



Parent Advisory Council Member Application

Submission Deadline: Monday, September 19, 2016 by 5 pm EST

About the Family Connection of South Carolina Parent and Youth Advisory Council

Family Connection of South Carolina is the state's Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) with the responsibility of educating, training, and providing parents of children with disabilities and youth/young adults with disabilities the knowledge, skills, and capacity to be effective advocates and self-advocates. Our work focuses on key areas: Healthcare, Education, Professional Development, Advocacy and Parent Support.

Our Education Connection team focuses on empowering families to become more confident and effective advocates for their children. Our goal is to help parents understand the importance of building a collaborative relationship, becoming more knowledgeable in navigating the special education system and being active participants in their child's education.

Able SC has a key role in partnering with Family Connection of SC's work as the PTI. A goal of the PTI is for youth with disabilities to become effective self advocates. As a Center for Independent Living (CIL), Able SC is focused on the concept of self-empowerment and empowering youth with disabilities to live active, self-determined lives. Able SC works to empower people with disabilities to live active, self-determined lives: advocacy, service and support.

With the support of Able SC, Family Connection is seeking individuals who would like to serve on our Parent & Youth Advisory Council (PYAC). The PYAC will have the responsibility of providing input into organizational policies, educational materials, bringing issues of concerns to the attention of the Executive Director of FCSC and leadership team.

This Parent and Youth Advisory Council aims to be a collaborative effort for parents of children/youth with disabilities (ages 0-26) AND young adults (ages 18-26) with any type of disability to provide perspective and suggestions for ages 0-26 to trainings, education, issues, policies, etc. related to the disability population and activities geared towards this population across South Carolina. An additional goal of the Parent and Youth Advisory Council will be to create a "how to" webinar outlining and detailing a way to create a sustainable and collaborative Parent and Youth Advisory Council and bridge the gap between parent support services and consumer/young adult support services.

The Advisory Council will be made up of 8-10 Council Members. 4-5 will be parents of children/youth with disabilities and 4-5 will be young adults between the ages of 18-26 with disabilities. The goal of this Advisory Council is to create a safe space for parents and young adults to communicate their perspectives and opinions related to transition for young adults with disabilities and resources available within their communities. Due to this goal, only one member of each nuclear family will be permitted to

serve on the Advisory Council. This means that a parent and their young adult would not be able to serve on the Advisory Council within the same membership year.

The Parent and Youth Advisory Council will be a diverse mix of races, genders, ethnicities, and locations across South Carolina and will reflect a variety of disabilities and perspectives. Advisory Council membership term will run from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

Eligibility Criteria

1. **To be eligible to serve on the Parent and Youth Advisory Council, prospective members must meet all of the following criteria:**
 - a) Be a parent of a child/youth with a disability
 - b) Commitment to attending all Quarterly Meetings (either in-person in Columbia, SC or via phone conference call option)
 - a. Quarter 1: Monday, October 10, 2016 from 6-8 pm
 - b. Quarter 2: Saturday, January 21, 2017 from 1-3 pm
 - c. Quarter 3: Monday, April 10, 2017 from 6-8 pm
 - d. Quarter 4: Saturday, July 22, 2017 from 1-3 pm
 - c) Demonstrate leadership and advocacy skills in school, employment, or within the community
 - a. This can be in the form of previous Board, Coalition, or Committee experience
 - b. An applicant who has been through a leadership training program is preferred: Community Leadership Academy (CLA) or Partners in Policymaking are two examples of leadership programs
 - c. If an applicant has not been through a leadership training program, they must have a willingness to try and attend one to build up their skill sets for serving on the Advisory Council
 - d) Reside in South Carolina.
 - e) Have a basic understanding of the Independent Living Philosophy and Movement.
2. **Advisory Council Membership Applications must be completed fully and returned via email or mail (postmarked no later than Monday, September 19, 2016). Applicants will receive an email confirming that their application materials were received**
 - a. Applications for parents can be returned to Shelley Nowicki, PTI Manager with Family Connection of South Carolina at snowicki@familyconnectionsc.org or via mail to Family Connection of South Carolina, Attn: Shelley Nowicki, 1800 St. Julian Place, Suite 104, Columbia, SC 29204
3. **Applicants must answer ALL questions in order for their application to be considered.**
 - a. Provide one non-family member reference

4. All Advisory Council applicants will be notified by a phone call and letter whether they are selected to serve on the Parent and Youth Advisory Council.

General Information

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Gender: _____ Race/Ethnicity (Optional): _____

Preferred Method of Contact: ____ Email ____ Phone ____ Mail ____ Other: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mailing Address (if different from above):

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Alt Phone Number: _____

What accommodation(s), if any, do you need to participate in Quarterly Parent and Youth Advisory Council Meetings (examples: personal care assistant, sign language interpreter, communication device, Braille, large print, or other accommodations you receive in school or place of employment)?

About You

Please respond to the following questions. Please complete in no more than 10 sentences per question, and attach to the application. You may attach a separate sheet of paper if needed.

1. Why do you want to become a member of the Parent and Youth Advisory Council? What strengths could you offer as an Advisory Council member?
2. What does disability mean to you? Do you think people with disabilities can be involved and integrated in their communities? Why or why not?
3. What are three words you would use to describe yourself? Include explanations for why you chose each word.
4. Describe your involvement in your school, employment, and/or community over the last year. Consider any activities you have participated in.

Please make sure that you have responded to **all** the parts of each question.

Submission Instructions

In order to be considered for membership on the Parent and Youth Advisory Council, you must have portions of this application filled out in entirety and submitted by **Monday, September 19, 2016 at 5 pm EST.**

1. Completed Application. Please respond to **ALL** questions. If needed, you may respond to any questions on a separate paper. **Applications will not be considered until the applicant submits all necessary materials.**

There are three ways to submit this application

FAX

1. Applicants can submit **parent applications** to Family Connection of South Carolina, Attention: Shelley Nowicki at 1-866-420-4082.

EMAIL

1. Applicants can email this completed application, along with their letters of recommendation (if you would like to submit letters of recommendation - this is optional) **for parents** to Shelley Nowicki at snowicki@familyconnectionsc.org.

POSTAL MAIL

1. **ALL Applicants** can mail their complete application (postmarked NO LATER than Monday, September 19, 2016), along with their optional letters of recommendation to:

Family Connection of South Carolina
Attn: Shelley Nowicki
1800 St. Julian Place, Suite 104, Columbia, SC 29204

If you have any questions, please contact Shelley Nowicki at snowicki@familyconnectionsc.org or 803-252-0914 (Voice), 1-800-578-8750 (Toll Free).