

LEGAL AID SOCIETY

OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE AND THE CUMBERLANDS

Information for Release

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LEGAL AID SOCIETY OFFERS FREE INFORMATION TO PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Special education guide outlines rights and responsibilities of parents and schools.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. Sept. 14, 2007 – The Legal Aid Society has just released a new guide for parents of children who get or need special education services in Tennessee. The booklet, What you need to know about Special Education, is free. It tells parents how to place a child in a special education program and how to work with schools to set up an appropriate program.

The Tennessee Department of Education reports that more than 120,000 students between the ages of 3 and 21 receive special education help. We wish we could give every parent one-on-one advice and representation, but our booklet is our next best option” Legal Aid Director Gary Housepian explained. “If parents can get good information in the early stages, then everyone will have a better understanding of what the system can and should do to meet the needs of students with disabilities.”

Special education advocate Rachel Moses added, “Our goal with this and all our booklets is to help people help themselves. Especially in the complex and emotionally-charged field of special education, parents can work much more effectively with schools when they know both their rights and their responsibilities.” Ms. Moses is a staff attorney in the Legal Aid Society’s Cookeville office.

The Legal Aid Society gives free legal aid to people who have nowhere else to turn. It has offices in Nashville, Gallatin, Clarksville, Murfreesboro, Columbia, Tullahoma, Cookeville and Oak Ridge.

For a free copy of the booklet or more information about legal aid, call toll-free at 800-238-1443. Legal Aid’s web site – www.las.org -- has a copy of the booklet and other information that is helpful to low-income families.

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