

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

This month's newsletter topic: *Self-Advocacy*

Next month's topic: *Assistive Technology*

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT



The Power of Accommodations

By Matthew Zellmer

Many disabilities are invisible, but still very real to the people living with them. If not accommodated properly, frustration could set in because it might be difficult for someone to even convince others that they have special needs, simply because nothing “appears” different about them. One mom we talked to watched this happening to her daughter and took matters into her own hands.

Her daughter has a hearing impairment which requires Cochlear implants, but you wouldn't know it if you heard her speak. Perhaps that is why the school thought it had an easy IEP on its hands. The girl was given an FM amplifier for classroom activities but was otherwise on her own. The school initially did not provide a captionist, so learning became a struggle. Thus, a young lady fully capable of succeeding was falling behind academically and having a hard time fitting in. Knowing that her daughter had college aspirations, mom decided to independently research what accommodation were available in higher education as well as consult with WI FACETS and other

agencies about what a parent's rights were while her daughter was still in high school. Mom decided to advocate for the use of a captioning system and press for staff training on the device so her daughter could thrive in her classes and enjoy the full high school experience without being overly conscious of her limitations. It was hard at first for the school to find the appropriate person to learn the equipment, but mom would not take no for an answer. She joked that the IEP team got serious about providing services when she let them choose between having cheesecake (which she had made) or lawyers at the meeting. The meeting was productive and everyone

was clear thereafter about how the captioning system would be implemented. The young lady ended high school on the Dean's List and well-positioned for success in college. She is an outstanding self-advocate who can truly accomplish whatever she sets her mind to. She even recorded an inspiring message of self-determination that wowed the audience at WI FACETS' fundraiser. Her mom simply says that she would advise parents to do their homework, use available resources and keep fighting to meet their child's needs. If they do, more stories could have an equally happy ending.

RESEARCH TO READ

Self-Advocacy Skills as a Predictor of Student IEP Participation among Adolescents with Autism

By Lucy Barnard-Brak and Danielle D. Fearon. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 2012, 47(1), 39-47
http://daddcec.org/Portals/0/CEC/Autism_Disabilities/Research/Publications/

[Education Training Developmental Disabilities/2011v47_journals/ETADD_2012v47n1p39-47_Self-advocacy_skills.pdf](http://www.educationandtraining.org/ETADD_2012v47n1p39-47_Self-advocacy_skills.pdf)

Abstract: The importance of student IEP participation has been indicated by both legislative mandates such as IDEA and research literature. The purpose of the current study was to examine those variables

that predict student IEP participation among adolescents with autism spectrum disorders as compared to adolescents with disabilities other than autism spectrum disorders. Using logistic regression analyses, self-advocacy skills were revealed to be a significant predictor of student IEP participation

among adolescents with autism spectrum disorders. These results suggest the particular importance of developing self-advocacy skills among adolescents with autism spectrum disorders as compared to adolescents with disabilities other than autism spectrum disorders.

RESOURCE TO READ

Research to Practice in Self-Determination Series Issue 1: Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy

National Gateway to Self-Determination, March 2011, Published by the National Training Initiative on Self-Determination and the Association of University Centers on Disabilities
http://www.aucd.org/docs/publications/nti_selfd_issues/2011_issue1_high_selfd_selfa.pdf

Introduction:

People who are self-determined know what they want and how to get it. They choose and set goals, then work to reach

them. They advocate on their own behalf, and are involved in solving problems and making decisions about their lives. The purpose of this series, Research to Practice in Self-Determination, is to describe key issues in the field of developmental disabilities that can be enhanced by considering efforts to promote self-determination. Each issue is prepared with a social-ecological framework in mind. This framework calls for strategies for intervention and support to take into account both the capacities of the person and the demands of the

environment. Interventions to promote self-determination should focus both on enhancing personal capacity, improving opportunity, and modifying the environment. There are twelve articles within this issue. The format for this issue includes definitions, a brief review of the literature, promising practices, applied examples, and targeted recommendations for scaling-up efforts. This



series is intended for use by people with developmental disabilities, family members, professionals, state and federal agencies, and academic programs. By collaborating with and enabling each of these entities, the goal of full inclusion for people with developmental disabilities can be realized.

STATEWIDE PARENT AGENCY:



Imagine being a parent and hearing for the first time that your child needed “special education services.” Many would not understand what that meant, and soon they would be launched into a world of jargon, acronyms and paperwork. The Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education & Support Inc. (WI FACETS) is available to help families navigate the maze and enable them to be their child’s own best advocate.

WI FACETS is a nonprofit

organization whose mission is to provide and broaden opportunities that enhance the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities with emphasis on support for underserved parents and families in the community. Staff members further this mission by upholding the agency’s core values of empowerment, respect, collaboration, accountability and sensitivity.

WI FACETS serves as Wisconsin’s Parent Training and Information

Center, funded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and provides information, training and resources to children and youth, ages 0-26, their families, and others who support them. WI FACETS’ services and trainings educate and empower families in the core areas of special education, self-advocacy and youth leadership. One-to-one support for IEP meetings, facilitated IEP meetings, and mediation sessions; assistance with thinking through issues that may occur in planning a

child’s school supports; resource referral; and high quality workshops (phone, webinar, and in-person) are all provided free of charge to families and professionals throughout Wisconsin.

To connect with WI FACETS, please join WI FACETS’ Yahoo! Group by visiting <http://www.wifacets.org/get-involved/networking>. Families can also call toll-free (877) 374-0511 or “Like” us on Facebook .

FEATURED ONLINE RESOURCES

TOPIC: SELF-ADVOCACY

Self-Advocacy: Know Yourself, Know What you Need, Know how to Get It by Nancy Suzanne James This article found on the Wrights Law website is written for adults in higher education and the workforce. The article describes what is needed to be a competent self-advocate. The importance of a good evaluation, how to share information, and how to get what you need are the key concepts within the article. It provides a good starting point and overview and a how-to for becoming a self advocate.

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/sec504.selfadvo.nancy.james.htm>

Disability Scoop Go to this website for a list of practical and necessary components of becoming a competent self advocate. Other issues you will find on this website include education, housing, politics, money, and much more.

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2009/07/21/self-advocacy/4203/7/>

Opening Doors A book that provides a comprehensive handbook for students, parents, teachers, school counselors, and transition coordinators. Additional topics in this series include self determination, employment, and transition planning. The links for all of these books are listed.

<http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/pdf/tranopndrs.pdf>,

<http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/pdf/tranopndrs-self-determination.pdf>,

<http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/pdf/tranopndrs-employmt.pdf>

http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_transition

http://www.wsti.org/wstidata/resources/opening-doors-adult-services-web_1365020936.pdf

You Tube Find the Captain in You Listed at this site are several clips related to self advocacy. You will find inspiring clips presented by students and leaders in self advocacy skills and training.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUQDozx7aug>

Post Secondary Transition Planning (PTP) This is a process required for all transition plans. It is web based and does require a user name and password which the user sets allowing the opportunity to return and add to or change information already entered. The site listed will take you to frequently asked questions and will direct you to other helpful resources and specific requirements for this plan.

<http://dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/pdf/spp13-ptp-parentyouth-guide.pdf>



Upcoming Statewide Events

WI Family Ties Family Fun Day- reserved for families that include children or adolescents with emotional, behavioral, & mental disorders.

Date: July 9th

Location: Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park 1701 WI Dells Parkway

Cost: \$12 per person -children 2 and under- free Admission price includes: hot dog picnic lunch, all day soda at the pavilion, free general parking, access to the entire water and theme park, and ½ price on the Almighty Hermes extreme ride!

Registration: by 7-2 space is limited online registration:

www.wifamilyties.org or call 1-800-422-7145 as soon as possible to reserve your tickets

Questions: info@wifamilyties.org

Autism Society Wisconsin 2013 Summer Lights! Camera! Autism! Using Video Technology to Enhance Lives

Date: August 15

Location: The Salvation Army Kroc Center, Green Bay, WI

Presenters: Sharon Hammer, Lisa Ladson & Kate McGinnity

Registration: June 15th- August 5th, 2013

Trauma Informed Care: What Parents and Professionals Need to Know Trauma affects brain development, learning, relationships, and many other aspects of life. Experts from around the state will address many of these issues in keynote presentations and break-out sessions in this informative regional Conference.

Date: August 24, 2013; 8:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

Location: West Salem High School

Cost: free

Registration: Contact Sandra McFarland at 877-374-0511, smcfarland@wifacets.org or on line at www.wifacets.org

Upcoming Statewide Events cont.

2012-2013 Parents and Partnership (PIP), and Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YiPPE) Training Schedule. What is Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YiPPE)? Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment is a leadership development opportunity for youth with disabilities and their parents to learn about the transition process in a unique way. Youth and their parents will hear from speakers and take part in hands-on activities in parallel programs over five weekends.

Dates: 2013-1014

Locations: PIP: Rhinelander, Lac du Flambeau, & St. Croix Falls

YIPPE: Green Bay

Cost: free

Registration:

deyoungm@cesa5.org
www.wspei.org or DPI web site
at <http://sped.dpi.gov/sped>

Closing the Gap: The 31st annual closing the Gap Conference This is the most practical, practitioner-driven AT conference in North America!
Date: October 9-11, 2013; Pre Conference – October 7-8, 2013

Location: Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in Bloomington-located just 10 minutes from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport

Cost: Parent registration \$275 and scholarships are available

Registration: <http://www.closingthegap.com/conference/>

CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Next month's newsletter topic: Assistive Technology

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 or 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.

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

* **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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