

# Help is Here: People – Family Support

*Sometimes strength comes in knowing you are not alone.*

"Having a child with a disability is a life-altering experience... but with the support of another parent we begin to see through the cracks and find joy in places we never could have imagined. Our journey continues, but this time we feel we will survive because we know another parent who has." - Unknown



Arc GMC board members and volunteers have helped with both of the websites below. We believe that information and resources shared on these sites can benefit all families: new and seasoned, alike. There is something for everyone!



## Navigate Life Texas

*Resources for kids with disabilities and special health care needs*

The **Navigate Life Texas** [website](#) is especially for families and parents of children with disabilities or special health-care needs and is designed to offer support, inspiration, resources, and links to services available. You will find blog posts, parent groups, videos and much more!



**PARENT  
COMPANION**  
FIRST FIVE YEARS

The **Parent Companion** [website](#) serves as a guide for Texas parents and caregivers of children with diagnosed or suspected disabilities from birth through 5 years of age.

### PARENT-TO-PARENT SUPPORT

[Texas Parent-to-Parent](#) provides support, caring connections, information and education to families who have a child with a disability or chronic health care needs.

## SIBLING SUPPORT PROGRAMS, SibShops & ONLINE CONNECTIONS

### ONLINE CONNECTIONS

- [SibNet](#) is a warm, thoughtful, and informative community where adult brothers and sisters from around the world share information and discuss issues of common interest.
- [SibTeen](#) is Facebook group where teenage sibs of people with disabilities can connect with others who get it. It's a fun and thoughtful group where members share unique concerns, joys, frustrations, and information with others who truly understand!
- [Sib20](#) is a Facebook group where twenty-something sibs of people with disabilities connect with others who “get it.” It’s sibling support from a young adult perspective.

### SIBSHOPS

SibShops provide young brothers and sisters of siblings with a disability peer support and information in a lively, recreational setting. Below is a list of Sibshops in the DFW area.

- Sibshops are offered as part of the [Cook Children’s Sib2Sib™](#) program and is designed to serve siblings of patients living with chronic illness or a life changing injury.
- Families for Effective Autism Treatment - North Texas ([FEAT-NT](#)) Sibshops are designed for young children of siblings with autism and other related disabilities.
- [H.E.R.O.E.S.](#) offers SibShops to children and teens of siblings living with disability or chronic health care needs.

### SIBLING SUPPORT PROGRAMS

- The [Sibling Leadership Network](#) provides siblings of individuals with disabilities the information, support and tools to advocate with their brothers and sisters and to promote the issues important to them and their entire families.
- The [Sibling Support Project](#) is a national program dedicated to the life-long and ever-changing concerns of millions of brothers and sisters of individuals with chronic health, developmental, and mental health support needs.
- The [Texas Sibling Leadership Network](#) is dedicated to advocacy efforts, resource-sharing, and support services for brothers and sisters who have siblings with disabilities.

*We get by with a little help from our friends.*

## **SONGS OF LOVE FOUNDATION**

The [Songs of Love Foundation](#) creates free, personalized, original songs to uplift children and teens facing tough medical, physical or emotional challenges. Each CD is professionally produced with lyrics containing the child's name and references to his or her favorite activities, things, people and pets. Songs are written and performed in any language in the musical style the child likes best.

## **SUPPORT FOR DADS**

Dads Appreciating Down Syndrome – [DADS](#) assists and supports, through fellowship and action, the fathers and families of individuals with Down syndrome.

[Dads of Disability](#): Stories for, by, and about fathers of children that experience disability Facebook group.

## **I NEED A BREAK: RESPITE RESOURCES**

Parenting is a tough job under the best of circumstances. Some moments, and even days may be stressful, while others are quite rewarding. As a result, parents may benefit from time away from the responsibilities of caring for a child. Whether you have just recently learned that your child will face lifelong challenges due to a disability or chronic illness, or you have been navigating this journey for a long while, remember you do not have to be a superhero or saint to be a good parent. Take a break – enjoy a night away. Respite can help strengthen your whole family and lead to a decrease in stress and an increase in your family's health and well being.

Many faith based organizations offer free respite nights for families of children with disabilities and their siblings. Click [here](#) to find a faith based respite program near you.

Some families prefer in-home respite care and have hired college students, friends and neighbors. Some have turned to online classified searches such as [Care.com](#), [Sittercity](#) or [urbansitter](#) while others have used respite providers from a private provider or their Local IDD Authority – [LIDDA](#).