents. I highly recommend it to the readers of JADD. (Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders) A Guide to Special Education provides guidance to parents who are tackling this difficult task. It is an excellent guidebook for any parent, attorney, advocate or educator who would like to learn the underpinnings of the legal structure of the special education system requirements, with a look at practical implementation and ideal conclusions/considerations. (www.childrensdisabilities.info) Cohen, a disability rights expert, attorney, and parent, has written an invaluable guide for parents who 'must serve as the ultimate case managers for the child' and the clinicians and advocates who assist them. Anyone encountering the special education maze should read this book, which describes a complicated and sometimes adversarial process as clearly as in humanly possible.... Highly recommended. (Library Journal) Matt Cohen is one of the leading lights of special education law. He has an unmatched record of success in representing families in their efforts to obtain educational and support services for children with disabilities. This book is filled with insights and practical information drawn from his comprehensive knowledge of the law and his extensive experience in advocacy. I recommend it to everyone working in the field. (Mark C. Weber, Vincent dePaul Professor of Law, DePaul University, and author of Special Education Law and Litigation Treatise) Wow! This book is like a "Mapquest" that puts the parent on a journey, making the process clear and concise. But more important, it is sensitive to the emotions a parent feels

during very vulnerable times on the journey. As a parent, I would want to keep it within reach by day and under my pillow at night. (Ellen McManus, Wilmette, IL, whose daughter has been represented by Matthew Cohen)

Matt Cohen is a lawyer's lawyer and an advocate's advocate. His deep storehouse of experiences in special education are synthesized in this comprehensive, comprehensible, and compelling book. Cohen's insights and strategies have been ground-truthed through years of case work, policy work, and community and parent education. His lucid analysis of the law and his distillation of advocacy strategies that actually work will benefit anyone who is interested in the education of children. This up-to-date book, filled with useful references, will become the benchmark work in the field. (Dean Hill Rivkin, College of Law Distinguished Professor, University of Tennessee College of Law)

An excellent, very readable explanation not only of what IDEA requires, both substantively and procedurally, but how advocates and parents can make it work. From the convenient outline of the process provided by the table of contents, in the order most parents will encounter it and arranged to properly emphasize substance over process, to the practical pointers highlighted by his "E=MC2" formula, Mr. Cohen has admirably achieved his stated purpose: to help parents (whose children are not experiencing success) identify points of potential conflict and ways to address those conflicts. (S. James Rosenfeld, Founder and Director, The National Academy for IDEA Administrative Law Judges and Hearing Officers at Seattle University School of Law)

Matt Cohen's secrets of great special education advocacy are in this book, laid out in a user-friendly, understandable format. It's all here-tips at the end of each section with tangible strategies for parents and their advocates, forms and letters, and a glossary of the alphabet soup so critical to special education. This essential resource will empower parents, giving them and their advocates the tools necessary to enforce their children's special education rights. (Aimee E. Gilman, special education attorney and parent, co-founder and Executive Director, Special Education Services, Cleveland, OH)

Matt Cohen's background as a disability rights expert, attorney, and parent insures the practical grasp, sensitivity, and wisdom necessary to distill the substance of the laws and strategies involved in special education advocacy. His expertise is grounded in this brilliant and strategic treatise assisting families and professionals to acquire the best programs and services for children. Having an uncanny insight into the issues that families face on the ground, Matt Cohen's new Guide provides families and professionals alike the most reliable resource yet to navigate the special education conundrum. (Barbara H. Dyer, Staff Attorney, University of Tennessee College of Law; The CAN-LEARN Project; Children's Advocacy Network; Lawyers Education Advocacy Resource Network)

A Guide to Special Education Advocacy is probably the most comprehensive publication yet to combine a thoughtful analysis of special education law and practice with effective

advocacy strategies on behalf of children with disabilities. Each chapter contains "E=MC2 Advocacy Strategies," which are sterling practical tips and insights for parents and advocates. This book is a must-read for all those that want to increase their knowledge and understanding of special education law and advocacy strategies. (Torin D. Togut, Adjunct Professor of Law, University of Georgia School of Law; Georgia Legal Services Program; Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates) Matt Cohen brings his extensive knowledge of special education and his talent as a writer to this book, explaining complex legal matters relating to the education of children with special needs in a way that is clear and easy to understand. This is a book every parent, teacher, administrator or family member of a special needs child will want to read cover to cover. (Nancy Hablutzel, Ph.D., J.D., Chicago-Kent College of Law) Matt has provided a scholarly treatise for parents and professionals written in the engaging and invigorating style that he is so comfortable with. This book in my opinion is the most thorough and well written analysis of the history and application of disability law, and the impact on real life experiences for students, available in print to date. (Kathryn Dobel, co-chair of CAPCA (California Association for Parent-Child Advocacy) and founding board member of COPAA (Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates)) Matt Cohen has hit it out of the park with this guide. It takes a truly gifted writer to translate the often complex special education laws and regulations into practical information that families can easily digest and use... This book is a must read for families and advocacy leaders. Matt Cohen hits a homerun with this guide and clearly establishes why he has become a highly regarded national authority on special education law, advocacy strategies, and special education policy. (NAMI Beginnings: National Alliance on Mental Illness) A Guide to Special Education Advocacy: What Parents, Clinicians and Advocates Need to Know covers disability law and its complexities and tells parents how to ensure a child with a disability receives education they are legally entitled to. From understanding services and the evaluation and re-evaluation process to gain them to different kinds of environments, this is packed with specific and detailed observations key to any special education library catering to professionals. (The Midwest Book Review)

VERY helpful book. I don't often write reviews on books, but this book merits a review. I came across this book by chance on the new books shelf at my local library. It has detailed up-to-date information on the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA and the IDEA 2006 regulations. This book should be very helpful to any parent trying to advocate for their child. It should also be helpful to special education teachers and administrators because of the detailed information on federal regulations regarding IDEA and Section 504, with specific CFR citations. The book also contains a comparison of Section

504 plans versus IDEA 2004. It dispels the idea that Section 504 is only applicable to students with health issues, and explains when one is preferable to the other. "Each law has advantages for children with disabilities depending on the circumstances of the child, the school, and the particular issue. At the most general level, IDEA is more likely to be of use to children who require a greater intensity of specialized instructional services and/or related services, who have more complex needs, and/or when there is a greater need for specificity in planning for the child, protecting the child's procedural rights, or holding the school accountable regarding issues of implementation. By contrast, Section 504 is typically of greater utility if the child's needs are less complex, if the child has a disability that does not qualify him or her for special education, or when the child needs only accommodations, as opposed to special education" (p. 236).

After reading this and then meeting with Matt Cohen to speak about inclusive education in Illinois, I realized how valuable a resource this book and Mr. Cohen are to equality in education. This book can be used as a tool for parents, researchers, attorneys, legislators, and anyone else interested to help navigate the education system for children with disabilities. It gives the ups and downs and honest advice for giving each child the best education to help reach their highest potential.

This book is written in an easy reading format. It can be very useful to education practitioners and also parents of special education students. It explains everything very easily. When you finish reading the book you can have a better understanding about IDEA, and Rehabilitation Act section 504. This is a valuable book, I recommended 100%.

This is an excellent book. I'm an educator and advocate. It's written in an easy to read format. The information will help parents, educators, advocates, and other related professionals. I'd like to see Mr. Cohen write an updated version including the more current changes in education. Especially related to Common Core and other changes in special education law.

As a pediatric OT, I work with children with disabilities birth - about 10. I have read many books on advocacy, and this is by far the best I have read. In fact, I purchased it for each of the families I see. It is written for providers and parents, with excellent strategies for meetings/letters/etc. The best advocacy book out there - and very updated!!!

Great Resource. So glad my attorney recommended this to me.

Wonderful, well written and informative read that will help parents wade through the special education process. Worth the money as you keep referring back to different chapters.

This book is a helpful resource. It helped me understand a lot more about special education law. It was interesting and enjoyable to read. I have it on my shelf now to refer to when I need it.

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