

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Topic of the Month: Autism Spectrum Disorder

Upcoming Statewide Events

Circles of Life Conference

This is a conference for parents and family members who have children with disabilities and professionals who support them.

Keynote: *Dr. Barbara Stroud* is passionate about supporting positive relationships between children and their caregivers. She focuses on culture as the way these relationships are developed and supported.

Date: April 21-22, 2016

Location: Country Springs Hotel, Pewaukee

[Information & Registration Link](#)

2016 Summit for Addressing Disproportionality

This year's focus areas will be: Family and Community Engagement, Student-Teacher Relationships, Effective Instruction, and School & Instructional Leadership.

Date: April 21-22, 2016

Location: Green Bay, WI

[Information Link](#)

28th Annual BIAW Brain Injury Conference

The conference provides valuable information for professionals, caregivers and survivors of TBI.

Date: May 2-3, 2016

Location: Wilderness Resort, WI Dells

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Parent's Guide: Special Education & IEPs

In this presentation from Children's Hospital of WI in collaboration with WI FACETS, one will learn about special education, IEPs, 504 plans, and regulations. Answers to frequently asked questions about special education and children's medical/mental health. **Date:** May 12, 2016

Location: Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Auditorium

Questions: Call 414-266-2932.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

Being Nonverbal Doesn't Mean One Has Nothing to Say

By Wendy Overturf

Last year, Mark (name changed), a first grader, was found eligible for special education under the category of autism. At that time, he was essentially nonverbal. When developing the initial IEP, the team determined that communication was a major goal. While the ultimate goal was for Mark to develop verbal skills, the team believed that in the interim it was important for Mark to be able to communicate in some other manner. Consequently, the team determined that it would be appropriate for him to undergo an assistive technology evaluation.

The evaluation process occurred over a several month period. Numerous devices were tried. The school district utilized the services of the Assistive Technology Lending Center (ATLC). ATLC is a lending library of high-end Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) equipment for trial purposes. The ATLC provides high-end AAC devices costing \$4000.00 or more for loan to Wisconsin public school educators for trial with children ages 3 to 18 who have IEPs and are enrolled in public schools.

After school personnel did several trials of different devices, the school district selected and purchased an assistive technology device with which Mark had shown success. Utilizing the new device in school was a slow process. First the staff had to receive training on how to use the device and how to incorporate its usage into Mark's normal daily routines. Then Mark needed to learn how to use the device. Over the course of the year, Mark's skills and motivation to communicate with the use of his communication device increased. The parents and school staff were very encouraged as they witnessed Mark beginning to communicate his needs, thoughts, and feelings. Mark also seemed to be happy about this and appeared less frustrated.

Mark progressed to the point where he was using his device to access his school work. Mark's parents requested another IEP team meeting. Specifically, they wanted to address the possibility of Mark taking the device home. They felt that Mark needed the use of the device at home to work on his academic goals and homework. The parents were aware that on a case-by-case basis, the use of school-purchased assistive technology devices in a child's home or in other settings can be considered. In these cases, the child's IEP Team determines that the child needs access to those devices in order to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). After discussing this at the meeting, the IEP team did determine that it was critical that Mark be able to have access to his communication device at home for him to continue to make progress on his IEP goals. The parents reported that the continuity of using the device both at home and at school has enabled Mark to have an increased "voice" in all his daily routines and interactions.



Upcoming Statewide Events

Opening Horizons Conference
Students with disabilities, family members, special education teachers, transition coordinators, and others will take an in depth look at the transition to college and learn about disability services in a college or university setting.

Date: May 5, 2016

Location: UW-Whitewater

[Information & Registration Link](#)

2016 Wisconsin Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Conference

Date: June 13 and 14, 2016

Location: Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake, WI

Intended for people who work with or on behalf of young children and their families. Featuring nationally-known and Wisconsin speakers, sharing information about promoting social and emotional development in everyday activities for infants, young children, and their families, as well as early intervention and treatment strategies.

[Information & Registration Link](#)

WI DPI: Two Day Autism Training: Supporting Visual Learners and Their Neurology

Date: June 21 & 22, 2016,

Location: Johnson Creek, WI

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Wisconsin's 23rd Annual State-Wide Institute on Best Practices in Inclusive Education

Date: July 25-27, 2016

Location: Wausau, WI

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Endless Possibilities Conference

All-day event for parents, school professionals and others focusing on mental health and education issues, strategies and resources.

Date: August 5, 2016

Location: UW-Whitewater, Highland Hall

[Information & Registration Link](#)

RESEARCH TO READ

Innovations in Behavioral Intervention Preparation for Paraprofessionals Working with Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Richard W. Serna, Harold E. Lobo, Cindy K. Fleming, Richard K. Fleming, Carol Curtin, Michelle M. Foran, and Charles D. Hamad. *J Spec Educ Technol* March 2015 vol. 30 no. 1 1-12

[Article Link](#)

Abstract:

Given the empirically validated success of behavioral intervention based on applied behavior analysis for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other developmental disabilities, the demand for knowledgeable and skilled paraprofessional teaching staff is very high. Unfortunately, there currently exists a widely recognized shortage of such practitioners. This article describes the development of an online training program aimed at preparing paraprofessionals for face-to-face training and supervision as part of a solution to the growing demand. The focus of the program has been on moving beyond traditional

online pedagogy, which has limited interactivity. Instead, the approach to teaching fundamental knowledge and implementation skills in behavioral intervention methods incorporates first-person simulations, typical of live mentor/mentee training. Preliminary program evaluation data are also described.

Parents Taking Action: A Psycho-Educational Intervention for Latino Parents of Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder

Magaña, S., Lopez, K. and Machalicek, W. (2015), *Family Process*. doi: 10.1111/famp.12169

[Article Link](#)

Abstract:

The increased prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) among Latino children, later diagnosis, limited access to bicultural specialist support, and worsened health outcomes when compared to non-Latinos points to the need for a culturally relevant parent education intervention. This pilot study examined the



feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary outcomes of a culturally derived intervention, Parents Taking Action, for 19 Spanish-speaking mothers of children with ASD. This study introduces the *Promotora de Salud* Model of intervention delivery to the autism field. A mixed-methods design including one group pre- and posttest design and focus groups was used to evaluate the outcomes of PTA. We found that the intervention was both feasible to implement and acceptable to participants. We also found significant increases in empowerment oriented outcomes for parents between pre- and posttest suggesting that the intervention is promising. Suggestions for future research and practice are offered.

STATEWIDE PARTNER:



The Autism Society of Wisconsin (ASW) is dedicated to improving the lives of all affected by autism in Wisconsin by providing information and referral, family support, advocacy, professional development, resource development, and by raising awareness and acceptance. ASW sponsors an annual spring and fall conference, a free quarterly newsletter, provides information and referral and monitors a peer support listserv. The Autism Society of Wisconsin is the voice for autism in Wisconsin, advocating for individuals with autism, their families and those who work with them.

Visit the [Autism Society of Wisconsin Website](#) to join the email list or access resources such as:

[Living with Autism Series](#)

[Autism Society of Wisconsin Resource Guide](#)

ONLINE RESOURCES



Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)

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 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 its constituents, therefore they have employed a 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 website](#)

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](#)

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. It is 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 who have children with autism. [My Autism Team website](#)

Oasis@MAAP

MAAP Services is a non-profit organization that provides information, networking, referrals and printed materials for individuals, families and professionals concerned with autism spectrum disorders. The website has an online forum and links to newsletters, articles, and books related to autism spectrum disorders. [Oasis@MAAP](#)

Edgewood College: Parent Empowerment

Dr. Tom Holub, Professor of Education & Special Education Program Coordinator, Edgewood College

Edgewood College, in Madison, is involved with a Department of Public Instruction Special Education Personnel Development Grant that moves toward parent empowerment. Currently working in two schools, Edgewood provides support to Schurz Elementary in Watertown and to Huegel Elementary in Madison. The primary work relates to outreach. Parent and caregiver information sessions are hosted in these schools and speakers have presented. Leaders in the field of special education have been available for questions and answers as well.

Under the leadership of Dr. Tom Holub, Graduate students from Edgewood are assigned as school liaisons. They work with parents and school staff to set up the evening sessions. Topics for the meetings, have included, but are not limited to; understanding special education law, universal design for learning, and promoting family engagement and leadership in schools. For additional information, contact Tom at tholub@edgewood.edu

INSTRUCTIONAL TRENDS:

Professional Learning Communities



Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are one of the key School and Instructional Leadership strategies in the “Promoting Excellence for All” initiative. PLCs are based on the research of Richard DuFour, EdD. They are groups of educators, school professionals, and anyone with an interest in education- including family and community members. Wisconsin has identified some guiding principles of PLCs, including: focusing on learning, prevention & intervention; shared vision and collaborative decision making; and results-oriented commitment to continuous improvement.

The mission of PLCs is learning for all students. Teams ask the questions: What do we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning? To answer these questions and work toward the shared vision of learning for all, the PLC team works collaboratively to improve practices through deep learning, setting goals, and analyzing results. The PLC also collaboratively decides which issues are true priorities and then focuses efforts on those issues. Since PLCs are results driven, evidence of progress is also provided.

PLCs have led to successful outcomes on a variety of issues in many schools and districts across Wisconsin and the nation. Wisconsin’s own [Hortonville School District](#) has gotten national attention for the success of its PLC. You can learn more about its achievements [here](#).

To read more about Professional Learning Communities, click [here](#).

See Richard DuFour speak about the importance of PLCs [here](#).

View the [Guiding Principles of the Wisconsin Personnel Development Model](#).

UPCOMING WEBINARS

Information & registration for WI FACETS free workshops and webinars :

www.wifacets.org/events

By phone, contact Sandra: 877-374-0511

Via email: smcfarland@wifacets.org

Educación Especial: ¿Qué Necesito Saber? (Telephone Workshop)

Date: April 15, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

Intellectual Disabilities: Definition & Eligibility Criteria

Date: April 27, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Molly Bever, WI DPI

Self-Advocate Spotlight Workshop

Date: April 27, 2016, 6-8 pm

Location: WI FACETS, 600 W. Virginia St. Milwaukee

Register/Contact: Matthew Zellmer at 414-374-4645 ext. 203

mzellmer@wifacets.org

Getting & Keeping Your First Job

Date: May 3, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Matthew Zellmer, WI FACETS

Productive and Friendly IEP Meetings

Date: May 9, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Jan Serak, WI FACETS and Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA 7

Evaluation and Assessment of American Indian Students

Date: May 11, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Eva Kubinski, WI DPI

Discapacidades de Aprendizaje (SLD) y Respuesta a la Intervención (RtI)

(Telephone Workshop)

Date: May 13, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

Specially Designed Physical Education for Students with Disabilities

Date: May 17, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenters: Garth Tymeson and UW-Lacrosse Graduate Students

Accessible Education Materials

Date: May 18, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Nissan Bar-Lev, Director of Sp.Ed., CESA 7

Supporting Literacy at Home

Date: May 19, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS

Los Derechos del Padre en El Programa de Nacimiento A 3

(Telephone Workshop)

Date: May 27, 2016, 12-1 pm

Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS



HOME-BASED INTERVENTIONS

Electronic books or E-books are increasingly popular and can be accessed from phones, computers, or tablets. Some e-books include audio, and others have even more interactive features that may lead to the child getting lost in the extras. Here are some strategies to read e-books with your child from Reading Rockets.



- Let your child explore. E-books are new and exciting! Then, read together after time has been given to explore.
- Focus on the story by asking questions – “What do you think will happen next?” or “What was your favorite part of the story?”
- Don't let the device do all the work. Stay with your child, interact with the story and have a conversation with your child about what you're reading.

On these sites, children can listen to and/or read along with books for free. Many are organized by title, author, and/or genre

[A Story Before Bed](#)

[Mee Genius](#)

[Story Nory](#)

[Day By Day New York](#)

[Loyal Books](#)

[Screen Actor's Guild Storyline Online](#)

[Lit2Go](#) (For older children)



Hoppin' Doubles

Jump into spring with this fun math game from First Grade A La Carte featuring a frog! Roll a die and either add it to itself (i.e. roll 2, $2+2=4$) or multiply it by itself (i.e. roll 6, $6 \times 6=36$). Cover the answer on the board. If the answer is already covered, the player loses a turn.

Whoever covers the most answers by the time the board is covered wins! Spaces can be colored in or covered with pieces of colored paper. There are two game boards depending on whether you have a 6 or 10 sided die. [Addition Game](#) [Multiplication Game](#)



Ordinal Numbers with Spring Bugs

“Ordinal numbers” are numbers that tell the position of something in a series or list, i.e. first, second, third, etc. Does your child know the ordinal numbers? Have them practice with this fun [worksheet](#) from Down Under Teacher and identify the bug's position in line from first through tenth.

Latino Autism Support Group

Grupo de Autismo: Educación Especial en Palabras Sencillas

Date: April 30, 2016, 10 am-12 pm

Grupo de Autismo: Discapacidades de Aprendizaje (SLD) y Respuesta a la Intervención

Date: May 28, 2016, 10 am-12 pm

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

Contact: Martha Lechuga (414) 374-4645, ext. 224



CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Upcoming newsletter topics:

May: [Early Childhood](#) **June:** [Emotional Behavioral Disabilities](#) **July:** [Speech and Language Disabilities](#)

To submit contributions, you may use either the attached Word document for contributing articles, events, or resources. Send submissions to woverturf@wifacets.org. If unable to access form, send you may send information in an email.

Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the **1st 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 the 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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