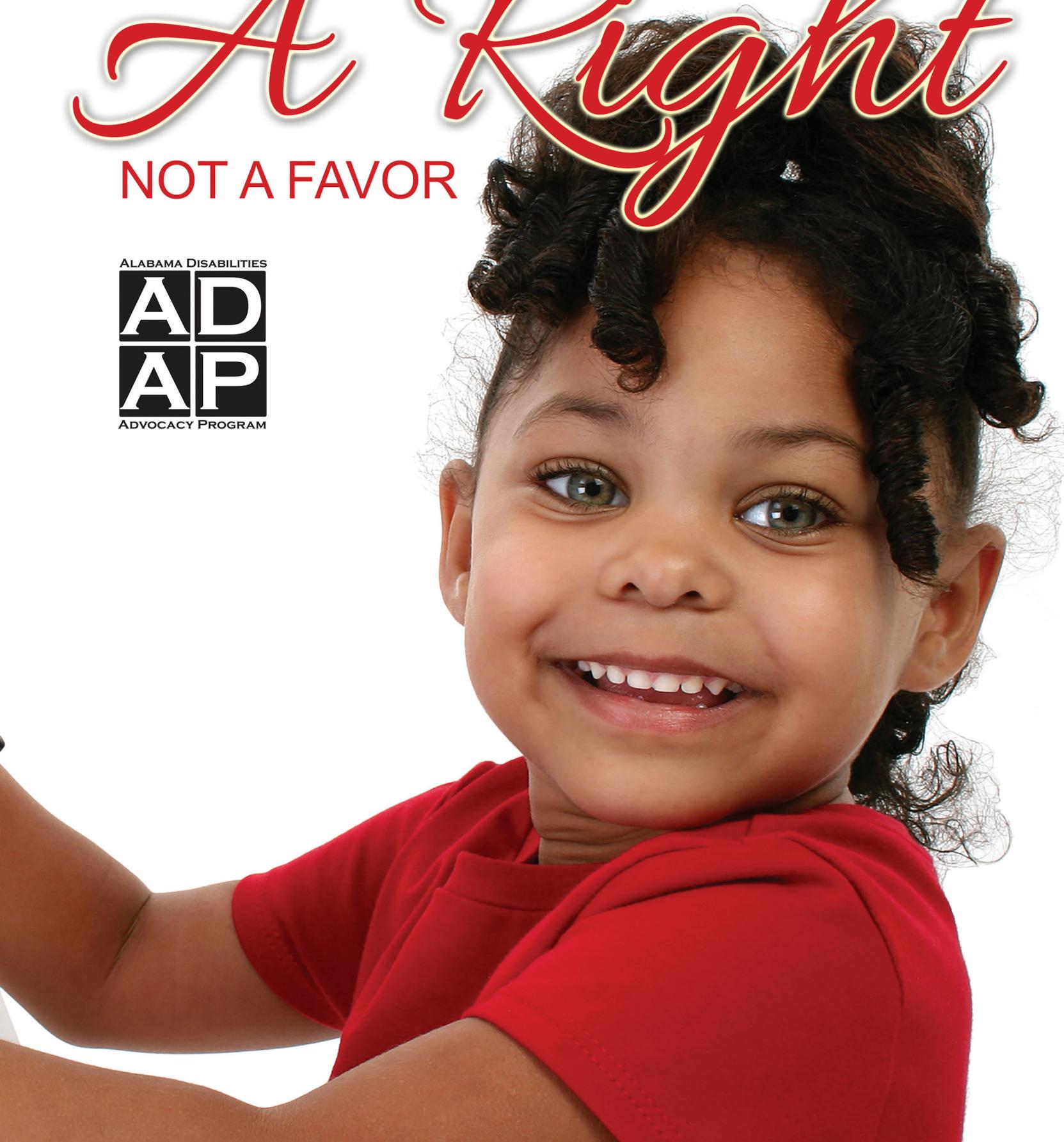
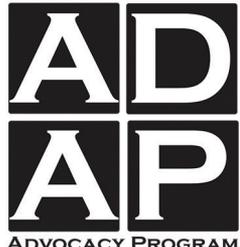


SPECIAL EDUCATION IN ALABAMA

A Right

NOT A FAVOR

ALABAMA DISABILITIES



A Right Not A Favor

This book was printed with funds provided generously under a grant from the Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities (ACDD). The views, opinions and content of this publication are ADAP's and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions or policies of the ACDD.



July 2014
Alabama Disabilities
Advocacy Program

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This manual provides information about special education law. However, legal information is not the same as legal advice - the application of law to an individual child's specific circumstances. ADAP recommends you consult a lawyer to ensure this information, and your interpretation of it, is appropriate to your particular situation.

**Alabama Disabilities
Advocacy Program**

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The Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP) is part of the nationwide federally funded protection and advocacy (P&A) system. ADAP provides legal advocacy services to Alabamians with disabilities to protect, promote, and expand their rights. ADAP's vision is one of a society where persons with disabilities are valued, exercise self-determination through meaningful choices, and have equality of opportunity. ADAP's advocacy efforts are governed by these values:

- Persons with disabilities should have the same opportunity to participate in the community as persons without disabilities.
- Persons with disabilities have the right to reasonable accommodations needed for full participation in their communities.
- Persons with disabilities have the right to be afforded meaningful choices and to make informed decisions.

ADAP provides information and referral services, public education programs, and individual case advocacy services.

Information and Referral

Anyone may call ADAP for information and referral services related to disability legal issues.

Education and Training

Individuals or groups may request disability rights and advocacy training. Requests are considered in light of ADAP's annual priorities and its resources for public education programming.

Individual Case Advocacy

ADAP provides individual case advocacy services according to the agency's priorities and case selection criteria.



Introduction

Children with disabilities in Alabama have a legal right to free and appropriate programs of special education and related services. State and federal law require teachers and school administrators to work together with parents to create individualized education programs to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities. Thus, when schools provide special education, they do so not out of kindness, but because children with disabilities are entitled by law to these services. In other words, **SPECIAL EDUCATION IS A RIGHT, NOT A FAVOR.**

The purpose of this manual is to help parents understand their children's rights to such services, learn how to advocate for those rights, and understand how best to partner with school personnel, so that when their children graduate from school, they are prepared to lead productive and independent adult lives, to the maximum extent possible.

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