

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Topic of the Month: Autism Spectrum Disorder

Upcoming Statewide Events

Helping Children Cope with Depression

Through this presentation, Dr. Mervin Langley, a licensed psychotherapist, will help parents, teachers, and community members recognize the basic signs, symptoms, and characteristics of depression. Practical suggestions and strategies for audience members to use with their child(ren), how to support their child(ren) if they are depressed, and possible interventions and treatments available.

Date: April 21, 2015 6 pm-7:30 pm

Location: Aurora Wellness Center,
300 McCanna Parkway, Burlington

Contact: lradtke@basd.k12.wi.us

Self-Advocacy Spotlight

This workshop is for transition-aged students with disabilities, parents, educators and service providers. **Date:**

April 28, 6-8 pm

Location: WI FACETS, Milwaukee

To register: Contact Matthew Zellmer
414-374-4645, ext. 203 or

mzellmer@wifacets.org

Autism Society of Wisconsin Annual Conference

This 3-day conference includes a keynote address from renowned speaker Temple Grandin, a full-day literacy workshop, and an update on important research on the impact of ASD on individuals and the family across the lifespan. A variety of breakout sessions covering topics important to the autism community will be offered on Friday and Saturday.

Dates: April 30-May 2, 2015

Location: Kalahari, WI Dells

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Circles of Life Conference

Circles of Life is Wisconsin's annual conference for parents and family members who have children with disabilities and professionals who support them.

When: April 30- May 1, 2015

Location: Stevens Point

[Information & Registration Link:](#)

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

Communication and Collaboration are Key

By Wendy Overturf

A few months ago while I was shopping, I happened to see a parent I knew who had a child with autism. I had not seen her for quite a number of years and so I inquired about her daughter. The girl was now 17 and I remembered that during the child's elementary years that there had been challenges for both the parents and the school as they worked to develop a plan that would best meet her needs. The parent related that her daughter was now a senior and had plans on attending a community college in the fall. She further explained that her daughter was employed within the community, had her driver's license, and was doing well in school as a result of the appropriate modifications and accommodations that were in place.

It was evident that this family had developed good communication and collaboration with the school personnel. The mom went on to say that one of the most critical components of developing a trusting relationship with the school was to have an

informal meeting with all her daughter's teachers prior to school starting. The mom felt that while a well-written IEP was essential, it was also important for her to personally share in person some of the unique strengths and challenges regarding her daughter. She believed this communication and collaboration with staff prior to school starting provided for a better transition to the new school year and gave the staff a better understanding of her daughter as a person. Additionally, she felt it might help alleviate misunderstandings during the school year. While the mother acknowledged the expertise of the school staff, she reiterated the commonly heard phrase, "If you have met one person with autism, then you have met one person with autism." She went on to say that each child with autism is unique and that the disability manifests itself in many different ways.

This mom felt so strongly about needing the

opportunity to meet with school staff prior to the start of each school year that she advocated at each annual IEP meeting to have it included on the IEP I-9 Program Summary Form. By having this incorporated in the IEP she was assured that it would occur.

While meeting with school staff informally prior to or shortly after school starts in the fall might not be needed or be appropriate for all children with disabilities, this parent felt that this was one critical component of her daughter's success in school.



ONLINE RESOURCES

Autism Spectrum Disorder



Autism Source

The Autism Source™ Resource Database, created in 2004, is the most comprehensive database of its kind. The Autism Society strives to offer only credible and reliable resources to our constituents, therefore we have employed our nationwide network of affiliates and collaborated with other autism organizations and professionals throughout the U.S. It is because of these collaborative relationships that the Autism Source™ Resource Database continues to grow and is kept current with comprehensive resource listings.

[Autism Source](#)

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

This website has the eligibility criteria for autism, information about trainings, and links to archived webinars. There is also a link to sign up for the email autism newsletter which contains resources and updates relating to autism. Extensive links to additional resources are also provided.

[WI DPI Website](#)

Center for Parent Information and Resources

This website has information about Autism Spectrum Disorders and includes a fact sheet, tips for parents and teachers, and includes links to organizations that have additional information and resources related to Autism Spectrum Disorders. This website also has a link for the Spanish version.

[CPIR Website](#)

Autism Society

The mission of the Autism Society is “Improving the lives of all affected by autism.” The five focus areas are: Advocacy, Education, Support, Services, and Research. The website has links to topics relating to five focus areas as well as links to many other topics related to autism.

[Autism Society Website](#)

Autism Speaks

Autism Speaks is one of the world's leading autism science and advocacy organizations, dedicated to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatments and a cure for autism; increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders; and advocating for the needs of individuals with autism and their families.

[Autism Speaks Website](#)

My Autism Team

MyAutismTeam is a social network and online support group for parents of children with autism.

[MyAutismTeam Website](#)

OASIS@MAPP

MAAP Services is a non-profit organization that provides information, networking, referrals and printed materials for families, challenged individuals and professionals concerned with the autism spectrum. The Online Asperger Syndrome Information and Support (OASIS) website has an online forum and links to newsletters, articles, and books related to autism spectrum disorders.

[OASIS Website](#)



Each year the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction receives numerous questions from parents, school districts, and other stakeholders about the permissibility and requirements around shortening a school day for a student who is receiving special education services. Shortening a student's day raises issues regarding the provision of a free and appropriate public education

(FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as well as potential discrimination under 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The department has developed this bulletin to address those questions and provide guidance in this area. [WI DPI Shortened School Day Bulletin](#)

Support Groups

Urban Support Group

Date: 4/18/2015
11:00 am-12 pm
Location: WI FACETS

School-Based Summer Services for Children in Special Education

Date: 4/18/2015
12 pm-1:00 pm
Location: WI FACETS

Autism Support Group

Date: 4/18/2015
1:00 pm-2:00 pm
Location: WI FACETS

Grupo de Autismo: Servicios Escolares de Verano para Niños en Educación Especial

Date: 4/25/2015
10 am-12 pm
Location: WI FACETS

Urban Support Group

Date: 5/16/2015
11:00 am-12 pm
Location: WI FACETS

Transition: Planning Life after School

Information and resources on the new Postsecondary Transition Plan (PTP), laws that govern the transition process, how to develop student self-determination, and services available for employment, education, independent living, and community life.

Date: 5/16/2015
11:00 am-12 pm
Location: WI FACETS

Autism Support Group

Date: 5/16/2015
1:00 pm-2:00 pm
Location: WI FACETS

Grupo de Autismo: Planeando la Vida después de la Escuela

Date: 5/23/15
10 am–noon
Location: WI FACETS



WI FACETS
600 W. Virginia St., Suite 501
Milwaukee, WI 53204

WI FACETS Phone Workshops



Registration for all phone workshops:
Contact Sandra McFarland at 877-374-0511, smcfarland@wifacets.org or online: www.wifacets.org/events

IEP Part 1

Date: 4/14/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Using Our Stories for Policy Change

Date: 4/15/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Joanne Juhnke, WI Family Ties

IEP Part 2

Date: 4/16/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Special Education Discipline Requirements

Date: 4/22/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Patti Williams, WI DPI

School-Based Evaluations & How They Differ from Medical Evaluations

Date: 4/29/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Kathryn Bush, WI DPI

¿Es su Hijo un Blanco de Intimidación y Acoso?

Date: 5/1/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

Yes, Your Child Can Work

Date: 5/6/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Kathy Tuttle, TIG Grant

Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System (WSEMS):

How to Conduct Family Friendly and Productive IEP Meetings

Date: 5/11/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Jan Serak, WI FACETS & Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA #7

Transition in Birth to 3 (in Spanish)

Date: 5/13/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Melissa Velez

The ABCs of Reading: Fostering the Skills, Detecting Problems Early

Date: 5/20/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Cheryl Ward, Northshore LLC

Shortage of Speech & Language Pathologists in WI Schools & Update of Speech and Language

Date: 5/27/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA #7 & Sheryl Thormann, WI DPI

Educación Especial: ¿Qué Necesito Saber?

Date: 5/29/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS



HOME-BASED INTERVENTIONS



Reading Strategies

Paired Reading to Improve Reading Fluency

A capable reader and a struggling reader read in unison. As the struggling reader becomes more confident, he decides when they are ready to try reading alone. If the struggling reader makes an error, the capable reader provides the correct word. Together they then read the sentence with that word in unison and continue reading. Paired reading is different from repeated reading. Topping and Whitley (1987, 1990) found that paired reading can significantly improve reading fluency.

Ways Parents Can Improve Reading Fluency with Paired Reading

Each night the parent or sibling reads a brief poem or passage to the child who struggles with reading. Next the parent and child read the passage together several times. Then the child reads the text to the parent or sibling.

A great book for this type of paired reading is **You Read to Me, I'll Read to You: Very Short Stories to Read Together** by Mary Ann Hoberman.

In his study, Rasinski (1995) found that children who engage in this form of paired reading demonstrated significant gains over children who received tutoring without this paired reading support.

Resource — [Paired Reading – How to Do It: A Guide for Parents](#)



Math Strategies

Walk & Count

Ordinary activities can be used to reinforce young children's number sense and introduce them to arithmetic operations such as addition and subtraction.

- Take your child for a walk. You can walk around your neighborhood, through a park, or just around the rooms in your home. As you walk, suggest that your child do the following:
 - Take two big steps and three little steps.
 - Take three little steps, hop one time, take three big steps.
 - Take one little step, turn around two times.
 - Hop four times, turn around one time.
 - Take three big steps forward and two big steps backward.
- Count aloud each kind of action that your child performs and compliment him for his efforts.
- Let your child suggest to you things to do as you walk.
- For your kindergarten child, expand the activity by asking him to "guess" (estimate) how many of his steps it will take, for example, to get from the tree to the corner. After he makes his estimate, have him count steps to see how close the estimate is. Next ask him how many of your steps it will take. Will it take you more steps or fewer to go the same distance? Again, have him count to see if his answers are correct.

Additional Resources: [US Department of Education Website](#)



CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Upcoming newsletter topics: May: **Mental Health**
June: **Early Childhood**
July: **Bullying Prevention**

To submit contributions, you may use either the [online form](#) or the attached fillable PDF form for contributing articles, events, and resources. Send the PDF form submissions to woverturf@wifacets.org.

Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the **20th of each month**. For time sensitive training advertisements, the information should be sent a minimum of two weeks prior to the event date; ideally a month ahead of time. Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles. Family engagement success or impact stories can be written at an individual or family level, classroom level, school building level, district level, county level, CESA level, etc. Your submittal may not be in the final copy of the upcoming month's newsletter if it was in a previous month's email, the event date has passed, the web link doesn't work, or there is already an article in place. Articles and resources will be saved to be used for later newsletters. We reserve the right to edit contributions as needed.

This monthly update is provided by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement.

DISCLAIMER: Inclusion of information in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training, and Support (WI FACETS), the Department of Public Instruction, the U.S. Department of Education, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

NOTE: If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please go to <http://www.servingongroups.org/newsletter-signup> or contact: Wendy Overturf at woverturf@wifacets.org.



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