



SUPPORT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SMA

Ensure all students with SMA have appropriate educational supports, inclusive learning settings, and the tools to succeed

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees students with disabilities, including spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes access to an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that outlines the necessary accommodations, modifications, and services to meet the student's unique educational need. ([U.S. Department of Education, IDEA](#))
- The federal government has consistently failed to meet its IDEA obligation to fund 40% of special education costs, currently covering less than half of what was originally promised. This funding shortfall has left many school districts under-resourced and families fighting for critical services. ([National Council on Disability](#))
- Assistive technology, such as voice-to-text software, adapted computers, and communication devices, plays a critical role in helping students with SMA engage in classroom activities. However, many students face challenges in accessing the technology and related supports they need. ([Centering Disability in Technology Policy](#))
- Access to higher education for students with SMA is often hindered by inadequate disability services and a lack of accessible infrastructure at colleges and universities. ([Access and Participation of Students with Disabilities](#))

CURE SMA POSITION

Cure SMA urges policymakers to:

- Increase federal funding for special education programs to meet student needs.
- Support access to the assistive technology and educational supports in the classroom.
- Enhance training for all teachers so they can effectively support their students' physical accessibility and diverse learning needs.
- Increase disability support services and accommodations at colleges and universities.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD ACT

Educational access is vital for the success of students with SMA, from preschool through higher education. Inclusive education practices, adequate funding, and access to assistive technology empower students with SMA to reach their full potential. Congress should increase investments in special education programs, promote awareness of assistive technology, and ensure compliance with IDEA mandates. SMA-specific needs, such as physical accessibility, tailored educational accommodations, and specialized supports, require consistent resources. Families of children with SMA frequently report facing significant barriers in securing these supports, resulting in lost educational opportunities. By ensuring fully funded IDEA programs and better preparation for teachers,

school districts can better serve these students. Cure SMA envisions a world where all students with SMA have the opportunity to thrive in the classroom and beyond.



Cure SMA Advocacy | 800-866-1762 | advocacy@curesma.org | cureSMA.org

[Cure SMA](#) is a national organization that advocates for individuals with spinal muscular atrophy, a progressive neurodegenerative disease that robs people of physical strength, taking away their ability to walk, swallow, and breathe.