

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Topic of the Month: Early Childhood



## Upcoming Statewide Events

### Parent's Guide to Special Education and IEPs

**Date:** May 12, 2016

**Location:** Children's Hospital of WI  
Overview of special education, IEPs and 504 Plans and answers to frequently asked questions. Free of charge.

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### Strategies for Managing Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

**Date:** May 19, 2016 6pm-7:30pm

**Location:** Aurora Wellness Center, 300 McCanna Parkway, Burlington, WI

Dr. Mervin Langley will be providing this free presentation about how to parent and support a child with ADHD. This presentation will focus on ways to harness strengths and help children overcome difficulties with impulse control, distraction, and time management. Registration is required for this event. Please send name, email, and phone to Lori Radtke at [lrادتke@basd.k12.wi.us](mailto:lrادتke@basd.k12.wi.us) or by calling (262) 763-0180 ext. 2224.

### 2016 Wisconsin Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Conference

**Date:** June 13 and 14, 2016

**Location:** Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake  
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](#)

### Beyond Diversity I - Aligned with Courageous Conversations about Race

**Date:** June 15 and 16, 2016

**Location:** Minocqua, WI

This seminar is designed to help teachers, students, parents, and administrators understand the impact of race on student learning and investigate the role that racism plays in institutionalizing academic achievement disparities.

[Information & Registration Link](#)

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

### Getting a Jump Start on Family Engagement

By Wendy Overturf

When school staff engage in caring and trustful relationships with families, the families are more apt to participate in their children's educational development. (Karen Mapp, 2002, "A New Wave of Evidence") In this same publication, Dr. Mapp outlined the following conclusions from the synthesis of the research related to family, school, and community connections and the relationship to student achievement.

When parents and school staff work together to support learning, students:

- Earn higher grades and test scores;
- Enroll in higher level programs;
- Are promoted more and earn more credits;
- Adapt better to school and attend more regularly;
- Have better social skills and behavior; and
- Graduate and go on to higher education.

In 2006, Dr. Mapp co-authored a second book, *Beyond the Bake Sale*, that was designed for teachers and parents on the front lines in public schools, and administrators and policy makers at all levels. *Beyond the Bake Sale* discusses the "Joining Process." The Joining Process is Dr. Mapp's framework for developing positive relationships between schools and families. This framework consists of three elements: Welcoming, Honoring, and Connecting.

One school district in Wisconsin wanted to make a concerted effort to engage its families when the youngest learners first entered school. Like most districts, they had the typical prekindergarten roundups in the spring for registration and informational purposes. However, the early childhood teachers wanted to take this a step further. Realizing that the parents and children were probably a bit nervous about starting this new journey, the early childhood teachers and director of special education set up a summer family engagement project. The purpose of the project was to help the children meet some of their new classmates and get familiar with the school building and some of the daily routines prior to the start of school in the fall. Another purpose was to connect with the parents and start developing those critical caring and trustful relationships with them. They also wanted to make connections that were "linked to learning." When Dr. Mapp talks about being "linked to learning," she is talking about engaging with families in a way that will support the learning process for each student. Teachers and parents used Dr. Mapp's book (2006) for suggestions. The sessions for both the children and parents were held five times during the summer and were held both during the day and in the evening to accommodate the different work schedules of parents.

Survey results showed that this was a valued experience for students, parents, and staff. One parent commented, "I really thought this was a great idea. Both my son and I were nervous about starting school. At the end of the summer he and I had made meaningful connections with the school staff, other children, and other parents." Early connections such as these foster those caring and trusting relationships that are necessary for meaningful family engagement. Family engagement in early childhood has also been linked to higher rates of social and academic growth, literacy skills, school completion, positive behavior, and college attendance.

[Additional information](#) about Dr. Mapp's [research](#).

## Upcoming Statewide Events

### 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](#)

### Zones of Regulation-Strategies to Foster Self-Regulation and Emotional Control in Students

**Date:** August 1, 2016  
**Location:** Appleton North High School, Appleton, WI  
This training provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, managing their sensory needs and improving their ability to problem solve conflicts. Practical ideas are provided that can easily be incorporated into the classroom or home.

[Information & Registration Link](#)

### Endless Possibilities Conference

This all-day event focuses on mental health and education issues, strategies and resources. Parents, school professionals and others are invited. 1-3 Graduate credits available.

**Date:** August 5, 2016  
**Location:** UW-Whitewater  
[Information & Registration Link](#)

### Save the Date: 2016 Wisconsin Statewide Transition Academy

**Date:** October 5, 2016  
**Location:** Wilderness, WI Dells  
The Transition Academy will be an event packed with information relating to all areas of transition. This conference is perfect for all, whether you are an agency member, educator, para-professional, parent or student. A youth track will be available for students ages 14-21 who are interested in learning more about transition.

[Information Link](#)

## RESEARCH TO READ

### Home Literacy Environments and Foundational Literacy Skills for Struggling and Non-struggling Readers in Rural Early Elementary Schools

Tichnor-Wagner, A., Garwood, J. D., Bratsch-Hines, M. and Vernon-Feagans, L. (2016). *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 31: 6-21.  
doi: 10.1111/ldrp.12090

#### [Article Link](#)

#### Abstract:

Factors such as weak early literacy skills and living in poverty may put young students at risk for reading disabilities. While home literacy activities and access to literacy materials have been associated with positive reading outcomes for urban and suburban students, little is known about home literacy environments of rural early elementary school students living in poverty and their relationship to foundational reading skills for struggling and non-struggling readers. This study examined how home literacy environments might relate to rural

kindergarten and first grade students' reading performance. Parents of 1,108 kindergarten and first grade students in the rural Southeast completed questionnaires on the frequency of home literacy activities and access to literacy materials. Multilevel model analyses revealed that home literacy activities and access to literacy materials were positively related to basic word reading skills, passage comprehension, and spelling. Implications for families and educators are discussed.

### Equity and Mathematics Education

Clements, Douglas H., and Sarama, Julie. (2015).

#### [Article Link](#)

#### Abstract:

As we saw in our first Kennedy Institute position paper ("Education and Equity"), students in some groups, such as those from low-income communities, demonstrate significantly lower levels of achievement. This is especially



true of achievement in the domain of mathematics (1-5). In this position paper, we address issues regarding equity in mathematics achievement and education, including students who live in poverty and who are members of linguistic and ethnic minority groups (the next position paper will address students who have mathematical disabilities or difficulties

### Research in Plain Language: Summer

#### Learning Loss

Check out this [infographic](#) showing how children lose skills over the summer if they do not practice their academic skills.

Now, read Wisconsin DPI's [recommendations and resources](#) for preventing summer learning loss.



Wisconsin Early Childhood  
Collaborating Partners

### WI Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP)

**Mission of WECCP:** All children will be healthy, nurtured, safe and successful

**Vision:** Wisconsin communities, agencies, associations, and state government will work together as a system of high quality comprehensive early childhood services for all children and families.

WECCP was started in 1994 and focuses on collaboration among diverse early childhood partners and exists now as a 'braided' funding effort among three state agencies: Departments of Public Instruction (DPI), Children and Families (DCF) and Health Services (DHS). The WECCP website serves as the collaborative source of information on issues of cross sector interest, state initiatives and research based practices. Regional Collaboration Coaches have been in place since 2004 to connect, build, and sustain cross sector systems around state and regional (early childhood) priority areas.

The [WECCP website](#) has a wealth of information and resources. Some of the topics include child development, WI Model Learning Standards, health and wellness, child find, family partnerships, and numerous links related to children with disabilities. The website also has links to information related to best practices in early literacy, math, and other content areas.

**ONLINE RESOURCES:****Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)**

This website has a variety of resources related to early childhood education. It also has a link to a webinar series on early childhood education. [CPIR website](#)

**Too Small to Fail**

Too Small to Fail aims to help parents and businesses take meaningful actions to improve the health and well-being of children ages zero to five, so that more of America's children are prepared to succeed in the 21st century. The website has an abundance of links to resources related to children from 0-5 years of age. [Too Small website](#)

**National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

NAEYC is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children from birth through age 8. The Association administers a voluntary, national accreditation system for high-quality early childhood programs, sponsors a variety of initiatives to improve professional preparation of early childhood educators, and produces a wide array of early childhood resources. NAEYC membership provides participation in both national and local services through the Association's network of over 300 local, state, and regional affiliates. [NAEYC website](#)

**ZERO TO THREE**

ZERO TO THREE's mission is to support the healthy development and well-being of infants, toddlers and their families. This multidisciplinary organization advances its mission by informing, educating, and supporting adults who influence the lives of infants and toddlers. [Zero to Three website](#)

**Early Childhood-WI Department of Public Instruction**

This website gives information on a variety early childhood program topics. The links to individual web pages give information related to each program topic area, resources, links to other sites, and DPI department contact persons. [WI DPI website](#)

**Wisconsin Head Start Association**

The Wisconsin Head Start Association (WHSA) is a private not-for-profit membership organization representing over 16,000 young children and their families and over 4,000 staff composing the 62 Head Start/Early Head Start programs—including American Indian and Migrant/Seasonal programs—in Wisconsin. One purpose of WHSA is to provide a network for information, training, advocacy, support, and action for directors, parents, and staff of Head Start & Early Head Start programs in Wisconsin. [WHSA website](#)

**United States Department of Education-Early Learning Resources**

This website has an extensive list of resources related to early literacy development and other critical early learning skills. [US DOE website](#)

**Milestones Checklists**

Use these milestones checklists to help family and staff as they track the developmental progress of children ages three months to five years. [Milestones Checklists](#)

**Yes DEC Can!**

Interesting news and updates regarding Policy & Advocacy in the field of Early Childhood Special Education and Early Intervention. Newsletter sign up is available on the website. [DEC website](#)

**Importance of Play in Kindergarten**

What's your favorite memory of kindergarten? Was it nap time, playing in the sandbox, or playing on the swings? The kindergarten of today has drastically changed; many classrooms have replaced playful learning with paper-pencil and teacher-led tasks. These two articles highlight the importance play as a developmentally appropriate practice.

[Reimagining Kindergarten](#)

[Kindergartners Get Little Time to Play. Does it Matter?](#)

**US Department of Health & Human Services & US Department of Education**

Principles and best practices for family engagement for families of young children. [Policy Statement](#) on Family Engagement from the Early Years to the Early Grades

**INSTRUCTIONAL TRENDS:****Standards-Based Grading**

Many school districts are moving to a standards-based grading system. In this type of system, teachers report what students know and are able to do relative to the Wisconsin and Common Core Academic Standards and sometimes to school district standards.

Grade level standards, also known as proficiency statements, describe what students should know and be able to do in each subject area at each grade level. They help shape the curriculum from one grade to the next, as teachers are familiar with instruction that has already occurred and can build upon it.

Standards-based report cards often give a grade for each learning goal, so students receive multiple grades in each subject area. In 5th grade math, for example, one might see the subject broken into several categories, such as operations/algebraic thinking and fractions. Under each category, there might be a list of math skills the child should be able to do, as well as a grade showing how the child is doing in each area.

Work habits—educators may call this learning behavior or success attributes—are often graded separately to provide an accurate picture of the child's academic achievement. Behavior includes aspects like completing tasks on time, going to class prepared, and contributing positively to class discussions.

The letter grade system (A, B, C) was historically built on percentages and averaging. The grade often consisted of homework, quizzes, tests, and projects which were sometimes weighted and averaged together. Now, a standards-based grade will measure the student's level of proficiency to a grade level standard. The goal is for the student to reach proficiency on specific grade level standards.

**Seven Reasons for Standards-Based Grading**

is an excellent article that describes the advantages in more detail.

## UPCOMING WEBINARS

### Information & registration for WI FACETS free workshops and webinars :

[www.wifacets.org/events](http://www.wifacets.org/events)

By phone, contact Sandra: 877-374-0511

Via email: [smcfarland@wifacets.org](mailto:smcfarland@wifacets.org)

### 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

### Birth to 3 Program: ICC Parent Participation

**Date:** June 1, 2016 12-1 pm

**Presenter:** Dana Romary, WI Dept. of Health Services Birth to 3 Program

### IEP Part 1

**Date:** June 7, 2016 12-1 pm

**Presenter:** WI FACETS Staff

### Bridging Behavior Plans between School and Home

**Date:** June 8, 2016 12-1 pm

**Presenter:** Deb Ramacher, WI Family Ties

### IEP Part 2

**Date:** June 9, 2016 12-1 pm

**Presenter:** WI FACETS Staff

### Creando Acuerdos en la Educación Especial (WSEMS)

(Telephone Workshop)

**Date:** June 10, 2016 12-1 pm

**Presenter:** Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

### School Choice & Vouchers: What Parents Need to Know

**Date:** June 15, 2016 12-1 pm

**Presenter:** Sally Flaschberger, Disability Rights Wisconsin

### Introducción a la Educación Especial (Telephone Workshop)

**Date:** June 24, 2016 12-1 pm

**Presenter:** Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS



## HOME-BASED LEARNING

With our early childhood focus this month, many of our home-based learning strategies are directed at younger children. However, we have included mathematics and literacy resources for older children as well.



### Construct a Word

A fun way for children to learn how to build words. Children choose a two-letter word ending, and then are encouraged to add one or two letter beginnings to the word to make new words to add to the word bank. Great for ages K-2. Try [here](#)

### Puzzle Me Words

This spelling game has various levels and you can choose words by vowel sounds. Try [here](#)

### Encouraging Older Children to Read

Trying to get your middle schooler to read more? Read this [list](#) of tips! High schooler? Try [here](#)

What is the Difference Between Dysgraphia & Dyslexia? This [table](#) can help you out.

Looking for ways to support literacy for your young children while school is out? Register for WI FACETS' free webinar and learn tips and strategies!



### Animal Lost and Found

A fun online counting game for preschoolers and kindergarteners where the child tries to help the character find his pet. Includes pointers for parents. Find it [here](#).

### Building Sandcastles

Ready to play in the sand and practicing learning shapes for preschoolers and kindergarteners? Match the shapes of wet sand with their outlines to build different sandcastles [here](#).

### What should I expect?

Not sure what math skills to look for in your preschooler? Learn more [here](#).

### Supporting your Middle Schooler in Math

As our children get older, we as parents can get a little lost supporting them with math homework; or perhaps we over-support to make sure our kids get those high grades. Here are some [tips](#) to help you support your child at home.

## Latino Autism Support Group

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

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

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

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

## Grupo de Autismo: Defendiendo los Derechos de su Hijo con Necesidades Especiales

**Date:** June 25 10 am- 12 pm

## Youth Leadership Summit 2016 - June 20-24 (Milwaukee) or July 11-15 (Mequon)

Great summer opportunity for youth with disabilities ages 14-21 to learn about self-advocacy, employment, college and life skills. Registration ends 5/27 or when all spots are full. Contact Matthew Zellmer at 414-374-4645 or [mzellmer@wifacets.org](mailto:mzellmer@wifacets.org).

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# CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

## Upcoming newsletter topics:

**June:** Emotional Behavioral Disabilities **July:** Speech & Language **August:** Other Health Impairment

To submit contributions, you may use either the attached word document for contributing articles, events, or resources. Send submissions to [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto: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.

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**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](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org).



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