

The Capital

ONLINE ▼



[Home](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Search](#) | [Contact](#) | [Buy the Paper](#) | [Archives](#) | [Photos](#) | [Lively Events](#) | [Local Directory](#)
[Classifieds](#) | [Top Stories](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [Police Beat](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Sports](#) | [Pets](#) | [Neighborhoods](#) | [Poll](#)



Lifestyle

[2004 Calendar](#)
[Lively Events calendar](#)
[2003-2004 School Calendar](#)

Special ed forum slated

By THERESA WINSLOW Staff Writer

The field of special education law can be confusing for parents trying to do the best for their children.

But Severna Park psychologist Joyce Cooper-Kahn is trying to change that by organizing a two-day forum at Anne Arundel Community College later this month.

Called "Special Education Law for Parents and Professionals: Understanding the Issues and Processes," the workshop includes discussions on tests and measurements, recent legislative changes and commonly used terms.

It will be conducted by Virginia-based attorney Peter Wright and his wife, therapist Pamela Wright, who are renowned in the field.

Ms. Cooper-Kahn said she wanted to hear them speak, and thought the simplest way was to bring them here.

"I figured, if I felt the need, there were others," said Ms. Cooper-Kahn, whose firm, Psychological Resource Associates, is co-sponsoring the workshop. "Because there are a lot of challenges within special education and regulations, I felt like I needed to stay current."

The other sponsors of the event are The Learning Network and AACC.

Kim Minnucci of Crofton, a parent of two special needs children, says the workshop is a great idea. She's in the process of earning a graduate degree in special education, which has helped her navigate the system, but she said other parents could benefit from the kind of information the Wrights will provide.

"It's difficult to interpret all the lingo," she said. "I think this will be excellent."

Diane Black, director of special education for county schools, agreed that special education law is a complex field. There are frequent updates and changes, she said.

"Any resource that parents have would be advantageous to them," she said.

Ms. Cooper-Kahn said that keeping up with all the rules and regulations can become a second job for parents. Her son has ADHD, so she has firsthand experience with the subject. Plus, she encounters special education issues in her practice.

Besides understanding the law, she said parents have to know what services are available for their children and how to get them.

The Wrights have been conducting these workshops for more than 10 years, ever since Mr. Wright successfully argued a special education case before the Supreme Court. They've also teamed to author three books in the field.

Mr. Wright said the workshop is broken up into two parts. The first familiarizes people with the law, and the second explains how to get services.

Mr. Wright contends that the laws really aren't that complicated; it's just that people need someone to demystify the concepts for them. He said a lot of people approach the subject with the mind-set that it's going to be difficult, and he feels it's his job to change that kind of thinking.

"So many individuals feel they can't read the law (and) understand it," he said. "(We provide) hands-on experience."

For more information on the workshop or to register, call 410-647-8840 or go to the Web site at www.wrightslaw.com. The workshop is scheduled for April 30 and May 1. The fee is \$250 for professionals, \$150 for parents, and \$290 for professionals who want to earn continuing education units.

twinslow@capitalgazette.com

[Next Lifestyle story](#)

[Lifestyle Page](#)

[Top Stories Page](#)

*Published April 22, 2004, [The Capital](#), Annapolis, Md.
Copyright © 2004 [The Capital](#), Annapolis, Md.*



[Top Stories](#) | [Search](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Archive](#) | [Local Directory](#) | [Buy the paper](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Poll](#)

[Index](#) | [Home](#) | [Sports](#) | [Police Beat](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [Lively Events](#) | [Neighborhoods](#) |

[Photos](#)

Copyright © 2004 *The Capital*