



Dr. Diane Plunkett

Workshop and Professional Development Presenter



Professional Biography

Dr. Diane Plunkett is the founder of Steppingstone Services, LLC, and a special education professional with more than 30 years of experience supporting children, adults, and families across educational and disability service settings. Her work has included roles as a special educator, interventionist, therapist, case manager, and disability-services professional. She brings both professional expertise and the perspective of a parent of a child with exceptionalities. Dr. Plunkett translates complex special education concepts into clear, practical strategies that participants can use in meetings, documentation, collaboration, and day-to-day decision-making. Her presentations emphasize respectful family-professional partnerships, educational continuity, student voice, trauma-informed practice, and actionable next steps.

Degrees, Licenses & Credentials

- **Doctorate:** Ph.D. in Special Education, University of Kansas
- **Kansas License:** Special Education: Birth-Kindergarten
- **Missouri Certifications:** Early Childhood (Birth-Grade 3); Early Childhood Special Education (Birth-Grade 3); Mild/Moderate Cross-Categorical Special Education (K-12)
- **Specialized Training:** Trauma-informed care training and certification
- **Experience:** More than three decades of cross-setting disability and family-support experience

Presentation Areas

- IEP, 504, evaluation, eligibility, and meeting preparation
- Family-professional communication and collaborative problem-solving
- Educational continuity for students in foster care or changing placements
- Trauma-informed and disability-responsive educational practice
- Documentation, record review, progress monitoring, and parent concerns
- Student voice, transition planning, and self-advocacy

Sample Workshop Topics

- Preparing for an IEP Meeting with Clarity and Confidence
- Writing Effective Parent Concerns and Building a Useful Record
- Understanding Evaluations, Eligibility, and Educational Need
- From Behavior to Support: Trauma, Disability, and Better Questions
- Preserving Educational Continuity Across Schools and Placements
- Girls in Foster Care with IEPs: Recognizing Cross-System Gaps
- Strengthening Family-School Partnerships Without Losing Advocacy Focus

Program Formats & Audiences

Typical lengths: 60-90 minute introductory sessions; 2-3 hour skill-building workshops; half-day or full-day professional development. **Customization:** Programs may be introductory, intermediate, or customized around an organization's goals, policies, audience, and case examples. **Available for:** Parents and caregivers, educators, related-service providers, school leaders, advocates, foster-care and child-welfare professionals, community agencies, and interdisciplinary teams.

Delivery & Continuing Education

Virtual delivery is available for organizations in appropriate service areas. **In-person programs** are primarily offered in the Kansas City region and surrounding Missouri and Kansas communities; other locations may be arranged. Steppingstone Services does not currently award continuing-education credit directly. Host organizations may seek approval through their own accrediting bodies; objectives, agenda, presenter qualifications, and attendance documentation can be provided upon request.

Bring practical, responsive professional learning to your organization.

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