



SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2009

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

A SPECIAL NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Dear Families and Friends:

Due to environmental and economic considerations, Support for Families will no longer be sending out separate Parent Professional Workshop/Clinic flyers or Special Event flyers to everyone on our mailing list. Instead we will be including upcoming events in a pullout section in the newsletter. You can put it on your refrigerator/bulletin board to remind you of upcoming events.

In addition, if you are interested in receiving our newsletter via e-mail instead of through the mail, or if you have any questions, please contact us at 415-920-5040 and speak to one of the Community Resource Parents or send us an e-mail at info@supportforfamilies.org.

Wishing you well,
Juno Duenas, Executive Director
Support for Families of Children with Disabilities

Special Needs Inclusion Project Features: Including Alexander”

Excerpt from a paper by Robert Rye, used with permission from the author.

Alexander entered my preschool classroom with a terrible crash. A table got bumped and two plants and a bag of soil went crashing to the floor. Alexander moves around in a wheelchair. He had rolled into our Science Table, while his mom, Beth, was searching for his cubby in the classroom. Although I had met with school administrators and special education providers about Alexander, this was the first time I was meeting my new student and his mother. I was nervous to say the least, and what an entrance I had to deal with. I was clearly not ready, and neither was my classroom.

I took a deep breath, positioned a smile on my face, and slowly approached Alexander and his mother. I squatted down next to Alexander and introduced myself. "Hello there", I said, "My name is Robb and I am your teacher. Welcome to our classroom. It looks like you had a little crash." "Yes I did", he replied. I

asked him if I could help him clean up. He politely replied, "Yes please".

I began to remove the plant parts from Alexander's lap as Beth came closer. In my clumsy attempt to stand up to greet her, I bumped the same table that Alexander had crashed into and off tumbled another plant, pouring plant parts and soil to the floor and all over my shoes. I was horrified. Alexander began to laugh out loud; Beth knelt down beside us and said, "I'm terribly sorry". I looked at Beth, then Alexander, and I began to laugh as well. I was feeling much more relaxed at this point and said, "It's OK. Even grown-ups sometimes crash".

It was at this moment that I realized that I had some growing to do with regard to my own comfort level around people and children with disabilities. And because there was probably some growing about to take place in the hearts and minds of the other 16 students in my class, I needed to act fast. I needed to be ready for Alex-

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Your Child CAN Participate!

My name is Kathleen Schlier, and in addition to being a manager at Support for Families, I am also a parent of a child with special needs. When my daughter was ten, a friend asked her if she was interested in taking dance lessons. She has cerebral palsy and the thought had never entered my mind that she could be a part of a dance program, including getting up on stage and performing! I realize now how limiting this was for my daughter, and it was more a question of finding the right program for her. After many years, she now takes dance classes five times a week while getting exercise and connecting with her friends.

If you have a child with a disability, the question of joining a team sport or enrolling in a summer camp can be challenging and somewhat daunting. You may wonder about the

ability of programs to be fully inclusive and safe. The fact is, it's important for children with disabilities or special health care needs to be as active as their siblings and typical peers.

The good news is that there are many programs that can provide the support and guidance that families need to make good choices about recreational activities. Support for Families is here to help you find them.

Support for Families and San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department will bring a host of these organizations to the Music Concourse at Golden Gate Park on Saturday, April 18, 2009 from noon to 3:00 p.m. "Access to Adventure" is a new family event that combines fun activities with information

about health and recreation. Representatives from organizations such as "Project Insight," a program for children and youth with visual impairments, can answer your questions and show you how you can directly access the programs, camps and organizations in your community.

Enjoy a fun day in the park, get some information, and check out the exciting activities and entertainment. Lunch will be provided for each participant—all completely free. Call 415-920-5040 to register or go to our web site to find out more information: www.supportforfamilies.org. I hope to see you at the park this spring!

Kathleen Schlier is the Care Services, Family Event and Volunteer Manager and can be reached at 415-920-5040 extension 22 ❖

Parent Mentors Learn from Expert Panelists and Celebrate Upcoming Graduation!

The Parent Mentor Program is excited to announce that in April, a panel of disability related advocacy professionals will give a presentation to mentors attending our special education series. The focus will be on IDEA, ADA, and Section 504.

To commemorate eight months of hard work, the program will be celebrating our new mentor's efforts at our upcoming graduation in May. Congratulations new mentors!

Support for Families would like to extend a warm THANK YOU to all of our mentors! Over the many years, your hard work and dedication have been a vital part of the Support for Families network.

Interested in becoming a mentor...

We encourage you to participate in our upcoming Parent to Parent training scheduled for this June. This training offers English and Spanish speaking parents the opportunity to meet existing mentors, improve on active listening skills, role play and practice positive communication strategies. It's an excellent opportunity to polish up on your self advocacy skills and to prep you for the new school year. (See the pull-out section for dates, times, location).

In addition, if you've thought you could use more help in understanding the IEP process and would like to help families at the same time, becoming one of our mentors through the special education series can help you

learn about IDEA. You would have the opportunity to meet other parents and learn about your rights and responsibilities; special education eligibility criteria; the special education "language;" and tips and strategies to help you prepare for your child's I.E.P. The next special education series begins Fall of 2009.

The Parent Mentor trainings are FREE. Limited child care is available with two week advanced registration with Joan or Sonia is required.

To learn more contact Joan Selby, jselby@supportforfamilies.org or Sonia Valenzuela, svalenzuela@supportforfamilies.org at 415-920-5040 ❖

Getting to Know the Support for Families Board Members

My family was introduced to SFCD in 1993 after my daughter was diagnosed as being on the Autism Spectrum. From that introductory period when we were first learning the terminology through the ensuing years, SFCD has been a source of education and haven of emotional support.

We found SFCD through a fortuitous referral and have benefited immeasurably from the myriad of resources provided. The initial referral from SFCD to the High Risk Infant Agency Council opened the doors for early intervention services that were instrumental to my daughter achieving

her full potential. My daughter is now in the "Transition" phase and SFCD services continue to be instrumental in our lives.

In addition to receiving services I have had the opportunity to see SFCD from the perspective of a volunteer. I joined the HIRIIC Council in 1993, served my first term on the SFCD Board beginning in 1994, and rejoined the Board in 2007. Having been involved in this dual capacity for a span of seventeen years, I have seen SFCD grow exponentially to meet the growing needs of our community. I continue to be amazed at the scope of the services provided.

I am honored to work with the talented and dedicated staff and with the other members of the Board who are all committed to achieving the mission of SFCD. SFCD has become an extended family for us and touched the lives of countless other families on a similar path.

Facts: Sally Spencer, member of SFCD Board and Improving Transition Outcomes Project (ITOP) Council lives in San Francisco with daughter Chloe Pollock, 19, and sometimes with son Spencer Pollock, 21, who visits regularly. Chloe loves pink, singing, dancing and caring for her dog, cats and bird. ❖

SFUSD's Special Education Assignment Process Needs Rethinking

The opinions expressed here are solely those of the Community Advisory Committee as a whole and do not represent the views of Support for Families of Children with Disabilities. If you have any concerns or issues please contact them by email: cac_specialed@hotmail.com or go to their web site's About Us page at www.sfcacsped.org/ for names of their Officers.

As San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) works to overhaul its assignment process, the CAC would like it to consider changing its enrollment process for children needing special education programs. As the chart suggests, major disparities exist in the enrollment process for these children and children in general education.

As of now, the SFUSD process includes having a computer run a random lottery against a list of seven schools to decide where a child goes to school. SFUSD special education administrators have explained that "programs" are decided in IEP meetings, and that the "placements" made by the Educational Placement Office are not "decisions", they are "assignments".

Placements of children in special education are supposed to be individualized according to IDEA, they are in fact very

Comparing SFUSD Enrollment Processes

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

important decisions and what SFUSD is implementing now is not individualized.

For example, a child with a hearing impairment may need to be in an environment that has controlled sound. A child with physical disabilities needs to be at a school site that is accessible. Too many complicated factors are at play to rely on "placement" being made by lottery. We urge SFUSD to consider

changing the current system in order to achieve greater equity for students in special education programs.

Rachel Norton, a parent and special education activist newly-elected to the San Francisco Board of Education, agrees and says that the easiest way to remedy this situation is to make

CONTINUED on next page

Alexander, continued from p. 1

ander.... So did his peers, and so did our classroom.

I knew the first thing I needed to consider was my classroom design. I was quickly measuring the width of the pathways in the room and raising the height on some of tables to accommodate Alexander's wheelchair. I made the changes to the best of my ability, and then asked Alexander's mom if she would be willing to tour the classroom with me and make more suggestions. Beth seemed delighted to be involved. I began to relax a little more, knowing that I didn't always have to know the right way to approach certain situations with Alexander, and I could ask for help.

It was Story Time and we were about to read another book written by Todd Parr. *It's Okay to Be Different* was the book that day, and it was going to be heard in a much more powerful way than in my previous readings. I began to read. "It's ok to be missing a tooth

(or two or three). It's ok to need some help. It's ok to have big ears. It's ok to have wheels". Bam! It happened. Hands went up and children started calling out. "Hey, just like Alexander", said one child. Another said, "Alexander's wheelchair has silver wheels. That one has purple and blue". One little boy who had been demonstrating some discomfort with Alexander raised his hand and said, "Todd Parr wrote a story about Alexander". Then I heard Alexander quietly say, "Yup".

Suddenly everyone was taking a genuine interest in Alexander. The children were asking wonderful question and inviting him to play. I don't believe in popularity contests, but if we had one, I am guessing Alexander would have won. After all, Todd Parr wrote a book about him.

Alexander provided his peers and me with many wonderful experiences that year. He taught us a lot; not only about his disability, but also about his many abilities. He taught me to recognize my

own discomforts and deal with them. Welcoming a child with various abilities into your classroom brings many challenges. However, when approached with love, great care, understanding, the willingness to learn more, and honesty, it also brings great joy.

References

Include Me, Guide to Inclusive Child Care, The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Publication date unknown

Parr, Todd. *It's Okay to Be Different*, Little, Brown Young Readers, 2004

About the author:

Robb Rye grew up in a small town in New England, raised by a single mom and four older sisters. He currently lives in San Francisco, CA, where he works with preschool age children. Robb's two greatest passions are learning and teaching. Robb can be contacted at robbrye@comcast.net.

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Mental Health Features: Family and Human Rights: From Guatemala to the Bay Area

As the new Social Worker at Support for Families, it seems appropriate to let you, the families we serve, know a little something about my life and work experience and how it has shaped my philosophy.

I returned to the Bay Area with my two children in April after 7 years of living and working in Guatemala City. In Guatemala, I had the privilege of doing human rights work with indigenous survivors of the armed conflict that took place in the 1980's. Through a US-based organization located here in Oakland, NISGUA (www.nisgua.org), the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala, we supported over 100 men and women from 5 different regions of the country who had witnessed massacres in their communities. Many had lost their entire families and had to go into hiding either in Mexico or within Guatemala to escape the military.

My experience in Guatemala transformed me on a profound level and has forever changed my perspective on my work as a social worker. Returning to the United States with my family was a difficult process that also gave me tools and insights that I currently apply to my work with families. It is not easy to manage our children's education along with finding work and housing. Childcare is expensive and often there is no space available. Sometimes the way the system is set up is not supportive to our children's unique needs or

circumstances. Prior to living in Guatemala, I worked in youth and women organizations in San Francisco, mostly focused in the Mission neighborhood. It feels wonderful to return to a community I love and know very well.

I decided to apply for the Social Work position at Support for Families because I wanted to work in an organization that valued parents' experiences and believed in peer support. Whether it be surviving war or raising a child with special needs, people who have direct experience with a certain issue are the real experts on their own needs and challenges. I strive to apply that principle in every aspect of my life and work.

As the Mental Health Social Worker at Support for Families, I provide an additional form of support to parents facing stressful moments or mental health challenges. 'Mental Health' can be a loaded concept. In many cultures, seeking mental health support means being crazy, weak or not capable. Instead, it should be seen as a sign of strength that we reach out when life becomes too much. This is particularly true today, in times of violence, economic difficulties and when so many of live far away from extended family. We are desperately trying to manage our children's services and education on top of other responsibilities and life stresses. I believe that the mental health of individuals is directly related to the overall health of

our society. These are hard times and as parents, we must take care of ourselves in order to be there for our kids.

I offer short-term individual counseling and intensive case management in Spanish and English to parents or youth. I do not work directly with children but can make referrals to other organizations and services. I also am co-facilitating two new support groups: one for **Foster Parents of Children with Special Needs** as well as the **Family Links/Vinculos Familiares group for parents of children with emotional, behavioral or mental health concerns.**

Since beginning to work at SFCD in July, I have learned a great deal from the families I serve and from my co-workers, especially the Community Resource Parents who answer our phone line. Many parents face compounded challenges advocating for their children's development, care and education. I am humbled everyday at the wisdom and strength of the families I work with. My job is to offer a space for parents to express feelings, clarify actions, make decisions, gain strength and resources.

Sue Kuyper, MSW can be reached at 920-5040 X33. Her email is skuyper@supportforfamilies.org Please contact her if you are interested in knowing more about SFCD support groups and/or mental health services. ❖

SFUSD, continued from p. 3

placement decisions at IEP meetings, not by lottery. *"It's important to be sure we're taking into account each child's individual situation when making placement decisions for children with disabilities"* Norton said.

References

Chart: General Education vs. Special Education Enrollment Process, Courtesy of Rachel Powell Norton, Dec 4, 2008, <http://www.beyondchron.org/news/index.php?itemid=6346>



Quotes: Rachel Norton Interviewed on

December 2, 08, for BEYONDCHRON, San Francisco's Alternative Online Daily News, <http://www.beyondchron.org/news/index.php?itemid=6346>

About CAC:

The purpose of the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC) is to advise the Board of Education on Special Education policies, programs and priorities and parent education. For more information about CAC or this article, please contact by email: cac_specialed@hotmail.com. ❖



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:
2601 Mission Street
Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94110

GO TO OUR WEBSITE 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 3,000 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 culture, language, or disability issue.

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

Our purpose is to ensure that families of children with any kind of disability or special health care need have the knowledge and assistance they need to make informed choices that support their child's health, education, and development. We provide peer support to families, and information and education to families, professionals and the community at large. Most of our staff members, volunteers, and board members are, themselves, family members of children with disabilities.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Juno Duenas

NEW PULL-OUT SECTION

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

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Description of Our Ongoing Clinics

BABIES AND BAGELS

Presented by High Risk Infant Interagency Council (HRIIC)

A series of training and networking opportunities for families of children 0-3 with special needs or who have concerns about their child's development.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) CLINICS
4:00-6:00 PM

Presented by Support for Families

Learn about Special Education law, the IEP process, what to do when things aren't working, and how to

become a more active & effective team member

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI) CLINICS

Presented by Katy Lusson, Ph.D., J.D., Protection & Advocacy

An overview of Social Security with a focus on SSI disability benefits. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with the presenter to ask their individual questions.

TRANSITION TO ADULT SERVICES CLINIC

Presented by Support for Families
Learn about special education transi-

tion services for children age 16 and over, and how to effectively participate in the development of your child's transition plan.

All our clinics are free of charge and, unless otherwise indicated, provide childcare with advance notice. Call 415-920-5040 for more information.

For dates and times of clinics, see Calendar of Events, on back page. For more information, call Open Gate Family Resource Center at 415-920-5040.

NEW PULL-OUT SECTION



Our Support Groups

All our support groups are free of charge and, unless otherwise indicated, provide childcare with advance notice. If you are interested in participating in any of these groups, call Open Gate at 415-920-5040 for more information.

Autism Group. Bi-monthly support group for families of children with Autism. NO CHILD CARE PROVIDED. *Facilitated by Jackie Fox.*

Asperger's Group. For families who have children with Asperger's Syndrome. *Facilitated by Karen Haney-Owens.*

Cantonese-Speaking Groups:

Chinatown Child Development Center. For Cantonese-speaking families of children of all ages with special needs. *Facilitated by Lisa Yee.*

Sunset Parents Group. For Cantonese-speaking families of children with special needs. *Facilitated by Tammy Kong.*

Family Links/Vinculos Familiares Group. A peer support group of parents of children with mental, emotional or behavioral difficulties. Meetings in English and Spanish. *Facilitated by Christine Reina and Sue Kuyper.* NO CHILDCARE PROVIDED.

Foster Parent Group. A group for foster parents caring for children with special needs to exchange resources, support and information. *Facilitated by Sue Kuyper and Dennis Locket.*

Parents of Transition Age Youth with Disabilities and/or Special Health Care Needs. Join us for information, resources and support for the issues we and our youth face as they reach adulthood. *Facilitated by Linda Tung.*

Prader-Willi Group. For families of children with Prader-Willi Syndrome. Sibling group also provided. *Facilitated by Mary Holbrook and Christina Lewis.*

Mission Head Start Group. For Spanish-speaking families of children birth to five with special needs. *Facilitated by Sonia Valenzuela.*

Tuesday Night Group. For families of children birth to five who have been recently diagnosed with a disability. *Facilitated by Nina Boyle.*

Please call Sue Kuyper, Social Worker, at 920-5040 X33 for information about other support groups being offered or if you are interested in a group on a specific issue. Sue speaks Spanish and English.

Saturday Parent-Professional Workshops



Support for Families presents:

THE 2009 INFORMATION & RESOURCE CONFERENCE

EVERY CHILD BELONGS

Saturday, March 28, 2009

JOHN O'CONNELL HIGH SCHOOL
2355 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA

9:00 am—3:30 pm

Opening Remarks: Superintendent Carlos Garcia,

San Francisco Unified School District

Keynote Speaker: Professor Pamela Wolfberg,

San Francisco State University

Director, Autism Spectrum Program
(Project Mosaic)

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

To register for the conference, or for more information, go to www.supportforfamilies.org and click on the 2009 Information & Resource Conference link or call (415) 920-5040

A WORKSHOP ABOUT BUILDING SOCIAL SKILLS

Saturday, May 9, 2009

Parents and Professionals are invited to attend a workshop where experts will discuss social skills topics including:

- ◆ How do I help my child make friends?
- ◆ How can I support my child in formal and informal social situations?
- ◆ Creating opportunities for socialization across various environments such as the classroom, recess, and outside of school.
- ◆ Supporting a child's social development through the IEP.

Presented by:

Gavia C. Brennan, PhD

Kaiser Permanente San Francisco

Department of Psychiatry, Child and Family Team

Autism Spectrum Disorders Diagnostic Clinic

Sylvia Weinmann, M.A.

Special Education Consultant.

The San Francisco Unified School District
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for Special Education
and Support for Families present:

A TOWN HALL MEETING

with

SFUSD Special Education Administrators and Staff

Saturday, May 16, 2009

Parents and Professionals are invited to bring their issues, concerns and ideas!

What do families need and want to know about special education services? How can we improve the delivery of special education services?

Kidpower - Teach Kids in Your Life to be Safe!

Saturday, June 13, 2009

This entertaining, active program gives parents, teachers and other caregivers the opportunity to learn the Kidpower approach for introducing and practicing self-protection skills with young people with disabilities.

Adults learn how to teach children to:

- Be and act aware, calm and confident
- Move away from potential danger, especially if alone
- Set respectful powerful boundaries
- Stay safe from bullying or verbal attack
- Be effective and persistent in getting help

Thank you to the San Francisco Foundation for helping support this workshop!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE ABOVE WORKSHOPS

Please note: Workshop Presentations begin promptly at 9:00 am.

Location: Workshops are held at John O'Connell High School
2355 Folsom Street (@ 20th St) S.F., CA 94110
Limited parking is available in the schoolyard. Entrance to the workshop and parking lot via Harrison Street.

Time: 8:30 am—Registration
9:00 am-12:30 pm—Program

RSVPs: 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.

NEW PULL-OUT SECTION



Calendar of Events

March 2009

March 5 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
 March 12 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (English)
 March 19 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (Spanish)
 March 24 9:30-11:00 am Babies and Bagels (English)
 March 26 4:00-6:00 pm SSI Clinic (English, Spanish, Cantonese)
 March 28 9:00-3:00 pm Information and Resource Conference

April 2009

April 2 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
 April 9 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (English)
 April 16 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (Spanish)
 April 18 12:00-3:00 pm Access to Adventure Golden Gate Park
 April 23 4:00-6:00 pm Transition to Adult Services (English)
 April 28 9:30-11:00 am Babies and Bagels (English)

May 2009

May 7 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
 May 9 8:30 am-12:30 pm A Workshop About Building Social Skills Presented by Gavia C. Brennan, PhD and Sylvia Weinmann, M.A.
 May 14 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (English)
 May 16 8:30 am-12:30 pm A Town Hall Meeting, SFUSD Special Education Administrators and Staff
 May 21 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (Spanish)
 May 26 9:30-11:00 am Babies and Bagels (English)
 May 28 4:00-6:00 pm SSI Clinic, (English, Spanish, Cantonese)
 May 28 4:00-6:00 pm (English) Transition to Adult Services

June 2009

June 4 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (Cantonese)
 June 11 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (English)
 June 13 8:30 am-12:30 pm Kidpower Parent/Professional Education Workshop
 June 18 4:00-6:00 pm IEP Clinic (Spanish)
 June 23 9:30-11:00 am Babies and Bagels (English)
 June 25 4:00-6:00 pm Transition to Adult Services (English)

NEW PULL-OUT SECTION



★ Explore fitness and fun for kids and youth ★
 with special health care needs or disabilities

Presented By:



Parking: Music Concourse Garage: \$3/hr (Enter from MLK Drive or Fulton St. at 10th Ave.)
 Limited street parking available
 Public transportation: #44 O'Shaughnessy, #5 Fulton, N-Judah

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2009
12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Golden Gate Park Music Concourse Bandshell

(Between the deYoung Museum and Academy of Sciences)

- Organizations will be there to answer questions about how your children can access their programs and provide fun activities for the whole family.
- Entertainment: music, magicians, face painting and more!
- Opportunity to relax, have fun and network with other families.
- Lunch provided by **Simple Kindness**.

Register by calling:

415-920-5040



For more information, please visit our website: www.supportforfamilies.org

Education features: SF CARD's Self and Home Workbook: A Guide to Personal Preparedness

The Self and Home Workbook: A Guide for Personal Preparedness (05/2007) is a survey families can use to begin talking about disaster planning in the event of an emergency. This is part THREE of a multi-part series that will appear in future issues of this newsletter. This material was prepared by CARD (Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster, located in Oakland and serving the East Bay). It has been modified and is presented by San Francisco Community Agencies Responding to Disaster as a member of the Bay Area PrepareNow Partners: www.preparenow.org. SF CARD -1675 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94109, 415.955.8946, info@sfcad.org, http://www.sfcad.org. Their web site contains additional resources for families and agencies.

Safeguarding My Treasures

DATE:

Take AT LEAST ONE action to protect one of my most treasured items.

1. Item: _____

How will you protect this items? _____

Extra Credit:

2. Item: _____

How will you protect this item? _____

3. Item: _____

How will you protect this item? _____

Addressing My Fears:

Take AT LEAST ONE action---even a small one that addresses an area of concern.

1. Area of Concern: _____

What will you do? _____

Extra Credit:

2. Area of Concern: _____

What will you do? _____

3. Area of Concern: _____

What will you do? _____

PART 3: A SPECIAL NOTE FOR PARENTS FROM SF CARD'S SELF AND HOME WORKBOOK CONTINUED IN FUTURE ISSUES OF THIS NEWSLETTER ❖

HRIIC Features: Early Intervention for Preschool: Tips for Transitions

Transition from early intervention services to preschool can be an exciting as well as stressful time for children and family members. Preparing for this event helps reduce anxieties and ensure a smooth passage. California's Early Start Program requires transition planning to begin before children turn three—at least three to six months before the third birthday.

There are many resources available for families in preparing for this transition. The High Risk Infant Interagency Council (HRIIC) and Support for Families of Children with Disabilities partner with the Golden Gate Regional Center and San Francisco Unified School District in providing transition workshops for families. Support for Families also offers parent-to-parent support.

Here are some tips for parents to help start the planning:

- **Think about your child's strengths and areas of concern to you.** Identify what you think your child needs to learn in order to develop new skills and abilities. Write down your thoughts. Bring your questions, concerns, and input with you to your child's Transition Planning meeting.
- **Organize your thoughts.** How will your child's being in a new setting fit into your family's life? What are your resources? Are there other family responsibilities and commitments? What are your preferences and priorities?
- **Schedule assessments when your child is at his/her best.** Tell the person who will be doing the assessment about your child's daily schedule and best time.
- **Follow up with assessments as scheduled.** Delays in assessments may cause delays in starting preschool services. Find out what assessments are needed, who will be doing them, and when they will be scheduled.
- **Consider getting parent-to-parent support.** Ask your service coordinator or infant teacher to assist you or contact Support for Families.
- **Gather information.** Learn about program options available in your community. Know your rights and responsibilities.
- **Ask questions.** Ask as many questions as you have. If something seems clear during the meeting but later does not, call your service coordinator or

infant teacher. He/she can answer questions or find someone who can answer them.

Families can learn more about preparing for transitions at the Transition Workshops offered by the HRIIC this spring. Representatives from Golden Gate Regional Center and San Francisco Unified School District will provide information about their procedures, describe their programs, and answer questions. HRIIC and Support for Families staff will share additional ideas and resources, including a transition planning guide.

The first workshop will be held at the annual Support for Families Information and Resource Conference at John O'Connell High School on March 28, 2009. The second workshop will be on May 6, 2009. Please call Support for Families for details about each workshop.

About the Author(s): 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

Open Forum

The following bulletins have been placed at the request of various parents and professionals. These are not endorsements, but are included for your information only. We are not responsible for changes to information.

10 Tips for Good Advocates

by Pat Howey, Advocate
Easy, concise and helpful tips for parents and professionals
Pat Howey's article can be found on the Wrightslaw web site at :

www.wrightslaw.com/howey/10tips.advocates.htm

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH LIBRARY

Releases new edition of their electronic-knowledge path with Spanish language resources. This web page list web sites, publications and databases for families and professionals.

http://mchlibrary.info/KnowledgePaths/kp_spanish.html

IMPACT

is a California statewide all-volunteer, non-profit organization of parents, teachers and professionals serving deaf and hard-of-hearing children. Established in 1986 by 12 parents, IMPACT is supported and encouraged by a host of organizations that serve the deaf community.

Check out their web site at: www.impactfamilies.org/

NEW AUTISM LEGISLATIVE DATABASE

tracks Autism legislation.
created by the National Conference of State Legislatures. Tool allows you to search legislation by state, topic, status, primary sponsor, bill number or keyword
The database can be found at:
www.ncsl.org/programs/health/autism.cfm

SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

A UNITED HOSPITAL FUND WEB SITE

offers information and advice in handy guides and checklists for family caregivers and health care providers. These guides written in English and Spanish can assist with transitions from home care to hospitals or reverse. Read more at:

www.nextstepincare.org/

Healthy San Francisco

created to make health care services accessible and affordable for uninsured residents. The program offers a new way for San Francisco residents who do not have health insurance, to have basic and ongoing medical care.

Learn more about this service at:
www.healthysanfrancisco.org/Default.aspx

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- Community Outreach
- Assistive Technology Mini-lab
- Web site:
www.supportforfamilies.org

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