



THE CENTER FOR
Exceptional
FAMILIES



Parent Centers



- Were created in 1975 through the disability movement (later known as IDEA) to encourage, inform, and empower individuals and families
- Are funded by the US Department of Education. *Every* state and U.S. territory has a Parent Center (TCFEF is the only PTI in Arkansas)



A Parent Center...

- Serves families of children ages birth to 26 and works with all disabilities.
- Provides information about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to benefit individual's outcome.
- Offers a variety of services including one-to-one support and assistance, workshops, printed materials and publications, and social medias.



Parent Centers serve. . .

- **1.4 million** contacts with parents and professionals through trainings, presentations, calls, letters, home visits, and e-mails.
- **1.2 million** parents and professionals have received individual assistance from Parent Centers.
- **4.7 million** have been reached through print and electronic newsletters.



**Data from Parent Center Hub, Publication 2020





Parent Centers Help Families



Understand

their children's disabilities and educational needs.

Educate and Encourage

families regarding their child's educational rights and responsibilities and encourage them to get involved in the processes.

Train

parents to advocate for their children and provide training for educational professionals on specific disabilities.

Connect

families to community resources.

Assist

in resolving problems between families and schools.

Teach

parents how to effectively communicate with their school and related service providers.

Promote

high expectations and endless possibilities.



The Center for Exceptional Families

- Funded in 2015 as the Parent Center of Arkansas
- Is a statewide organization
- Is a 501c3 nonprofit operating on federal dollars and private donations
- All services are provided FREE of charge



Board of Directors

Elizabeth Band
*Board Chair
Jonesboro

Bethany Rice
Hot Springs

Ruth Eyres
Sherwood



Rachel Hritz
Little Rock

Lauren Preston
Jonesboro

Your Name Here!
Your City!

Kimberly Roberts
Jonesboro



Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

To improve educational opportunities for students with disabilities, including students transitioning to adult life beyond high school.



Vision Statement

To work in collaboration with families and their local school districts to promote an innovative approach to special education services for individuals with disabilities.

Advocacy with heart



Grant Goals

- **Provide**
knowledge regarding special education services.
- **Create**
opportunities for youth and young adults to become effective self-advocates.
- **Increase**
engagement between families and professional communities
- **Conduct**
outreach programs to underserved groups to increase their knowledge of programs and services available to them.



TCFEF Data



660

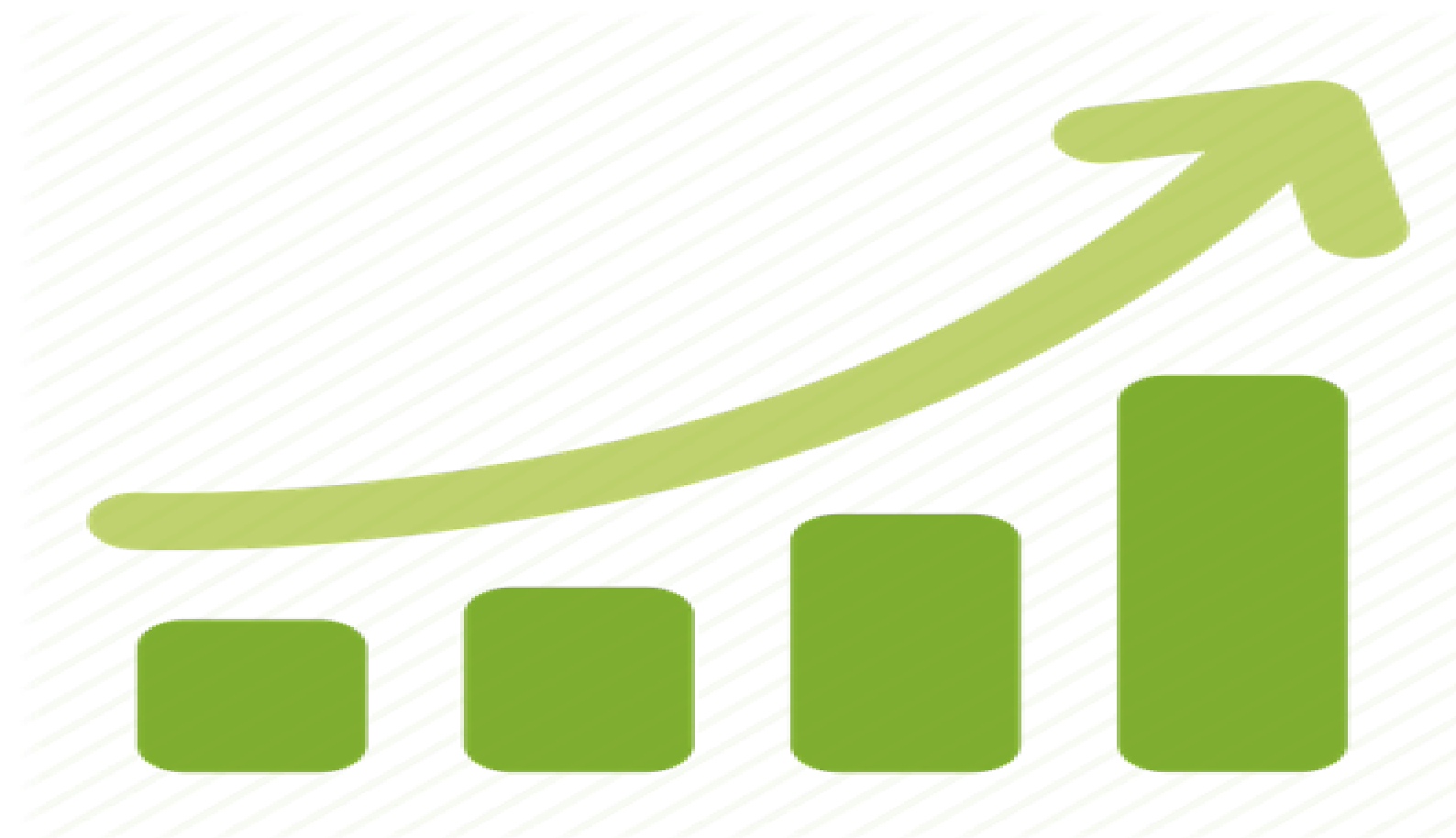
workshops conducted by TCFEF staff across the state

3,000

IEPs, IFSPs, FIEPs, 504s,
and meetings attended

15,100

phone calls received from
families and professionals



****Data collection: 2015-2020**



Our Workshops

- Early Intervening Services and Response to Intervention
- The Center for Exceptional Families
- 123's of the 504
- Transition to Kindergarten
- Effective Parent Advocacy
- Behavior Intervention Plans
- Autism
- Understanding the IEP
- Transition to Adulthood
- Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia
- Testing and Evaluation Procedures
- Parents Rights Under IDEA
- Lead Inspire Focus Excel (LIFE)
- Sensory Processing
- Info on Test Acronyms
- and Many More!



Workshop Comments

- “I love what TCFEF has to offer me both as a parent and a professional!”
- “I have and will continue to recommend TCFEF to people that have a need. I value the information and support I received from the Center.”
- “Our parent mentor is a valuable asset to our families! Always available to answer questions and respectfully help or find the answers.”
- “As a service provider I feel this workshop was not only beneficial to parents but also to service providers in providing families with the necessary resources to meet their needs.”



Shelby Knight

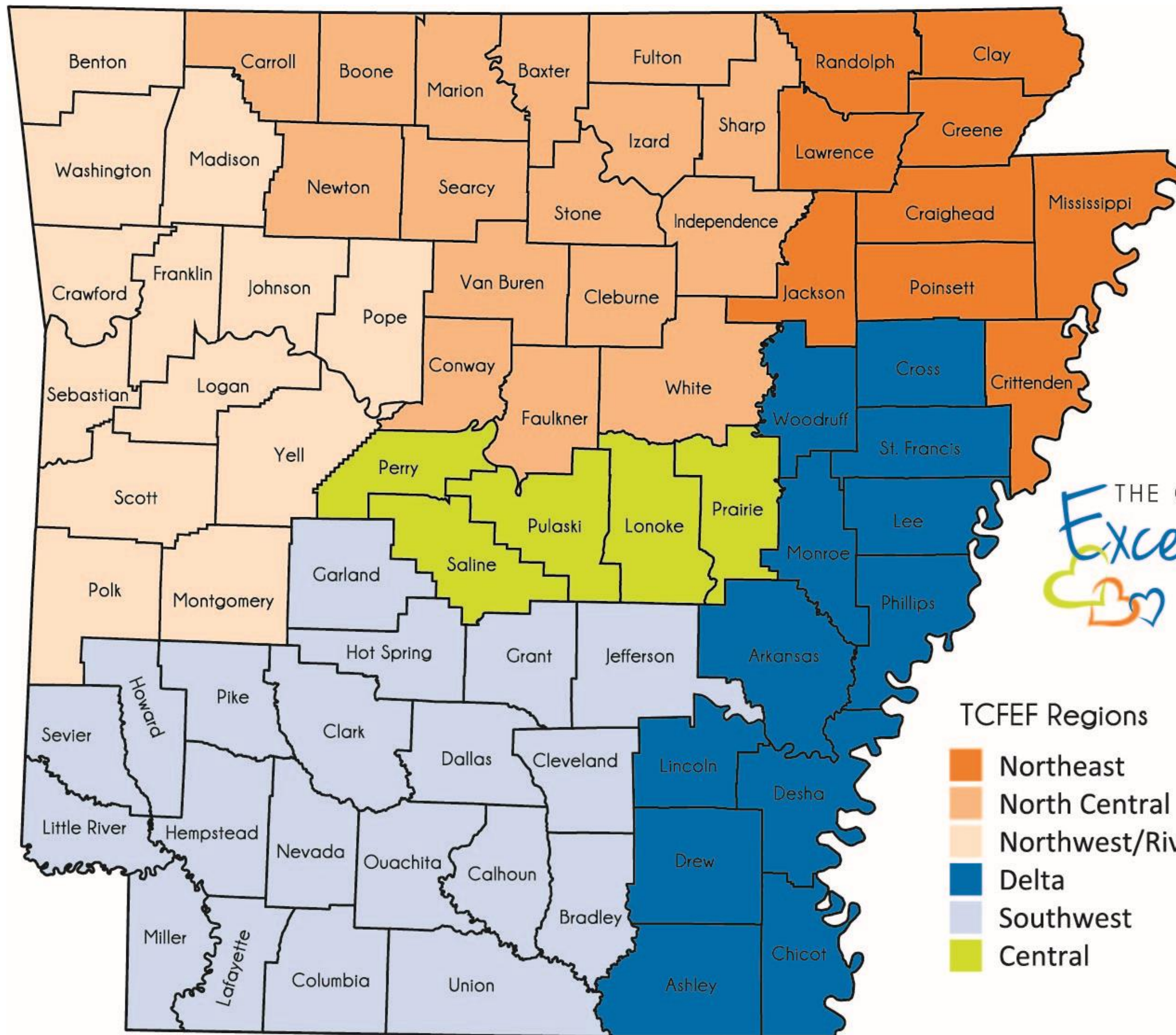


Executive Director

Shelby is the parent of an adult son with autism. Since his diagnosis, she has been active in all issues and projects involving children, youth and adults with disabilities.

Shelby has more than 30 years of experience in the advocacy field working with families to insure the best possible outcomes for children and adults with disabilities. She is the board chair of a group home in Jonesboro, served as an advisory board member of the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, she is a board member of a local early intervention program and is an advisory council member of the local branch of Project Search.





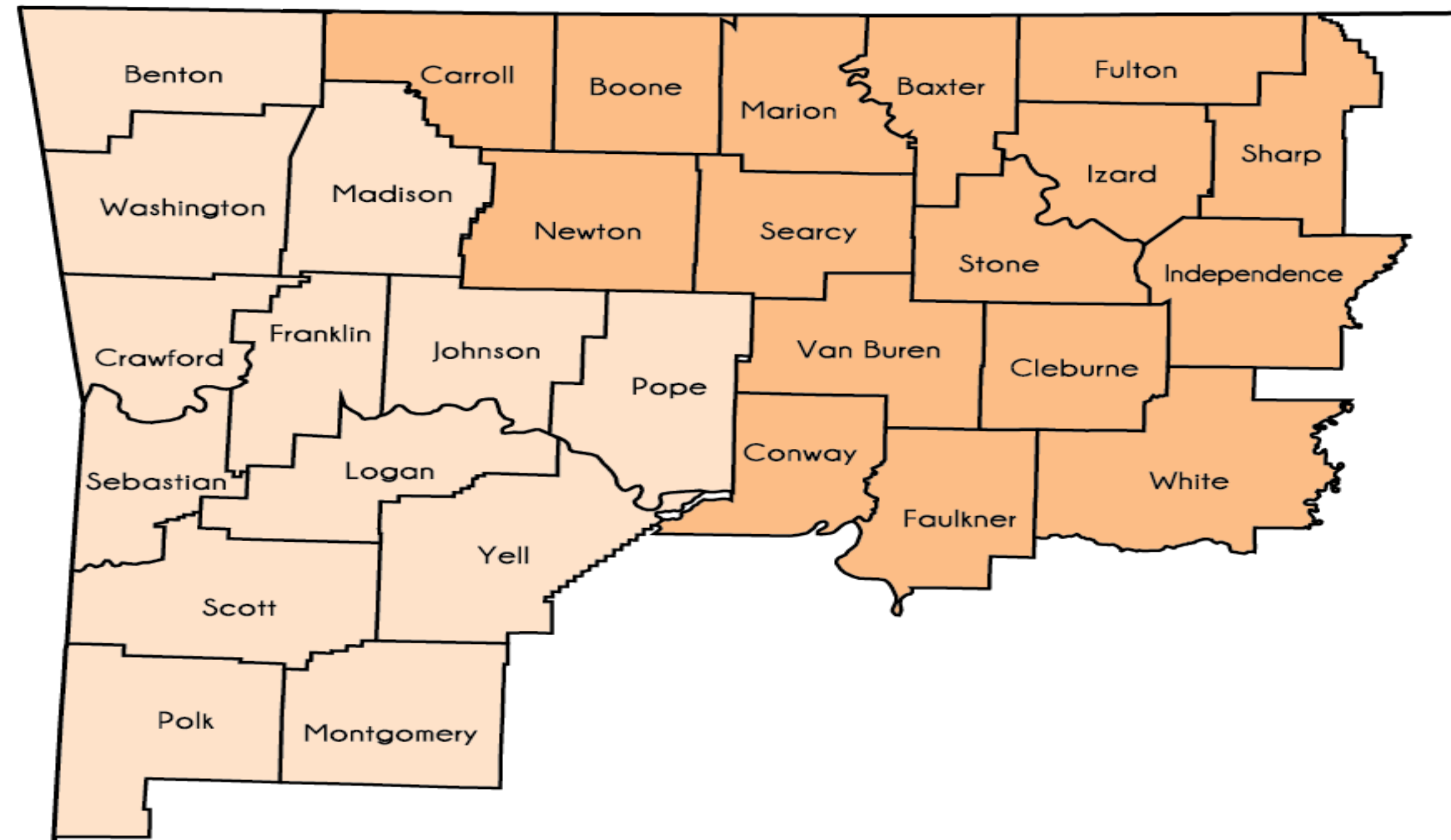
- TCFEF Regions
- Northeast
 - North Central
 - Northwest/River Valley
 - Delta
 - Southwest
 - Central



Loreena Hegenbart



**North Central, NW,
and River Valley
Parent Mentor**



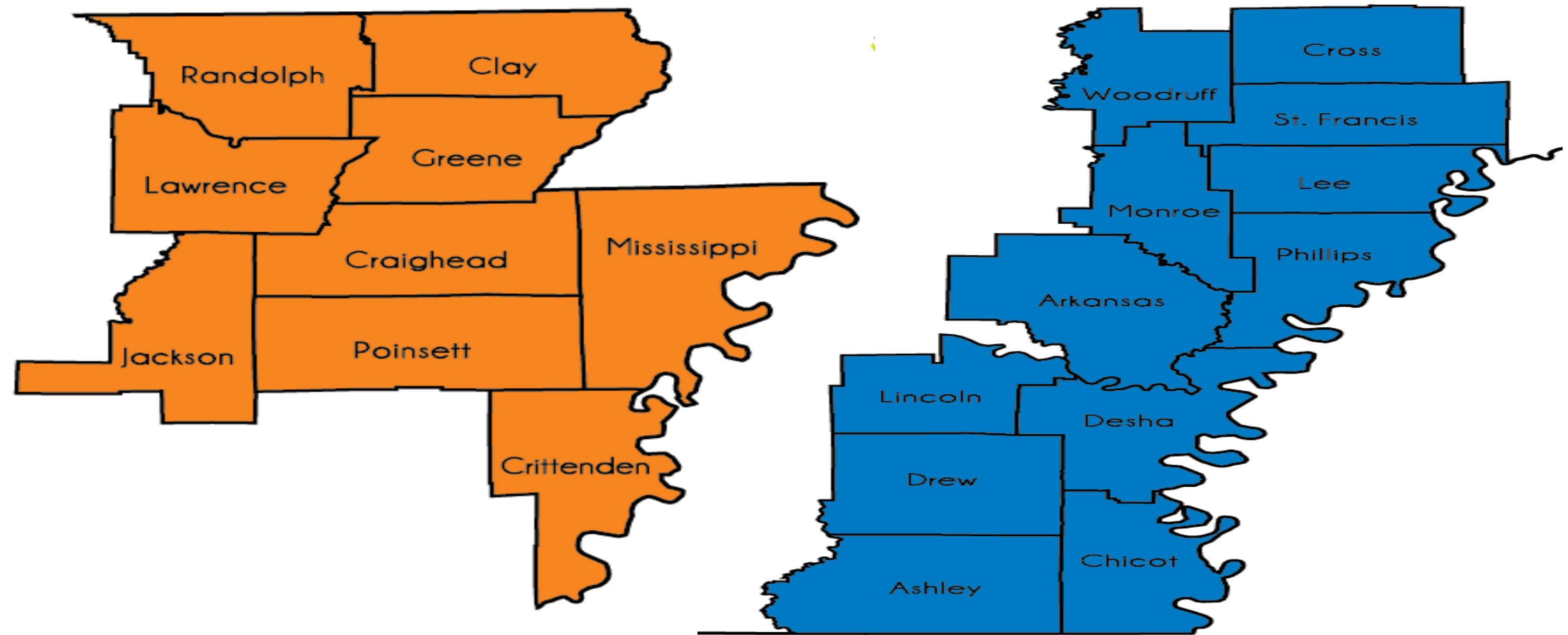
Loreena has knowledge and experience working with a wide spectrum of physical and mental disabilities. Having a sibling and one of her own children with a disability, her passion for obtaining the most inclusive education possible and improving her loved ones' quality of life became a career for advocacy work with families and children with disabilities. Loreena is the widow of a former military member and works with the Arkansas Council for Military Children on the Community Outreach Committee.



Teresa Hendrix



**NE and Delta
Parent Mentor &
Curriculum Specialist**



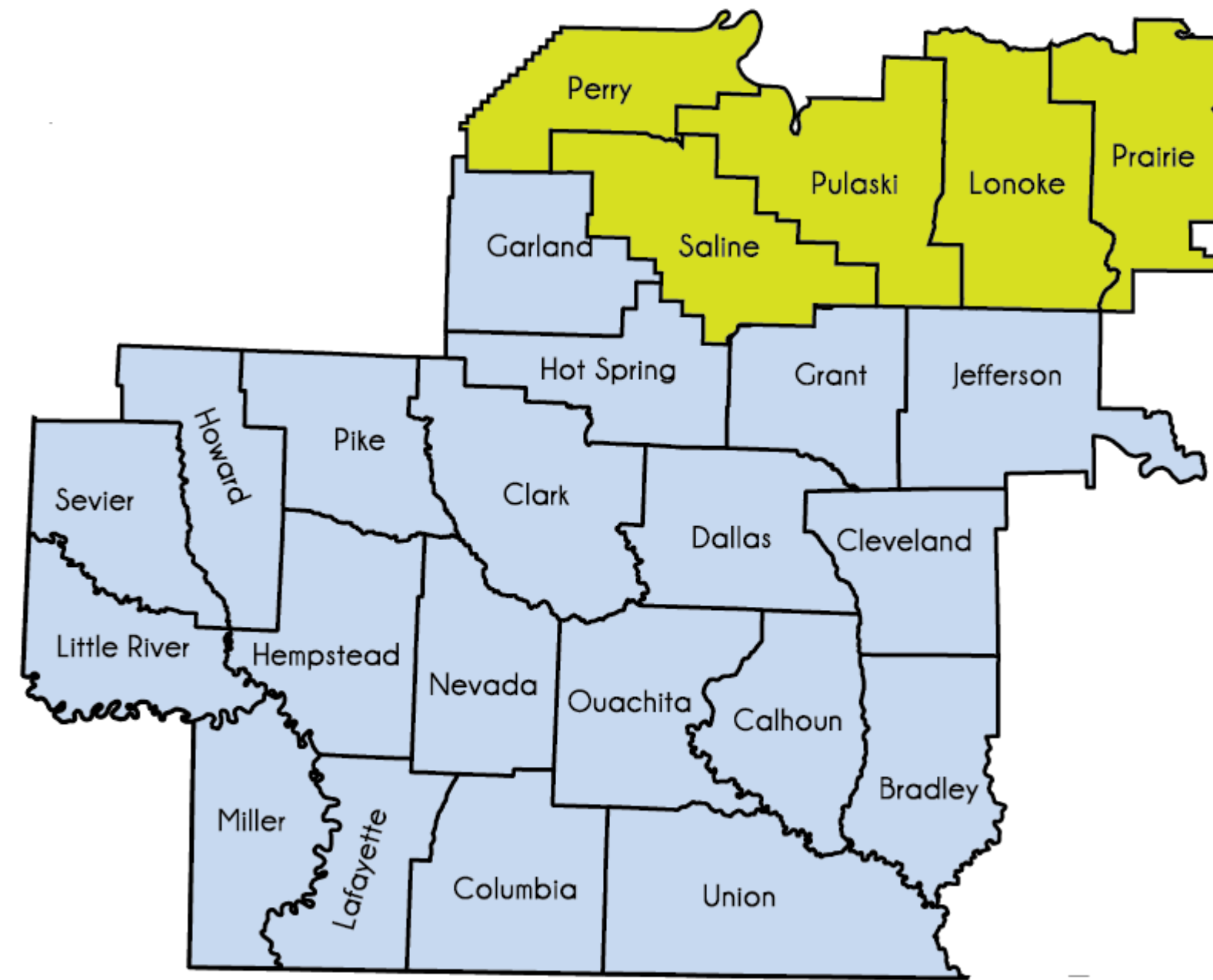
Teresa is a newly retired special educator. She spent the last 35 years in education as both a special education teacher and administrator. Teresa has a passion for special education that began as a small child visiting a Lions' Club nursery school for the blind in Memphis, TN. Having a close family member with a visual disability has allowed Teresa to see the unique challenges facing families and students with disabilities. Teresa also worked for Arkansas Transition Services for several years.



Karen Lutrick



**Central and SW
Parent Mentor**



Karen Lutrick has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology and a minor in Sociology. She has advocated for children and adults with disabilities for more than 20 years as an educational advocate and resource provider. She is the TCFEF lead on the multi-state vocational rehabilitation grant. Karen enjoys sharing information and empowering individuals to achieve equality. She has three adult children, the youngest an individual with a disability.



Michele Lappin



**Media/Technology
Coordinator &
Intakes**



A native of Louisiana, Michele Lappin comes to TCFEF with years of experience in advocating for people with disabilities, including time spent advocating for children and adults in the Louisiana legislative session. Michele is a wife and a mother of three children with varying disabilities including Autism. She has a Bachelor's degree in Education. Michele is an avid researcher and her focuses include behavioral and mental health, disability laws, LGBTQ+ issues, neuroscience and psychology.



Candie Corona



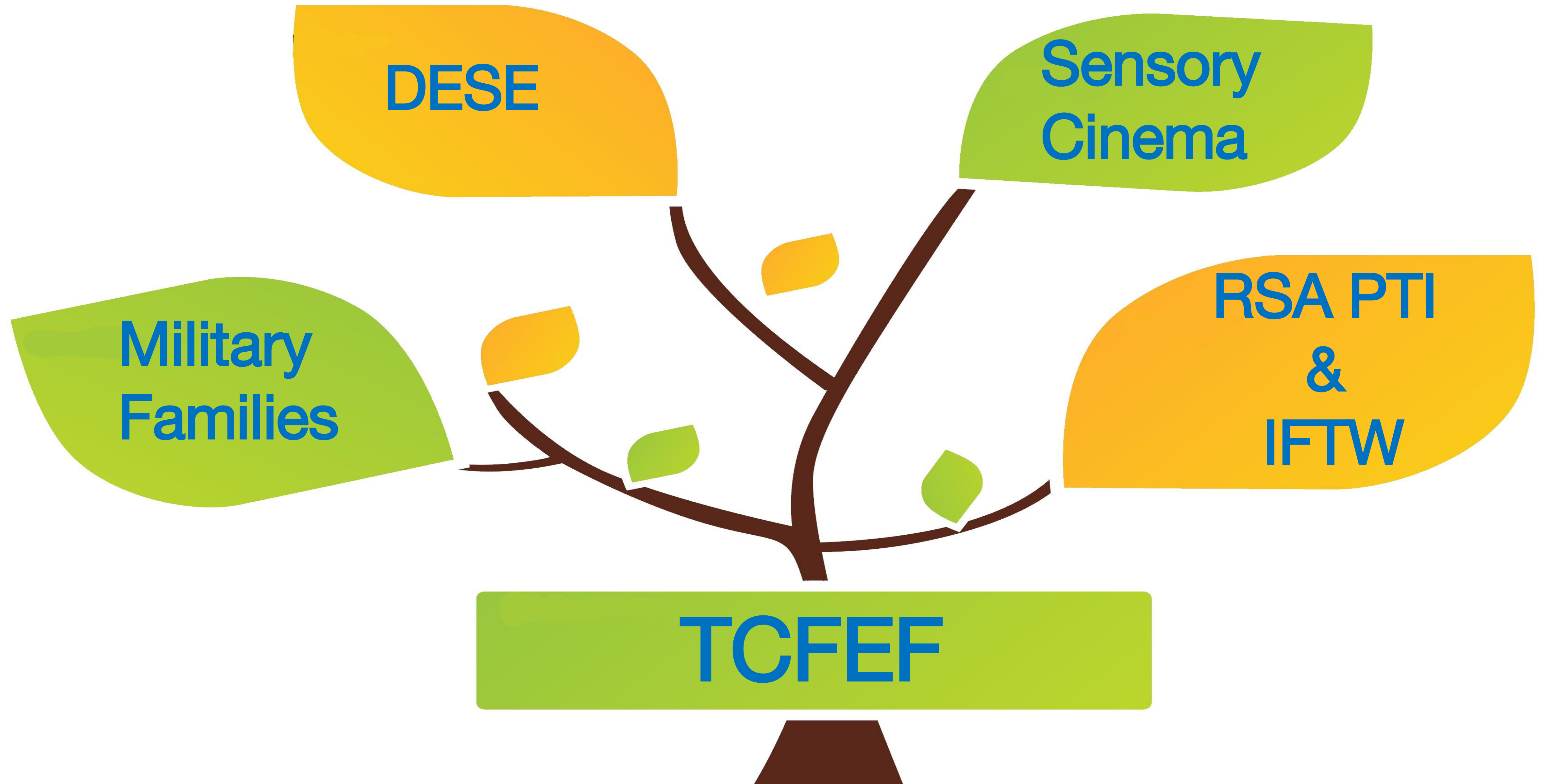
**Hispanic Outreach
Coordinator**



Candie is from Fort Worth, Texas and calls Conway, Arkansas her home. She graduated from UCA with a B.A. in Spanish, is a certified Family Support Specialist, and a Certified Education Interpreter. She has worked for non-profits for over a decade. She currently works at Choosing to Excel, where she connects young parents to support, resources, and education during their pregnancy and their child's early years. She is passionate about connecting Hispanic families to resources and support.



Our Projects and Collaborations



DESE



Arkansas
State Personnel Development Grant

RTI  **Arkansas**

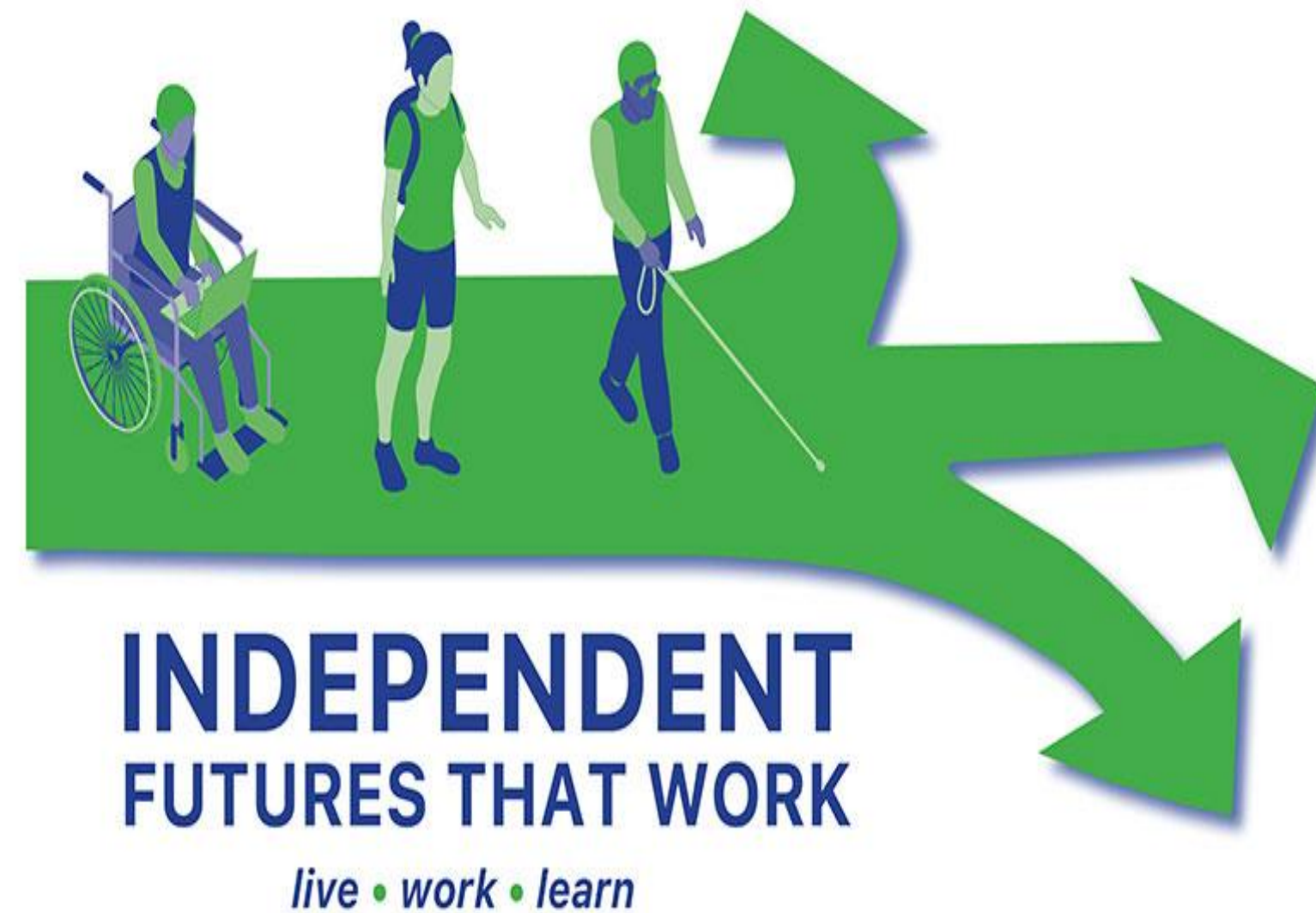


Road to Advocacy Series

ACMC



RSA PTI IFTW



Resources for Teen and Young Adults

Not secure | http://thecenterforexceptionalfamilies.org/programs/youth-in-transition/

Gmail YouTube Maps PIX Arkansas - Google...

Po Box 16125 • Jonesboro, AR 72403
(870) 336-3012 • Toll Free (888) 360-9654
If you have used our services, please take our survey, [CLICK HERE](#)

THE CENTER FOR
Exceptional
FAMILIES

Our Team Resources **Programs** News & Events Calendar

Resources for Teen and Young Adults

Current Arkansas Resources

Independent Futures That Work Project

[Website](#)

Select Language

IFTW Arkansas State Advisory Committee

Type here to search

2:38 PM 7/21/2022

Sensory Cinema



Lights up! Sound down!

More Resources

Youtube

Webinars,
Workshops, Tips Trips
and Talks on
Tuesdays (also on
Facebook)



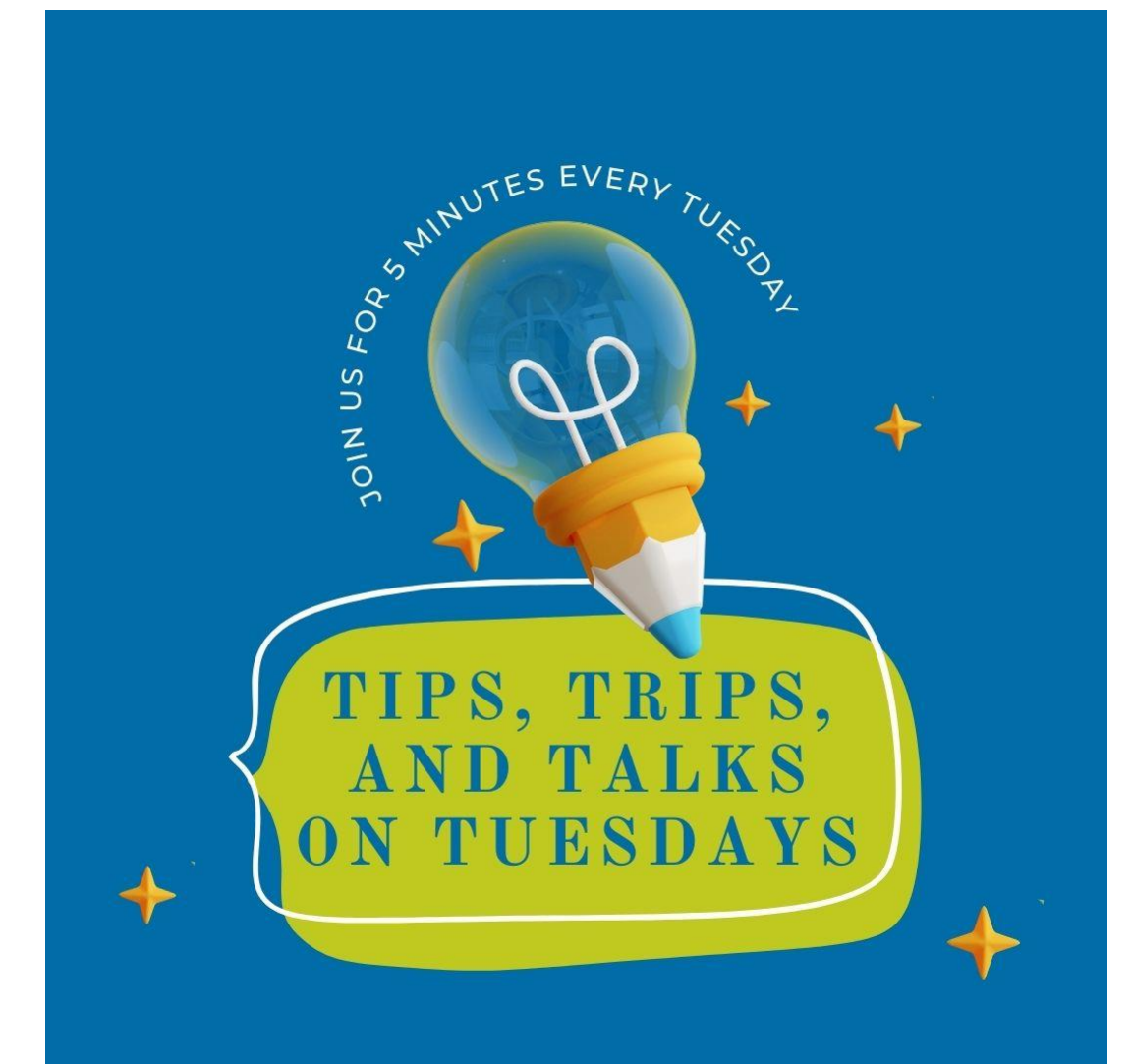
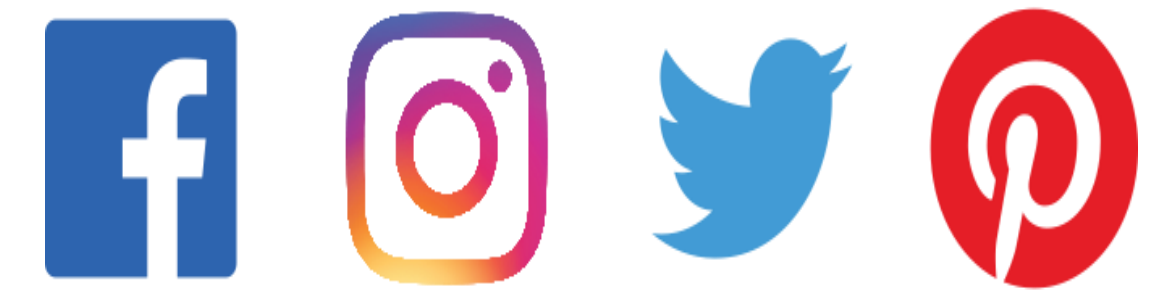
Email Newsletter

Includes information
about news, events,
workshops, tips,
organizations, public
school info, and other
disability related
information

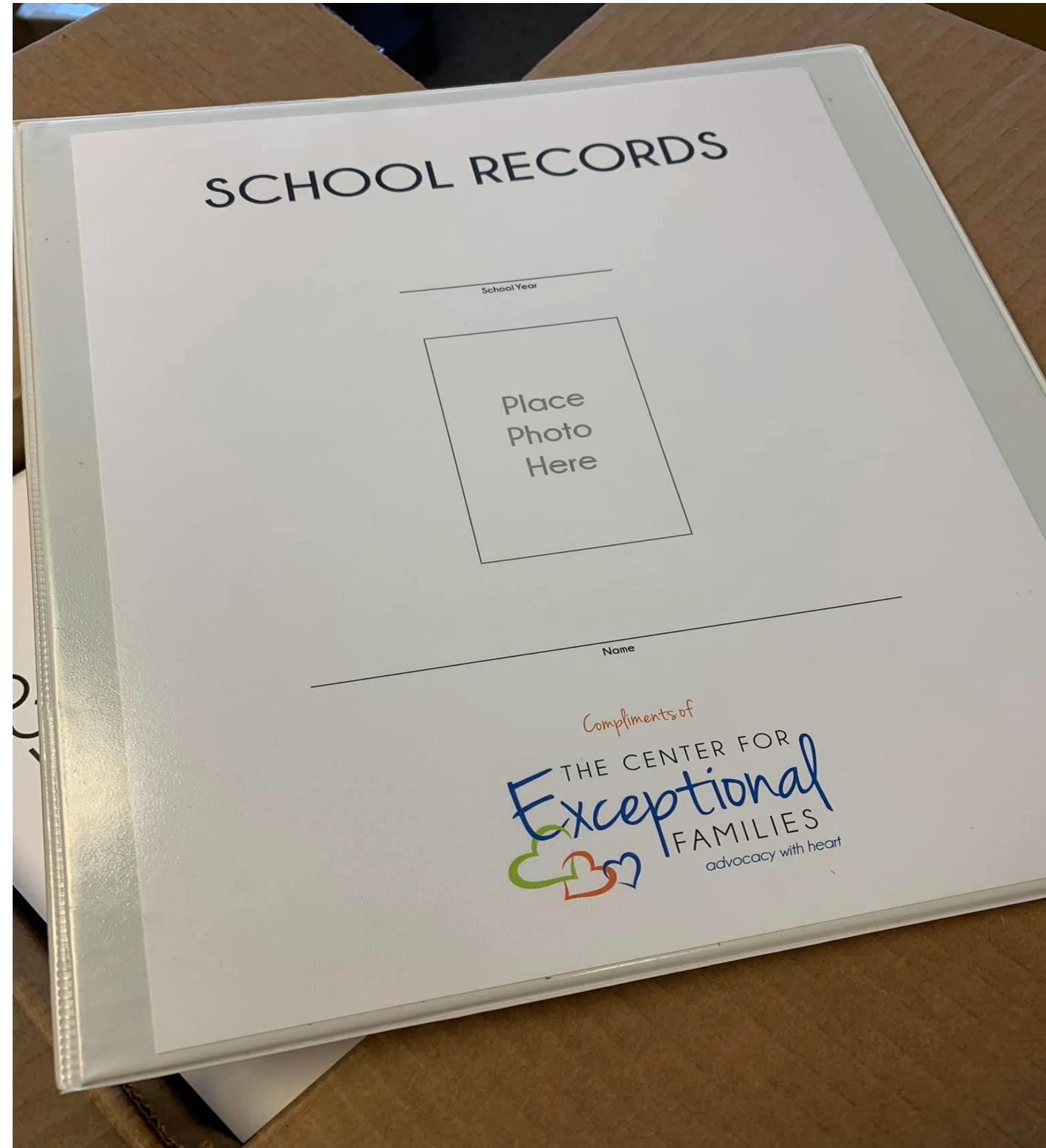


Social Media

Facebook, Tips, Trips,
and Talks on
Tuesdays, Twitter,
Instagram, and Tiktok



Parent Toolkit



In partnership with a growing number of organizations, TCFEF is now able to provide FREE parent toolkits that include a binder with tabs for keeping educational and medical records organized for student or child.



Ag For Autism

Contact Information

888-360-9654

toll free

www.tcfef.org



@exceptionalfamilies



**Advocacy
with Heart**