As a parent, you are an expert when it comes to understanding your child. You may, however, appreciate assistance in determining how to help your child succeed in school.

**What is the first step to effective communication with your child’s school?**

*Start closest to the child*—Discuss your concerns about your child’s learning with your child’s teacher, followed by the counselor, and/or the principal.

- **Start the conversation with what you know:**
  - My child is having difficulty in school…
  - I am concerned about my child’s ability to make friends…
  - I am worried about my child’s ability to succeed in school next year…

- **Ask questions:**
  - Does the school staff see some of the same issues?
  - What progress is my child making toward learning?

- **Discuss options:**
  - Share your proposed solution(s) to the problem.
  - Work with school staff to determine the next step.
  - Work collaboratively to meet the needs of your child.

**Additional Information**

The Bureau of Special Education also publishes a *Pennsylvania Parent Guide to Special Education for School Age Children*, which provides an overview of the special education process. Visit [www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net) for the Guide, special education forms, and other useful information, or call 800-360-7282 (Harrisburg).

Regional Advocacy Organization for Eastern and South Central Pennsylvania:

**Parent Education Network (PEN)**

- 717-600-0100 (V/TTY)
- 800-522-8527 (V/TTY)
- 800-441-5028 (Spanish in PA)
- [www.parentednet.org](http://www.parentednet.org)

To get more information about your rights or how to resolve disputes with your school district, including how to request a hearing, contact the Bureau of Special Education’s ConsultLine at 800-879-2301.