

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Topic of the Month: Communication



Upcoming Statewide Events

St. Croix Falls Parents in Partnership (PIP) Parents in Partnership is a leadership development opportunity for parents of children with disabilities. Parents and other caregivers meet together five times during the year to share their family stories, challenges, joys, and triumphs of raising their children. NW Wisconsin October training.
Date: October 2 & 3, 2015
[Information & Registration Link](#)

Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YIPPE) Leadership development opportunity for youth with intellectual 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.
Training Locations, Dates & Links:
Green Bay: October 9 & 10, 2015
WI Dells: October 9 & 10, 2015
Fau Claire: October 23 & 24, 2015

Welcome to the Awesome of Being Different. Together. Jennifer O'Toole presents a day-long conference providing smart ideas spoken plainly in ways that challenge veteran professionals and give real hope to families just beginning their spectrum journeys. *Register & pre-order book by 9/21/15.*
Date: October 1, 2015: 8:30-3:30
Location: WCTC, Pewaukee, WI
[Information & Registration Link](#)

Special Education Conference 2015 Offering more than 20 sessions that will appeal to regular and special educators working with students with disabilities.
Dates: October 12-13, 2015
Location: Kalahari Resort & Convention Center, WI Dells
[Information & Registration Link](#)

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

Productive and Friendly IEP Meetings

By Wendy Overturf

While informal communication between schools and families should be occurring on a routine basis, the IEP meeting is the formal process of bringing all the IEP team members together to develop an individualized education plan. The IEP meeting creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to improve educational results for children with disabilities. An IEP meeting should be a chance for parties to collaborate, share expertise, be student-focused, encourage creativity, and utilize problem-solving skills.

Recently, Jan Serak and Nissan Bar-Lev, partners of the Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System (WSEMS), developed a presentation with input from parents, districts, and agencies on "How to Conduct Friendly and Productive IEP Meetings." By looking at very practical tips and techniques that can increase the productivity of an IEP meeting and reduce conflict, this presentation hopes to support both parents and districts in developing strong productive relationships and effective, forward looking conversations about the needs of students with disabilities.

During the solicitation of their input, school districts gave many examples and techniques that have proven successful throughout the IEP process in establishing and maintaining a positive relationship with the parents. For example,

- Be prepared.
- Consider sending parents a questionnaire about their child (asking for concerns, strengths, and thoughts) or a student profile. Ask parents if they have any questions or thoughts about the IEP meeting. (This will help the district understand potential issues that could arise.)

A relatively simple step for a district is to create a welcoming atmosphere and greet the parents outside of the actual meeting room. In the survey, parents indicated that only 21% had actually been met and welcomed outside the actual IEP meeting room. One parent commented that his district used a technique that resulted in a positive experience. *"We were in a half circle facing white pads on easels. The strengths of my son were listed in big bright colors. True strengths, not just what he enjoyed doing. This set the tone for the entire meeting. They saw him for who he was, and not for the challenges he had."*

This is just a brief synopsis of the information in the presentation, "How to Conduct Friendly and Productive IEP Meetings." The entire presentation covers many other areas, including when it may be appropriate to request a facilitated IEP or mediation (which is a free service to both districts and parents.) It can be accessed at www.wifacets.org. (From the home page, click on **Training** and then **Archived Workshops**. After entering your name and email go to **Dispute Resolution** and page down to the **May 11, 2015 presentation**.)

Upcoming Statewide Events

2015 Wisconsin Statewide Transition Academy

Offering opportunities for transition-minded youth, parents, community members, agencies, and educators to immerse themselves in information, strategies, and resources related to transition planning to increase successful postsecondary outcomes. Explore model programs, workshops and guidance in best practices in supporting students, age 14-21, who are transitioning to college, career and independent living.

Date: October 29-30, 2015

Location: Wilderness and Glacier Canyon Lodge, WI Dells

[Information Link](#)

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Two Day Autism

Trainings:

Autism Essentials Across the School Day

Oct. 6 & 7, 2015, Wausau

Early Childhood Autism Essentials Across the Day

Oct. 20 & 21, 2015, Johnson Creek

Teaching and Supporting New Behaviors

Nov. 3 & 4, 2015, Wausau

[Information & Registration Link](#)

State Superintendent's Conference on Special Education & Pupil Services Leadership Issues-

Date: October 20-21, 2015 *

*On Monday, **October 19, 2015**, there will be a Public Forum from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Location: Glacier Canyon Lodge, Wilderness Resort, WI Dells

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Your Child Can Work!

Informational evening provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), the Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative (WSPEI) and the Transition Improvement Grant (TIG).

Date: Nov 3, 2015: 5:30-8:30 pm

Location: CESA 1, N25 W23131 Paul Rd., Ste 100 Pewaukee, WI 53072

[Information & Registration Link](#)

RESEARCH TO READ

Augmentative and Alternative Communication for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Intellectual Disability

Sigafoos, Jeff, O'Reilly, Mark F., Lancioni, Giulio E., Sutherland, Dean (2014) *Current Developmental Disorders Reports*, 1(2), 51-57.

[Article Link](#)

Abstract: Many individuals with autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disability are candidates for augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). We review two current trends in AAC research involving persons with ASD and intellectual disability. The first trend is the use of smartphone and tablet devices in AAC interventions. The second trend is the direct comparison of the relative efficacy of differing AAC options, for example comparing the use of manual signs versus picture-based communication systems versus speech-generating devices. Studies in the first group suggest that this

intervention. Studies in the latter group have found differences in how quickly some individuals have learned to use different options and differences in preference for the various options. These research trends suggest a possible new direction for AAC intervention that incorporates aspects of self-determination.

Utilizing Parental Homework as a Form of Parent Involvement in Early Care and Education

Kim, YaeBin, Riley, David A. (2014) *NHSA Dialog* 17(2), 90-94.

[Article Link](#)

A novel way of promoting parent involvement was tested: homework given to preschool parents, to read to their children at home using the dialogical reading method. An earlier study showed that the homework led to actual increases in children's pre-literacy skills.



The current study investigated whether the parents in the experimental group actually changed their overall amount or type of parent involvement with the program, as compared to control group parents. Results show that the preschool parental homework led to a shift in the content of parent-teacher communications, so they became much more focused on the individual child's development. The findings suggest that parents can respond enthusiastically to homework from their childcare program, this homework can contribute to a shift in the nature of teacher-parent communications, and can have significant impacts on child development.

STATEWIDE PARTNERSHIP:

Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training and Support, Inc. (WI FACETS) was founded in June 1995 by a small group of parents. Since then, WI FACETS has developed into a leading source of information and support in Wisconsin for children and youth who have special needs, their families and others who support them. The mission is to provide and broaden opportunities that enhance the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities and their families, with emphasis on support for underserved families in the community. All services from WI FACETS are no cost.

WI FACETS:

- Helps parents build partnerships with those who provide services to their children
- Connects families to community resources
- Educates parents on their rights and how to use those rights to become involved in their child's education
- Provides information and resources to educators and other professionals who support children with disabilities

WI FACETS provides 5 core services to help parents and others support and enrich the lives of children with disabilities:

***Information & Referral * Support Groups *Parent Leadership
*Individual Assistance *Youth Leadership Development**

Current training events are always included in this monthly newsletter and can also be accessed on their website at www.wifacets.org. The website also has archived trainings as well as a wealth of information related to children with disabilities.



ONLINE RESOURCES



Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)

Resources related to parent involvement as well as tips for communication with the school. [CPIR Website](#)

The Role of E-mail in Parent-Teacher Communication

The value and potential challenges of using email for parent-school communications.

[Article Link](#)

It Takes A Village To Teach A Child - Building Bridges Between Schools And Parents

Resources related to home-school communication and conflict resolution strategies.

[Website](#)

Family-School-Community Partnerships 2.0

Collaborative Strategies to Advance Student Learning

Resource booklet developed by the National Education Association. *Family-School-Community Partnerships 2.0* outlines ten strategies that are the foundation for creating effective partnerships, like building one-to-one relationships between families and teachers that are linked to learning.

[National Education Association Website](#)

Parent-Teacher Conference Tip Sheets for Principals, Teachers, and Parents

Developed by the Harvard Family Research Project, this booklet highlights tips for parents and professionals that will help foster more effective parent-teacher conferences.

[Harvard Family Research Project](#)

Tips for Parents: Parent -Teacher Conferences

Information about effective parent-teacher conferences, available in Spanish & English.

[Article Link](#)

Bridging Home-School Communications: Helping Parents Begin Conversations with Teachers

A variety of suggestions to assist parents in developing more effective ways to communicate with teachers. [Special Education Advisor Website](#)

Preventing and Resolving Parent Teacher Differences

Suggestions for both parents and professionals on how to minimize and resolve conflicts.

[Kidsource Website](#)

Building Parent-Teacher Relationships

This website provides strategies that have been effective in improving parent-teacher communications. [Reading Rockets Website](#)

Parent-Teacher Talk

On this website are examples of actual conversations parents can have with teachers regarding concerns parents may have about their child. [Good Housekeeping Website](#)

National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships

This website outlines the standards developed by the National PTA for effective family-school partnerships. The website also has links to other resources related to building these partnerships.

[National PTA Website](#)



Results Driven Accountability (RDA) What RDA Means in Wisconsin
[A Message from Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#)

Upcoming Statewide Events

Children Come First Conference— Theme: “Include Me!”

Conference is for those caring for, working with, or concerned with the well-being of children and young adults with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. This conference brings together professionals, educators, and families, with national experts in the field of children's mental health.

Date: Nov. 10-11, 2015

Location: Glacier Canyon Lodge, Wilderness Resort, WI Dells

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Technology for Special Education

2015—Featuring sessions on educational, instructional and assistive technology for beginning, intermediate and advanced level learners. Exhibit Hall offers opportunity to learn more about technology services and products.

Date: November 16-17, 2015

Location: Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, WI Dells

[Information Link](#)

Self-Determination Conference

This conference works to empower people with disabilities in Wisconsin to have more control over their lives. The conference is for persons with disabilities, their families and professionals who support them.

Date: November 9-11, 2015

Location: Kalahari Resort, WI Dells

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Across the Lifespan Conference

Offering opportunities to learn about special education, transition, higher education, assistive technology and employment. As the title implies, “Across the Lifespan” targets all age groups. This includes PK-12, post-secondary education, adulthood and seniors. Attendees represent the fields of assistive technology, education, case management, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology and rehabilitation counselors. Students of these professions, consumers and family members also attend.

Date: December 3-4, 2015

Location: Chula Vista, WI Dells

[Information & Registration Link](#)

WI FACETS Telephone Workshops & Webinars

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

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR): What It Is and How It Can Help
Date: 9/23/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Meredith Dressel, DVR

Bullying
Date: 9/24/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Introducción a la Educación Especial
Date: 9/25/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

Serving on Groups That Make Decisions (Section 1 & 2) Webinar
Date: 10/1/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS

IEP Part 1
Date: 10/6/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Navigating the Special Education Maze
Date: 10/7/2015 12:15-1:15 pm
Presenter: Mary Skadahl, WSPEI

IEP Part 2
Date: 10/8/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System (WSEMS): Facilitated IEPs
Date: 10/12/2015, 12:15-1:15 pm
Presenters: Jan Serak, WI FACETS & Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA 7

IEPs and the Common Core Standards
Date: 10/14/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Deb Hall, WSPEI/CESA 2

Serving on Groups That Make Decisions (Section 3) Webinar
Date: 10/15/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS

Apoyos e Intervenciones para Obtener una Conducta Positiva
Date: 10/16/2015 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

A Family Guide to PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support)
Date: 10/20/2015
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Serving on Groups That Make Decisions (Section 4 & 5) Webinar
Date: 10/29/2015, 12-1pm
Presenter: Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS

Resolviendo Desacuerdos a Través de la Mediación
Date: 10/30/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS



HOME-BASED INTERVENTIONS



Reading Strategies: Family Reading Place

Setting up a place in your home where everyone in the home can read is a nice way to kick off a new school year. There are two important things to consider when setting up a Family Reading Place – location and materials.

Make sure the room is quiet, well-lit, and comfortable for everyone. Think about having bins or bookshelves, tables, pillows, blankets, as well as couches and chairs. Making sure family members are comfortable while reading is important.

Because this is a family reading area, be sure to have reading materials on hand that appeal to all family members. Books will of course be part of this area, but don't limit it to just books. Think about including magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, religious books, maps, atlas, globes, and even comic books are all appropriate. Everyone needs to have something they will be eager to read.

Source: [*Literacy Development Begins at Home, With a Literate Home Environment*](#)



Math Strategies: Everyday Mathematics

Now that a new school year has started, it's a good time to put new routines and jobs in place for your child around mealtime that reinforce math concepts.

Setting the table:

Let your child help set the table. Fold napkins as triangles one day, and then fold them in half the next day. What shape do the napkins form? Find the number of chairs needed to match the places set. Determine the number of knives, forks, and spoons needed. This reinforces shapes and number concepts.

Sharing and Problem-solving:

Use sharing to reinforce division concepts and fraction skills. How many cookies will each child get if five boys need to share 15 cookies? What if one cookie is left over and three children want to share it? If there are 60 grapes in a bowl and we divide the grapes equally between 6 girls, how many does each girl get? How many pieces of cake can we cut an 8" x 8" pan of chocolate cake into if each piece is 2 inches wide by 2 inches long?

Source: More ideas on activities that can be done at home for children of all ages:

[*A Family's Guide: Fostering Your Child's Success in School Mathematics \(Pre-K – Grade 12\):*](#)

September Support Groups

Urban Support Group

Date: 9/19/2015, 11:00am to 12:00pm

Technology and the IEP: Achieving Your Child's Goals

Date: 9/19/2015 - 12:00pm to 1:00pm

Autism Support Group

Date: 9/19/2015, 1-2 pm

Grupo de Autismo: Tecnología y el IEP:

Alcanzando las Metas de su Niño

Date: 9/26/2015, 10:00am to 12:00pm



Meeting Location:

WI FACETS
600 W. Virginia St., Suite 501
Milwaukee, WI 53204
(414) 374-46345

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Upcoming newsletter topics:

October: [Learning Disabilities](#) November: [Epilepsy](#) December: [Assistive Technology](#)

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 **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 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.



www.dpi.state.wi.us

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