

**Advocacy Report
January 2018 - June 2018**

All names have been changed to preserve confidentiality.

BENEFITS – IHSS

Bobby's IHSS Paramedical Service Hours are Reinstated.

5-year-old Bobby has been receiving IHSS for two years. After Bobby's last annual assessment, the IHSS social worker decided that he no longer needed paramedical service hours. The social worker made this termination of paramedical hours even though Bobby's licensed occupational therapist had correctly completed the required Request for Order and Consent - Paramedical form. Bobby's therapist regularly trains Bobby's mother to help him with range of motion exercises at home, such as picking up beads and buttons to help with fine motor skills and oral chewing exercises to improve his feeding skills. However, the county social worker incorrectly considered those exercises as part of dressing and feeding time already allotted. OCRA provided direct representation at a state hearing. At the hearing, Bobby's mother testified, describing the exercises she does with Bobby at home as not part of feeding and dressing time, but as paramedical services under the law. Soon after the hearing, Bobby received a favorable hearing decision ordering the county to reinstate Bobby's paramedical service hours.

OCRA Helps Alberto Get Protective Supervision.

Alberto was denied protective supervision, despite having behaviors such as running away elopement, tantrums, head-banging, and repeated attempts to touch the stove when someone is cooking. OCRA gathered records and evidence to support Alberto's need for protective supervision and requested a new psychological assessment from the regional center. OCRA then filed for a state-level fair hearing on the family's behalf. After submitting the new evidence to the county appeals specialist, the county granted protective supervision in February 2018. Retroactive benefits stretched back a full year, totaling about \$26,000. Alberto's parent will receive an ongoing monthly income of about \$2,670 for providing his protective supervision services.

Rachel and Veronica Obtain the Family Exemption for IHSS Overtime.

OCRA recently represented sisters, Rachel and Veronica, at an administrative hearing to obtain IHSS. Veronica was awarded protective supervision and the judge increased her time from 78.35 hours per month to 173.35 hours per month. Rachel became eligible for IHSS and the judge awarded 40.11 hours per month. Shortly after the hearing, Rachel and Veronica's mother, who is also their IHSS provider, received a notice stating she violated the new overtime rules by providing too many hours of IHSS. OCRA helped her complete the Family Exemption form and followed up with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). CDSS approved the family exemption request and now Rachel and Veronica's mother can be their parent provider without violating the workweek limits under the new overtime rules.

Protective Supervision is Restored after OCRA Represents at Hearing.

Fabiano's mother contacted OCRA after receiving notice that his IHSS protective supervision eligibility was being terminated. OCRA helped Fabiano file an appeal and obtain aid paid pending, so his protective supervision hours would continue until the hearing. After reviewing the case, it appeared nothing had changed in Fabiano's life to warrant the termination of protective supervision. OCRA also learned that the IHSS in-home assessment was conducted in English when Fabiano's mother and provider is monolingual Spanish-speaking. OCRA agreed to directly represent Fabiano, then gathered documentation of his developmental disabilities and collaborated with the regional center to get an assessment of his continued need for protective supervision. At the hearing, OCRA provided evidence and elicited testimony from Fabiano's day program staff about his continued need for 24-hour supervision to remain safely at home. The judge made a favorable decision and Fabiano remains eligible for IHSS protective supervision. After the hearing, OCRA requested a new IHSS social worker who speaks Spanish, which was granted. Fabiano is happy to remain living at home and he can continue to dance to his favorite Michael Jackson songs.

BENEFITS – MEDI-CAL

Client Obtains Nutritional Formula from Kaiser After Filing Grievance.

Vihaan relies on nutritional formula orally because he cannot eat solid foods. He has been receiving nutrition this way for 18 years. Vihaan developed a reaction to the formula he had been using and needed to switch to a new brand. Kaiser, Vihaan's health insurer, denied his request for a new nutritional formula because he ingests it orally instead of through a g-tube. OCRA first helped Vihaan's mother request funding from the regional center for the formula while she advocated for Kaiser to provide it. The regional center agreed to provide the formula in the interim. OCRA then drafted a grievance for Vihaan's mother to file against Kaiser. The grievance outlined Vihaan's developmental disabilities and how the formula is medically necessary and recommended by his doctors. Vihaan's mother filed the grievance and Kaiser agreed to fund the nutritional formula.

20 Years of Care Continue for Nilo.

For over 20 years, Nilo depended heavily on his primary care doctor, with whom Nilo felt comfortable and who understood Nilo's medical needs. However, after an unsuccessful attempt to keep his fee-for-service Medi-Cal, he was forced to enroll in a Medi-Cal Managed Care plan. This new health plan enrolled Nilo with a different physician farther away from his home. Nilo has difficulty communicating and relies on his mother for communication with other people. His mother also helps Nilo make decisions and access services as his conservator. The health plan refused to accept the Letters of Conservatorship, the document which authorize his mother to help him. Also, Nilo's mother, who is monolingual Spanish-speaking, was having trouble communicating with the health plan's member services department. OCRA called the plan with Nilo's mother on the line and educated the member services representative about Nilo's right to supported decision-making. OCRA discovered that a recent training within the plan about confidentiality might have contributed to the misapplication of the law. OCRA advocated for Nilo to decide about his healthcare through an authorized third party. Nilo's mother was also able to re-enroll him with his previous doctor.

BENEFITS – SSDI

OCRA Gets SSDI Benefits Back and Resolves \$49,000 Overpayment.

Dylan received a notice from Social Security that he was overpaid over \$49,000 in SSDI. Even worse, his monthly SSDI benefits had been terminated because Social Security said he worked too much and earned too much money to qualify. OCRA reviewed stacks of notices from Social Security, contacted Dylan's employer, and contacted Social Security once it became clear the termination and overpayment were mistakes. Dylan received a subsidy from his employer, who completed a form showing the subsidy and special help that Dylan gets at work. After reviewing the documentation OCRA submitted, Social Security reinstated Dylan's benefits retroactively, which meant that Dylan did not owe any overpayment. Dylan will continue to work at his job without worrying about his benefits being terminated.

BENEFITS – SSI

After Appeal, SSI Overpayment is Reduced from \$10,379 to \$1,593.

Tammy received a notice that her SSI benefits were terminated and she had an overpayment of \$10,379. The notice alleged that she had been over the SSI resource limit for many months. Tammy's mother received a tax refund two years in a row, which was deposited in her bank account along with her other income and Tammy's SSI benefit. Tax refunds are exempt for 12 months starting the month after receipt, and SSA must assume any withdrawals during the 12 months are from other account funds before being applied to the tax refunds. This allows for a greater balance of the exempt funds to remain in the bank account. Since Tammy is a minor, she and her mother have a combined \$4,000 resource limit. SSA assumed that when Tammy's mother withdrew any money from the account, it was funds from the tax refund. SSA then determined the tax refunds were spent within two months, therefore, any month that the account was over their \$4,000 total resource limit, Tammy was ineligible for an SSI payment. OCRA advised Tammy's mother to appeal the termination of benefits and the overpayment allegation. OCRA agreed to represent Tammy at a reconsideration meeting. OCRA created a monthly accounting chart for the two-year period. At the meeting, OCRA argued that SSA had applied the tax refund rule incorrectly. After reviewing the

chart and the attached bank statements, SSA agreed to reinstate Tammy's benefits and recalculated the overpayment.

Lupita Avoids a Supplemental Security Income Reduction.

Lupita received a notice of action reducing her SSI benefits because she was receiving "in-kind support and maintenance." OCRA met with Lupita and her mother to explain the information in the notice. OCRA explained that SSA considers the food and shelter a beneficiary receives from someone else to be "in-kind" income that will reduce the monthly SSI payment. OCRA explained her right to appeal, the appeal process, and timeline. Lupita and her mother filed an appeal, after which Social Security reinstated her original SSI benefit amount.

OCRA Successfully Advocates for an Increase in Monthly SSI Amount and Overpayment Waiver.

Charles came to OCRA concerned about multiple notices he received about his SSI. Two issues affected Charles' SSI payments each month: his fluctuating income from his restaurant job and how SSA viewed his living ocracarrangement. SSA informed Charles he had been substantially overpaid by thousands of dollars. OCRA assisted Charles to timely file a request for reconsideration appeal and accompanied him to an informal conference. During that conference, Charles and SSA fully discussed living arrangements, and SSA corrected his status. This will cause less money to be deducted from his monthly check. Further, SSA granted a waiver of overpayment recovery for the alleged overpayments. Charles need not pay back any money because it was SSA's mistake and Charles could not afford to pay that money back.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Luke Attends His Daughter's Graduation with His Personal Care Attendant.

Luke contacted OCRA because his daughter's school was refusing to give him an additional ticket to his daughter's graduation ceremony for his personal attendant to support him. Each graduate had a maximum of three tickets for the event. Due to his mobility impairment, Luke needed his attendant's assistance to safely navigate through the large crowd before

and after the graduation. OCRA researched sections of the Americans with Disabilities Act that require state and local entities to make reasonable accommodations to their policies and procedures so individuals with disabilities can access their programs and services. OCRA helped Luke draft a demand letter to request the reasonable accommodation. Upon receiving Luke's correspondence, the school gave Luke an additional ticket for his assistant to attend the graduation.

EMPLOYMENT

Mason Maintains His Employment.

Mason loves his job. He portions food at a franchised restaurant. One day, the manager told Mason he was being put on leave without a return date. Mason was the only employee put on leave and the only employee with a disability. Mason thought he was performing well because he had never been reprimanded at work. OCRA worked with Mason and his job coach to protect his rights. OCRA prepared Mason's job coach for a meeting with the manager, helped establish clear objectives for Mason, and reviewed potential reasonable accommodations for his employment. Mason, his job coach, and manager agreed to create a job description with objectives for Mason, and he was not put on leave. Mason has increased his food portion output and is working toward a raise.

HOUSING

OCRA Helps Charles Get Long Overdue Housing Repairs.

Charles had been living independently in his home for just under a year. His mother called OCRA with several complaints regarding the habitability of Charles' apartment. After getting permission from Charles, OCRA met with Charles and his mother at his apartment to survey the repairs that were needed. Charles showed the apparently raw sewage leaking from the toilet into his shower, and the broken window latch in his front room. OCRA contacted the property manager and requested that they complete these repairs immediately. Since then, Charles has received a new toilet and a working window. OCRA is also assisting Charles with issues related to his supported living services.

OUTREACH AND TRAINING

Peer Advocate Empowers Bet Tzedek to Communicate with People with Developmental Disabilities.

In January 2018, OCRA's Peer Advocate conducted a training to sixteen Bet Tzedek staff who offer legal services to low-income individuals, including people with intellectual/developmental disabilities. OCRA created a training to empower Bet Tzedek staff to better communicate with people with developmental disabilities. Advocates learned disability etiquette including effective client communication, listening skills, and focusing on an individual's abilities rather than disabilities. This means using people first language and avoiding words that convey stigma like "crazy" or "feeble." OCRA also helped attendees understand different disabilities. Advocates were challenged to speak with colleagues without using the letter "S", which demonstrated what it might be like for a person with a speech disability. The audience later asserted that it was challenging to convey their thoughts without using the letter "S," which highlighted the challenges persons with developmental disabilities may encounter when having to communicate. Attorneys recounted their experiences of ineffective client communication and discussed ways to improve client communication in future interactions. Bet Tzedek staff expressed feeling empowered to communicate with people with developmental disabilities.

PERSONAL AUTONOMY

Eddie Is Freed from Conservatorship and Pursues Relationship with His Brother.

Eddie's brother contacted OCRA requesting assistance for Eddie to move to Sacramento. He said Eddie did not like his current group home which did not properly accommodate Eddie's hearing impairment. Eddie was under a conservatorship and not allowed to move out of the home to be near his brother. OCRA worked with the local public defender's office to have Eddie's conservatorship terminated. Afterwards, OCRA directly represented Eddie at multiple IPP team meetings. OCRA helped Eddie to obtain a new regional center case manager proficient in ASL. Eddie's new case manager welcomed Eddie's brother as a part of his circle of support and member of the IPP team. Eddie's case manager also supported his

desire to live closer to his brother and identified a supported living service agency to help facilitate the move.

REGIONAL CENTER – COMMUNITY PLACEMENT

Greg Gets to Celebrate His Brother's Life with Family.

Greg lives in a developmental center. He is working hard to meet his goals so he can transition to a less restrictive setting. Over the holiday season, Greg's brother passed away unexpectedly. Greg had great respect for his brother who was a Marine Corps veteran. It was very important to Greg and his mother that he get permission to go home and attend his brother's memorial services. Greg and his mother struggled to get staff at the developmental center to respond to their requests for Greg to attend the service. OCRA helped connect with the developmental center and the regional center to ensure Greg attended his brother's funeral services alongside his family. Greg found peace and closure after losing his beloved brother.

Rae Moves Into His Forever Home.

Rae is a young man who is conserved by his regional center. He had lived in a restrictive setting since 2006. Almost every year since 2010, he filed Writs of Habeas Corpus to leave the restrictive setting, without success. In late 2015, OCRA stepped in to help Rae because he had filed two Writs of Habeas Corpus within three months without success. Rae's IPP team unanimously supported his request for community placement, but the regional center, his conservator and holder of all rights, disagreed. Rae's frustration would often lead him to storm out of IPP meetings. Rae eventually used his voice to advocate for himself at IPP meetings and court hearings. His regional center finally agreed to community placement and secured a supported living agency (SLS) agency to work with him. Unfortunately, after months of cross-training, his regional center switched his SLS agency without IPP team consent. Rae agreed to start over because he wanted to move into the community as soon as possible. More delays occurred when his regional center conservator and new SLS provider could not agree on needed services and supports. This year, Rae told his IPP team he wanted to be in his apartment before his birthday. After 8 years of Rae yearning and advocating for community placement, his wish came true. Rae celebrated his birthday in his new home.

Julie Asserts Her Rights and Maintains Her Community Placement.

After moving out of a locked psychiatric facility, Julie called OCRA for help with several potential denial of rights issues she was having in her new group home. She was new to this home and did not want to risk getting an eviction notice if she asserted her rights. Julie wanted to purchase cigarettes and smoke them at her leisure. The group home wanted to make sure Julie exercised her rights safely. OCRA attended Julie's 7-day and 30-day IPP meetings at the group home. At Julie's 7-day IPP meeting, OCRA requested that Julie be allowed to access her own money and use it to buy cigarettes. At Julie's 30-day IPP meeting, OCRA requested that Julie and the group home staff agree on where and when she could smoke cigarettes. During that meeting, Julie and the group home staff agreed that Julie could smoke whenever she wanted to in the backyard of the group home and that staff could watch her through the back window, as long as Julie told a staff member if she needed assistance. Julie and the group home staff also agreed that when Julie runs low on cigarettes, she will let staff know and staff will purchase them for her at the store. In Julie's case, thoughtful person-centered planning prevented a wrongful denial of rights and averted a potential eviction. Julie continues to live at the group home and is proud as this is the longest period of time she has lived outside of a locked psychiatric facility.

Rosa and Her IPP Team Tackle Anxiety and Clients' Rights Issues.

Rosa moved into a specialized behavioral home in the community after many years in a restrictive setting. The transition to community living was challenging for Rosa because she missed the familiarity of the former setting. Rosa's new group home staff was very supportive and worked with her. However, she exhibited behaviors of inserting small objects into her body. As part of a proposed behavior modification plan, the regional center and group home staff wanted to deny Rosa access to all small personal possessions she kept in her bedroom. They also wanted Rosa to have constant line-of-sight observation, even when she used the restroom. They wrongly believed Rosa's conservator had authority to approve these restrictions as part of her treatment plan. OCRA attended IPP meetings to help Rosa and her IPP team develop a plan to minimize the risk of harm to Rosa from these behaviors while still safeguarding her rights. The IPP team had a hard time understanding clients' rights and the denial of rights

process. OCRA told the IPP team that access to personal possessions is a right rather than a privilege to be earned, that a conservator could not waive this right, and that denial of this right could not be used as a treatment modality. After much discussion of less restrictive interventions, Rosa agreed to waive her right to personal possessions to keep herself safe. Her staff agreed to give her access to her personal possessions under careful supervision. In addition, her IPP team agreed that using the restroom did not require line-of-sight observation. The behaviorist also agreed to keep the denial of rights plan separate from the behavior plan. Rosa's rights were protected because of the willingness of everyone on her IPP team to discuss the issues openly. The team worked hard to balance the need to keep Rosa safe from self-harm while respecting her right to personal possessions, privacy, and choices.

REGIONAL CENTER – ELIGIBILITY

Suzy Wins Back the Services She Needs to Care for Herself and Her Family.

Suzy lives with her two children and her mother, who is also a regional center client, in her mother's home. Suzy relies on supported living services, transportation training, and case management services from the regional center to be successful. The regional center reassessed Suzy and determined that she was no longer eligible for their services, as she was no longer substantially disabled. OCRA met with Suzy and her IPP team to confirm her support needs. OCRA utilized an expert in regional center eligibility who assessed Suzy and then supported her appeal for continued eligibility. The regional center reviewed OCRA's hearing packet and sent a notice of resolution two days before the state-level hearing. Suzy continues to receive services and supports and is successfully raising her two children.

Regional Center Finds Nicole Eligible for Services After Denying Her Eligibility.

Nicole's foster care attorney contacted OCRA for advice about the regional center hearing process. Nicole filed an appeal after regional center denied her eligibility. Regional center agreed with Nicole's diagnosis of autism, but said that her autism was not substantially disabling. OCRA provided Nicole's attorney with advice about regional center mediations, appeals,

continuances, independent psychological evaluations, and negotiating with regional center. Nicole's foster care attorney used this information and sent a letter with a new school report to the regional center arguing that Nicole met the eligibility criteria. Regional center's fair hearing coordinator agreed to discuss the case again with the eligibility team. The eligibility team reconsidered and found Nicole eligible for services.

REGIONAL CENTER - SERVICES

Haliah Gets a Regional Center Evaluation.

Haliah and her family are refugees from the Middle East. As monolingual-Dari speakers, they struggled to access any public benefit or service. Haliah has Down syndrome and her parents made multiple attempts to get a regional center eligibility evaluation. However, they never received a call back from the regional center. OCRA contacted the local regional center and requested Haliah be assessed for eligibility. The regional center contacted the family the next day and scheduled an intake visit for the following week.

Ruby Keeps the SLS Agency that Meets Her Individual Needs.

Ruby cares for her adult children who all have special needs. She has received SLS from an agency for over 10 years. The agency knows her needs and those of her children well. Ruby trusts her SLS staff and has worked with them to keep her and her family safe for many years. One day, the regional center decided to change her SLS agency. Ruby did not agree because she wanted to keep the SLS agency she trusts. Ruby appealed and needed help. OCRA explained the fair hearing process to Ruby and her staff and prepared document packets for the hearing. Ruby went to the fair hearing and explained how the SLS agency meets her and her family's unique needs as she planned with OCRA. The judge ruled in her favor and Ruby will keep her SLS agency.

Brian and His Family Finally Have Some Hope.

Brian finished school in June 2017. For almost a year, the family requested regional center services, such as a day program, for Brian. After a year of not receiving services, Brian's mother contacted OCRA. OCRA advised Brian's mother to make a written request for an IPP meeting. Within the

required 30 days, the regional center scheduled the meeting. OCRA represented Brian at the meeting. Since then, the regional center has provided a more structured plan and strategy for Brian to receive services during the day. Brian and his family have also met with a potential day program provider. Even though Brian has no day program yet, he and his family have a clear path forward.

Georgina, Matthew, and Thomas Receive Supports to Continue Living at Home.

Georgina, Matthew, and Thomas are triplet preteens with significant needs for support. Their mother, Lesly, was their sole caregiver and received respite services to get an occasional break from their care. Unfortunately, Lesly became ill and Matthew was diagnosed with a medical condition that required nursing services. Despite their mother's efforts, the regional center refused to grant additional services to support their mother in caring for them at home. Lesly struggled to receive even the approved IPP services because the providers were not showing up. Lesly contacted OCRA and learned about her right to request a hearing. OCRA coached Lesly through the appeal process and Lesly successfully represented her triplets at an administrative hearing. Now the triplets receive homemaking services in addition to nursing respite to allow them to continue to live at home.

OCRA Helps Samuel Get a Day Program and Behavioral Services.

Samuel is a young man with an intellectual disability. Samuel recently had a behavioral incident where he threatened staff members at his day program. Samuel told staff they had better give him back his bag because there was a poisonous snake inside. Staff at the day program emptied Samuel's bag to find only Samuel's drawing materials consisting of markers, pens, and paper. Samuel was not allowed to return to his day program. The regional center sent Samuel a notice of action indicating they were discontinuing funding for his day program pending a "risk assessment" to be conducted by a professional. Samuel and his family contacted OCRA who immediately told them to appeal the action, ask for an informal meeting, and ask for an IPP meeting to discuss services for Samuel. At the IPP meeting and again at the informal meeting, OCRA argued that Samuel's behavioral services must continue consistent with his IPP regardless of whether Samuel is in the day program. Samuel was

present at both meetings. He was composed, polite, and apologetic for his actions. By the end of the informal meeting, all agreed that Samuel would be referred to another day program that offers behavioral support services and staff consistent with Samuel's needs and IPP goals. They agreed to a functional behavioral assessment in lieu of a risk assessment. Samuel will also receive mental health and behavioral support in his home until he starts his new day program.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Alexander and 10 Other Students in His Classroom Receive 33 Hours Each of Individual Academic Tutoring.

Alexander's mother called OCRA for help because frequently there was no credentialed teacher in Alexander's special day classroom. She said she had spoken with the school principal and with other school district administrators about the problem, but they did nothing. When OCRA called the district and spoke with a program specialist to discuss what was going on in Alexander's classroom, she said she knew the problem, but there wasn't anything the district could do because there just weren't enough credentialed teachers available. OCRA filed a Compliance Complaint with the California Department of Education (CDE) on Alexander's behalf. CDE found the district out of compliance and ordered 33 hours of compensatory 1:1 academic tutoring not only for Alexander, but also for each of the other ten students in that classroom.

Fred Obtains Physical Therapy and Mobility Equipment from School.

Fred is a 7-year-old boy with a significant intellectual disability. When Fred's mother contacted OCRA, Fred's educational placement was home and hospital instruction. He was in the home and hospital placement due to multiple hip surgeries and behavior problems. Fred's school district denied him physical therapy and mobility accommodations, claiming they were medical needs. Fred's mother contacted OCRA to request advocacy because she wanted him back in school with the proper services and accommodations. OCRA advised Fred's mother about his right to receive services and accommodations he needed to access his educational curriculum. OCRA also represented Fred in an IEP meeting to request these services. Fred is now back in school and receiving physical therapy.

The district has also provided him with a new stroller and walker to use at school.

Student Gets Supports Needed to Prevent Change of Placement.

Dominic is a young child with behaviors that his teachers couldn't manage without calling his mother to come pick him up. He is non-verbal, on the autism spectrum, and has an intellectual disability. He had a difficult year at school. When his mother contacted us, he'd gone from a full school day at the start of the year to attending school for just two hours per day. She said this was not by her choice - the school had simply reduced his hours to what they said they could handle. His behavior was so disruptive that when they kept him there longer, the school called her to take him home. Dominic walks and waits at a bus stop to get to school despite his limited mobility. This made mornings even harder on him. His classroom environment was not adjusted for his sensory needs, and he did not have appropriate space or tools to feel safe and reduce his stimulation. His mother had been denied requests for accommodations and had heard from the school that Dominic may need a more restrictive placement. Dominic's mother wanted assistance with developing his IEP. OCRA attended the IEP meeting and successfully advocated for a 1:1 aide, door-to-door transportation, counseling services, a behavioral assessment to develop a plan, and immediate changes and accommodations to his classroom.

Kendi Pursues Her Academic Goals.

Kendi's goal is to receive a degree in psychology to work with people with developmental disabilities. She graduated from high school and proceeded to college hoping to achieve her goal. One semester into the associate's degree program, she encountered an obstacle. Kendi failed to timely withdraw from a class and a fee was assessed. Kendi lives on a fixed income and the fee created great hardship. More troubling, Kendi could not register for the next semester if the fees were unpaid. Kendi and her circle of support contacted numerous departments on campus, all of which told her she is responsible for knowing the deadlines. After weeks of trying, Kendi and her circle of support contacted OCRA for assistance. OCRA drafted a letter for Kendi to take to the school asking for a waiver of the fees. Kendi delivered the letter to school personnel along with a form and the fees were waived. Kendi can now continue to pursue her goals.

John Obtains Compensatory Education and Is Allowed to Attend a Full School Day.

John is a 6-year-old boy with Williams Syndrome and significant behavioral difficulties. From the time John began going to school, he had never attended for a full school day. For over a year, the school had been promising to increase his instructional time, but had not followed through. His mother repeatedly requested a full school day. John was attending school for only two hours per day when mother contacted OCRA for advocacy assistance. After reviewing his records, OCRA learned that his IEP called for three hours of instructional time per day. OCRA agreed to represent John at an IEP meeting. At the IEP meeting, the school agreed to increase John's academic instruction one hour weekly until reaching a full day, and to pay for compensatory education for the instruction time not provided.

Nathan Receives Special Education Services.

Nathan had been out of school and not receiving any educational services. His mother contacted OCRA for help to get Nathan back in school and compensatory services for the services he missed from the school district. OCRA represented Nathan at several Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meetings and negotiated with the school district. The district finally made an offer, which met Nathan's needs. He will receive nursing services to cover his health needs throughout the day and ten minutes before and after school, behavioral intervention services in his home, language and speech services for 90 minutes per week, occupational therapy for 60 minutes per week, adaptive physical education for 30 minutes per week, music therapy for 120 minutes per week provided outside of the school day, assistive technology training for 600 minutes per year, and an Independent Educational Evaluation for occupational therapy. The district also offered 200 hours of compensatory education that can be used for specialized academic instruction, speech or occupational therapy, adapted physical education, or assistive technology. Nathan is now successfully back in school.

D'Shaun Gets An Appropriate School Placement.

D'Shaun was a first-grader placed in a classroom for children with severe autism. Most of his peers still needed support to pair socks and recognize

colors. However, D'Shaun could read, add, and subtract nearly at grade level. D'Shaun's mother had repeatedly asked that he be moved into a less restrictive setting. Her requests were ignored for most of the school year. OCRA attended D'Shaun's next IEP meeting. OCRA assisted D'Shaun's mother with compiling and presenting work samples to show D'Shaun's readiness for a less restrictive placement. The district agreed to move D'Shaun into a less restrictive classroom setting and also developed a transition plan to support D'Shaun with the change.