

PACER Center's Parents And Residents Together Program (PART) *Information for Resident Physicians*

A project of PACER Center for parents of children and youth with special health care needs and disabilities, and medical doctors

What is the Parents And Residents Together (PART) program?

- This collaborative project of PACER Center and the University of Minnesota brings Pediatric and Med-Peds Residents together with families of children and youth with special health care needs and disabilities in the family's home. It provides a realistic view of the family's life in a non-medical setting.
- Parents are recruited and participate in a specialized training at PACER Center.
- Residents from the University of Minnesota start their rotations with an introduction to PACER Center.
 - **Developmental-behavioral rotation:** This orientation focuses on the concepts of medical home and family-centered care, as well as the struggles families face. It also demonstrates the complexities involved in finding resources, financial assistance, and school accommodations that parents experience. Residents learn about available resources, the challenges families face in navigating the system, and the difficulty of care coordination.
 - **Adolescent rotation:** This orientation focuses on transition in three areas: 1) From pediatric to adult health care; 2) From school to work; and, 3) From home into the community.
- Residents on their adolescent rotation are matched with a family for a visit, which takes place in the home of the child or youth with a disability.
 - Residents have an opportunity to meet in a non-clinical setting and understand the challenges families and youth face as they strive to become integrated in their communities and schools.
 - Parents and youth have the opportunity to share their story, and discuss with physicians what does and doesn't work for them in a clinical setting. The parents and youth also learn advocacy and leadership skills.
 - Both families and physicians learn collaboration, the importance of a team approach to medical care, and how they can best work together to improve health outcomes for children and youth with special health care needs and disabilities.
- A follow-up session for Residents takes place at PACER Center. There is an information exchange and discussion about the lessons learned from their visit and their partnership with the families. Residents tour PACER Center, and learn about the PACER's Simon Technology Center and PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. They also participate in a panel with PACER's multicultural staff.



Families are part of the health care team

- Teamwork and collaboration between families and doctors are essential to provide quality care for an individual child or young adult with disabilities and special health care needs.
- Parents, doctors, and others are part of a team, contributing their own unique areas of expertise and knowledge.
- The expertise that families bring to systems of care is vital. Parents are the experts for their child and are able to understand their child's needs.
- Professionals can provide support and information, but families have the ultimate responsibility of coordinating all the roles of a team, acting as caregivers, advocates, and decision makers.
- Team members work together as colleagues. Recommendations from each team member are equally valued.
- Open communication between families and physicians foster the best care of the child.



PART Residents gain invaluable insights into the experiences families have in raising their children with special health care needs. PART helps parents and resident physicians learn the importance of family-centered care in working with children and youth with special health care needs and disabilities. Working together as a team provides the best possible outcomes.

History of Parents And Residents Together (PART)

- PACER Center is a national, nonprofit organization, started in 1978, to assist families with their children's special education rights. Today PACER assists families with the needs of children with all disabilities, including special health care needs.
- For nearly 30 years, PACER Center and the University of Minnesota have collaborated to develop **Parents As Teachers**. This program is the first project to bring parents and resident physicians on their developmental-behavioral rotation together to learn from each other in a non-clinical setting.
- In 2012, Parents As Teachers was expanded by the addition of the Pediatric Resident Training Program (P RTP), which focused on adolescents transitioning from pediatric to adult healthcare, from school into a postsecondary or work environment and into the community. P RTP also focused on working with families who are racially and culturally diverse.

In 2015, both programs were combined into a single program. One division works with adolescent and young adult transitions (PART-A), and the other addresses younger children with developmental and behavioral challenges (PART-DBP).

What Residents are saying about PART

“The parent and young person were phenomenal, and I will remember the home visit experience for a long time. It will change how I practice after graduation.”

“This was one of the most memorable and impactful experiences I have had in my residency. This family is amazing, and I was so fortunate to meet them.”