



SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2011

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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.

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday Evening October 14, 2011

A benefit to support
SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Wine & Design

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

Honoree

Dr. David Alexander, CEO

Lucille Packard Foundation for Children's Health
<http://www.lpfch.org/newsroom/releases/alexander.html>

Entertainment

Wesla Whitfield and Mike Greensill

<http://www.weslawhitfield.com/>

News from SNIP (The Special Needs Inclusion Project)

San Francisco's numerous cultural institutions are reaching out to schools to provide them with interesting exhibits and lively activities that supplement the schools' curriculum. SNIP has had the opportunity this past year to contribute to their efforts, working with the Contemporary Jewish Museum and Aquarium of the Bay. While they offer two very different visitor experiences, they share a high level of commitment to providing inclusive experiences for children and youth with and without disabilities.

The **Contemporary Jewish Museum** actively includes people with disabilities in their programs. Last fall they launched an initiative to be more inclusive: "Beyond the important resources of ramps, elevators, and large fonts, there are many tools we use in our everyday interactions with visitors which create an inclusive and welcoming environment. Fine-tuning these ever-important human powered tools will be the focus of this new initiative." SNIP staff observed their education staff in action and provided specific suggestions for managing and enriching the experience for all the children visiting their exhibits and participating in the accompanying activities. The education staff participated in three workshops we customized for them, based on our observations and discussions. We then provided a general training about inclusive practices for representatives from each department of the museum, including security, on ways to welcome all visitors as well as the types of accommodations or modifications their visitors with disabilities might need.

The **Aquarium of the Bay** has been in a year-long endeavor to make their programming and activities more accessible, starting with forming an advisory committee to guide their efforts. One of the actions the committee recommended was to have Aquarium staff participate in training to increase their understanding of disabilities, which was subsequently provided by SNIP. The Aquarium of the Bay is providing additional outreach to families and children with disabilities by partnering with Support for Families for two upcoming family events, a movie night in August and the SFCD Annual Halloween Party in October. (see page 8) The entire Aquarium will be open to families during both of those occasions. On Halloween there will be fun activities throughout the Aquarium after hours, giving families and their children with disabilities plenty of opportunities to explore and enjoy the Aquarium at their own pace.



A Closer Look: What the House Budget Resolution Means for America's Seniors and People with Disabilities

(Excerpts from Families USA's April 2011 Publication - see below for link to the full fact sheet)

House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan introduced a budget resolution for fiscal year (FY) 2012 during the week of April 4, 2011 which included significant budget cuts in Medicaid and Medicare. Medicare serves virtually all Americans over the age of 65, as well as millions of people with disabilities who have nowhere else to turn for health care. Medicaid offers essential health coverage for nearly 60 million of the most vulnerable Americans—half of them children. For seniors and people with disabilities, Medicaid finances health care that Medicare doesn't cover, like nursing home and other long-term care. Large spending cuts would fundamentally alter Medicare and Medicaid in ways that would make them less reliable for the people who depend on them and that would shift financial risks for health care costs to consumers and to the states.

Q: Will the budget resolution keep in place the long-term care safety net for seniors and people with disabilities?

A: No. For any proposal that arbitrarily cuts Medicaid, the answer is no.

Medicaid is by far the largest payer for long-term care nationally, covering about 48 percent of all costs and 43 percent of the tab for nursing home care. Cutting Medicaid would place millions of Americans at risk of not being able to afford the long-term care they need. One-third of Medicaid spending is for long-term care for seniors and people with disabilities. For 14.7 million seniors and people with disabilities, Medicaid is a vital safety net that gives them access to care in the community or in nursing facilities, care that Medicare does not cover and that they otherwise could not afford. Cuts would force states to reduce long-term care services and would punch holes in that safety net.

Q: Will America's seniors and people with disabilities have more options to receive long-term care in the setting they prefer?

A: No. For any proposal that arbitrarily cuts Medicaid, the answer is no.

Most people who need long-term care would far prefer to remain living at home or in the community. Medicaid helps millions do that. More than 40 percent of Medicaid long-term care spending is for care that is provided to people in their homes or in the community. This care helps more than 2 million people stay out of nursing homes. Cuts to Medicaid spending would force states to reduce these services and would place millions at risk of institutionalization.

Q: Will the proposals help build a strong foundation for the future by helping our children get a healthy start in life?

A: No. For any proposal that arbitrarily cuts Medicaid, the answer is no.

Medicaid covers one-third of all children in the United States, making it the largest insurer of children. It also provides insurance for mothers, covering one in three births. Cuts to Medicaid would force states to cut coverage for mothers and children, putting the health of our children at risk. Poor health leads to poor performance in school and later in life. Cuts to Medicaid mortgage our future.

FAMILY VOICES
of California

Brought to you by Family Voices of California. www.familyvoicesofca.org.
Visit www.familiesusa.org to make your voice heard, keep up to date and provide input on the federal budget process. To see a copy of the full fact sheet, visit <http://familiesusa2.org/assets/pdfs/House-Budget-Resolution-Scorecard.pdf>.

We also would like to say goodbye to Tara Roibison who has been the Family Voices Manager for the last two years. We will miss her and wish her well in her new endeavors.



"Together We're Better" by Jared, 2nd Grader

Access to Early Literacy

The development of early literacy skills is important for all children, and parents can support this development through everyday activities in their homes and communities. The Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL) has many free resources for parents of young children, birth to five years, who have or are at risk for disabilities or developmental delays.

CELL has developed practice guides that contain practical and easy-to-do suggestions that can be used with all children. The guides can be downloaded and printed or viewed as a CELLcast or podcast (audio explanation of the practice with photos of parents and children doing the practice). CELL also has practice guides with adaptations that provide additional ideas for making sure that young children with disabilities can participate in early literacy activities. For example, the guide "Show Me the Funny" suggests ways that parents can share books with infants who have sensory or developmental difficulties so that book reading is an enjoyable experience for parents and babies.

In addition to these practice guides, there are short videos, which can be viewed online, that demonstrate ways to carry out some of the early literacy practices at home. Examples include finding early literacy opportunities in everyday places and activities and an interactive way to read with very young children.

CELL also has downloadable tools for parents such as a simple checklist for identifying children's interests in everyday literacy activities or ideas for early literacy materials to have at home. There are also fun posters with suggestions for incorporating early literacy during families daily routines.

Visit the CELL Web site (www.earlyliteracylearning.org/) to find these practice guides, CELLcasts, videos, tools, and posters as well as summaries of the research behind these resources. Parents and practitioners will find lots of ways to support and encourage all young children's development of listening, talking, and early reading and writing skills.

CELL is a research-to-practice national technical assistance center that promotes evidence-based early literacy learning practices. CELL is based at the Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute in Asheville, North Carolina, and is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Research to Practice Division.

Ann Carr, Director of HRIIC and Judy Higuchi, Assistant Director can be reached at 415-206-7743 or visit their web site at www.hriic.org.

A Big Congratulations to Our New Mentors!

Support for Families is happy to announce that during this past school year, the Parent Mentor Program hosted an eight month training session for both the English and Spanish speaking parents seeking to improve their special education knowledge and self-advocacy skills.

Our eighteen newly trained mentors received training on what special education is and is not, who is eligible, the types of services that can be provided, timelines, the six principles of IDEA, placement, procedural safeguards, least restrictive environment, inclusion, etc.

Congratulations mentors, you're a wonderful group of parents and we appreciate your enthusiasm, energy, knowledge and time. Your participation in this program, allows our agency to help serve a number of families in need. We can't do it without your help!

Interested in becoming a mentor?

We encourage you to participate in our upcoming Special Education Series scheduled to begin in September. This training offers English and Spanish speaking parents the opportunity to learn about their rights and responsibilities under the Individuals Disability Education Act (IDEA) and to learn how to navigate this system with the support and knowledge of sharing with other parent mentor volunteers.

The Parent Mentor trainings are **FREE**. Limited childcare is available with pre-registration.

To learn more about the Parent Mentor Programs, please call Joan or Sonia at 415.920.5040 and/or via email: Joan Selby jselby@supportforfamilies.org or Sonia Valenzuela svalenzuela@supportforfamilies.org.

*Note: Registration with Joan Selby or Sonia Valenzuela is required.
Thank you.*

Siblings of Children with Special Needs

By Anita Gurian, Ph.D. - NYU Child Study Center

All siblings experience rivalry off and on, but having a sibling with special needs is a special challenge. Parents and kids, however, report that it's manageable and even has some benefits.

Siblings of children with special needs may have special feelings.

Many parents have to spend a great deal of their time attending to a child with special needs. As a result, the other children in the family may feel that their own needs have lower priority or they may have other worries. These reactions may be expressed in various ways. Some children and adolescents may:

- Feel alone or neglected or jealous about the extra attention given to a child with special needs
- Wish that they too had problems to get more attention
- Worry that the disability is contagious and that they might catch it
- Become overly helpful or noncompliant in an effort to gain approval
- Try to ease their parents' burden by not making demands or feeling guilty
- Feel guilty about their own good health
- Feel embarrassed or resent having to involve their sibling with neighborhood friends
- Be afraid to express negative feelings to avoid adding stress to the family
- Worry about the care and future of their sibling

How can parents help?

Parents should demystify the disability and explain it to their children in appropriate language. Do it early and do it often, since children's understanding and reactions change over time. They need to know what the disability is and what to expect. They also need to know the weaknesses as well as the strengths of their sibling. As children grow their understanding and their reactions change.

Parents, focused on including their child with special needs as a full member of the family, may tend to give less attention to the needs of their other children. It is important, however, to try to give each a regularly scheduled special time with each parent alone and together.

When planning family activities, remember that not everything has to be done with the whole family. When an activity is too taxing for the special child, arrangements can be made for his care while the family is out.

Encourage each child to pursue own his/her own interests and give each one a special space for personal things. Recognize each child's unique strengths and accomplishments and make sure they develop friendships outside the family. If a child is concerned about how a friend might react to his sibling, role play some possible conversations and explanations.

Have the child with special needs do as much as she can for herself and any other chores she is able to do. In this way everyone has some responsibility, and children don't feel overburdened. The child with special needs should be subject to the same rules as the others whenever possible and appropriate consequences should to be imposed.

Find opportunities to compliment each child for being helpful and for being a team player.

Parents should consider enlisting the help of relatives when feasible. For example, siblings might spend time with other family members.

Parents should initiate periodic family discussions at a quiet time with no distractions. Providing a designated time would enable everyone to air feelings, positive and negative, and a way of talking about stresses such as peers, reactions of public, extra responsibilities and other accommodations. Kids should know it's okay to ask questions, and discussion should clarify any misinformation they may have picked up. Parents should try to maintain calm, modeling an attitude of coping, communicating and actively seeking ways to solve problems.

Growing up with a sibling with special needs has benefits

Parents and children report that, compared to other families, they face more situations that demand flexibility and problem-solving. They also get more lessons in the components of character building—sensitivity, insight, ability to get along with others, tolerance of differences, compassion and patience, characteristics which will serve them well in other situations.

Resources

Views from Our Shoes: Growing Up With a Brother or Sister With Special Needs , edited by Donald Meyer, Woodbine House, 1997

The preceding was an excerpt from, "Siblings of Children with Special Needs" by Anita Gurian, Ph.D.. The full article can be found at: http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/siblings_children_special_needs. Used with permission of www.aboutourkids.org, website of the NYU Child Study Center. All rights reserved.



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 pm 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: supportforfamilies.org/library.html. 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

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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 www.supportforfamilies.org/help.html. Every gift can help make a difference in the life of a child with special needs.

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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 at infor@supportforfamilies.org

Autism Group: Monthly support group for families of children with Autism. Meets: 1st Wednesday of the month, 10:00 am -12:00 pm. NO CHILD CARE PROVIDED.

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

Spanish-Speaking Children on Autism Spectrum: For Spanish-speaking families of children on the autism spectrum. Meets: 2nd Wednesday of month from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm.

Asperger's Group: For families who have children with Asperger's Syndrome. Meets: 3rd Thursday of the month. 6:30 am -8:00 pm.,

Behavior Discussion Group: A workshop series and discussion group for families concerned about their child's behavior. Meets 3rd Thursday per month 6:30 am - 8:30 pm. *Special Presentation by Frank Marone, PhD of Behavior Education Training Associates on 5/19, 6/16,7/21, 8/18, 9/15.*

Cantonese SFCD Group: For Chinese-speaking families of children with special needs. Meets: every 1st Saturday of the month, 2:00 am - 4:00 pm.

Chinatown Child Development Center: For Chinese-speaking families of children with special needs. Meets: Every 3rd Monday of the month, 9:30 am -12:00 pm.

Down Syndrome Support Group: For parents and caregivers of children with down. Meets the 2nd - Tuesday evening of the month, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm,

Living with Loss: Loss, Hope and Healing: A group for parents and caretakers of medically fragile children and children facing life threatening illness..

Mission Head Start Group: For Spanish-speaking families of children birth to five with special needs. Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month, 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm,

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 - 8:00 p.m.

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 pm - 8:00 pm,

Prader-Willi Group: For families of children with Prader-Willi Syndrome. Meets quarterly on Saturdays, 10:00 am -1:30 pm.

Spanish-Speaking Prader-Willi Group: For Spanish-speaking families of children with Prader-Willi Syndrome. Meets twice a year on Saturdays, 10:00 am - 1:30 pm.

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 am - 8:00 pm.

Please Contact Kathy Winship, Social Worker, at 920-5040 X132 if you have questions. Kathy speaks Spanish and English.

Saturday Parent-Professional Workshops

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

Registration: 8:30 am * Program: 9:00 am-12:30 pm * Please note that Workshop presentations begin promptly at 9:00 am.* **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.**

Saturday, June 11, 2011, 8:30 am -12:30 pm
Topic - Sensory Integration

Do you ever wonder what sensory integration is? This workshop introduces parents, teachers, and other professionals to the world of sensory integration. It will include learning basic theoretical background, assessment, and implementing strategies at home and school.

Presenters: Amy Gray, OTR/L and Stephanie Hsai, OTR/ Occupational Therapists at the Child Development Center at California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC)

Saturday, September 10, 2011, 8:30 am -12:30 pm
Topic - 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)



2011 Information and Resource Conference

The trees are beginning to bloom and pollen is in the air. Aside from longer days and warmer weather, spring brings another event that occurs annually - the Support for Families annual Information and Resource Conference (IRC). This year, March 19, 2011 was a cold rainy day but the poor weather didn't stop more than 500 caregivers, professionals, volunteers and exhibitors from attending the 2011 Information and Resource Conference. This year's event titled "Learning Together" was held at John O'Connell High School in San Francisco's Mission District. The free daylong event was quite the success.

The keynote address was given by Richard Carranza, Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, Innovation and Social Justice, Cecelia Dodge, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, Rachel Norton, Commissioner of SFUSD Board of Education. During this presentation the three presenters addressed the upcoming changes to the special education services in the San Francisco Unified School District.

The event had 65 exhibitors in the exhibition hall and 21 workshops ranging in topics from Early Intervention through Transition to Adulthood. There were also several special topic workshops on behavior, inclusion, mental health and literacy. The conference workshops were attended by approximately 400 caregivers, professional and community members. Attendees were provided a light breakfast, lunch and onsite childcare.

This year's event would not have been the success that it was had it not been for all of the help that we got from the community. We would like to thank all of the organizations and individuals who participated in every aspect of the IRC, from set-up on March 18 to registration, workshop assistance, food court, and clean up on March 19. Their contributions of time and energy to the 2011 Information and Resource Conference ensured the success of this event.

Thank you to:

- The workshop presenters who contributed their valuable time to conduct educational workshops and the exhibitors who shared helpful information and resources with families and professionals
- Event Partners: Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC); High Risk Infant Interagency Council (HRIIC); Improving Transition Outcomes Project (ITOP); Special Needs Inclusion Project (SNIP); San Francisco Unified School District and The Junior League of San Francisco
- John O'Connell High School staff and administration, including Principal Rick Duber and Mr. & Mrs. Gamino
- San Francisco Unified School District for providing language interpreters
- Keynote speakers: San Francisco Unified School District Deputy Superintendent Richard Carranza, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education Cecelia Dodge, and School Board Commissioner Rachel Norton
- City College of San Francisco-Disabled Students Programs and Services, Matrix Parent Network and Resource Center, Parents for Public Schools, Parents Helping Parents and San Francisco Unified School District for generously loaning us several sets of interpreting equipment
- Support for Families, HRIIC, and SNIP staff and volunteers: Sonia Valenzuela, Joan Selby, Christine Reina, Cat Trap, Shanta Jambotkar, Linda Tung, Nina Boyle, Kathy Winship, Ana Plasencias, Regine Ho, Judy Higuchi, Alison Stewart, Dee Hayden, Lisa Yee, Keith Rockhold, Robin Hansen and Connie Wong
- A very special thank you to Wendy Yuan, Kathleen Schlier, Anna Costalas and SFCD Admin Team for their invaluable work before, during, and after the conference
- Cole Hardware, Purity Organic, Kellogg's, Popchips, Entemann's Bakery and Del Monte Foods for their in-kind donations
- The many individual volunteers and groups that gave their time to help with conference

We are very excited about this year's success and we can't wait to get started planning next year's IRC. The 2011 IRC "Learning Together" was an excellent event and if you couldn't make it this year we hope to see you at the next one.

Thank you,

Joe Goyos
Education Manager and
IRC Coordinator





Calendar of Events

June 2011

June 2	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
June 8	8:30 - 12:00 pm	Parent to Parent pt. 1 (Spanish)
June 11	8:30 - 12:30pm	Sensory Integration (PPW)
June 16	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Spanish)
June 23	4:00 - 6:00 pm	Transition to Adult Services
June 25	8:30 - 12:00 pm	Parent to Parent pt. 1 (English)
June 30	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (English)

August 26 5:30 - 8:30 pm

Movie Night at Aquarium of the Bay

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	Identification & Assessment Rights (PPW)
September 15	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Spanish)
September 22	4:00 - 6:00 pm	Transition to Adult Services

July 2011

No Clinics this Month

August 2011

August 4	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
August 11	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (English)
August 18	4:00 - 6:00 pm	IEP Clinic (Spanish)
August 25	4:00 - 6:00 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



Upcoming Special Events



Support for Families and Aquarium of the Bay present:



Movie Night!

Families of children with disabilities are invited to join us at a family-friendly movie and explore the Aquarium of the Bay at Pier 39!

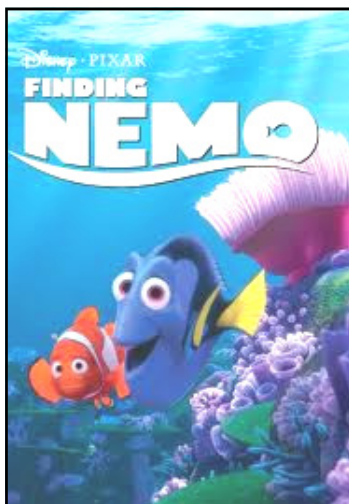
Friday, August 26, 2011

5:30-8:00 pm

Register by calling 415-920-5040

Enjoy a movie, pizza, and refreshments in the party room, then check out the sharks and rays in the aquarium—all completely free!

Three hour parking passes will be available for \$8 each.



SAVE THE DATE!

Support for Families
HALLOWEEN PARTY
at the
Aquarium of the Bay!

Saturday, October 29, 2011
5:00-8:00 p.m.

Register by calling
415-920-5040
beginning on Sept. 1, 2011

For more information about these family events go to: www.supportforfamilies.org or www.aquariumofthebay.org

Meet SFCD Board Member Chris Dehner

My wife and I were going along with our first pregnancy with anticipation and excitement when we found out our child had Down Syndrome. As can be expected we went through a range of emotions as we processed and came to grips with this news. One of the strongest feelings was the fear of the unknown. Becoming parents for the first time was overwhelming enough. Now we wondered how we would take care of a child with special needs.

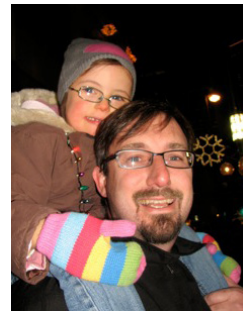
When our daughter Darcy was born it was one of the happiest days of our lives. Despite our relief in having a beautiful and healthy daughter we soon realized that we would benefit from support services. Naturally we consulted with our pediatricians and then the regional center. Still, there was so much for us to learn. The world of special needs can be quite a daunting system to navigate in addition to simply caring for a child's daily needs. This is when we first learned about Support for Families. The information and resources that Support for Families provides have been invaluable. We are consistently comforted by meeting people who are going through similar struggles and can relate to our family.

We have utilized many of the resources from Support for Families over the years. We have attended support groups out of which we developed friendships with families who have children with similar needs. These friendships have been a great source of strength and support. My wife and I have attended numerous seminars and trainings put on by Support for Families on topics ranging from behavior to communication to navigating the San Francisco Unified School District and the IEP process. These seminars and workshops have helped us find many of the resources that we have come to rely on in supporting our daughter.

In addition, we also attended events such as the Access to Adventure (through which we discovered Acrosports) and the Walk and Roll. Besides the resources and education provided, we have always been impressed with how Support for Families builds community and awareness.

I was honored when Support for Families asked me to serve on the Board of Directors. The energy and devotion shown by the staff and the board is truly amazing. After having benefited from so many of the services that Support for Families provides it is wonderful to work with them in continuing to be such a valuable resource in the community.

Chris and his wife, Andrea, live in San Francisco with their children Darcy, Finley and Brendan.



Access to Adventure 2011 – A lovely day in the park

Our third annual Access to Adventure event was held on Saturday, May 7th in the Music Concourse Bandshell in Golden Gate Park. This event is held every year for families of children and youth with disabilities or any kind of health care need. Health and recreation organizations brought a giant trampoline to jump on, sailboats to climb on, adaptive cycles to ride and more!

Thank you to all the exhibitors who participated this year. Thanks to Chuck Poling for being our emcee, and the following on-stage performers; Warren Hellman and The Wranglers Jeanie and Chuck's bluegrass music (along with bass player Ryan Lim), Performing Arts Workshop, Magic Jeanne and Hoop 'in Heather. There are many organizations, companies and individuals who contribute to this event. Thanks to Lucas Metcalf-Tobin, Ellen McCarthy and Lillian Bautista from SF Recreation and Parks Dept. for partnering with us again for this fantastic day in the park. Thanks to Sue from Aidells Sausage and Queenie and the great volunteers from Simple Kindness who provided lunch to the families.

We would like to thank our board member Jane LaPides and Murray Cahen who helped at the Prep Day, and purchased all the supplies. Thanks to our sponsor AAA of Northern California. Thanks to all the organizations who contributed a door prize, and Thanks to Tina Nelson who provided ASL interpreting. We also would like to thank Mike Perez and Nady Systems for providing the sound equipment, graphic designer Amanda Sargisson and photographer Veronika Gulchin. Thanks to Frank Schlier who grilled the vegetarian sausages and our board members Nancy Statler, Karen Cancino, Antje Shadoan and Sally Spencer who assisted at the help desk.

Thanks to Lisa Moniz and PG&E for providing the majority of the volunteers at the event, and the Junior League San Francisco for helping with set-up and at the SFCD craft table. Thanks to all the SFCD staff who worked that day.

Kathleen Schlier is our Care Giving, Special Events and Volunteer Manager. She welcomes new volunteers and can be contacted via email at kschlier@supportforfamilies.org



Join the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CACSPED)!

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

The purpose of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for Special Education is to advocate for effective special education programs and services, and advise the Board of Education on priorities in the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). The State Education Code mandates that each SELPA have a CAC and that a majority of CAC members be parents.

In San Francisco, CAC meetings are usually held on the fourth Thursday of each month (except July, November and December) from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. These meetings are open to the public; everyone is welcome to attend. Joining the CAC gives you an opportunity to have your opinions heard and make a difference in the way special education is conducted in our area.

Food, childcare, and Interpretation are provided (if you call in advance). For more information, and to reserve childcare, please call 415- 920-5040. Please join us. The Board of Education needs to hear about the issues facing your children in special education programs in our district. The more members and perspectives we have, the stronger our committee will become.

Meeting Location: Support For Families of Children With Disabilities, 1663 Mission Street, 7th floor.

Advocacy tips:

In order to be the best advocate you can be for your child, you'll need to know how to get organized and get educated. Keeping meticulous records is crucial; it will help you to become a more effective coordinator of services. Examples of records you'll want to keep and organize:

- IEP and IFSP records;
- Letters and notes (from teachers, doctors, etc.)
- Medical records and therapists' reports;
- Test results and evaluations;

Get copies of all written information about your child. Keep a journal of events and concerns you have about your child's school program and make notes from conversations and meetings you have with teachers and administrators regarding those concerns. Attend seminars and workshops. Read as much as you can about your child's disability and gather all the information you can about the latest therapies and treatments available. Join online list-serves and share information with other parents of children with similar needs and concerns. Support groups can also be very helpful for exchanging information. Finally, Support for Families has a Parent Mentor Program that offers individualized support from a mentor parent who can help you. Contact them at (415) 920-5040.

The CAC has a new website! <http://www.cacspedsf.org>

Resources

Protection & Advocacy, Inc. (PAI)

Provides advocacy help for Californians with disabilities.
(800) 776-5746 TTY: 800-719-5798 / <http://www.pai-ca.org>

Community Alliance for Special Education (C.A.S.E.)

Advocacy group and legal resource.
(415)431-2285 / <http://www.caseadvocacy.org>

Procedural Safeguards service of the California Department of Education (CDE)

Provides information regarding educational rights.
(800) 926-0648 / <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/>

The San Francisco Mayor's Office on Disability

(415) 554 - 6789 TTY: (415) 554-6799
Email: mod@sfgov.org
http://www.sfgov.org/site/mod_index.asp

Books:

From Emotions to Advocacy by Pete and Pamela Wright

The Complete IEP Guide: How to Advocate for Your Special Ed Child (5th Ed., Feb 2007) by Lawrence Siegel

Thank you!

Donations received January 1, 2011 through April 26, 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.

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In recognition of our professional childcare providers at the workshops
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In honor of Camille, Carmen and Virginia Lorne's Birthday
Pat Wilson

In honor of Matthew McRory's 2nd birthday
Lanier Coles

In honor of Michael Boussina
Zandy Krischer

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

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

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

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