

# PACESETTER

A news magazine of PACER Center, Inc. by and for parents of children and young adults with disabilities

## PACER launches National website on Transition and Employment

PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment has launched its innovative new website to provide important information and resources to support families, youth, educators, and employers as they help teens and young adults with disabilities reach their goals in adulthood. This state-of-the-art website ([PACER.org/transition](http://PACER.org/transition)) offers interactive learning opportunities, an extensive resource library, compelling videos, and inspirational success stories, all presented in a family-friendly way.

"There is a tremendous need for resources on transition and employment that can help parents and youth with disabilities," said Gretchen Godfrey, PACER's assistant director. "This new website was carefully developed to provide parents with an excellent place to locate practical resources."

For families of youth with disabilities, the transition from high school to employment, postsecondary education, and life in the community presents a variety of challenges. PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment offers innovative tools, reliable research, and interactive training to help address those needs. Visit the center at [PACER.org/transition](http://PACER.org/transition).

## Crosby, Stills & Nash were in perfect harmony at PACER's Annual Benefit



Emcees Frank Vascellaro and Amelia Santaniello of WCCO-TV present Mara MacMillan (left) with the first PACER Ambassador Award at PACER's Benefit.

Great music, great fun, and a great cause came together in a special way on Saturday, May 2 as the legendary Crosby, Stills & Nash performed in perfect harmony at PACER's 33rd Annual Benefit presented by Whitebox Mutual Funds. The folk rock supergroup gave a spirited, generous performance at the Minneapolis Convention Center in front of one of the largest crowds in Benefit history.

Music writer Jon Bream of the Minneapolis "StarTribune" called it a "stellar performance" by David Crosby, Stephen Stills, and Graham Nash and lauded the group's "impressive harmonies." Nash spoke eloquently on stage about PACER's efforts on behalf of children with disabilities and their families, before the group closed the show with a stirring rendition of, "Teach Your Children."

"What a show!" said Dan Levinson, President of the PACER Board of Directors. "There have been many outstanding entertainers over the years at the PACER Benefit but none more impressive than Crosby, Stills & Nash."

More than four decades since the trio first harmonized in Southern California, its members continue a creative partnership that is one of

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Attendees at PACER's Annual Benefit on May 2 saw the wonderful new video "Go Leah Go" about a three-year-old who has Spina Bifida and cannot use her legs. Leah loves riding her toy tractor that was adapted with hand controls by PACER's Simon Technology Center. To watch the video, go to [PACER.org](http://PACER.org) and click on the YouTube icon.



PACER Executive Director Paula Goldberg (left) visited motivational speaker and author Nick Vujicic (VOO-yee-chich) in California recently to talk about his partnership with PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. Vujicic, who has no arms or legs, speaks about bullying prevention at schools, in public service announcements, and on social media, where he has millions of followers.

## 2015 National PACER Symposium on Children's Mental Health and Learning Disabilities is August 4

Teachers, parents, and school administrators can now register for the 10th Annual National PACER Symposium About Children & Young Adults with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities. It is on Tuesday, Aug. 4, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Minneapolis Convention Center and features excellent national speakers and workshop presenters.

The symposium brings together 1,100 parents and professionals for a day-long event that provides outstanding information about children's mental health and learning disabilities, as well as proactive, positive teaching strategies and interventions. This year's keynote presenters are Brad Cohen of Atlanta, Steven Koppel of Boston, and Jodi Sleeper-Triplett of Arlington, Va.

Brad Cohen is an award-winning teacher, school administrator,

motivational speaker, and co-author of the book, "Front of the Class: How Tourette Syndrome Made Me the Teacher I Never Had." His life story has been featured on "Oprah," CNN, and in a Hallmark TV movie and the "New York Times."

Steven Koppel is the founder of MyMoments, a non-profit social enterprise that is pioneering the use of Expressive Digital Imagery (EDI). This new form of self-expression that is created on smartphones is being used as a tool to help individuals with mental health challenges.

Jodi Sleeper-Triplett is a trainer, master coach, mentor, speaker, and author who is considered by her peers to be the foremost expert on coaching youth with ADHD. Her company provides training programs for coaches, educators, and mental health

professionals worldwide.

*The symposium sells out quickly every year. Tickets are \$30 per person including lunch. Six hours of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are available for educators. Register online at [PACER.org/symposium](http://PACER.org/symposium) or call (952) 838-9000.*

**PACER Symposium  
Aug. 4, 2015**

**Minneapolis Convention Center  
\$30 per person including lunch**

**Register online now  
at [PACER.org/symposium](http://PACER.org/symposium)  
or call (952) 838-9000**

# The David B. Goldberg Endowment Fund

*“David Goldberg embodied the definition of a real leader — someone who was always looking for ways to empower others,” President Barack Obama wrote on Facebook. “His skills as an entrepreneur created opportunity for many, his love for his family was a joy to behold, and his example as a husband and father was something we could all learn from. We’re heartbroken by him leaving us too soon, but we celebrate a remarkable legacy.”*

David Goldberg, 47, passed away suddenly on May 1, 2015 while vacationing in Mexico. The son of PACER Center co-founder and Executive Director Paula Goldberg, David was the Chief Executive Officer of SurveyMonkey and the husband of Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer of Facebook.

David was a highly successful entrepreneur for several innovative, web-based companies, and was a respected and beloved leader in Silicon Valley. He cared passionately about people and ideas, and had an amazing ability to relate to individuals from all walks of life. David was kind and compassionate. He was a mentor to hundreds of people and helped empower so many women and men. A former executive with Capitol Records, he loved music, the Minnesota Vikings, and his family and friends.

In 2012, David shared his personal story in the “New York Times,” including about the early days of PACER. “I was 8 and my brother was in kindergarten. We collated and filed papers, and I put on puppet shows to teach schoolchildren that kids with disabilities deserved their respect and friendship,” he wrote. “For a long time I didn’t realize that although my mother is in the nonprofit sector, she’s an entrepreneur. Her career influenced the direction my life took.”

David attended the Blake School in Minneapolis and graduated Magna Cum Laude from Harvard University. His funeral was attended by more than



1,700 mourners at Stanford University, including dozens of well-known leaders from the worlds of technology and entertainment. Bono, lead singer of the renowned band U2, performed one of David’s favorite songs.

“David was admired by so many people, both for his incredible entrepreneurial success but more importantly for his humanity and help to others,” Paula said. “He was an

extraordinary person. His impact will live on for generations.”

*The family has requested that memorials be given to the David B. Goldberg Endowment Fund, 8161 Normandale Blvd., Minneapolis, MN, 55437. The fund will help PACER continue to serve children and families through innovative programs such as the Simon Technology Center and PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center.*

## And the survey says... Support PACER with SurveyMonkey

Helping PACER is now as easy as taking simple online surveys. PACER supporters can sign up on SurveyMonkey Contribute to receive short surveys from SurveyMonkey customers who need opinions on a variety of topics. For every survey completed, SurveyMonkey makes a donation to PACER, and all participants have the opportunity to win \$100 in an instant win game. Participants’ identities and information remain confidential. Sign up at: [contribute.surveymonkey.com/charity/PACER](http://contribute.surveymonkey.com/charity/PACER).



# Supplemental Security Income can be a bridge to employment and economic independence

Work is an important part of young people's lives that builds self-esteem and independence, and provides positive social interactions. Unfortunately, many youth with disabilities are discouraged from finding employment because of the fear that they will lose their financial benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI). In fact, there are incentives in place that encourage young adults to be employed and receive job training while still receiving SSI.

"Families are often confused about eligibility for SSI benefits and how that will be affected when their son or daughter gets a job," said Deborah Leuchovius, coordinator of PACER activities for Minnesota's Disability Employment Initiative, a partnership of Minnesota agencies that serve youth. It is led by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development's Office of Youth Development and directed by Kay Tracy.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal program that provides benefits to individuals with disabilities to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter. It is funded from general tax revenues (not the Social Security trust fund) and can be used when a young person is receiving job training, pursuing post-secondary education, or while employed.

"A disability can sometimes make it difficult to prepare for work and find a job while still having enough income to pay for basic living expenses," said Leuchovius. "SSI can help."

To qualify for benefits, individuals need to meet three requirements:

1. Have a diagnosed disability that impacts their ability to work
2. Have very little income
3. Have few financial resources

When students reach age 18, only their personal income and assets — not those of their parents — are considered in



determining SSI eligibility. In addition, there are a variety of work incentives available to pay for tuition and transportation costs, and individuals can retain Medicaid coverage.

Although the process of sorting through benefit eligibility may seem confusing at first, a counselor from the Social Security Administration will work with individuals to

determine what combination of work incentives and benefit programs makes the most sense. It is important to note that the eligibility requirements for SSI are different from other benefits, and not everyone with a disability will qualify. "Even if a person receives other disability supports and benefits or accommodations, they might still not qualify for SSI," Leuchovius said.

The landscape for employment opportunities for people with significant disabilities is changing. More youth are pursuing post-secondary education and the number of work options is expanding. With good planning, assistance to help develop their work skills, and financial help from SSI, youth and young adults can be more successful in school, on the job, and in the community.

*More information is available online at [PACER.org/transition](http://PACER.org/transition), the website of PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment.*

**“Work is an important part of young people's lives that builds self-esteem and independence.”**

# PACER offers practical resources to help youth in transition develop the skills they need to become successful adults

Less than one in five individuals with disabilities participates in the labor force compared to more than 60 percent of people without disabilities, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. Research demonstrates, however, that youth who have greater self-advocacy, communication, and problem-solving skills are more successful in the workplace. As part of the 'Minnesota Parents Training Parents' project funded by the U.S. Department of Education, PACER is providing youth with disabilities and their families with the resources to develop these valuable skills. "It is very clear that good self-advocacy skills lead to better outcomes for youth with disabilities," said Jody Manning, project co-director. "PACER is addressing the need for resources and training to help youth acquire these skills."

PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment has launched an innovative new website ([PACER.org/transition](http://PACER.org/transition)) that includes a 'Learning Center' that was made possible through funding from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation. It has extensive resources developed by PACER, as well as links to other helpful sources of information. These include a resource library, a comprehensive video library, and other interactive tools. In addition, PACER holds workshops for parents and youth. These resources will enable youth to:

- Learn more about the nature of their disability
- Discover their strengths and better understand the challenges they face
- Learn about available resources to support their success in education, employment, and the community



- Improve their ability to communicate and work with professionals and service providers

When youth with disabilities reach secondary transition age (planning must occur during 9th grade in Minnesota), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires assessment and planning in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, and independent living. In Minnesota, a youth's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and evaluation reports often identify needs in the areas of employment and post-secondary education.

"One of the ways students can improve their self-advocacy skills is by expressing their needs in IEP meetings," said Virginia Richardson, PACER Parent Training Manager. "When they are educated about their disability, and know their rights and responsibilities, youth tend to become more assertive."

While labor participation rates are low for all youth with disabilities, youth

from culturally and racially diverse communities, and those with limited English proficiency, face even greater challenges. Many PACER resources are available in multiple languages including Spanish, Hmong, and Somali, and other materials are being developed.

The number of youth with disabilities who continue their education after high school is growing, and there are many opportunities to learn job skills and prepare for competitive employment. One of PACER's primary goals for youth in transition is to reinforce the importance of having high expectations. "When parents have high expectations for their youth, especially in the areas of education and employment, their sons and daughters tend to be more successful after high school," said Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director. "PACER emphasizes the need to identify the appropriate supports that students require so that every young person with a disability can achieve his or her highest potential."



# Join us Oct. 3 for PACER's Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying

PACER's Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying on Saturday, Oct. 3 will once again mark the beginning of National Bullying Prevention Month, which was initiated by PACER in 2006. Organized by the Friends of PACER, the event is at Normandale Lake Park in Bloomington, Minn., and includes a four-mile run and a 2-mile fun walk/roll followed by live music, inspirational speakers, and family activities. Students can collect pledges to support bullying prevention.

Communities nationwide also host Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying events, and PACER offers a free toolkit which outlines how to plan a local event. To learn more about how you can take part in PACER's Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying, visit [PACER.org/bullying/nbpm](http://PACER.org/bullying/nbpm).

## Wear orange Oct. 21 on Unity Day

People around the world will wear orange and unite for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion on PACER's 5th annual Unity Day. By wearing orange and uniting against bullying through events, activities, and outreach, students, teachers, businesses, and communities can take action to



'Make it Orange, Make it End!' PACER offers a web-based Student Event Planning Guide that was developed in conjunction with Facebook to make it simpler for teens to plan Unity Day events

To learn more about National Bullying Prevention Month, visit [PACER.org/bullying/nbpm](http://PACER.org/bullying/nbpm)

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## A crowning achievement for Miss Utah candidate

"I don't know if it's because I am wearing the crown, or if it is because they can relate to my personal experiences with bullying," Christensen said, "but they tell me their stories, contact me on Instagram, and ask me for advice. It's very humbling."

The WE WILL Generation™ is student-led with adult support. It capitalizes on the social influence of peers and enables teens to take action. Students are encouraged to share their stories and submit creative content online at [PACER.org/bullying/wewillgen](http://PACER.org/bullying/wewillgen).

Classroom curricula and activities are provided free to schools and can be implemented quickly and easily. The program can also be used by youth organizations outside of school — sports teams or Scout groups, for example.

"Students play an especially important role in bullying prevention," said Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. "Brynn has done an incredible job of using the tools PACER provides to positively impact thousands of students. She is an amazing individual!"

A freshman at Utah Valley University, Christensen has also volunteered to help PACER reach more students online via Instagram and is creating compelling content for PACER's social media outreach.

"The WE WILL Generation™ is an outstanding program and working with PACER has been a great experience," Christensen said. "Being a princess is the best unpaid job in the world, but what has been truly life-changing is the opportunity to connect with the kids."

# PACER advocates help families create a plan for success

For parents of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), securing accommodations for their child can be a challenge. It can be even more stressful when the school does not provide the services the child is entitled to receive, as was the case for 10-year-old John.

John was diagnosed with ADHD in 4th grade and although his medication helped him concentrate and control his impulsive behaviors for a short period of time, he started to fall behind with his schoolwork in 5th grade. As he neared the end of the school year, his mother Addison knew that John needed some additional supports to be successful in middle school. “John is smart, but the school was not meeting his needs,” said Addison.

Addison requested an evaluation from the school, but was told that John’s diagnosis of ADHD did not qualify him for a 504 Plan. Frustrated but not discouraged, Addison called PACER Center for help. She connected with PACER staff parent advocate Susan Einspar, who told Addison that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) had changed and John’s diagnosis of ADHD likely qualified him for a Section 504 Plan.

Susan provided the school with documents that showed John’s eligibility for the 504 Plan. Within days, Addison and Susan had a meeting with the school district to discuss John’s needs. Working closely with PACER, Addison was able to obtain a 504 Plan for John that includes the accommodations he requires, such as use of assistive technology, unlimited time for tests in a non-distracting environment, and preferential seating near the teacher. With his 504 Plan in place, John has been very successful in his first year of middle school and has received all As. He is also learning how to self-advocate. “Susan and PACER are fantastic,” said Addison. “They helped me to advocate for John in his greatest time of need, and he is doing great now.”



Addison has also used her knowledge of the special education system to help her daughter Paige, who was diagnosed with ADHD and a learning disability. Because of what she learned from PACER, Addison knew how to help Paige receive accommodations. “With PACER’s help, I was able to give the school the information they needed to help John,” said Addison. “That made it much easier for me to get Paige what she needed.”

*The family’s names have been changed in this story to protect their privacy. For more information on Section 504 Plans, visit [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c33.pdf](http://PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c33.pdf) or call (952) 838-9000 and ask to speak with a parent advocate.*

## What is a Section 504 Plan?

A Section 504 Plan ensures that a child with a disability identified under the law, who is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution, receives accommodations that will ensure his or her academic success and access to the learning environment.

## Volunteer for Fun Times

Youth and young adults with disabilities like to spend time with friends just like other teens do. For more than 10 years, PACER has been connecting teens with and without disabilities through the Fun Times social program. It was developed by PACER volunteer Win Bennett, the sibling of a teen with a disability, and other high school students in the Twin Cities. PACER is seeking volunteers (ages 16 to 25) with and without disabilities to attend activities such as sporting events, movies, game nights, and more. Visit [PACER.org/funtimes](http://PACER.org/funtimes) for information, contact Fun Times coordinator Andrea Moore ([andrea.moore@pacer.org](mailto:andrea.moore@pacer.org)), or call (952) 838-9000.



# PACER Center's Annual Benefit v



Left: Benefit co-chairs, Mary Holmes, Nancy Kaysen, Jessica Broyles, Noelle Sheehan, and Colleen McGough Wood.

Right: Andy Redleaf, Lynne Singer Redleaf, Rishia Zimmern, and Andrew Zimmern.



Kathy Roedel and Bryan Fleming



Jodi Resnick, of The Walt Disney Companies, and Don McNeil, PACER board member



Tim and Emmy Mastel

Continued from page 1

the most influential and enduring in music. Their performance was one of many highlights of a wonderful evening.

Frank Vascellaro and Amelia Santaniello of WCCO-TV were terrific emcees. They were joined on stage during part of the Live Auction by the always entertaining Andrew Zimmern, host of the Travel Channel series "Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern," who had generously donated a memorable culinary experience for the auction.

Mara MacMillan was presented with the first PACER Ambassador Award in recognition of her efforts as a

PACER volunteer. Mara, who has Williams Syndrome, is the daughter of PACER Advisory Board member Muffy MacMillan and Frank Bennett.

The audience viewed two outstanding new videos. "Go Leah Go" is a heartwarming story about how PACER helps children with disabilities. "Turn a Life Around" is a moving video about the work of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center and was created by PACER volunteers Ron Brant and Denise Holt. Both can be viewed online at PACER.org.

The Benefit raises funds to support PACER's important programs for children with and without disabilities,

including the new National Parent Center on Transition and Employment, the Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders project, the Simon Technology Center, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, and individual assistance to parents.

"Thank you to all of our corporate sponsors and nearly 400 volunteers, as well as everyone who donated to the silent and live auctions," said Paula Goldberg, PACER's co-founder and Executive Director. "PACER is so grateful for the continued support."

**Mark your calendars now: PACER's 34th Annual Benefit is April 30, 2016.**



# was bigger and better than ever



Left: Marilyn Horowitz, Don McNeil, and Donna Fluke. Right: Chloe Sooferian and Mason Miller came from Los Angeles for the event.



Graham Nash, Greg West, Nancy West, Stephen Stills, Margie Wichoff, John Wichoff, CEO of C.H. Robinson, and David Crosby



Frankie Bennett, Muffy MacMillan, Graham Nash, Mara MacMillan, Taylor Becker, Stephen Stills, Noel Bennett, David Crosby, Win Bennett, and Alexandra Gray Bennett



Terry Nigon, Betsy Nigon, Allen Lenzmeier, Kathy Lenzmeier, Nick Lenzmeier, and Kelly Lenzmeier Page.



Andrew Zimmern, Graham Nash, Stephen Stills, Eliana Grossman, Lynne Singer Redleaf, and David Crosby.

# Resources are available nationally through PACER's Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Project

For families of children with mental health and emotional or behavioral disorders, it can be challenging to locate and receive the supports and services their child needs. PACER's Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Project provides resources and support for parents, youth, professionals and the community at [PACER.org/cmh](http://PACER.org/cmh). PACER has been helping children with mental health needs since 1984.

"PACER is committed to supporting, educating, and promoting understanding to parents, educators, and the community," said project coordinator Renelle Nelson. "We want children with mental health challenges and emotional or behavioral disorders to experience success."

## PACER resources featured by Babble.com and the Huffington Post

PACER is a regular contributor to Babble.com, the highly acclaimed online magazine and blog network published by the Walt Disney Company for parents. The articles also appear on the Pulitzer Prize-winning Huffington Post, the most-viewed news website in the United States. Babble is partnering with PACER to help parents better understand and navigate the needs of children with mental health and behavior issues. Read PACER's contributions at [babble.com/contributor/pacercenter](http://babble.com/contributor/pacercenter) or [huffingtonpost.com/pacer](http://huffingtonpost.com/pacer).

*To learn more about PACER's resources for children with mental health and emotional or behavioral disorders, visit [PACER.org/cmh](http://PACER.org/cmh), e-mail [pacer@pacer.org](mailto:pacer@pacer.org), or call (952) 838-9000.*

## PACER's 2015 Housing Resource and Information Fair

Youth and young adults with disabilities explored the many options for independent living and housing at PACER's Housing Resource and Information Fair in April. To learn more about PACER's housing resources, visit [PACER.org/housing](http://PACER.org/housing).



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PACER Center enhances the quality of life and expands opportunities for children, youth, and young adults with all disabilities and their families so each person can reach his or her highest potential. PACER operates on the principles of parents helping parents, supporting families, promoting a safe environment for all children, and working in collaboration with others. An Equal Opportunity Employer, PACER is funded by grants from the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Services and other sources, and from foundations, corporations and individuals. Views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Departments or other donors. Contributions to PACER are tax-deductible. For information, call Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

PACER website: [PACER.org](http://PACER.org)

FAPE site: [fape.org](http://fape.org)

MN SEAC site: [mnseacinfo.org](http://mnseacinfo.org)

BULLYING: [PACER.org/Bullying](http://PACER.org/Bullying)

[PACERKidsAgainstBullying.org](http://PACERKidsAgainstBullying.org)

[PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org](http://PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org)

*(Alternate format is available upon request.)*



# Learning about PACER's Simon Technology Center Lending Library has been music to this family's ears

It has been noisy around their house lately, but Danielle and Don Costello don't mind the extra volume. That's because their daughter Cathleen is fond of playing with Band Jam, an adapted musical toy that the Costellos found at PACER's Simon Technology Center Lending Library.

Cathleen is a spunky and highly social 7-year-old with delayed growth who has challenges with her fine motor skills. Until recently, Danielle and Don were able to adapt infant and toddler toys to meet Cathleen's developmental needs. As the child has grown, however, it has become more difficult to find typical toys that challenge and interest her. "She wants toys that can be played with independently and also with other kids her age," said Danielle. "She doesn't want to play with baby toys anymore."

The Costellos pored through catalogs of adapted toys, but had difficulty determining which would be most appropriate for Cathleen. They attended PACER's Simon Technology Center (STC) Open House last fall, where Cathleen enjoyed playing with Band Jam. When the Costellos learned that they could borrow the toy from the STC Lending Library, they knew they had found the right solution for their daughter.

The STC Lending Library has more than 2,300 items available for loan, including adapted toys and software for reading, writing, math, science, independent living skills, and keyboarding. Assistive technology devices and hardware for loan include touch screens, switches, alternative keyboards, trackballs, and augmentative communication devices. Library memberships are \$50 per year for families and \$100 per year for therapists and educators. Members may borrow three items at a time for up to four weeks.



Cathleen Costello plays with Mini Carillon, an adapted musical toy from PACER's Simon Technology Center Lending Library.

Since joining the lending library, the Costellos have borrowed several adaptive toys, including Band Jam and Mini Carillon, which allow Cathleen to play musical instruments with easy-to-use switches. They also borrowed a mechanical stamper for arts and crafts. "Adapted toys are a big investment, so it's nice to try them before we buy them," said Danielle. "We have found so many cool things in the lending library that we may have never considered for Cathleen."

Danielle is confident that the lending library will be able to support Cathleen's growth and development far into the future. "It's such a great investment," said Danielle. "Plus, the staff is so helpful and friendly. I wish I would have known about it much earlier."

To learn more about PACER's Simon Technology Center Lending Library, visit [PACER.org/stc](http://PACER.org/stc) or contact Tina Hanson at [tina.hanson@PACER.org](mailto:tina.hanson@PACER.org) or (952) 898-9000.

**“Adapted toys are a big investment, so it's nice to try them before we buy them.”**

*-Danielle Costello*



# Workshops

PACER Center workshops are free to Minnesota parents. For information and to register, call (952) 838-9000 (metro area) or toll free at (800) 537-2237 (Greater Minnesota) or visit [PACER.org/workshops](http://PACER.org/workshops).

## CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH, EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL

### Responding to Challenging Behaviors at School, at Home and in the Community

Children with challenging behaviors are often misunderstood but with the right kind of support, can be successful. This workshop will help parents identify and respond to behaviors that may indicate mental health concerns; navigate school and community supports and services; and learn effective parent advocacy skills.

- **July 22, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

### Parent Leadership Summit on Children's Mental Health

PACER's Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Project will hold a Parent Leadership Summit on Children's Mental Health on Aug. 21, 2015. Family members will receive training on state and local mental health issues, learn how to work with policymakers, and receive information and training on how to participate in policy committees to impact the mental health system of care for children, youth, and families. Participants will also create a personal action plan. Space is limited. To learn more about this unique opportunity, contact Renelle Nelson at (952) 838-9000.

- **Aug. 21, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (PACER)**

### Meeting Mental Health Needs at School, at Home and in the Community: Strategies and Tips for Parents

Children and youth with mental health needs often struggle with their behavior at school, at home, and in the community. This workshop will offer information on what unmet mental health needs can look like, and suggest strategies and tips to help provide support. Separate strategies and tips will be offered for early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school years.

- **Date TBD, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**  
Streaming option also available

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

### My Child's Strengths and Needs

This workshop will provide parents of children ages birth to 5 with tips on how to talk with early childhood professionals about their child's strengths and needs, as well as the opportunity to talk and connect with other parents to share experiences and lessons learned along the way.

- **June 18, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

### Families Are Important: Understanding the Early Intervention Process in Minnesota

This workshop features an overview of families' rights, roles, and responsibilities within the early intervention system. It also addresses services in the natural environment, the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and child and family outcomes.

- **July 20, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

### Is My Child's IEP Ready for School?

This workshop will provide parents of children ages 3 to 5 with an overview of the importance of Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals. It will also include a discussion about how to make sure that the current IEP addresses the supports and services needed for a child to be successful in school or other early learning environments.

- **Aug. 18, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

## PARENT TRAINING

### Special Education and Charter Schools

Parents of children with disabilities who attend a charter school will learn more about parent/student rights, services, resources, and ways to resolve disagreements.

- **Aug. 6, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (Minneapolis)**

### 10 Topics to Help Your Child Succeed in Special Education

Parents who participate in this interactive workshop will learn about 10 important areas of focus in special education, and acquire skills and knowledge they can use to help their children with disabilities be more successful.

- **Aug. 18, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (Anoka)**

### The ABC's of the IEP – A Guide for Minnesota Parents to the IEP

This workshop will help parents understand how to use the IEP to benefit their child. Presenters will use the PACER booklet, "Guide for Minnesota Parents to the IEP," to help participants understand how each required part of the IEP can be developed to meet the child's needs.

- **Aug. 20, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. (PACER)**

### Hot Tips on the Individualized Education Program: Is Your Child's IEP Individualized and Appropriate?

Parent participants in this hands-on workshop will learn how to use the valuable information on their child's special education evaluation report to determine how well the Individualized Education Program (IEP) addresses the child's unique needs. Parents need to bring a copy of their child's most recent school special education evaluation report and current IEP.

- **Aug. 29, 9:30 a.m. to Noon (PACER)**

### Planning for Educational Inclusion

Parents of children with disabilities who participate in this workshop will learn more about educational inclusion. Topics include least restrictive environments, access to the general curriculum, and participation in state and district-wide assessments.

- **Sept. 29, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

## SIMON TECHNOLOGY CENTER

### Using the iPad to Enhance Summer Learning

Participants will learn how to use the iPad and apps to keep children in grades 3 to 7 engaged and learning throughout the summer. You'll discover strategies to use the iPad as a fun summer learning tool, as well as apps to help students keep their skills fresh.

- **June 15, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (PACER)**  
Streaming option also available

### Assistive Technology to Support Little TIKES' Challenging Behaviors

Participants will learn about technologies such as visuals and schedules, weighted items, and sensory items, to support young children with challenging behaviors.

- **Aug. 18, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. (PACER)**  
Streaming option also available



# Join us Sept. 19 for Simon Technology Center's Family Fun Day

From high-tech gadgets to technology that supports everything from play to learning to employment, there will be plenty to explore and try at the Simon Technology Center Family Fun Day and Tech Expo. The event will be held on Saturday, Sept. 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at PACER Center.

Children with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who serve them can explore the possibilities of assistive technology and enjoy interacting with a variety of devices for infants, toddlers, children, teens, and adults. Children can test drive a robot, ride adaptive bikes, stop by the photo booth, or visit the do-it-yourself technology station. The event is free but advance registration is required. Register online at [PACER.org/stc](http://PACER.org/stc) or call (952) 838-9000.



## Managing Life the Smart Way with Technology for Teens

Does managing homework, time, and health sometimes feel overwhelming for your youth? Technology can help! Participants will learn how smartphones, tablets, and computers, can help students more independently manage school work, time, and wellness. Family strategies for using technology to foster independence will also be discussed. This workshop is designed for students in middle school and up, and their parents.

- **Aug. 19 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. (PACER)**  
Streaming option also available

## Going to School: Telepresence and Robotics in the Classroom

For students with a disability or a special health care need that prevents them from attending school, telepresence and robotic technology can offer access to learning and the classroom. This workshop will explore telepresence and robotic technologies for students, discuss challenges that may arise, and offer success stories.

- **Sept. 28, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. (PACER)**  
Streaming option also available

## Let's Write a Story: Tools for Creating Social Stories

Social stories help learners understand the world and prepare for the unexpected. Workshop participants will learn about a variety of tools that can be used to create a social story.

- **Oct. 1, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. (PACER)**  
Streaming option also available

## Leveraging Technology to Improve Executive Function

Executive function skills are vital for daily living. Challenges with these abilities may appear at any age and can change over time. This workshop will explore tools and strategies to help with attention, memory, planning, organization, time management, social and emotional concerns, self-monitoring, and setting and achieving goals. A person-first framework will be used to consider and select the right tools to help individuals with disabilities move toward independence.

- **Oct. 8, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. (PACER)**  
Streaming option also available

## TRANSITION

### The Journey to Adulthood

This workshop will provide parents with information about the changes that occur to every child, with or without a disability, during adolescence and puberty. Participants will feel more comfortable and confident as they help their youth navigate the issues of sexuality during this important transition to adulthood.

- **June 25 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

### Ready for Life After High School? Employment and Support Strategies for Youth with Disabilities

Planning for employment is an important step in preparing your young adult with a disability for life after high school. This new workshop will provide information on career exploration and planning, along with strategies for finding

and keeping a job. Parents will gain knowledge about how to help prepare their youth for employment, and will hear from agencies that provide employment services and supports. Parents of students in the 9th grade and beyond are encouraged to attend.

- **Sept. 24, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., (Anoka)**

### Taking the Next Step: Planning for Success in Postsecondary Education

An increasing number of youth with disabilities are choosing to continue their education after high school. This free workshop for parents of youth will provide information on how to help youth prepare for success in college, understand the value of postsecondary education, and access needed supports.

- **Date and Location TBD**

### Understanding Employment Supports for Youth with Significant Disabilities

Employment supports for youth with significant disabilities can be confusing for parents who are learning about various waivers, rules, and programs. This workshop will help parents better understand the available options so they can help their youth find success in employment.

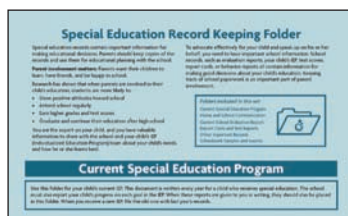
- **Date and Location TBD**

# Resources

## Updated! Special Education Record Keeping Folders

Special education records contain important information for making educational decisions. This set of 6 folders helps parents organize school paperwork to help them make good decisions about their children's education. 2014.

◆ \$10 | 11+ copies, \$8 each | PHP-a5



## Updated! EZ AT

A guide for parents and professionals working with children ages 3-8 with disabilities. It provides assistive technology activities to encourage inclusion among all students. EZ AT offers information on a wide range of devices and products that promote best practices for home and classroom learning. 2015.

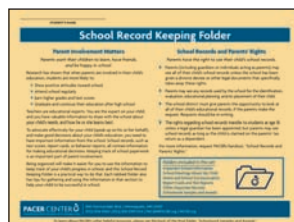
◆ \$5 | 10+ copies, \$4 each | STC-16



## New! School Record Keeping Folders

This School Record Keeping Folder is a practical way for parents to stay organized to keep track of their student's progress in school. Each of the six tabbed folders also have tips for gathering and using the information to help your child to be successful in school. 2014.

◆ \$10 | 11+ copies, \$8 each | MPC-6



## A Guide for Minnesota Parents to the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Updated for 2014. Helps parents work with schools to address each child's special needs through understanding the required components of the IEP. Includes examples from the Minnesota state-recommended form.

◆ \$3 | 10+ copies, \$2 each | PHP-a12



## Families Are Important! An Early Childhood Guidebook for Families of Young Children

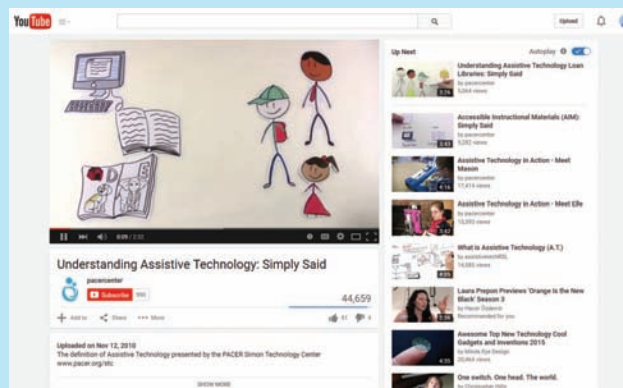
Helps families of children with disabilities or delayed development understand Minnesota's early intervention system and how to access services for their child. 2014.

◆ \$7 | 10+ copies, \$6 each | AP-44



## Simply Said: Understanding Accessibility in Digital Learning Materials

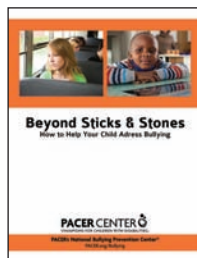
This fully captioned video is designed to increase awareness of digital learning materials, and how individuals can work together to increase the demand for accessible materials. Produced by PACER Center, in conjunction with the National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials, the video features simple drawings that make it quick and easy to learn and share. Watch the Simply Said videos at PACER.org/stc/videos.



## Beyond Sticks & Stones: How to Help Your Child Address Bullying

This book offers bullying prevention strategies for children at home, in school, and online. It is filled with information and practical tools that can help parents and others take action against bullying. A special section of the book provides specific tips for parents of children with disabilities. 2013.

◆ \$10 | 10+ copies, \$8 each | BP-7



## Housing: Where Will Our Children Live When They Grow Up?

Parents of youth with disabilities will find that this easy-to-use book answers many questions about future housing choices to make with their child. From housing options to funding to supports and services, there is a wealth of information. 2012.

◆ \$8 | 10+ copies, \$6 each | PHP-a26



◆ This symbol indicates one item is free to Minnesota parents or guardians of children with disabilities and to Minnesota young adults (age 14 and over) with disabilities



## To order the listed materials...

1. Specify how many you want of each item and the cost.
2. Total your order, adding appropriate sales tax.
3. Enclose payment with your order.
4. Mail to: PACER Center  
8161 Normandale Blvd.  
Minneapolis, MN 55437-1044

You may also place orders on PACER's website at [PACER.org/publications](http://PACER.org/publications). Prices include postage and handling. A discount may be available if 10 or more of the same item number are ordered.

◆ Indicates one item is free to Minnesota parents or guardians of children with disabilities and to Minnesota young adults (age 14 and older) with disabilities. For foreign orders, please telephone or e-mail PACER (see page 10). Payment must be in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank.

Order number	Name of publication ordered	Quantity	Per item cost	Total item cost

Total cost of all items ordered \_\_\_\_\_

(Minneapolis residents, 7.75%; Hennepin County residents, 7.275%; Anoka, Ramsey, Dakota, Washington counties, 7.125%; most other Minnesota residents, 6.875% )  
Sales tax varies with specific location.

Please complete the following with your order:

I am a:  Parent  Professional  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (c)

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*If a parent:*

Birth date of child with disability: \_\_\_\_\_ Disability: \_\_\_\_\_

### You can be a PACER puppeteer

Would you like to be part of the fun, creative team of PACER puppeteers? PACER's acclaimed KIDS AGAINST BULLYING and COUNT ME IN® puppet programs feature endearing, child-size puppets that address bullying prevention and disability awareness in a thoughtful, entertaining way. No experience is needed to be a puppeteer. Volunteers receive training to learn puppet and presentation skills and do hands-on rehearsals. Puppeteers present at schools in the Twin Cities metro area two or three times a month. To learn more, call PACER at (952) 838-9000 or e-mail [puppets@PACER.org](mailto:puppets@PACER.org).



### Center on Technology and Disability offers AT, IT resources for parents, educators

The Family Center on Technology and Disability (FCTD), PACER Center, and the American Institutes for Research have partnered to create the Center on Technology and Disability (CTD). The Center is designed to help children and youth with disabilities, their families, and educators to access and use assistive technology (AT) and instructional technology (IT). Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the CTD offers an extensive library, interactive learning center, and online discussion forums. Learn more at [ctdinstitute.org](http://ctdinstitute.org).

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**Change Service Requested**

# She's part of the WE WILL Generation™

Nearly 60 percent of bullying situations end when a peer intervenes. It is a powerful statistic that led PACER to develop the WE WILL Generation™ campaign, and spurred 19-year-old Brynn Christensen of Lehi, Utah to take action in her community. Christensen is using the power of peer-to-peer communication, and her platform as a Miss Utah candidate, to help prevent bullying. "I love the WE WILL Generation™ and the approach it takes," said Christensen, who is partnering with PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. "Younger students look up to older students. When I come into a school wearing my Miss Lehi crown, younger children see me as a role model and they really listen to the message."

The WE WILL Generation™ (hashtag #WeWillGen) is a web-based campaign that teaches students how to respond when they see a bullying situation. It provides them with tools to speak up on behalf of their peers and prevent bullying in their schools, the community, and online. Christensen, who was cyber-bullied in high school, has used her platform to speak to more than 10,000 students about bullying prevention and PACER Center this school year. She also impacts parents and other adults through media and community appearances.

*Continues on page 6*



*Brynn Christensen (right) is an ambassador for the WE WILL Generation™ campaign to end bullying.*