

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

This month's topic: *Transition*

Upcoming Statewide Events

25th Annual Autism Society of Wisconsin Conference

Hear from prestigious speakers, engage in valuable networking and visit the large exhibitor hall.

Date: April 24-26, 2014

Location: Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells

For more information and to register, visit <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e8dbvdhv8eafd0ab&llr=dgpwmkab>

FREE Pizza Supper & Sharing Session on Special Education and Birth to 3

Families come and share your ideas about special education— What's working? What can be improved? What do you need as a parent? Free pizza & beverages. Panel of agencies invited to listen to you: WI FACETS, Disability Rights WI, WI DPI, WSPEI, WIBPDD, Birth to 3, Madison Metro. School District.

Date: 4/24/14 4:45–6:15 p.m.

Location: Marriott West, Madison

To Register: 877-374-0511 or smcfarland@wifacets.org

FREE Parent Transition Nights

Join the Transition Improvement Grant (TIG) and the Wisconsin Statewide Parent Education Initiative (WSPEI), in collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) & Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC) for an informational event.

Date: 4/29/14

Locations:

CESA 8, Gillett, 5:00-7:30pm
or Southwest Technical College, Fennimore, 6:00-8:30pm

To Register: Register for this event through www.wsti.org (Go to the Calendar of Events and click on date, select "register"). Similar trainings at other CESAs can also be registered for on the website. Attendees will be prompted to register for an account if one has not been set up already.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

"No" is Not an Answer

By *Matthew Zellmer*

Students with disabilities are often told that they can't or won't be able to do something in school and in life. There are two distinct responses to this: acceptance or determination. The student and parents at the center of this month's story chose the latter and achieved the desired result.

This young person was diagnosed with a learning disability before age 3 and served by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) while in public school. She also spent several years in private school, but returned to public education for high school with the intent of utilizing the services included in her IEP and preparing for college.

Led by the example of both parents, college in this family



was not a hope or a choice, but an expectation. It was the key to success in life, disability or not.

There was never a doubt in the young student's or her parents' mind that she would get there and thrive. Sadly, this was not true of all members of her IEP team. Her guidance counselor had, in her words, "exceedingly low expectations" and had only considered providing her with very limited college options.

Other team members knew she would face challenges but were undaunted. She had always been a self-motivated student who regularly stayed late for extra help. She knew where she wanted to go and was more than willing to undertake all the necessary hard work and preparation. It was not

exactly a big leap for someone who had run her own IEP meetings since sophomore year.

The young woman's parents, whom she says were always engaged in IEPs and the daily goings on at school, worked with the IEP teacher to set up a meeting with her disability services support person at her chosen school, which led to her taking several tours and enrolling in a summer transition program which acclimated her to campus and allowed her to begin classes early. She never regretted any of it and is now graduated and actively seeking to help others with disabilities and share her story through motivational speaking.

This story typifies several of Joyce Epstein's strategies for effective family involvement. (For more on these, see the "Research to Read" section.) It also shows how effective engaged IEP teams can be, and demonstrates that drive beats doubt every time.

RESEARCH TO READ

Promoting Transition to Adulthood for Youth with Physical Disabilities and Health Impairments

Targett, P., Wehman, P., West, M., Dillard, C., & Cifu, G. (2013). Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 39(3), 229-239.

Abstract: Post school outcomes for individuals with disabilities have been consistently poor, when compared to individuals without disabilities, in the areas of employment and education. This article takes a look at issues involved in the transition

of youth with orthopedic or physical disabilities (OPD) and other health impairments (OHI). It begins with an overview of students with OPD and OHI. This is followed by information on how to improve transition from school to work and postsecondary education outcomes through assessment, effective instruction, and individualized supports. Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/mhxhqaw>

Experiences of College Students with Disabilities and the Importance of Self- Determination in Higher Education Settings

Getzel, E. E., & Thoma, C. A. (2008). Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 31(2), 77-84.

Abstract: Although the literature is clear that self-determination is an important component of the transition planning process for students with disabilities preparing for postsecondary education,

Upcoming Statewide Events

Endless Possibilities for Children with Learning Disabilities Conference

Parents and professionals will learn about new SLD eligibility requirements, how to support children at home and in school, and much more.

Patrick Schwarz, PhD, dynamic and engaging professor, leader in inclusive education, and Creative Culture Consulting CEO will keynote, *From Possibility to Success*. FREE conference. If register early.

Date: 5/3/14, 9-3:30
Location: Hotel Mead, WI Rapids
To Register: Sandra McFarland at smcfarland@wifacets.org



Milwaukee Transition Conference: One Size NOT Fit All. Do you have a child age 14 -21 with a special need and live in Milwaukee? Are you concerned about your child's future after high school and interested in learning about supports and services? Learn about transition and getting the services your child needs. Meals provided; bus pick-up available.

Date: May 5-6, 2014
Location: Country Springs Hotel, Pewaukee

To Register: (608) 828-9959 or email lynn@fvofwi.org More info: <http://fvofwi.org/training-and-events/events/>

Opening Horizons Conference This FREE conference is a great preview of college life and open to high school sophomores through seniors and their families. Hear from admissions, disabilities services, current students and more.

Date: 5/9/14, 9-2:30
Location: UW-Whitewater
For more information/to register: Visit <http://tinyurl.com/mcuhyv> or contact Kimberly Giertz-Karis at (262) 472-4711 or giertzkk@uww.edu.

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RESEARCH TO READ

(Continued from page 1)

further studies are needed to explore what self-determination strategies these students use to remain in college and successfully meet the challenges in postsecondary education settings. This article describes a study conducted with postsecondary education students in 2- and 4-year college settings to (a) identify skills that effective self-advocates use to ensure they stay in college and obtain needed supports and (b) identify the essential self-determination skills needed to remain and persist in college. Findings from the study and implications for postsecondary education and secondary education are discussed. Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/n6vcsae>

Summer Employment for Transition-Age Youth with Severe Disabilities

Carter, E. W., Ditchman, N., Sun, Y., Trainor, A. A., Swedeen, B., & Owens, L. (2010). *Exceptional Children*, 76(2), 194-212.

Abstract: Although early work experiences during high school represent one of the most consistent predictors of post-school employment for young adults with disabilities, little is known about how these adolescents might access these valuable transition experiences. This study examined the summer employment and community activities of 136 high school students with severe disabilities. The majority of youth was either not working (61.7%) or reported sheltered employment (11.1%). The most prominent predictors of summer



employment status were holding a job during the spring semester and teacher expectations for employment. Recommendations for research and practice focus on increasing the capacity of schools, families, and communities to support the involvement of youth with severe disabilities in meaningful summer activities. This article can be accessed by going to <http://tinyurl.com/nobogvh> and clicking on the "Full Text" link to the right.

STATEWIDE PARTNERSHIP: TRANSITION IMPROVEMENT GRANT (TIG)

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WI DPI) began the statewide Transition Improvement Grant (TIG), in July, 2013, to provide effective, targeted, and low cost professional development to Wisconsin youth, parents, educators and transition partners in the area of postsecondary transition.

The TIG celebrates the importance of bringing together educators, parents, youth, and transition partners in a unified effort to build great transition planning through the Statewide Transition Academy, the Statewide Transition Coordinator Network Meetings, monthly webinars, and professional development opportunities in your local areas.

TIG has facilitated three successful statewide Transition Coordinator Network (TCN) meetings to provide information and professional development in the areas of: employment for students with disabilities, employment needs from an employer perspective, an understanding of dual enrollment and new assessments in Wisconsin, and updates from their Transition Agency Partners at each meeting.

The TIG grant has also hosted two additional events: The CCoT Retreat (County Communities on Transition) and the Wisconsin Statewide Transition Academy: College and Career Ready. Both events highlighted the importance of transition planning and connecting youth to their communities.



The upcoming 2014 Statewide Transition Academy will feature family, youth and professional tracks to provide a variation of sessions to meet all individual needs involved in the transition process.

For more information about TIG, contact grant staff, register for the Statewide Transition Academy or TCN Meetings, attend a webinar, or request a training in your area, create an account at www.wsti.org.

The website will soon have a new look and URL: www.WiTIG.org. Visit it often to find the transition resources you need.

FEATURED ONLINE RESOURCES

TOPIC: TRANSITION



Opening Doors Booklets:

Check out the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's newly redesigned resource booklets for students, parents and schools. There are now four in the series: *Employment, Post-secondary Education and Training, Self-Determination, and Adult Services*. A Guide to the Post-Secondary Transition Plan (PTP), the series' fifth booklet will be released soon. Links to and an order form for the first four are available at <http://tinyurl.com/nehfvbd>

PTP Demonstration Site:

This is a key resource for families as parents and students prepare for transition IEPs. The site allows them to create a model IEP and walks through each transition goal area in detail. It is particularly useful for parents to be able to engage in the same planning process that schools are required to do with their children. It also encourages students to develop plans early for life after high school. Access the site at <http://tinyurl.com/q9au2rk> and click the "Create PTP" tab to begin.

A New Way of Thinking

This new DPI publication for youth, families and teachers has chapters on introducing disability to students, positive thinking, self-advocacy, self-empowerment, and assessments. It is designed to help students gain understanding and build skills leading to effective transition planning. A online module is available at <http://tinyurl.com/lnulwys>. You must have a free account at wsti.org to access the module.

National Center for Secondary Education & Transition:

The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) coordinates national resources, offers technical assistance, and disseminates information related to secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities in order to create opportunities for youth to achieve successful futures. NCSET is headquartered at the Institute on Community Integration in the University of Minnesota's College of Education and Human Development. Visit <http://www.ncset.org/> for a plethora of resources geared toward families and youth.

Going to Work Video Series:

Watch six Wisconsin youth with disabilities and their employers share their inspiring stories of successful transitions from school to employment. In this five-part video series. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/> and search "Wisconsin Youth First" to view.

Think College:

A project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, this website is designed especially for families of youth with intellectual disabilities. Get information on specially designed postsecondary programs around the country to find the right one for your child. Thinkcollege.net spawned other sites like it through many schools, including UW-Madison. Visit their site at <http://tinyurl.com/o3yv27o>

Job Accommodation Network:

This online clearinghouse provides youth, families, employers, and other professionals with a vast array of resources. Visit <http://askjan.org/> for definitions of accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a searchable database of kinds of accommodations for specific disabilities and fact sheets on how to appropriately ask for them and/or provide them to employees.

Upcoming Statewide Events

Youth Leadership Summit sponsored by WI FACETS and IndependenceFirst

This week-long event for high school students is designed to build leadership and self-advocacy skills as we explore life after high school. Students learn about jobs, college, relationships, money management and more in fun, interactive ways. Breakfast and lunch provided. Youth earn a stipend for attending.

Location/Dates/Times: Milwaukee, June 16-20, 10am-4pm OR Mequon, July 14-18, 10am-4pm

Registration: A short application is required. Email Matthew at mzellmer@wifacets.org to receive one. Submission deadline is Friday, May 2nd.

Youth Leadership Forum

YLF is a week-long leadership training for high school sophomores through seniors. Applications must be submitted by April 21. The application process requires a short essay and letters of support, so youth need time to work on it.

Dates: July 13-18, 2014

Location: Edgewood College, Madison

For More Info./To Apply: Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/qbmjwlp>

SUPPORT GROUPS

Urban & Autism Support Groups

Where: WI FACETS

600 W. Virginia St., Ste 501, Milwaukee

When: 5/17/14, 11am-1pm

Topic: Transition IEPs & the PTP

Grupo de Autismo

Donde: WI FACETS

600 W. Virginia St., Ste 501, Milwaukee

Cuando: 5/24/14 10 AM-12 PM

Tema: Apoyos e Intervenciones para Obtener una Conducta Positiva

WI FACETS Phone Workshops

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

Es su Hijo un Blanco de Intimidacion y Acoso
Cuando: 5/2/14, 12-1pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

Section 504 & the ADA
When: 5/6/14, 12-1pm
Presenter: Charlotte Price, WI FACETS

School-Based Mental Health Services
When: 5/7/14, 12-1pm
Presenter: Hugh Davis, WI Family Ties

WSEMS- Resolution Meetings
When: 5/12/14 12-1pm
Presenter: Jan Serak & Nissan Bar-Lev, WSEMS

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Part I
When: 5/13/14, 12-1pm
Presenter: Joe Kluber, WI FACETS

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Part 2
When: 5/15/14, 12-1pm
Presenter: Joe Kluber, WI FACETS

Parents' Role in Community Employment & Engagement
When: 5/14/14, 12-1pm
Presenter: Jenny Neugart, Let's Get to Work project

Drop-Out Prevention: Tools & Strategies
When: 5/21/14, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Eva Kubinski, DPI

Bullying & Harassment
When: 5/22/14, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Don Rosin, WI FACETS

Parents' Rights in Birth-to 3
When: 5/28/14, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI DHS B-3 Staff

Educacion Especial: Que Necesito Saber?
Cuando: 5/30/14, 12-1pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS



HOME-BASED INTERVENTIONS



Reading

Re-Reading and Reading Aloud Strategies to Increase Reading Comprehension and Fluency

In order to comprehend and process information, many people benefit from re-reading. Repetition is critical to the learning process whether one has special needs or not. While re-reading, the use of a different voice, tone or perspective, can also help with comprehension. This reading aloud strategy often helps children who struggle with reading comprehension. Listening to someone else read or listen to an audio book while they follow along is very helpful because they're getting both the visual input from the text and images as well as auditory input.

- ~ Bring the words to life with your expression and enthusiasm. Sound worried, excited, scared or bossy, at the story requires.
- ~ Change your voice and your speed. Slow down to build suspense, use a quiet or squeaky voice for a small character and a booming voice for a big one.
- ~ Make mistakes on purpose. It's important for your child to know that everyone makes mistakes and it is okay.

Reading Comprehension Strategies: <http://nichcy.org/5readingcompstrats>

Read Aloud Videos: <http://www.readingrockets.org/reading-topics/reading-aloud>

Read Aloud Brochure for Parents: http://www.rif.org/documents/us/reading_aloud.pdf



Math

Using Real-Life Examples to Help with Understanding and Managing Data

Every day we are presented with a vast amount of information, much of it involving numbers. Learning to collect, organize, and interpret data at an early age will help children develop the ability to manage information and make sound decisions in the future. Allowing children to touch, feel, and manipulate their world can make math more meaningful. Here are some easy to do strategies to reinforce math learning:

- ~**Sort household items.** As your child tidies up toys or clothing, discuss which items should go together and why. Show your child how you organize food items in the fridge – fruit together, vegetables together, drinks on one shelf, condiments on another. Encourage your child to sort other household items – crayons by color, cutlery by type or shape, coins by denomination.
- ~**Make a food chart.** Create a chart to record the number of apples, oranges, bananas, and other fruit your family eats each day. At the end of the month, have your child count the number of pieces of each type of fruit. Keep a daily food log with calories, fat grams, etc. and total for the day. Use a pedometer to track number of steps walked each day and convert to miles, calories burned, etc.
- ~**Budget together.** Ask kids to make a household budget for a month. Subtract common expenses such as rent, utilities and car payments. Make it a game to apply what they learn in math.
- ~**Make a grocery list.** Clip coupons and see how much the family saves. Determine the amount saved, percentage saved, etc.
- ~**Talk about the likelihood of events.** Have your child draw pictures of things your family does often, things you do sometimes, and things you never do. Discuss why you never do some things (swim outside in January). Talk to your older child about what's happening in the community and world through news reports and newspapers.

Teaching Kids to Transfer Learning to Real World Situations: http://www.brighthubeducation.com/parenting-grade-schoolers/128497-transferring-learning-to-real-life/?cid=parsely_rec

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Next month's newsletter topic: [Mental Health](#)

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 mzellmer@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 contact: **Matthew Zellmer**, WI FACETS SPDG Research Coordinator at 414-374-4645 x203 or mzellmer@wifacets.org.



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