FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

This month's topic: Assistive Technology

Upcoming Statewide Events

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.
Milwaukee Series Begins 12/6/14
Flyer and Registration Link

Autism Essentials Across the School Day– DPI Two Day Conference
In addition to reviewing the essential core strategies to assist students with autism, this is a great training to invite general education teachers, new special education staff, paraprofessionals, families, and other staff working with students with autism to receive a general overview of autism and autism-related teaching strategies. Basic strategies including how to assist in supporting movement/sensory needs of students with autism will be discussed. This overview will address specific questions participants have in relation to behaviors which they find challenging and also in learning teaching strategies which help meet some basic needs for children with autism.
Sponsored by: WI Department of Public Instruction.
When: January 13 and 14, 2015
Where: Johnson Creek, Comfort Suites
Information & Registration Link

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

Opening Doors to Opportunities

By Wendy Overturf

You may have heard the phrase "when one door is closed, another door opens." Sometimes students with disabilities are challenged with accessing appropriate services and they often hit closed doors. Assistive technology (AT), has the potential of opening doors for these students. This was the case with Jon. At his recent IEP meeting, Jon, a high school junior with spina bifida and a specific learning disability, shared that he was concerned about completing high school and being successful in college. He further mentioned that he was having difficulty keeping all his papers and assignments organized and keeping his laptop charged. Jon also added that he had some mobility issues. Carrying all his

textbooks was physically taxing for him and it was also difficult for him to participate in "off-campus" group project meetings, especially during the winter months.

Realizing that the IEP Team was charged with the responsibility for determining Jon's individual needs for assistive technology, the team brain-stormed possible solutions. It was decided that Jon would undergo an assistive technology evaluation to determine those supports that were needed.

At the IEP meeting after the AT evaluation, it was decided that Jon could benefit from an iPad. iPads are much lighter than laptops and also have an extended battery life which would allow Jon much more independence. His textbooks could also be put on the iPad in order to decrease some of Jon's other challenges. It was also suggested that

Jon use Google Docs. Google Docs allows him access to his documents from anywhere. Google Docs also allows users to simultaneously work on a single master document, so Jon could work with other team members on a group project even if he couldn't physically participate in a meeting. The use of an iPad would also give him access to FaceTime, which also would allow him to participate remotely in group meetings. The IEP also included training for both Jon and staff on the use of these technologies.

This is an excellent example how a student advocated for his assistive technology needs and how a school team collaborated to provide assistive technology solutions that would meet his needs. A door once closed, or never considered, has now opened for Jon!

Family Engagement

Upcoming Statewide Events

Teaching New Behaviors—DPI Two Day Autism Conference

Behavior which interferes with the learning of a student or others is often the result of a context that is not adequately supported. Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) will be taught along with opportunity given to participants to work in groups to develop support strategies and Behavior Intervention Plans. In addition a model to work with escalating behaviors will be presented. Sponsored by WI Dept. of Public Instruction.
When: February 17 and 18, 2015
Where: Johnson Creek, Comfort Suites
Information & Registration Link

Wisconsin Transition Conference 2015

When: February 18-20, 2015
Location: WI Dells
Keynote speakers will discuss research based strategies that improve post school outcomes for students with behavioral challenges and national employment initiatives and current employment outcomes and strategies for students with disabilities in transition. Participants have the opportunity to choose from many sessions and will be able to visit the Exhibit Hall to learn more about transition services and products, meet our entrepreneurs with disabilities and network during breaks! Early registration prices end 12/19/2014.
Conference Schedule , Information & Registration Link

Autism Society of Wisconsin Annual Conference

When: April 30-May 2, 2015
Location: WI Dells
Temple Grandin will be keynote speaker on Friday, May 1, 2015. Complete conference schedule has not been released yet. Early registration prices end 12/19/2014.
Information & Registration Link

RESEARCH TO READ

An Analysis of Best Practices and Assistive Technology Tools for Students with Learning Disabilities

Aronson, Sadie, and Betsy Orr. "An Analysis of Best Practices and Assistive Technology Tools for Students with Learning Disabilities." Journal on Education (JEd) 1.2 (2014).
Article Link

Abstract: Incorporating special education students into the general education classrooms has become increasingly common in today's classrooms. According to the U. S. Department of Education, nearly 99% of students with learning disabilities are receiving "special education and related services" in a general education classroom. This paper addressed what forms of assistive technology are being utilized and how this technology is used in conjunction with general education teaching methods. Best practices are also discussed.

Integrating Assistive Technology into Teacher Education Programs: Trials, Tribulations, and Lessons Learned

Van Laarhoven, Toni, et al. "Integrating Assistive Technology into Teacher Education Programs: Trials, Tribulations, and Lessons Learned." Assistive Technology Outcomes and Benefits 8.1 (2012): 32-47.
Article Link

Abstract: This article describes several stages in the integration of assistive technology (AT) into and across the curriculum of a teacher education program. The multi-year initiative included several projects and strategies that differentially affected faculty ability to integrate training and evaluation in using AT in their coursework. All strategies increased faculty familiarity and comfort with AT. However, only video tutorials resulted in faculty infusion of AT in their courses. Implications for teacher preparation programs, including the need to infuse assistive technology within and across coursework are discussed.

STATEWIDE PARTNERSHIP

The PROMISE initiative is intended to improve services for youth SSI recipients and their families. The services help youth recipients achieve better outcomes, including graduating from high school ready for college and a career, completing postsecondary education and job training, and obtaining competitive employment in an integrated setting. As a result, these youth SSI recipients can achieve long-term reductions in reliance on SSI.

PROMISE is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Social Security Administration, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Labor. Wisconsin is one of six sites participating in the demonstration project. Along with Wisconsin, PROMISE grants were awarded to California, New York, Maryland, Arkansas, and a consortium of states that includes Utah, Arizona, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana.

Wisconsin Promise will help youth and their families meet their school and work goals in order to better their income and financial stability, reducing poverty.

Find out more about Wisconsin Promise by downloading the Wisconsin Promise Overview Slideshow or visit the Wisconsin Promise Website.

ONLINE RESOURCES
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

SETT Framework
SETT is an acronym for Student, Environments, Tasks, and Tools—all of which need to be fully explored when assistive technology tools are considered or selected. The website offers a set of forms for collaborative decision making.
SETT Framework Documents

The Family Center on Technology and Disability
This website offers monthly newsletters, success stories, information about disability organizations, reviews of technology resources, and more. Its collection of nearly 1,000 annotated resources can be browsed or searched by topic, disability, and material type. In addition, its newsletter archive provides examples of strategies and tools that are helping students succeed. Some of the resources are available in Spanish.
Family Center on Technology and Disability Website

Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI)
WATI materials to help guide teams through the process of considering, assessing, implementing, and supporting the use of assistive technology. The publications offer suggested tools and strategies for students with various types of disabilities as well as for various curriculum areas. The website also includes checklists to assist educators in gathering information about a student, the student's environment, and tasks the student needs to complete.   WATI Website

National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)
This site focuses on how schools can serve students who are unable to read or use standard print materials, through the use of specialized formats (braille, audio, large print, and digital text). There are articles and research about effective practices, technical information, tutorials, webinars, online forums, and more.
AIM Center Website

Bookshare
Bookshare is an online library of more than 170,000 digital books for children and adults with qualifying disabilities. Schools can download textbooks, books, and periodicals, which their students can access on computers or mobile devices using software or apps that read the text aloud. For students with visual impairments, schools can also download files for use with braille devices.   Bookshare Website

Learning Ally
Learning Ally offers a collection of more than 70,000 audiobooks, including recorded textbooks and literature titles, for children and adults with qualifying disabilities. Audiobooks are available as digital downloads, as well as CDs, and free apps are available for popular mobile devices. Learning Ally works with volunteers to record books that its users request.
Learning Ally Website

Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services (QIAT)
The QIAT Consortium is a national, grassroots group that provides input into the ongoing process of developing, disseminating, and implementing a set of quality indicators for assistive technology services. The QIAT website provides guidelines that can help schools improve their assistive technology services, as well as an email list where educators can participate in online discussions.
Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Website

Links

Assistive Tech Innovations: 14 New Apps & Other Tools
Apps that allow the teacher to differentiate instruction to meet different learning styles.

Best Google Chrome Accessibility Features for Assistive Tech

Free Assistive Tech Tools Make Learning Accessible to All

Assistive Technology Resources for Students with Autism

Milwaukee Center & Autism Support Group
Where: WI FACETS 600 W. Virginia St., Suite 501 Milwaukee, WI 53204
Date: December 15, 2014 11 am-1 pm
Topic: Addressing the Behavioral Needs of Students with Autism & Other Disabilities
Facilitator: Maria Nogueron, WI FACETS

WI FACETS
Phone Workshops

IEP Part 1
Date: 11/18/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Using Verbal De-escalation to Reduce the Need for Seclusion and Restraint
Date: 11/19/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: CPI staff

IEP Part 2
Date: 11/20/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): What Parents &Professionals Need to Know
Date: 12/3/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Programa de Educación Individualizado (IEP) Parte 1
Date: 12/5/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

WI Special Education Mediation System - Mediation
Date: 12/7/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenters Jan Serak & Nissan Bar-Lev

IEP Part 1
Date: 12/9/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Parent Leadership in Public Policy Related to Systems Change
Date: 12/10/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Lisa Pugh, Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW)

IEP Part 2
Date: 12/11/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Programa de Educación Individualizado (IEP) Parte 2
Date: 12/12/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS Staff

Section 504
Date: 12/16/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Introduction to Special Education
Date: 12/18/2014, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Reading Strategies

Different Forms of Reading Material as a Way to Increase Reading Vocabulary and Understanding:

Check out literature and reading materials in both their book forms and as books on tape in a CD or digital recording. Many times children's and young adult's literature is available on tape and in book form. Your child will see great benefit from reading along in the book while listening to the same book on tape. Your child will see and hear the words and phrases together and that is a good way to reinforce site word recognition. Some books are turned into movies. Watching the movie may increase understanding and can also help your child identify similarities or differences between the book and the movie. Finally, your child might benefit from assistive technology such as a text reader. All of these methods provide your child exposure to stories and literature that he might not otherwise choose to read because of the difficulty. He can gain knowledge of the content and increase vocabulary without having to struggle through the book and perhaps be discouraged.

[Listening to Literature: Struggling Readers Respond to Recorded Books](#)

Math Strategies

Plan and Take a Trip in the Car:

Using a map of your city or state or the internet, plan a family trip. Decide where you will go. Add up the number of miles. How long do you think it will take to get there? What if we make a few stops? Is there another way to get there? How much gas will it take to get there? What does it cost to fill the tank? What is the difference in cost to fill the tank with premium compared to regular gas? How many miles per gallon does the car get? The questions and possible math problems to solve are endless. Have your child keep track of your trip in a notebook or on their tablet and a figure out what was the total cost. Have fun!

[Family Vacation Travel Math Activities](#)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Next month's newsletter topic: *Gifted Education*

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 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 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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