

"I was very worried about my child's first IEP, but my peer support partner set me at ease and gave me helpful hints."

—ANONYMOUS

# Peer Support Partner Program

Unique one-to-one support from someone who has been there...



## Request a Match with a Peer Support Partner

To be matched with a peer support partner, fill out an application online at [www.lanterman.org/psm](http://www.lanterman.org/psm).

If you do not have Internet access, contact Lanterman's Koch ♦ Young Resource Center at 213.252.5600 or [kyrc@lanterman.org](mailto:kyrc@lanterman.org) for more information about the program and to request a match with a partner.

To ensure the best possible match between a family and a peer support partner, matches are made on an individual basis by the Regional Center's family support specialist based on the information provided by the family in need.

A match between a family and a partner can range from one-time contact to more long-term support. Families can meet in person or address their needs online or via the phone.

Families can request a match whenever they feel the need to talk to another family on an individual basis.



Partners in Lifelong Support



3303 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 700  
Los Angeles, California 90010  
213.383.1300 • Fax: 213.383.6526  
E-mail: [kyrc@lanterman.org](mailto:kyrc@lanterman.org)  
[www.lanterman.org](http://www.lanterman.org)



“It’s made all the difference in the world to be able to talk to someone who understands the challenges and feelings I experience every day, who isn’t judgmental, to know that I’m not the only one, and that I’m not alone.”

—UNKNOWN



**T**he Peer Support Partner Program was established about 20 years ago and compliments Lanterman’s support groups by providing families with the opportunity to be matched one-to-one with a peer. The peer partner is someone who can enhance the guidance, experience and information related to developmental disabilities provided by the Center’s service coordinators.

The partnership between the Regional Center and peer support partners allows the Regional Center to focus on coordinating programs and services for clients, while peer families assist with emotional support and comfort.

No matter the need, age or disability, there is someone who understands and shares the experience of having a family member with a developmental disability, and is able to provide the unique support that only a person who has “been there” can.



## About Our Peer Support Partners

Peer support partners are Lanterman families who volunteer to be specially trained to serve as a link between families and the Regional Center, and to work in partnership with other families in meeting support, information and advocacy needs.

They have experienced the joys and challenges of raising a child with special needs and can help other families, especially those new to the regional center system, understand the respective roles and responsibilities of the Regional Center, families and other agencies.

They can also provide information about resources that can make families more effective advocates for their sons and daughters, enabling them to make informed choices and decisions.

Peer partners represent multiple languages and have experience with disabilities throughout the lifetime. They have experience with:

- ❖ the birth to 3 period, including extreme prematurity;
- ❖ a variety of developmental disabilities, including rare disorders;
- ❖ the transition into the school system, including providing support with preparing for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting and advocacy assistance during the meeting; and
- ❖ the transition to adulthood, including postsecondary education and employment.