

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

## Upcoming Statewide Events

### WI Autism Leadership Network Pre-Conference

The Autism Society of Wisconsin, in partnership with WI FACETS is providing a full day of training and a networking opportunity for parents and providers who help families affected by autism in Wisconsin.

**Date:** April 18, 2013, 9-3:30

**Location:** Kalahari, WI Dells

**Registration:** \$20 includes training and lunch. Registration Fee is waived for those registered for the ASW Full Conference. Download the attachment, or pay online at

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e6z10v2260f15b12&lr=tdgpowmkab>

### ASW 2013 Annual Conference

Bridging to the Future: Autism Across the Lifespan, is open to educators, parents, individuals with ASD and other professionals. The incidence of autism spectrum disorders continues to rise at an alarming rate. Educators need access to information about best practices, evidence-based practices and resources for supporting students on the autism spectrum.

**Dates:** April 19-20, 2013

**Location:** Kalahari, WI Dells

**Registration:** Register online at [http://www.asw4autism.org/conferences\\_workshops.html#Registration](http://www.asw4autism.org/conferences_workshops.html#Registration)

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT



### Transforming a Classroom of Students into a Family

How do you transform a misfit group of students into a family? Nicki Miller, a veteran third grade teacher can tell you.

One year, Ms. Miller started the school year with a diverse group of students that measured low in reading and math skills and high in behavior problems. Right away, she knew she had to create a supportive community in

their classroom so students would be willing to try, make mistakes, and grow from them if they were going to make any progress.

One of her best ideas in creating a community was to involve families. Every month Nicki would host a family night for her class after school. She and the students would showcase their learning that month, Nicki would give a introduction to next month's learning, and there would be a project, activity, or game students and families could do together.

Each month more families would attend the family night and then more started to volunteer during the school day. Nicki was building a relationship with each family and families

were building relationships with each other. Friendships were growing both in and out of the classroom. The families started to get together outside of school for birthday parties and weekend play dates.

As the year progressed, the climate in her classroom became a safe place for students to be themselves and to support one another. The students always tried their best and made steady progress in all areas, especially behaviorally. Of course no family is without issues. When a problem arose, the class would have a "family" meeting and work it out. It was amazing to see this class evolve into such a hardworking, caring family.

*By Emilie Braunel*

## RESEARCH TO READ

### The Why Behind RTI

By Austin Buffum, Mike Mattos, and Chris Weber  
*Educational Leadership*  
Oct. 2010 Vol. 68 Num. 2,  
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct10/vol68/num02/The-Why-Behind-RTI.aspx>

The authors of this article state that Response to

Intervention (RTI) will only be successful if schools use the right practices for the right reasons. So often the wrong questions are asked, leading school staff to fail at developing the correct thinking about RTI.

Schools need to see RTI as a school-wide, general

education policy to prevent and support learning, instead of viewing it solely as a tool to determine special education services.

Learn about the questions schools should ask themselves to lead their work in helping all students be successful.

**E-Reader Accessibility Workshop**

The Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired is offering a free, hands-on workshop on the accessibility features of e-readers.

**Date:** March 27, 2013

**Time:** 3-4:30pm

**Location:** Goodman South Madison Public Library, 2222 S. Park Street, Madison.

**Presenter:** Jean Kalscheur, Council Vision Rehabilitation Teacher

**Registration:** This workshop is free; however, registration is suggested. To register, call 608.266.6395.

**Urban Transition Conference**

UTC will offer sessions on transition requirements and effective transition practices for beginning, intermediate and advanced level learners.

**Dates:** April 24-25, 2013

**Location:** American Serb Hall, Milwaukee, WI

**Registration:** Visit [http://www.edevents.org/conferences/urban-transition-conference#conference\\_overview](http://www.edevents.org/conferences/urban-transition-conference#conference_overview)

**Questions:** Contact Linda Maitrejean at 715-377-8706 or [lindam@cesa11.k12.wi.us](mailto:lindam@cesa11.k12.wi.us)

**Third Annual Waisman Center Day with the Experts: Down Syndrome**

Participants will learn about the latest advances in Down syndrome research, and will hear firsthand from a panel of experts—individual(s) with Down syndrome and their families.

**Date:** Saturday, April 27, 2013

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (Complimentary coffee & bagels at 8:30 a.m.)

**Location:** Friends of the Waisman Center Auditorium 1500 Highland Avenue, Madison WI 53705

**Cost:** Free admission & parking.

**Registration:** Please pre-register since capacity is limited. To register visit:

<http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/events/experts/Downsyndrome.html>

or contact Teresa Palumbo, [palumbo@waisman.wisc.edu](mailto:palumbo@waisman.wisc.edu) or 608.263.5837

## RESEARCH TO READ

**The Impact of Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports on Bullying and Peer Rejection**

By Tracy Waasdorp, Catherine Bradshaw, and Philip Leaf  
*Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.*

2012; 166(2): 149-156

<http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/>

[article.aspx?articleid=1107694](#)

Bullying is a national concern. Schools are trying various ways to prevent it. Research has found zero-tolerance programs don't work. The researchers wanted to find out if School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) make a difference in bullying and peer rejection.

The results of this study showed that schools with

SWPBIS reported lower rates of teacher-reported bullying and peer rejection than schools without SWPBIS. The study also noticed a lower rate of teacher-reported bullying and rejection overall for the students who were introduced to SWPBIS at an earlier age.

In conclusion, SWPBIS can be part of the solution in creating a better school climate and culture for all students.

## STATEWIDE PARENT AGENCY:

# WISCONSIN STATEWIDE PARENT-EDUCATOR INITIATIVE



Meeting the individualized needs of students with special education needs is a challenge for parents and teachers alike. Few would argue that is easier to do when everyone involved is communicating well with each other. But many families may face barriers of language or education, making partnership with teachers easier said than done.

Partnership is a good one-word description of the

mission of the Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative (WSPEI). Its goal is to help parents and school districts find or create the resources that will help them build positive working relationships that lead to shared decision making and improving children's learning. It aims to increase the amount of information families have through special education-related trainings, conferences, and networking meetings with community agencies.

WSPEI also trains parent liaisons in each school district. The liaisons can provide families with resource materials, teach team about special education, and help them prepare for IEP meetings.

All services are free statewide. For information on WSPEI, call toll-free 1-877-844-4925 or visit [www.wspei.org](http://www.wspei.org).

## FEATURED ONLINE RESOURCES

### TOPIC: RTI & PBIS

**Response to Intervention and Family Engagement - Wisconsin RtI Center:** Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) are concepts that require parent engagement to be successful. This site offers a wealth of information to give families the confidence to participate in the process as they engage with their child's school to implement and sustain these practices. The WI RtI Center offers a series of on-line modules for families explaining RtI and the relationship between RtI and PBIS. With each module a list of activities is offered to support parent learning. The site also contains a glossary of language used related to RtI and PBIS. When you open the site all of this information will be right there. In addition there are other resources that are easily accessed from this page. Other headings include RtI from the student perspective, high quality instruction, balanced assessment, and culturally responsive practices to name a few.

<http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/parents-and-family/understanding-rti/femodule.html>

**A Parent's Guide to Response-to-Intervention (RTI) - NCLD:** The National Center for Learning Disabilities website provides great information within the guide book. It is clear, concise, and very informative. In addition to the guide book, Topics addressed include parent perspective, tiered interventions, check lists and worksheets. In addition, this site is a good place to go for information that is helpful to parents of children with learning disabilities and also relevant to a broader population of special needs areas. You can get to the other topics easily from the home page.

<http://www.nclld.org/learning-disability-resources/ebooks-guides-toolkits/parent-guide-response-intervention>

**RTI Parent & Family Resources | RTI Action Network:** Families are critical partners in effective implementation of RTI. As states and school districts work to implement an RTI process that provides early help to struggling students, parents need to understand the essential components of RTI and the roles they can play in supporting their child's success. There is a long list of topics related to RtI and within each topic specific information including research articles, definitions, identification of signs suggesting increased and more intensive support. <http://www.rtinetwork.org/parents-a-families>

**PBIS for Parents:** For parents who are looking for concrete ways to support PBIS in your children's schools, this website is the place for you. You will see examples from a Colorado elementary school that provides examples of how to work with parents. One piece that is particularly helpful is a chart that lists Dr. Joyce Epstein's list of ways to become engaged and specific strategies that relate to each of these categories. Other samples include letters to send home with students and sample newsletters.

<http://www.pbis.org/training/parents.aspx>



#### **Advocacy for Change: A Family Leadership Institute (Family Voices of WI)**

Participants will learn about state budget priorities affecting families and youth including health care, waiting lists, special education and children's long-term supports.

**Where:** Madison Concourse Hotel, Madison

**When:** April 3-4, 2013.

**Registration:** The registration fee, conference materials, lodging and meals will be covered by the sponsoring organizations. A limited number of applicants will be accepted based on their interest and past experiences with advocacy efforts.

#### **Family Voices of Wisconsin Parent Leadership Grants**

Participants in the Leadership Institute will be eligible to apply for a grant to encourage and facilitate advocacy, systems change and policy efforts.

**More information and applications:** visit

<http://www.fvofwi.org>.

**Questions:** Contact Barbara J. Katz, Co-Director, Family Voices of WI at 608.220.9598 or [barb@fvofwi.org](mailto:barb@fvofwi.org)

#### **Regional Special Education Conference for Parents & Professionals (WI FACETS in collaboration with WSPEI, CESA 2 & CESA 4)**

**TOPIC:** HELLO, I'M OUT OF CONTROL! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

Children need support, not anger; understanding, not blame; love, not frustration. This workshop will help parents react to difficult behaviors positively to support growth.

**When:** April 13, 8:30am-12:15pm

**Location:** Wintergreen Resort & Conference Center, WI Dells

**Registration:** Contact Sandra McFarland at: 877-374-0511; [smcfarland@wifacets.org](mailto:smcfarland@wifacets.org) or at [www.wifacets.org](http://www.wifacets.org)

### 2013 Circles of Life Conference

Wisconsin's Annual Conference for Families of Children with Disabilities & Professionals

**Dates:** April 25-26, 2013

**Location:** Holiday Inn & Convention Center, Stevens Point

**Registration:** Brochure and Registration forms can be found on the Circles of Life Conference website at [www.colwisconsin.org](http://www.colwisconsin.org).

### UPCOMING WI FACETS PHONE WORKSHOPS

**To register:** Contact Sandra McFarland at (877) 374-0511 or [smcfarland@wifacets.org](mailto:smcfarland@wifacets.org). Register online at [www.wifacets.org](http://www.wifacets.org).

#### WI FACETS: ADHD and Executive Function

**When:** 4/3/13, 12-1pm

**Presenter:** Joan Helbing, Appleton P.S.

#### WI FACETS: Early Childhood and Assistive Technology

**When:** 4/9/13, 12-1pm

**Presenter:** Marlea Linse, WI FACETS

#### WI FACETS: Children & Teens with Mood Disorders: The Impact on Education

**When:** 4/10/13, 12-1pm

**Presenter:** Nanci Schimann, Balanced Mind Foundation

#### WI FACETS: Post-Secondary Planning for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

**When:** 4/17/13, 12-1pm

**Presenter:** Daniel Parker, WI Department of Public Instruction

#### WI FACETS: Processes of Decision-Making Groups

**When:** 4/18/13, 12pm & 7pm

**Presenter:** Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS.

#### WI FACETS: Assistive Technology Information for Families

**When:** 4/23/13, 12-1pm

**Presenter:** Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

**There are two ways to submit contributions. Use either the online form at <http://bit.ly/WO9a39> or use the attached fillable PDF form for contributing articles, events, and resources.**

**Send the fillable PDF form submissions to [mzellmer@wifacets.org](mailto:mzellmer@wifacets.org) or [ebraunel@wifacets.org](mailto:ebraunel@wifacets.org)**

*Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the 20th of each month at noon. 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.*

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*This month's update is provided by WI FACETS to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement.*

\* **WIFACETS website:** <http://www.wifacets.org>



*Please visit the following links to the Parent Leadership Hub web page of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) website:*

\* **Just in Time Information (JITI):** [http://wispdg.org/pl/res\\_jit.html](http://wispdg.org/pl/res_jit.html)

\* **Resources:** <http://www.wispdg.org/pl/resources.html>

\* **Multi-Media Workshops, Video and Webcasts:** <http://wispdg.org/pl-multi.html>

### DISCLAIMER

Inclusion of information in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Wisconsin 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 contact:*

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*[mzellmer@wifacets.org](mailto:mzellmer@wifacets.org).*

