



# SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

## NEWSLETTER

FALL 2011

### Table of Contents

SFCD Fall Fundraiser	1
Early Screening	2
Parent Mentor Program	2
Evidence-Based Practices at School	3
The Importance of Parent Support	4
<b>PULL - OUT SECTION</b>	<b>5-8</b>
<b>Our Services &amp; Events</b>	
Corporation and Our Volunteer Program	9
Halloween Party	9
SFUSD's New Student Assignment Policy	10
Thank You!	11
SFCD Board & Staff	12

Support for Families of Children with Disabilities is a nonprofit, support, resource and networking organization for families of children with special needs and the professionals who work with them. All services are free of charge including resources, phone-line, drop-in center, support groups, workshops & family gatherings.

The setting will be elegant —the stunning Galleria at the San Francisco Design Center —and the food and wine will be flowing freely at the **Support for Families Wine + Design Fall Gala set for Friday evening, October 14, 2011, 6 – 10 PM.**

A highlight of this year's gala will be a special performance by cabaret star **Wesla Whitfield and the Mike Greensill Trio**. Support for Families will present a service award to the **Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health**, in recognition of its work on behalf of children with special health care needs.

At the gala's silent and live auctions, guests will compete to be high bidder on unique goods and services: wine, collectors' items, entertainment, jewelry, getaways and much more. And fabulous raffle prizes — including an iPad2 and Kindle eReader — will be awarded to four lucky ticket-holders.

**This annual event raises funds that are critical to the continuation of Support for Families' programs and services. There are many options for participation:**

- Join us at the event! Individual tickets are \$100 each.
- Become an event Sponsor with a donation of \$500 or more.
- Purchase raffle tickets for your chance to win great prizes: an iPad2, Kindle, Flash video camera, or \$200 Amazon gift card! \$5 each, or 5 for \$20.
- Volunteer to help before, during, or after the event!

**The Support for Families website at [www.supportforfamilies.org/fundraiser](http://www.supportforfamilies.org/fundraiser) has information on all of the above — or you can contact Development Director Jan Watson at [jwatson@supportforfamilies.org](mailto:jwatson@supportforfamilies.org) or 415 282-7494 ext. 104**

**JOIN US!!**  
**Friday Evening October 14, 2011**

A benefit to support  
**SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES**

wine + <sup>2011</sup> design

**The Galleria**  
**at the San Francisco Design Center**  
**Gala, Auction and Raffle**

**Honoree**  
Lucille Packard Foundation for Children's Health

**Entertainment**  
Wesla Whitfield and Mike Greensill

*Please note that we will be printing and mailing a limited number of invitations this year to reduce our costs and put more of the funds raised into our programs and services! If you wish to receive a printed invitation, please call Jan or Linda at the office to make sure we have your current address information. Or, you can visit our website and reserve your tickets online. We hope to see you on October 14th!*

## Early Screening—A First Step to Intervention

Early identification of children with special health care needs and early intervention services for these children and their families can have positive impacts on both the children's developmental outcomes and the family's life. But a critical first step is identifying that a child has or is at risk for a developmental delay or disability—especially during the first three to five years.

Families have shared stories about how they learned that their child has a disability or special health care need. Often it was a pediatrician, teacher, or child care provider who raised a concern about the child's development and helped the family find services and resources. However, other families did not have those supports and report wishing they had learned about their child's special needs earlier than they did.

Early screening is a way to monitor a young child's development and detect any possible delays or disorders. Screening is a simple procedure for parents to see how their child is reaching certain developmental milestones—basic skills such as moving, communicating, playing, and interacting with adults and other children. Health care providers, early childhood programs, and other agencies serving young children and families often provide screenings for children enrolled with them. If the screening shows that the child is not reaching these milestones at the age when most children do, a more in-depth evaluation by specialists may be recommended. There are also simple tools that parents can use to record their children's development and share with their health care provider.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has an initiative called "Learn the Signs. Act Early." There are free materials on the website ([www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html)) for families, health care providers, and early childhood educators. Resources for parents include developmental milestones charts and tools for children from three months to five years of age, information on developmental screening, and suggestions for sharing concerns with the child's doctor or other health care provider. There are also links to other websites that have additional resources specifically for families.

First Signs is a national non-profit organization that was founded by a parent of a child diagnosed with autism and has an advisory board that includes many nationally known clinicians and professionals. The mission of First Signs is to "to ensure the best developmental outcome for every child by promoting awareness regarding the most important and often overlooked aspects of development: social, emotional, and communication." Detailed information about screening, developmental milestones, sharing concerns with physicians and parents, and print and web resources can be found on the First Signs website at <http://www.firstsigns.org/index.html>.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is promoting early developmental screening at children's well-child care visits. AAP has a website titled "Healthy Children" ([www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)) that has a lot of information about children's development at different ages from birth through 21 years.

**The High Risk Infant Interagency Council (HRIIC) also has developmental checklists available in English, Spanish, and Chinese. For free copies please contact HRIIC at [info@hriic.org](mailto:info@hriic.org) or (415) 206-7743.**

---

## Parent Mentor Program (PMP)

On May 17th the Parent Mentor Program (PMP) graduated its most recent group of Parent Mentor volunteers from the Special Education Training series. Twelve (12) English speaking Mentors and five (5) Spanish speaking Mentors participated in the 8 month series that began in September and finished this May with a party to celebrate their accomplishments. The Special Education series covered various areas including Evaluations and Assessments, the IEP Process, and Related Services. And on April 19th the PMP hosted a panel of professionals that covered IDEA, Section 504 and ADA for the audience of Parent Mentors.

In June we had our Parent-to-Parent (P2P) portion of our training – June 25th (English) and June 8th and 15th (Spanish). During this training we talked about communication skills, active listening and what it means to be a Support for Families Parent Mentor. Our volunteer Mentors have been an integral part of our organization and a benefit to our families who have utilized their support. In September we will again begin the eight month Special Education Training series using CASE/PAI's Rights and Responsibilities handbook and other resources to help our new Parent Mentors gain knowledge about the special education environment.

If you are interested in becoming a Parent Mentor, please contact us for more information:

**Joan E. Selby, Parent Mentor Program Coordinator (English) [jselby@supportforfamilies.org](mailto:jselby@supportforfamilies.org)**

**Sonia Valenzuela, Parent Mentor Program Coordinator (Spanish) [svalenzuela@supportforfamilies.org](mailto:svalenzuela@supportforfamilies.org)**

**JoAnna Van Brusselen, Parent Mentor Program Coordinator (Spanish) [jvanbrusselen@supportforfamilies.org](mailto:jvanbrusselen@supportforfamilies.org)**

## Evidence-Based Practices at School: A Guide for Parents

All parents want their children to receive the best education possible. One way to help your child succeed is to know if the school is using effective teaching and intervention practices. But how can schools and parents know if a practice is effective? One method is to see if there is any research or “evidence” to prove that the practice works. This handout explains the meaning of “evidence-based practices” and why they are important. It also lists resources where parents can learn more.

### What is an Evidence-Based Practice?

Both the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) require that schools use programs, curricula, and practices based on “scientifically-based research” “to the extent practicable.” This means that whenever possible, the educational interventions being used must be strongly supported by evidence from well-conducted research studies. Educational research may be said to be scientific when it:

- Uses a sound research design. The outcomes of students receiving a tested teaching strategy or intervention are compared to similar students who do not receive the intervention.
- Is based on high quality data analysis. Researchers must be sure to carefully collect, store and examine the data.
- Involves other researchers to review the results. The study should be reported in a journal so other researchers can review the methods used and repeat the research in other settings.

Under IDEA, instruction is individualized based on the student’s needs. That’s why it is especially important that the knowledge and experience of professionals and parents are also considered when deciding how to teach a student with disabilities. Professionals and parents should know about instructional practices and interventions that have been shown by research to be most effective. These research-based practices should then be matched with a student’s unique needs and skills when developing a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). It is important to record what works so that evidence can emerge over time that offers new insights into teaching and learning for students with disabilities.

### How Do I Help Ensure My Child is Receiving Evidence-Based Instruction?

If you have questions about an educational practice that is being used with your child, you can ask the teacher or other school staff about the research supporting the practice. As part of the discussion at your child’s IEP meeting, it is important to ask whether there is evidence that supports the academic, social and behavioral practices or interventions that are being proposed.

You can also review the websites below when preparing for Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings to find information about different practices being considered.

### Where Do I Find Information on Evidence-Based Practices?

The U.S. Department of Education and other agencies and organizations maintain websites and databases with information on evidence-based practices in the field of education:

**What Works Clearinghouse:** <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/> - The What Works Clearinghouse is housed at the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences. What Works Clearinghouse produces practice guides and reports with recommendations for schools on interventions in various topical areas.

**Promising Practices Network:** [www.promisingpractices.net](http://www.promisingpractices.net) - The Promising Practices Network provides research-based information on programs and practices that have been shown to be effective in improving the lives of children, including educational outcomes.

**The Center for Evidence-Based Practices:** [www.evidencebasedpractices.org/](http://www.evidencebasedpractices.org/) The Center for Evidence-Based Practices’ goal is to bridge the research-to-practice gap in the areas of early childhood education and family support.

**Research Basics:** [www.nichcy.org/Research/Basics/Pages/Default.aspx](http://www.nichcy.org/Research/Basics/Pages/Default.aspx) - Research Basics is a collection of articles and resources on understanding educational research and statistics from the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY).

#### References:

- Beghetto, R. (2003). Scientifically Based Research. ERIC Digest. Accessed online February 9, 2011 at: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED474304.pdf>.
- Cook, B.G., Tankersley, M., & Landrum, T.J. (2009). Determining evidence-based practices in special education. *Council for Exceptional Children*, 75(3), 365-383.
- Gersten, R. (2009). Types of research and their roles in improvement of practice. National Center for Learning Disabilities. Accessed online February 9, 2011 at: <http://www.nclld.org/at-school/especially-for-teachers/effective-teaching-practices/types-of-research-and-their-roles-in-improvement-of-practice>.
- Turnbull, A., et al. (2010). Knowledge to action guides: Preparing families to be partners in making educational decisions. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 42(3), 42-53.
- U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. (2003). Prepared by the Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy. Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A User-Friendly Guide. Accessed online February 9, 2011 at: <http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/rigorousvid/index.html>.

*This document was supported by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs Cooperative Agreement H328R080012. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of other organizations imply endorsement by those organizations or the U.S. Government. This document is also available on the ALLIANCE National Parent Technical Assistance Center’s website at: <http://parentcenternetwork.org/national>.*

## The Importance of Parent Support

by Beth Ohannesson, M.S., M.F.T and Julia Martin, Founder of SIKidSF, A Support Group for Parents of Kids with Sensory Processing Disorder

**Sensory parents have a big job.** Sensory children carry an extra burden, and their parents shoulder a major part of that load. Rather than baseball or ballet, we are busy arranging assessments, Occupational Therapy (OT) programs, advocating for school accommodations, reading the latest research, repairing social upheavals, and driving our kids to therapists and specialists. With so much focus on outside treatment for children, parents' influence and needs are often overlooked.

**Parents' state of mind** is crucial to the wellbeing of the family system. Parents feel ineffective when a child's sensory meltdowns and shutdowns set the tone within a family. Siblings get less attention and marriages are strained. The whole family system can become overwhelmed and go off track. This is hardly the happy family life we dreamed of!

**Children affect parents' neurology too!** Members of a family affect each other. Parents' minds and brains are designed to be affected by their children, not just the other way around. When our kids are thriving, we feel happy and proud. When they are suffering, we suffer too. Parents regularly metabolize sensory input from their children; it's part of the job.

**Parenting is as important as OT.** Parents contribute more sensory input to their children than any other person in their child's life: more than therapists, teachers or friends. Parents hold and comfort, wash, feed, play with, read to and tuck in. They calm, enliven and discipline through tone of voice, loving eye contact, respectful touch, and compassionate listening offered after nightmares or hurt feelings on the playground. These interactions offer the type of sensory input that helps children feel safe, in control of themselves and connected to others. At best, this type of compassionate parenting helps children develop a healthy sense of Self. Bodily sensations inform feelings states, which lead to clear thinking, collaborative problem solving and good judgment.

**Compassionate parenting** can go a long way to helping children integrate sensory differences. A parent's relationship with their children will directly affect the neurological development of self-regulation, executive functioning, and attachment styles. However, when parents of SPD kids become chronically overwhelmed, their kids are at risk.

**Compassion fatigue:** It's nearly impossible to remain resilient when you feel exhausted, overburdened, burnt out, and depressed. The warm, flexible attentiveness that we associate with good parenting may be replaced with an anxious parent, dulled by feelings of isolation and ineffectiveness. Instead of enjoying and appreciating time with our children, parents of SPD kids often find themselves bracing for the next sensory assault. Parents struggle to find ways to connect with their children, while hoping that the next meltdown might not last more than an hour, and we might enjoy even one of the things we planned for that day.

**Parents of SPD kids often feel like failures.** Although we try valiantly to help our struggling kids, there is often little reward for the many long years of hard work. Many factors contribute to the strain on the SPD parent child-relationship:

- Less time together that is joyful, playful or easy-going and increased time spent managing highly stressful interactions.
- Lack of positive feedback from the community and increased feelings of isolation because our kids don't fit in.
- Financial burden of prolonged specialized treatment that is rarely covered by insurance.
- Increased and longer lasting dependency needs of children upon parents, causing an extension of delayed gratification of other needs.

**The chronic strain** of raising a child with SPD takes a high toll. Even the heartiest of parent can become emotionally depleted, trudging from day to day, not noticing or enjoying their children or their life. Sadly, depressed and anxious parents are more likely to offer negative sensory input, which further agitates and frightens their struggling child. This is heartbreaking for parents and children.

**Support is crucial.** SPD parents need support to hold steady emotionally. With support, we can raise children who feel confident and self-aware. With support, we can feel proud of how we have risen to the challenge of parenting our sensational kids. Below are ways that SF Bay Area SPD Parents can find support:

**Find someone to talk to.** Having a person who understands what you are going through and is willing to listen is critical. Having someone to talk to about the stress your family is under is a great way to off-load negative feelings about yourself, your child, and your circumstances. Choose someone familiar with SPD and ready to listen.

**Take time** do the things you enjoy as if it were a medical prescription! Feelings of happiness produce neurotransmitters that combat stress. Find something you like to do and make it a priority. This is not a sprint; this is a marathon and you'll need to pace yourself.

**See a professional** - Beth Ohannesson, M.S., M.F.T. (415-564-0782). offers 8-week, depth oriented, small group sessions for parents of children with SPD based on the Hand-in-Hand Parenting by Connection Approach. Included are specific tools for expanding parent support, as well as parenting strategies aimed at building emotional understanding, connection and safety within SPD families.

**Join a Support Group.** SIKidSF is a free resource for SF Bay Area Parents of SPD kids. We share sensory tools, resources and specialists, every day obstacles and successes. There is a monthly in-person meeting for parents.

**For more information visit SIKidSF.com**

*We can't take away the burden,  
but we can help carry the load.*



## SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

A support and resource organization providing services for families of children with disabilities

# Our Services

### HOW YOU CAN USE US

**CALL US AT:**  
(415) 920-5040

**EMAIL US AT:**  
info@supportforfamilies.org

**VISIT US AT:**  
1663 Mission Street  
7th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103

**GO TO OUR WEB SITE AT:**  
www.supportforfamilies.org  
to get the latest information  
on workshops, events and  
new resources.



#### Phone Line/Drop-in Center

Get individualized information, referrals, and answers to all your questions from Support for Families staff, who are parents themselves. Staff will follow up to make sure you get the answers you need. Staff speak Cantonese, English, Spanish. Care giving for children available 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays.

#### Resource Library

Access more than 3,500 books, videotapes, DVDs and a toy lending collection for families and professionals. Visit the library catalog online at: <http://www.supportforfamilies.org/library>. On-site computer access and hands-on assistance is also available.

#### Support Groups

Come to a support group to find solutions to challenges, learn advocacy skills, and explore resources. Support groups provide a network for families to gain strength by sharing experiences with peers.

#### Volunteer Parent Mentors

Find a match with a trained volunteer Parent Mentor based on a shared issue, condition and or situation.

#### Educational Workshops and Clinics

Learn about resources, rights and responsibilities in monthly parent/professional workshops and weekly small-group clinics. Care

giving for children and interpretation services available with advance reservation for clinics and workshops.

#### Family Links to Mental Health

Get peer support from parents or a professional consultation from mental health clinicians who can help families and professionals access mental health and other services for children.

#### Family Gatherings

Socialize and network in a fun relaxed atmosphere at quarterly events, such as our annual ice-skating party and Halloween party.

#### Newsletter

Read the quarterly newsletter in English, Spanish, or Chinese to find articles of interest to families and professionals.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The purpose of Support for Families is to ensure that families of children with any kind of disability or special health care need have the knowledge and support to make informed choices that enhance their children's development and well being. Through fostering partnership among families, professionals and the community, our children can flourish.

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Eilleen Boussina  
Karen Cancino  
Judy Chen  
Christian Dauer, Vice President  
Chris Dehner  
Todd Gemmer, Treasure  
Nany Hudgins  
Laura Lanzzone, Secretary  
Jane LaPides  
Kelly McRory  
James Riley  
Antje Shadoan  
Sally Spencer, President  
Nancy Statler  
Laurie Strawn

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Juno Duenas

## How You Can Help

All services and events, even childcare, are always free of charge to encourage participation by all families. With the demand for services greater than ever, your donations help make this possible. A gift to Support

for Families means that families of children with special needs will be better prepared to help their children—and that more children with disabilities will live their lives with dignity and opportunity.

Send a check to the address below or give online at <http://www.supportforfamilies.org/help>. Every gift can help make a difference in the life of a child with special needs.

#### **INSIDE**

Support Groups

Information & Resource  
Conference Highlights

Parent-Professional  
Workshops

Calendar of Events

Upcoming Special Events



## Support Groups

**All support groups are free of charge.**

Childcare is provided, unless otherwise indicated, and must be reserved in advance. If you are interested in participating in any of these groups, call (415) 920 - 5040 or e-mail us for more information.

**Autism Group:** Monthly support group for families of children with Autism. Meets: 1st Wednesday of the month, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Facilitated by Jackie Fox.  
NO CHILD CARE PROVIDED.

**Evening Autism Group:** Meets 1st Tuesday evening of the month, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**Spanish-Speaking Children on Autism Spectrum:**

For Spanish-speaking families of children on the autism spectrum. Meets: 2nd Wednesday of month from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Asperger's Group:** For families who have children with Asperger's Syndrome. Meets: 3rd Thursday of the month. 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Facilitated by Karen Haney-Owens.

**Behavior Discussion Group:** A workshop series and discussion group for families concerned about their child's behavior. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday of month from 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Facilitated by Kathy Winship.

**\*Special Presentations:**

8/18 - Nina Kaiser, Psychologist;  
9/15 - Frank Marone, Behaviorist;  
10/20 - Speaker TBD;  
11/03 - Janine Nadaner, Psychotherapist

**Cantonese SFCD Group:**

For Chinese-speaking families of children with special needs. Meets: every 2nd Saturday of the month, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Facilitated by Mee Kit Yip-Li.

**Chinatown Child Development**

**Center:** For Chinese-speaking families of children with special needs. Meets: Every 3rd Monday of the month, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Facilitated by Lisa Yee.

**Down Syndrome Support Group:**

For parents and caregivers of children with Down Syndrome. Meets the 2nd Tuesday evening of the month, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Facilitated by Judy Silva and Wes Horner.

**Foster Parent Support Group:**

For foster parents of children with special needs. Meets the 1st Thursday of the month, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Facilitated by Dennis Lockett and Lorraine Hanks.

**Living with Loss: Loss, Hope and**

**Healing:** A group for parents and caretakers of medically fragile children and children facing life threatening illness. Contact Kathy Winship for more information. Facilitated by Nancy Iverson, MD.

**Mission Head Start Group:**

For Spanish-speaking families of children birth to five with special needs. Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month, 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Facilitated by Kathy Winship.

**Parents of Transition Age Youth with Special Health Care Needs and Disabilities:**

Join us for information, resources and support for the issues we and our youth face as they reach adulthood. Meets 1st Tuesday of the month from 6:00 p.m - 8:00 p.m. Facilitated by Linda Tung.

**Parents of Young Children Group:**

A group for parents who have children aged 0-3 with a disability or special health care needs. Meets one Tuesday per month, 6:00 p.m - 8:00 p.m. Facilitated by Nina Boyle.

**Prader-Willi Group:** For families of children with Prader-Willi Syndrome. Meets quarterly on Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Facilitated by Kathy Winship.

**Spanish-Speaking Prader-Willi Group:**

For Spanish-speaking families of children with Prader-Willi Syndrome. Meets twice a year on Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Facilitated by Kathy Winship.

**Tuesday Night Group:** A group for parents who have children aged 3 and above with a disability or special health care needs. Meets one Tuesday per month, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Facilitated by Nina Boyle.

**Coming in Fall 2011:**

**Parent Toddler Playgroup:**

A group for parents/caretakers and their children ages 18-42 months with disabilities or special health care needs. Meets: Monday August 22nd, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (series dates TBD). Facilitated by Adriana Taranta and Kathy Winship.

Please Contact Kathy Winship, Social Worker, at 415-920-5040 X132 for information about other support groups being offered or if you are interested in a group on a specific issue. Kathy speaks Spanish and English.





## Upcoming Parent-Professional Workshops (PPWs)

Workshops are **FREE** and held at **Support for Families of Children with Disabilities** at 1663 Mission Street, 7th Floor (between Duboce Street and South Van Ness Avenue).

Registration is a half hour before the workshop. \* Please note that Workshop presentations begin promptly on time stated. \* **Reservations are required.** \* Sign up early—space fills up fast! To attend a workshop, reserve child care, and/or interpretation services, you must call at least two weeks in advance: **(415) 920-5040.**

### FRIDAY PPWs

September 23, 2011 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

#### **Bullying and Harassment: Parents Right's and School District's Responsibilities – ENGLISH**

If your child has been a target of bullying or is being bullied come to this works to find out what your rights are. Attorneys from the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights will give a workshop on what rights parents have and what responsibility the school district has under federal regulations in regards to bullying.

**Presenters: Civil Rights Attorneys from the Department of Education**

September 23, 2011 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

#### **Topic: Bullying and Harassment: Parents Right's and School District's Responsibilities - SPANISH**

Description above

**Presenters: Civil Rights Attorneys from the Department of Education**

October 21, 2011 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

#### **Using American Sign Language to Communicate**

This workshop's goal is to help families harness the power of communication with American Sign Language (ASL). This will be an introduction to "Signing Time." Through skillfull delivery of Signing Time curriculums in classes and workshops, an environment of learning and play is created that nurtures and strengthens families.

**Presenters: Teri Voorhes, Certified Instructor**

November 18, 2011 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

#### **Social Security's Supplemental Security Income for Children with Disabilities**

This workshop will cover addressing eligibility, benefits, and issues of legal representation for Social Security's Supplemental Security Income for children with disabilities.

**Presenters: Betty Herrera, Attorney at Law**

### SATURDAY PPW's

September 10, 2011 from 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

#### **Identification & Assessment Rights: Referral to RTI—Mysteries Revealed**

This workshop provides an overview of state and federal special education referral and assessment rights with a special emphasis on referral procedures, the Student Study Team (SST) process, the response to intervention (RTI) guidelines for students with learning disabilities and eligibility options for students with ADD/ADHD.

**Presenter: Joseph J. Feldman, Executive Director, Community Alliance for Special Education (CASE).**

October 8, 2011 from 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

#### **Special Needs Conservatorship**

Parents of children with special needs are often bombarded with financial and health care concerns regarding their children. For example, how can I continue to make health care decisions for my adult child? How can I protect my child financially from swindlers? How can I provide for him or her financially without disturbing public benefits if I am gone? There is good news: attorney Ellen Cookman will answer all of these questions and more!

**Presenter: Ellen S. Cookman, Attorney at Law**

November 12, 2011 from 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

#### **Taking ACTION to improve overall Health & Wellness**

Exercise and nutrition are two important areas that are often overlooked but affect our everyday actions and overall well-being. We will discuss current trends, resources and programs surrounding your child's wellness needs as well as provide tips on increasing physical activity and improving nutrition. I will explain the BuddiesInACTION program in depth, addressing our health goals for individuals of all abilities and ages.

**Presenter: Jen Pleimann CFT, CSCS.**

December 10, 2011 from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

#### **Inclusion**

This year National Inclusive Schools Week is from December 5 – 9, 2011. Please join us at a workshop about inclusion. Inclusive Schools Week has celebrated the progress that schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to an increasingly diverse student population, including students who are marginalized due to disability, gender, socio-economic status, cultural heritage, language preference and other factors.

**Presenters: TBA**



# Calendar of Events

## September 2011

September 1	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
September 8	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (English)
September 10	8:30 - 12:30 pm	Mysteries Revealed Response to Intervention (PPW)
September 12	9:30 - 12:00 pm	Special Education Rights & Responsibilities: Least Restrictive Environment (Cantonese)
September 15	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Spanish)
September 20	5:30 - 8:30 pm	PMP Special Education Series (English)
September 21	9:30 - 12:30 pm	PMP Special Education Series (Spanish)
September 22	4:00 - 6:00 pm	Transition to Adult Services
September 23	10:00 - 12:00 pm	Bullying and Harassment (English)
September 23	10:00 - 12:00 pm	Bullying and Harassment (Spanish)
September 29	4:00 - 6:00 pm	Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy (Spanish)
September 26	9:30 - 12:00 pm	Special Education Rights & Responsibilities: Vocational Ed., Pre-school & Early Intervention (Cantonese)

## October 2011

October 6	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
October 8	8:30 - 12:30 pm	Special Needs Conservatorship (PPW)
October 13	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (English)
October 18	5:30 - 8:30 pm	PMP Special Education Series (English)
October 19	9:30 - 12:30 pm	PMP Special Education Series (Spanish)
October 20	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Spanish)
October 21	10:00 - 12:00 pm	Signing Time: American Sign Language (PPW)
October 27	4:00 - 6:00 pm	SSI Clinic
October 27	4:00 - 6:00 pm	Transition to Adult Services

## November 2011

November 3	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
November 10	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (English)
November 12	8:30 - 12:30 pm	Taking ACTION to Improve Overall Health & Wellness (PPW)
November 15	5:30 - 8:30 pm	PMP Special Education Series (English)
November 17	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Spanish)
November 18	10:00 - 12:00 pm	Social Security's Supplemental Security for Children with Disabilities (PPW)
November 18	12:30 - 2:30 pm	Transition to Adult Services
November 30	9:30 - 12:30 pm	PMP Special Education Series (Spanish)

## December 2011

December 1	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
December 3	8:30 - 4:30 pm	Parent to Parent (English)
December 7&14	9:30 - 12:30 pm	Parent to Parent (Spanish) Part 1&2
December 8	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (English)
December 10	8:30 - 12:30 pm	Inclusion Workshop (PPW)
December 15	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Spanish)
December 16	11:30 - 1:30 pm	Transition to Adult Services

For more information on any of these events please call Support for Families at 415 - 920 - 5040 or visit us at [www.supportforfamilies.org](http://www.supportforfamilies.org)

## HALLOWEEN PARTY AT AQUARIUM OF THE BAY AT PIER 39!



for Children with Disabilities  
and their families and friends



Explore Aquarium of the Bay  
and do fun crafts and games!

**Saturday, October 29, 2011**

5:00—8:00 pm

Event is free. \$5 suggested donation per person.

**Register by calling 415-920-5040**

**Public Transportation:** Take the "F" Fisherman's Wharf to Pier 39.



## HOLIDAY ICE-SKATING PARTY for Families of Children with Disabilities

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2011

6:00-8:00 pm.

**Yerba Buena Ice Skating Center**

750 Folsom Street (between 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Streets  
on the rooftop of the Moscone Center)

Event is free. \$10 suggested donation per person, which includes entrance, skates, and a book and treats for each child.

*Reserve space by calling 415-920-5040 beginning on November 1 to reserve space for children with disabilities and their families.*

For more information about these family events go to: [www.supportforfamilies.org](http://www.supportforfamilies.org)



## Corporations and Our Volunteer Program

### *Making Meaningful Connections*

One of the most important parts of my job at Support for Families is finding energetic, dedicated and loyal volunteers in the community to foster a healthy volunteer program. We depend on individuals and family members like you to introduce us to people in the community seeking volunteer opportunities, such as those in corporations. These collaborations are important for Support for Families, by opening doors to quality volunteers, but also benefit the companies by introducing them to resources available in their community and offering enriching experiences for employees. Support for Families is fortunate to have formed a partnership with PG&E and has been able to recruit volunteers from many of the existing volunteer groups there, such as "Woman's Network", "Access Employee Resource Group", "The Green Team" and "The Pride Network" for our family events, such as the "The Winter Ice Skating party" and "Access to Adventure." Corporate relationships help us to further our mission of offering fun recreational opportunities to families and enable us to stretch our resources to their fullest potential. If you work for a company (large or small) who would like to get their employees involved, please contact me to tell me about it! And, thanks to all our volunteers who work tirelessly to further our mission of helping families.

Kathleen Schlier  
Care Services, Family Event and Volunteer Manager

Kathleen can be contacted via email [kschlier@supportforfamilies.org](mailto:kschlier@supportforfamilies.org). She welcomes all who wish to volunteer at Support for Families.

## Halloween party – New Location, Aquarium of the Bay at Pier 39!

Join us Aquarium of the Bay for our annual Halloween party on Saturday evening, October 29, 2011 from 5:00-8:00 p.m. Make crafts and enjoy a light dinner in the party room, and explore the aquarium all for free! The Aquarium staff will offer "close encounters" of some of the creatures that live there! Don't forget to come in costume! Discounted parking passes will be available at the Aquarium. Register by calling 415-920-5040. Space is limited, call early!





## SFUSD's New Student Assignment Policy

Submitted by Katy Franklin, Chair of the SFUSD Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for Special Education

On June 14, 2011, the San Francisco Unified School District's Board of Education (BOE) voted to approve Board Policy P5101: Student Assignment.

The section relating to Special Education states:

***"The Individual Education Program ("IEP") team will determine appropriate placement for special education students."***

***"To the extent possible, given the unique needs of students as outlined in their IEP, the student assignment process used to assign general education students will be used to assign special education students."***

The first sentence is a long-awaited step in finally bringing SFUSD policy in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.). I.D.E.A. requires School Districts to provide formal, written offers of placement to students receiving special education services. Courts have interpreted that those offers must be very specific, that "placement" means actual school site, and not just a list of services.

What is of concern to CAC members is how the second sentence in the BOE policy directly contradicts the first, and simply restates SFUSD's current practice of deciding most special education school assignments by lottery. The "I" in "IEP" stands for "Individualized", and there is nothing "individualized" about placements determined by lottery. SFUSD policy promises that: "To the extent possible (...) the student assignment process used to assign general education students will be used to assign special education students" but the reality is that SFUSD's school assignment system is fraught with bias.

SFUSD General Education vs. Special Education Enrollment Processes

Enrollment Process	General Education	Special Education
Parents may apply to any school in the district	X	
Capacity of each school's program is routinely published	X	
Number of openings in previous year(s) is routinely published	X	
Number of Round 1 requests for program in previous year(s) are routinely published	X	
Bus route information is published and available to parents	X	
Placements are subject to available bus routes		X

*(Chart courtesy of Rachel Powell Norton)*

Another segment of SFUSD's new enrollment system mandates that, starting in 2017, students at certain elementary schools will "feed" into pre-assigned middle schools. During enrollment periods prior to 2017, feeder school designations will be a tie breaking factor in the lottery system. After 2017, parents who are unhappy with their children's automatic Middle School assignment may still try to apply to other middle schools.

SFUSD claims that the feeder system will make school assignment more equitable and create virtual "K-8's" (kindergarten through 8th grade schools) and strengthen schools by "keeping communities together." While this sounds like an especially good idea for students receiving special education services -- students enrolled in self-contained Special Day Classes (SDCs) do not seem to have been considered part of the school communities, because in numerous instances -- the type of SDC classrooms students are enrolled in, in elementary schools -- are not available at the designated middle schools. How will students enrolled in SDCs feel like part of a community when they cannot attend the school that all other students in the school will attend?

District administrators have asserted: "One of the main goals of the SFUSD special education redesign is the creation of more thoughtful, deliberate, and cohesive "pathways" for students who receive special education services." SFUSD is promoting the use of more inclusive practices in the district, and at school sites; so parents would appreciate it if administrators would be more mindful of how the decisions they make for students in general education affect children of students receiving special education services. Special Education classes will have to be relocated to "fit into" the plans SFUSD has made for students in General Education, and the "pathways" obviously do not include students in SDCs.

The CAC looks forward to a time when students receiving special education services are not always an afterthought. For a glimpse at special education services currently available at each elementary school and notes about how the Feeder Plan may impact students receiving those services, go to:

<http://www.cacspedsf.org/cacspedsf.org/Reports.html>

file: Proposed\_Feeders-Sped-1.pdf

# Thank you!

Donations received April 27, 2011 through July 19, 2011 Support for Families gratefully acknowledges gifts from the following individuals, groups and businesses. We apologize for any omissions or misspellings. Please contact us so we can correct our records.

## 2011 Half Marathon:

### Organizations

Pamakid Runners Club

### Individuals

Daniel Abundis  
Rachel Ackley  
Kurt Aizawa  
Alexandria Albers  
Gloryjean Allen  
Carmen Ancinas-Gee  
Richard Arnold  
Melissa Asilo  
Roger Ballesteros  
Florinda Battad  
Kevin Bell  
Janet Benassi  
Leanne Bissell  
Amanda Bongawil  
Christina Briley  
Stephen Bruno  
Monique Caires  
Joy Catolico  
Jeff Chaplin  
Suzanne Charon  
Kim Christensen  
Timothy Chuter  
Karis Coleman  
Lisa Coletti  
Jameson Costello  
Laurie Cotulla  
Christopher Covin  
Gary Crangle  
Chi Dang  
Karen Delakovias  
Ilda Delgado  
Getchen Diekman  
Marlene Dines  
Ben Draa  
Breege Drees  
Jean Duarte  
Stephanie Edwards  
Kirsten Eidenelson  
Olivia Estoque  
Marc Estoque  
Cecilia Fairley  
Diana Farmer  
Patrick Fernandez  
Guadalupe Flamenco  
Robin Fross, MD  
Eric Fuller  
Christine Garcia  
Ed Gauci

Danielle Gomez  
Geo Googins  
Charlie Graham  
Jeanne Grof  
James Hall  
Marilyn Harding  
Edgar Hernandez  
Michael Hinsdale  
Patrick Hoge  
Edith Hong  
Yasuo Ishizaki  
PJ Iyer  
Ginger Javier  
Drew Jensen  
Jeff Jones  
Clay Kellogg  
Patricia Kirscher  
Pamela Kisse  
Steven Knopp  
Britt Kopping  
Tiana Koziol  
Nicole LaCoursiere Wel  
Patricia Lai  
Shannon Lantzer  
Kiela Lara Conway  
Cyndy Larsen  
Megan Lee  
Wonkyo Lee  
Katy Leung  
Peter Limbrick  
Jennifer Lonsdorf  
Ashley Lopez  
Lisa Lucas-Barham  
Diane Lujan  
Cynthia Lundy  
Maritess Madrionan  
Daniel Marriage  
Kirsta Martino  
Marilyn McEnhill  
Michael McPartlan  
Shireen McSpadden  
Mario Melgar Jr.  
Jeanette Mericle  
Alexander Mitko  
Carol Montgomery  
Kathleen Morgan  
Simon Morris  
Kim Morrison  
Julie Munsayac  
Desiree Navarro  
Joan Ngando-Agbor  
Russell Nishikawa  
Molly O'Callaghan  
Amitava Parial  
Rushina Patel

Raj Patel  
Shelia Patterson  
Alexander Pieretti  
Kelly Pisarri  
Marianne Poon  
Beryl Potter  
Brian Proses  
Michael Purcell  
Karen Qiang  
Dinah Quiboloy  
Chris Ranney  
Jon Rasmussen  
Jan Reyes  
Laura Reyes-Wilson  
Christine Rojo  
Shirley Rossi  
Barry Schaeffer  
Cristine Schaeffer  
Marcia Shedlock  
Matthew Shingai  
Michael Shriver  
William Siacotos  
Alex Smpliciano  
Jahari Smith  
Stephanie  
Sonnenshine  
Joanne Spetz  
Jennifer Tablan  
Elyssa Thome  
Sharon Tomsy  
James Trotter  
Theresa Turri  
Omar Ventura  
Michael Venuti  
Brent Victory  
Keith Villalovos  
Jennifer Vocal  
Chris Wade  
Montira Warran  
Anthony Wild  
Claire Williams  
Jenny Wilson  
May Win  
Stephanie Woitte  
Jocelyn Yunzal  
Michael Zensius

### Access to Adventure:

Lauren Senhaur

### Family Voices 2011 Summit:

The California Endowment

## Other Donations:

### Organizations, Businesses and Corporations

A.S. Batle Company  
The McLoughlin Gallery LLC

### Individuals

Rebecca Beeson  
Marilyn Chelini  
Lynn Davis  
Susan Efendi-Sullivan  
Sharon Kaitz  
Darnee Lansangan  
Patrick Mahoney  
Amy Rassen  
Jessica Savage  
Heidi Segedin

### In-Kind Donations:

**Organizations**  
Nitro PDF

### Library:

**Organizations**  
Jessica Kingsley Publisher  
Davis Dyslexia Center International  
Free Spirit Publishing  
Redleaf Press  
AMACOM Books  
Brookes Publishing  
Lee and Low Books

### Individuals

Anonymous  
Karra Barber  
Linda Brault  
June Bug  
Elaine Butler  
Emily Chin and Rose Phung  
Rogill Clute  
Anna Costalas  
Connie Johnson  
Dennis Lockett  
Kathryn Rato  
Leslie Roffman and Todd Wanerman  
Fanny Valencia

## Tributes and Memorials:

*In honor of Jake Gamboa's 7th birthday*  
Correy Bernal  
Kay Lu  
Jeff Romano  
Marianne Wong-Sorani

*In honor of Joan Crowell's 90th birthday*  
Elizabeth and Julian Eisenstein  
Virginia Kahn

*In honor of Jonah Fox*  
Karen Dempsey

*In memory of David Yan*  
PuiWah Yan and Family

### Workplace Gifts and Pledges:

**Morgan Stanley**  
Nersi Boussina  
Todd Gemmer

**2010 United Way Campaign**  
Michael Kapulica

**PG&E Corporation**  
Mark Fultz

### Corporate Matching Gifts:

Helen Jespersen

*In honor of the Chen/Gamboa family*  
Goldman, Sachs & Co.



## SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

1663 Mission Street, 7th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103

NONPROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA  
PERMIT NO. 1887

### SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

#### All services are free of charge:

- Phone Line & Drop-In Center
- Information & Resources
- Resource Library
- Support Groups
- Parent Mentor Program
- Educational Workshops
- Family Gatherings
- Short-term Counseling
- Community Outreach
- Website:

[www.supportforfamilies.org](http://www.supportforfamilies.org)

This NEWSLETTER is published quarterly in English, Spanish & Chinese. If you have a question or comment, send it to [info@supportforfamilies.org](mailto:info@supportforfamilies.org)

#### Support for Families

1663 Mission Street, 7th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
T: 415.282.7494  
F: 415.282.1226

#### Family Resource Center Warmline and Information and Referral

1663 Mission Street, 7th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
T: 415.920.5040

### Board of Directors

Sally Spencer, President  
Christian Dauer, Vice President  
Laura Lanzone, Secretary  
Todd Gemmer, Treasurer

Eileen Boussina  
Karen Cancino  
Judy Chen  
Chris Dehner  
Nancy Hudgins  
Jane LaPides  
Kelly McRory  
James Riley  
Antje Shadoan  
Nancy Statler  
Laurie Strawn

### Executive Director

Juno Duenas

### Staff

**Nina Boyle**, Program Director  
**Elaine Butler**, Librarian  
**Anna Costalas**, Information and Resource Manager  
**Lauren Crook**, HRIIC and SNIP Technical Assistant  
**Joe R. Goyos**, Education Manager  
**Karen Haney-Owens**, Community Resource Parent  
**Deidre Hayden**, Special Needs Inclusion Project Director  
**June Hew**, Community Resource Parent  
**Bill Lewandowski**, Operations Director  
**Dennis Lockett**, Community Resource Parent  
**Christine Reina**, Community Resource Parent

**Kathleen Schlier**, Care Services, Family Events and Volunteer Manager  
**Joan Selby**, Parent Mentor Coordinator

**Lindsey Sheehy**, Administrative Assistant

**Alison Stewart**, Special Needs Inclusion Project Manager

**Catania Trap**, Office Manager

**Linda Tung**, Administrative Assistant  
**Sonia Valenzuela**, Parent Mentor Coordinator

**Jan Watson** - Development Director

**Katherine Winship**, Social Worker/  
Mental Health Coordinator

**Lisa Yee**, Community Resource Parent

**Wendy Yuan**, Education Coordinator

### High Risk Infant Interagency Council

**Zulema Rubalcava Barron**, Training and Technical Assistance Manager

**Ann Carr**, HRIIC Director

**Shellie Citron**, Administrative Assistant  
**Judy Higuchi**, HRIIC Associate Director

**Regine Ho**, Round Table Care Coordinator

**Karla Martinez**, Round Table Care Coordinator

**Shanta Jambotkar**, Round Table Care Coordinator

**Ana Vanesa Plasencia**, Data Evaluation Specialist

### Family Resource Center Network of California (FRCNCA)

**Debbie Sarmiento**, FRCNCA Coordinator