Support for Parents of Children with Special Needs
Books and Resources

Raising a child with a disability, special healthcare or mental health needs can be a complex and demanding job. Many parents find experiences and stories from others who face similar challenges to be enormously helpful.

There are many resources to support parents of children with special needs. Many of these resources may be available at your local library or are available online.

Books

**A Cup of Comfort for Parents of Children with Special Needs**
Colleen Sell, 2009.
A collection of inspirational stories for those who care for children with special needs.

**A Different Kind of Perfect: Writings by Parents on Raising a Child with Special Needs**
A collection of over 50 short essays written by parents on raising a child with special needs. Offers comfort, consolation and wisdom from parents who share their experiences.

**Breakthrough Parenting for Children with Special Needs**
Judy Winter, 2006.
Offers support for letting go of some dreams and facing and resolving grief. Also includes information on accessing early intervention services, guidelines for working with professionals and understanding the law and inclusion.

**Coping with Your Child’s Chronic Illness**
A practical guide for parents who need support, practical and effective ideas and resources for dealing with their child’s chronic illness. Provides information on communication with healthcare providers, learning to be your child’s advocate, talking with your child about their illness, self-care and working with your child’s school.

**Different Dads**
Jill Harrison (editor), 2007.
A collection of father’s stories of parenting children with disabilities. The testimonies written by fathers represent a broad spectrum of experiences including single fathers and married adoptive fathers.

**Extreme Parenting: Parenting your Child with a Chronic Illness**
Sharon Dempsey, 2008.
A guide for parents of children with long-term illness. Covers key strategies to help parents cope with the difficulties of dealing with their child’s illness and includes practical advice, models of exploration and action lists.

To Learn More
• Social Work
  206-987-2760
• Family Resource Center
  206-987-2201
• Ask your child’s healthcare provider
• seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services
• In the hospital, ask your nurse.
• From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
Going Solo While Raising Children with Disabilities  
Laura Marshak, 2015.  
Practical tips and information for solo parents of children with special needs.

My Baby Rides the Short Bus  
Yantra Bertelli, Jennifer Silverman & Sarah Talbot, editors.  
True-life tales by mothers and fathers raising kids with special needs. It provides a dose of both laughter and reality.

More Than a Mom  
Judy Winter, 2006.  
Practical and tried tips for living a full and balanced life when your child has special needs (a Mom’s Choice Awards recipient). Addresses staying healthy, organization, marriage, work options, finding specialized childcare and advocating for your child. Written with input from over 500 mothers.

Parenting Your Complex Child  
Peggy Lou Morgan, 2006.  
Help for parents who want to learn how to become a powerful advocate for children with autism, Down syndrome, PDD, bi-polar or other special needs. Provides documentation and tracking tools, information on how to create routines to support your child's needs and communicating their needs to professionals. Includes planning care for your child when you no longer can.

The Resilient Family  
Shows readers how to identify the strengths that already exist in your family and use them to enable your family to flourish, even in the face of burdens that feel overwhelming.

Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid  
The authors share their frustrations, sadness and stigmas they face as parents of children with special needs (one child has Asperger's Syndrome, the other has bipolar disorder).

The Elephant in the Playroom: Ordinary Parents Write Intimately and Honestly About Raising Kids with Special Needs  
A wide variety of stories from parents who have children with ADD/ADHD, sensory disorders, depression, autism and physical and learning disabilities. Addresses everything from deciding to medicate a child to learning how to care for oneself.

Articles

You Are Not Alone  
For parents who have recently learned that their child is developmentally delayed or has a disability. Addresses common reactions and emotions parents have and offers practical tips for parents to help themselves thru the period of trauma and change. parentcenterhub.org/repository/notalones

parentcenterhub.org/repository/notalone
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The Unplanned Journey: When You Learn Your Child Has a Disability

Included in this article are discussions of adjusting to the new life, accessing information and services, supporting the needs of the family, finding child care and working with professionals.
parentcenterhub.org/repository/journey/

Websites

**Washington Parent-to-Parent**
arcwa.org
1-800-821-5927
Provides information, resources, social and educational gatherings and supportive parent matching. Matches parents in one-to-one relationships with trained, experienced parents, based on similar diagnoses and family issues.

**Washington Father’s Network**
fathersnetwork.org
425-653-4286
Provides information, resources, annual conferences, regional dad’s groups. Connects men with other dads, resources, information and education, plus opportunities for “all family” celebrations.

**Open Doors for Multicultural Families**
multiculturalfamilies.org
253-216-4479
Provides culturally and linguistically relevant information, services, and programming to culturally and linguistically diverse families of persons with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

**Informing Families**
ingformingfamilies.org
Informing Families is a resource provided by the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council, in partnership with the Developmental Disabilities Administration. They offer news and information to individuals and families that empowers them to be active participants in planning and building a network of support and opportunities.

Podcasts

**Once Upon A Gene Podcast**
A podcast that explores the world of raising children with disabilities and rare genetic disorders.

Disclaimer: The inclusion of any website link, or resource accessed through a link, does not imply endorsement by Seattle Children’s. Please seek the advice of your child’s healthcare provider before you act or rely upon any information from these resources.

Seattle Children’s offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children’s will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201. This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children’s. However, your child’s needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child’s healthcare provider.
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