

## Parents urged to keep tabs on education funding

As fiscal shortfalls continue to challenge federal, state, and local governments, parents and others concerned about special education funding are urged to stay alert and pass on personal stories to legislators about the impact and success of special education.

At the federal level, a special 12-member congressional committee, or “super committee,” has been assigned to reach a deficit reduction solution and find \$1.5 trillion in debt reduction over the next 10 years. Additional spending limits will mean cuts of about \$900 billion in discretionary spending, which could include special education, over 10 years.

Congress is required to vote on the committee’s plan and a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution by Dec. 23. If either of those steps are not taken, automatic across-the-board spending cuts (including education) will occur.

“As these national and state budget debates persist, it is important for the special education community to stay informed about any legislative action that may affect their child, school, community, or organization,” says Heather Kilgore, PACER’s Public Policy Director.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## October is National Bullying Prevention Month

### Join the movement!

PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center has many exciting ways for individuals and communities nationwide to join the movement during National Bullying Prevention Month in October, which PACER originated in 2006.

The major events are:

- Run, Walk Roll Against Bullying, Oct. 1
- Unity Day, Oct. 12
- Unity Dance Day, Oct. 26

“The culture of bullying won’t end until people across the country take action and show children and teens that they care,” says Julie Hertzog, director of PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center, which sponsors the month.

“This is a very real and painful issue that kids are facing,” Hertzog says. “But they don’t have to face it alone, and bullying can be prevented if we all work together to change the culture.”

### Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying

PACER will host the second annual Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying on Oct. 1 in Minnesota. Outside Minnesota, individuals, schools, businesses, and organizations can host a Run,



*PACER Executive Director Paula Goldberg looks on as Ellen DeGeneres dances at the Sixth Annual Mann Symposium on Aug. 9 in Minneapolis. DeGeneres stopped by to show her support for PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center.*

Walk, Roll Against Bullying event in their communities using PACER’s free toolkit, available at [PACER.org/bullying](http://PACER.org/bullying). The toolkit shows how to plan a Run, Walk, Roll in five easy steps and includes tips, ideas, and resources. The Oregon Parent Center, which initiated the Run, Walk, Roll idea, and groups in Kentucky, Nebraska, and other states are also hosting this event.

### Unity Day: “Make It Orange and Make It End”

Join the movement to “Make It Orange and Make It End!” and unite

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Lakin chosen as new director of NIDRR

K. Charlie Lakin has been selected to serve as the director of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) at the U.S. Department of Education. He began in this role on Aug. 29, 2011.

Lakin was formerly the director of the University of Minnesota's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Community Living, Institute on Community Integration. As director of NIDRR, he brings more

than 40 years of experience as a teacher, researcher, consultant, and advocate in services for people with disabilities.

NIDRR provides leadership and support for a comprehensive program of research related to the rehabilitation of



*K. Charlie Lakin*

individuals with disabilities.

“We are delighted that Charlie will be in this leadership position. He cares about families and individuals with disabilities,” says Paula Goldberg, PACER Executive Director. “We have the utmost respect for him.”

## Parents urged to keep tabs on education funding

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It's also important to continue to let legislators know how their decisions impact a child's daily life, Kilgore notes.

### **Minnesota funding intact**

In Minnesota, there was good news for special education programs this summer. The Minnesota Legislature left the 2012-13 special education budget intact, despite state budget deficits. The budget deficits prompted the Legislature to create larger state “payment shifts” for general K-12

education funding, delaying \$780 million in state payments to school districts until the next two-year budget cycle. The new budget's payment delays of 40 percent are expected to create cash flow problems for Minnesota's school districts. Because of this, many school districts may be forced to use short-term borrowing to get by.

While the state of Minnesota funds approximately 68 percent of the salaries of the special education staff

who work directly with children with disabilities, the remainder of the cost is the responsibility of the local school district. These payment shifts and short-term loans generate additional funding challenges to local school districts that are maintaining their programs with fewer resources, Kilgore says.

Parents and others concerned about special education funding can stay updated on public policy by visiting [PACER.org/legislation](http://PACER.org/legislation).

## Support PACER Center through United Way and Children's Charities of America

PACER Center is eligible for donations made through United Way campaigns and Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), the workplace charity campaign for federal civilian, military, and postal employees. PACER is a tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization.

### **United Way**

The United Way accommodates employees wanting to support PACER. United Way pledge cards have a Donor Choice location in

which to write PACER's name and address (PACER Center, Inc., 8161 Normandale Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55437).

### **Children's Charities of America**

Look for PACER in your local campaign booklet under the Children's Charities of America (CCA) heading or alphabetically. You also can see a video about a PACER program by visiting [cfcvideospeakersbureau.org](http://cfcvideospeakersbureau.org) and entering PACER as the keyword. To

designate your gift to PACER, use code 12272. This code is unique to PACER and should be used under any heading where you see PACER's name listed.

For information on how to support PACER through the United Way, CFC, or other workplace charity campaigns, call PACER's development office at 952-838-9000 or visit [PACER.org](http://PACER.org) and click on Get Involved, Make a Donation.

# Mann Symposium attracts 1,100 and a surprise guest

The Sixth Annual Ted and Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation National Symposium about Children's Mental Health and Learning Disabilities attracted 1,100 teachers, parents, and administrators on Aug. 9 at the Minneapolis Convention Center, and surprised them with a brief visit by talk show host Ellen DeGeneres.

DeGeneres stopped by to show her support of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center.

Speakers at the Symposium addressed many issues regarding children's mental health and learning disabilities, including effective treatment planning and proactive, positive teaching strategies and interventions. Josh Hanagarne, author of the novel "The

Knot" and the blog "World's Strongest Librarian," brought many to tears with a moving presentation about thriving—not surviving—with Tourette's Syndrome.

Other keynote speakers included David S. Goldbloom, M.D., senior medical advisor, education and public affairs at the Centre for Addiction and

Mental Health in Toronto, Canada, and Dr. Read Sulik, M.D., a child and adolescent psychiatrist, adult psychiatrist and pediatrician.

The Symposium is co-sponsored by PACER Center and the American Dairy Queen Corporation and is made possible by the Ted and Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation.



Attendees of the Sixth Annual Mann Symposium enjoy a surprise visit from comedian Ellen DeGeneres.

## PACESETTER

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

ALLIANCE National PTAC site:

[ParentCenterNetwork.org/national](http://ParentCenterNetwork.org/national)

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

C3 site: [c3online.org](http://c3online.org)

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

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

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

(Alternate format is available upon request.)



*Elia Dimayuga-Bruggeman, Assistant Education Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (second from left), recently met with PACER staff (L to R): Virginia Richardson, Parent Training and Information Center Manager; Heather Kilgore, Public Policy Director; and Jody Manning, Parent Training Project Coordinator. Dimayuga-Bruggeman also welcomed teachers and parents to the Mann Symposium and thanked PACER for its resources that are available in several languages.*

# PACER workshop helps parents prepare their youth for the “journey to adulthood”

**P**ACER will present a workshop titled, “The Journey to Adulthood: What Parents of Children with Disabilities Need to Know,” on Tuesday, Oct. 18, from 7 to 9 p.m. at PACER Center.

The workshop will provide parents with information about the physical and social changes that occur during adolescence and puberty and give them tools and ideas to help prepare their youth for adulthood.

This phase of life provides a wonderful opportunity for parents and care providers to develop strategies to help youth through various changes. Youth need to be prepared not just for their personal changes, but also for society’s expectations regarding the appropriate behavior of adults. Parents can provide youth with opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills they will need.

For more information about the workshop, call 952-838-9000 or register online at [PACER.org/workshops](http://PACER.org/workshops).

## Puberty

Parents and youth can anticipate that puberty will generally begin for girls between the ages of 8.5 and 13, and for

boys between the ages of 9 and 14. A child’s disability may cause the physical changes of puberty to begin sooner, so parents may need to begin providing educational information earlier than they had planned.

With puberty come changes in personal hygiene. Parents can help youth gain independence in managing these new self-care tasks themselves or teach them how to direct the personal care attendant who will be assisting them as adults.

Personal care tasks can be incredibly complex for some youth to master. Parents and care providers can break the task down into individual steps and then compile the tasks into a story board that youth can refer to until they have mastered the task.

## Adolescence

In addition to taking care of a changing body, adolescent youth will also need to master increasingly complex social interactions.

Making sense of appropriate social behavior and boundaries can be difficult if youth are concrete learners, do not

think abstractly, or struggle with reading non-verbal social situations.

Families can make this easier for youth if they use two teaching tools: social skills stories and role playing.

Social skills stories are stories with a point: a situation, skill, or concept is described in a way that gives youth information about social cues, perspectives, and common responses.

Role playing allows a young person to try out different social skills in supportive environments before actually using them.

For example, youth can practice the social skills needed for going on a date or the appropriate response to being turned down to dance.

Parents who educate themselves and develop a plan will be ready to answer the questions youth have about the changes that are happening to their bodies and their emotions.

They can also watch for opportunities in their child’s daily life to teach about puberty and adolescence, as well as their own cultural and family values.

## New early childhood resources available in several languages

PACER Center has published several new resources for parents of young children with disabilities from diverse cultures.

**The Early Childhood Transition Guidebook** is now available in Spanish and Somali. The guidebook helps parents understand the process that guides their child’s transition from infant and toddler intervention services

to other early childhood services at age 3 and includes strategies to use for a successful transition.

**“Making the Move from Preschool to Kindergarten,”** is a handout available in English, Somali, Spanish, and Hmong. It offers a checklist for parents whose children are transitioning from special education preschool services into kindergarten.

Another new resource is **“Let’s Talk & Count!”** activity cards, a fun and easy way for parents to help children be ready for reading and math. “Let’s Talk & Count” is available in English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. A single copy is free to Minnesota parents.

To order, call 952-838-9000 or visit [PACER.org/publications/EarlyChildhood.asp](http://PACER.org/publications/EarlyChildhood.asp)

# October is National Bullying Prevention Month!

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against bullying. Make your color orange on **Unity Day, Wednesday, Oct. 12**. That's the day everyone can link together—in schools, communities and online—and send a message of support to students who have experienced bullying. Students can unite against bullying on Unity Day by wearing the color orange, using the resources on [PACER.org/bullying](http://PACER.org/bullying), handing out orange “UNITY” ribbons at school, or writing the word “UNITY” on their hands or binders. Facebook is partnering with PACER by posting information about Unity Day and other PACER activities on its safety, educator, and privacy pages during October.

## Unity Dance Day

On Wednesday, Oct. 26, people everywhere can come together in song and dance to raise awareness for bullying prevention by organizing a Unity Dance Day. Schools and community organizations can find everything they need to plan a Unity Dance Day in PACER's online toolkit. The toolkit includes the designated song for the dance, the choreographed dance moves, and additional materials and resources. It will be available in September at [PACER.org/bullying](http://PACER.org/bullying).

## Find The Courage

The end of National Bullying Prevention Month in October doesn't mean bullying prevention efforts need to end. Students and others can find new ways to support the movement during the “Find The Courage” campaign, which is launching in November, 2011. Watch [PACER.org/bullying](http://PACER.org/bullying) for more news about this initiative designed to help students “Find The Courage” to speak up when they see bullying happen. The Find The Courage campaign is a partnership between PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center and MK Sports and Entertainment Group.

## Mean Stinks!

### Save \$1 on Secret and support PACER

Nationwide, anyone can support National Bullying Prevention Month by participating in Secret Deodorant's “Mean Stinks” campaign.

The campaign is partnering with PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center and actress Amber Riley from “Glee” to encourage young women to stand up to “stinky” behavior – bullying. Secret is donating a portion of proceeds from select Secret Clinical Strength purchases to the National Bullying Prevention Center from now until the end of December.

Just fill in an online form (available at [facebook.com/MeanStinks](http://facebook.com/MeanStinks)) and receive a coupon to save \$1 on any Secret Clinical Strength product. Once it's redeemed, Secret will donate \$1 to PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center.

For more information on PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month and what you can do throughout the month to raise awareness of bullying prevention in your community, visit [PACER.org/bullying](http://PACER.org/bullying) or call 952-838-9000.

## Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying is Oct. 1

Join PACER for the second annual Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying on Saturday, Oct. 1, part of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month of October.

The four-mile run or 1.5-mile walk or roll will take place at Mt. Normandale Lake, Normandale Blvd. and 84th St., Bloomington, Minn. Following the race, people can gather at the Normandale Lake Bandshell for snacks and additional fun.

The entry fee is \$20 per person, and each participant will receive a complimentary T-shirt. Participants can also gather pledges from family, friends,



Participants from last year's event make it to the finish line.

co-workers, or local businesses. All proceeds from the event will go toward PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. Register online at [PACER.org/bullying/RunWalkRoll](http://PACER.org/bullying/RunWalkRoll).

# Behavioral assessment led to better

By Julie Holmquist

**W**hy do children scream, hit, or have a tantrum? The answers aren't always apparent, especially if your child has autism. For Leah Galle, closely examining the behavior of her son, Grant, was key to helping him cope with life at school.

Through PACER Center, Galle learned about Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), a process for collecting information that is used to help determine why problem behaviors occur.

"It was key and a turning point to his success," Galle says. "I don't know what I would have done without PACER."

When Grant first started school, Galle was concerned that he wouldn't have the support he needed to transition from his intensive behavior therapy program into the school environment.

After she called PACER, advocate Barb Ziemke assisted Galle as she began working with the school on Grant's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

"I really appreciated Barb's guidance and that she attended the IEP meetings with me. I call her my 'voice of reason.' She helped us all work together for Grant," Galle says.

Grant did well in kindergarten, but changes in school personnel and the increasing academic and social demands were difficult for him, and his behaviors worsened in first grade. "It was impacting Grant and our family," Galle recalls. "That's when Barb suggested doing a FBA."

Through PACER's information and with the help of a specialist in FBAs, Galle and Grant's IEP team completed

## Functional behavioral assessment basics

When a child has behavior problems that do not respond to standard interventions, a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) can provide additional information to help the team plan more effective interventions. A typical FBA includes the following:

- A clear description of the problem behavior.
- Observations of the child at different times and in different settings. These observations should record what was happening in the environment before the behavior occurred, what the actual behavior was, and what the student achieved as a result of the behavior.
- Positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address that behavior and to teach behavior skills.

Once the FBA has been completed, the results may be used to write a behavior intervention plan or to develop behavior goals for the Individualized Education Program.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) specifically requires an FBA whenever a child with a disability has his or her current placement changed for disciplinary reasons. A FBA can be considered at other times, too. You may request a FBA at any time if your child's problem behaviors are becoming more difficult, or when the team cannot explain to you why the problem behaviors occur.

a functional behavior assessment, which helped the team determine what Grant's behavior was communicating. An FBA can help parents and teachers understand what purpose the behaviors serve for a child.

With that information, the team then identified ways to address the behaviors and teach Grant new skills so he could learn to manage his behaviors. These ideas were included in a positive behavior support plan.

"From the time it was implemented, his behavior improved. There was a dramatic change, and he started making progress," Galle says. "The FBA opened a big window to understanding him. We realized that he had a

lot of social anxiety and performance anxiety."

The plan focused on reducing Grant's anxiety in several ways, such as offering choices, pre-teaching lessons, reducing the quantity of work, teaching math at home, and reducing school hours. The benefits were many, Galle says. Grant's confidence and friendship building skills increased, as did his ability to tolerate new situations.

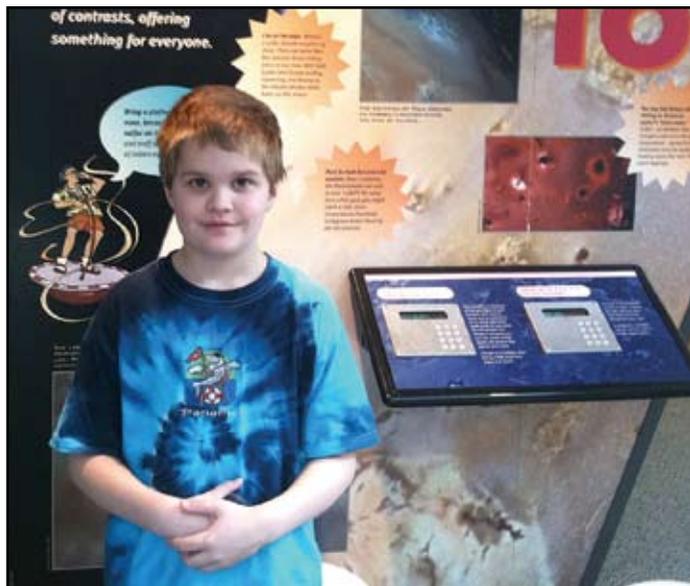
"For the most part, he feels good about school and himself," she says. Tweaking positive intervention plans and looking closely at the "why" of her son's behavior is an ongoing process, however, Galle notes. "The key is solid communication with the

# school days for boy with autism

district and working together to address situations. We need to continue to adjust and make changes to help him succeed.”

When Grant does well at school, he also does well at home, Galle says and his progress was marked with a milestone this spring. In the past, traveling with Grant was too difficult to manage, but the family was able to make a successful trip to Chicago, where they visited the Adler Planetarium and other museums. Grant, who has a special interest in space, thought it was his most “awesome” birthday ever, Galle says.

For more information about functional behavioral assessments, call 952-838-9000 and ask to speak to an advocate, or see “Functional Behavioral Assessments and Positive Interventions: What Parents Need to Know.” (ACTion Sheet: PHP-c79), available by ordering online at [PACER.org/parent/php/php-c79.pdf](http://PACER.org/parent/php/php-c79.pdf).



*Grant Galle at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago.*

## Health Information Center is one-stop source for parents

**F**or many parents, navigating the health care system can be difficult and complex. PACER’s Family-to-Family Health Information Center (F2F HIC) can help Minnesota families understand the health care system and their important role on the health care team.

Through individual assistance, workshop trainings, and online resources, PACER offers parents of children with disabilities and special health care needs a central source for support, advocacy, and information about the health care system.

Teamwork between families and professionals is essential to providing quality care for a child or young adult with special health care needs, says Wendy Ringer, coordinator of this PACER project. That’s why PACER works with both families and the professionals who serve them to promote a family-centered approach.

This PACER project can help families with anything from family-centered care plans to health insurance to working effectively with doctors. The Center’s helpful parent advocates understand the health care system because they have used it, too. The diverse staff can also help families from underserved and underrepresented populations.

“Thank you for taking the time to help me with my son’s health needs,” said one parent who received help. “You were my light in a dark tunnel. You gave me the knowledge and confidence to speak up for my son again, and now he has an Individualized Education Program in place with appropriate health-related goals.”

Another parent who was denied TEFRA coverage worked with Ringer to overturn the denial. TEFRA provides medical assistance for children

with disabilities whose parents do not qualify for other Minnesota health care programs.

“I went for a hearing with the Human Services judge, and because of knowing the Social Security eligibility requirements, I was able to successfully present our case,” the parent said afterward. “It was a scary process, so I am thankful for the help in navigating the system. I am so grateful to know about the Family-to-Family Health Information Center.”

The project was recently awarded continued funding through the Health Resources and Services Administration and Maternal Child Health Bureau, authorized through the Affordable Care Act. For more information on the Family-to-Family Health Information Center, call PACER at 952-838-9000 or visit [PACER.org/health](http://PACER.org/health).

# Preparation is key to gaining accommod

By Julie Holmquist

**P**lanning for college requires much preparation, even more so if a student has a disability and requires accommodations on college entrance exams.

Students with disabilities receiving services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are not automatically entitled to ACT or SAT testing accommodations, but must apply to use them.

Because the applications can require substantial documentation and months to process, families of youth with disabilities who plan to attend college and are entering ninth grade should begin preparing if accommodations are needed.

While there is no specific special education law that entitles students to accommodations on college entrance exams, individuals with disabilities are guaranteed certain protections and rights to equal access to programs and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and ADA amendments of 2008, as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

To access these rights when applying for accommodations on college entrance exams, an individual must present documentation of the disability and the necessity of the requested accommodation.

Documentation is key to securing accommodations on the ACT test, says Jody Manning, PACER's Parent Training Project Coordinator.

"Parents should begin to consider planning for the ACT testing when their child starts high school in ninth grade," Manning says. "If planning



for the ACT test seems appropriate for their child, they should definitely start thinking about it and make sure accommodations used by their child and the impact of those accommodations are well documented."

For the ACT, students may request one of the following accommodation categories:

- Standard Time National Testing with Accommodations
- Extended Time National Testing (50 percent time extension)
- Special Testing: Testing at school with extended time and alternate formats available—not as part of national or international testing at a test center.

For details on these categories, visit [act.org/aap/disab/index.html](http://act.org/aap/disab/index.html).

The request must be supported by documentation of the disability that is written by the diagnosing professional and meets all of the following guidelines:

- States the specific impairment.
- Is current (within three years).
- Describes the presenting problems and developmental history, including relevant educational and medical history.

- Describes the comprehensive assessments (neuro-psychological or psycho-educational evaluations). ACT also requires other documentation, depending on the specific disability. Visit [act.org/aap/disab/policy.html](http://act.org/aap/disab/policy.html) for complete details.

- Describes the substantial limitations resulting from the impairment.

- Describes specific recommended accommodations.

- Establishes the professional credentials for the evaluator, including information about licensure or certification, education, and area of specialization.

Parents and students usually work with school counselors on applications for college entrance exams, Manning says, but school counselors may not be aware of the ACT process for students with disabilities.

For example, parents should know that if an initial application is rejected, they can apply again with additional data, such as the Individualized Education Program (IEP) accommodations section, as well as progress notes or letters from teachers, coaches, and others who can substantiate the impact of the disability and the accommodation on the student's learning.

"Parents who have reapplied, even two or three times, and supplied additional documentation have been successful," Manning says.

Ed Colby, a spokesperson for ACT, says there is "no simple answer" for why an application is rejected. "Every case is looked at individually," he said. "If reviewers feel that there isn't a substantiated need, it will be denied, but it

# Accommodations on ACT college entrance test

will depend on the information provided by the student, and they will have the opportunity to provide additional information if needed. We go to great lengths to make sure that students who need extended time or other accommodations for the ACT have the ability to receive them.”

Parents can begin preparing the necessary documentation by making sure their child’s accommodations are recorded in the IEP or 504 Plan, along with data that shows how the accommodation benefits the student.

“If accommodations are consistently used in the IEP plan, it will help on your application,” Manning says.

Manning points out that students who have 504 Plans should not be discouraged to apply for ACT accommodations. “If they have a strong 504 plan that shows accommodations are being used that benefit the student, as well as an outside neuro-psychological evaluation, students should apply for the special testing.”

For more information about applying for accommodations on the ACT test, call 952-838-9000 and ask to speak to a PACER advocate. For information on postsecondary education, visit [PACER.org/tatra/resources/postsecondary.asp](http://PACER.org/tatra/resources/postsecondary.asp).

## Timeline for Parents

**Freshman Year:** Make sure your child’s accommodations are listed on the IEP or 504 Plan, along with data showing how they benefit your child.

**Sophomore Year:** Start gathering needed documentation. Check to see if your child’s diagnosis documentation is current and meets the requirements of the ACT application. If not, update it.

**Junior Year:** Begin application process in the fall. Check ACT testing dates and registration dates online at [actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org). The ACT can be taken beginning in the spring of the junior year. National tests are given six times a year. ACT tests can be taken more than once.

**Senior Year:** Take ACT test again in the fall, if needed.

## Give a car, help a child!

**G**ive a Car, Help a Child is a program that allows individuals to donate their used cars in exchange for a tax deduction. Funds from the donated vehicle will support PACER Center and the children and young adults with disabilities it serves.

PACER accepts cars and other motor vehicles. Cars should be 1991 or newer and running. Exceptions can be made depending on a vehicle’s condition.

Donors can drive their car to PACER Center or, if preferred, arrange for the vehicle to be picked up from their home. The donated vehicle will then be sold with proceeds benefiting the many programs of PACER Center.

PACER will provide all donors with a letter of acknowledgement to certify the value of the donation following the sale. Call PACER at 952-838-9000 or e-mail [PACER@PACER.org](mailto:PACER@PACER.org) for more information.

“Many people may be tired of spending too much on repairs, unhappy

with the trade-in value offered, or simply looking for an opportunity to help,” says Mary Schrock, PACER Director of Development. “By donating a vehicle to PACER, you are making a tremendous difference in the lives of children with disabilities.”

## Donating your car is simple!

- Just gather your keys, vehicle title, and lien release (if applicable).
- Call PACER at (952) 838-9000 to arrange a time to deliver or pick-up your vehicle. A receipt will be provided at the time of exchange.
- After the vehicle has been sold, PACER will provide you with a written acknowledgement of the final value of donation. Please keep the letter with your other tax records, as all donations are tax deductible.

# Parents: help your child with IEP transition goals

State data shows that only 58.8 percent of Minnesota's students age 16 and older have appropriate transition services and goals included in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The data comes from the state's 2009 Annual Performance Report (APR) on special education that was sent to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). OSEP's recent report to the state says it is "concerned about the state's very low 2009 data" in the transition area.

This data is significant for parents and students, says Carolyn Anderson, PACER advocate, because transition planning is an important step in preparing a student for life after high school. "One thing parents can do is learn about transition services and

the IEP so they can help their child achieve their dreams and goals," she says.

Families who want to learn more can view an archived PACER webinar titled, "Transition: Pathway to the Future," at [PACER.org/webinars/archive-listing.asp](http://PACER.org/webinars/archive-listing.asp). The webinar helps parents understand the special education transition process in Minnesota and how to effectively participate, from evaluation through developing an appropriate IEP. It also defines transition vocabulary, explains the transition sections of the IEP, and gives an introduction to postsecondary adult services.

The APR reported that only 58.8 percent of Minnesota students age 16 and above had IEPs that included:

- Appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessment,
- Transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals,
- Annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. OSEP also requires evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services were discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, was invited to the IEP team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached age 18.

## Curriculum for educators focuses on technology for teens

PACER recently finished the second year of its Teens Succeeding with Technology (TeST) program, which uses web-based resources to help high school students with disabilities plan for postsecondary education and careers. Educators can now replicate the program and access these resources for free at [PACER.org/stc/TeensSucceedTech](http://PACER.org/stc/TeensSucceedTech).

The program focuses on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and shows students what opportunities exist for them in these fields. The TeST curriculum features podcasts from professionals in STEM fields discussing their jobs, as well as videos on transition planning, careers, and postsecondary education, including a new virtual college campus tour. It also includes an informational video on how to use the materials.

This year, PACER's TeST program partnered with nine sites across Minnesota. More than 90 percent of the students said they learned something new through the program, with many citing the resources on postsecondary education as especially helpful.

"The TeST program helps students with disabilities consider their interests and hobbies and match them to possible careers," says Meghan Kunz, co-coordinator of the project and an assistive technology specialist with PACER's Simon Technology Center.

"The students in the program created personal transition plans that they can use to help guide them toward their future postsecondary and career goals."



*Students from nine sites in Minnesota took part in this year's TeST program.*

The program was funded by a Carl D. Perkins federal grant administered through Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU).

For more information on the TeST program, contact the Simon Technology Center at 952-838-9000 or [stc@pacer.org](mailto:stc@pacer.org).

# Doing jobs at home helps children gain school success

Children typically learn best by doing. Children can build some of the skills and behaviors schools look for in students when they start kindergarten by talking, reading, and playing. Giving children age-appropriate jobs in the home is another way to build positive behaviors and skills a child needs to be successful in school.

Young children typically can do many simple jobs at home such as: set and clear the table, help feed pets, pick up toys, dress and wash themselves, make the bed, or carry in mail. Parents can adjust these suggestions to fit their child's ability and interests.

As a parent, you can do several things at home to help your child develop kindergarten skills:

- Allow your child to choose the job at home. Your child will have more interest and work longer.
- Break jobs into simple one- or two-step directions. Let your child finish each step before adding another step to the job.
- Focus on the process instead of the end result. Try saying, "You're learning to put your toys away on the shelf –that's wonderful!"
- Give specific feedback. Try saying, "I like that you put the toy on the shelf," instead of "Great job!"
- Be flexible and patient. Let your child change or stop

## MINNESOTA PARENT CENTER

Minnesota PIRC  
A project of PACER

doing the job if he or she is frustrated. Give your child time to learn the job.

- Be satisfied with less-than-perfect results.
- Show appreciation for the effort. Share that you value

your child's efforts. Tell your child that he or she is helping the family.

- Let your child see you learn new skills, work hard, persevere, and be happy with less-than-perfect results.

The process of learning, doing, and finishing simple jobs builds important skills in children. These skills support academic success. Children will build and use these skills in kindergarten through high school and beyond. When a young child learns, does, and finishes a job, he or she begins to:

- See herself as able to manage a challenge
- Understand that effort can bring improvement
- Learn that persistence can lead to progress
- See how adults' guidance and feedback can help him improve

Jobs also make a young child feel valued and responsible. Children learn that their contributions are important, and that chores at home are important. Doing jobs at home helps children learn skills that are essential for school success.

## Do you want to make a difference? Change attitudes?

### Order PACER's COUNT ME IN<sup>®</sup> puppets!

*"What a great way to dispel myths and raise awareness!"  
Minnesota teacher*

#### Buy the set:

**BASIC SET:** Six puppets with scripts for preschool and elementary shows

**STARTER SET:** Three puppets with scripts on several disabilities for elementary students

All sets include puppet wheelchair, props, and a coordinator's handbook for creating a COUNT ME IN<sup>®</sup> project with volunteers. Training is also available.

Visit these engaging puppets at [PACER.org/puppets!](http://PACER.org/puppets!)



For more information, e-mail [puppets@PACER.org](mailto:puppets@PACER.org) or call PACER at 952-838-9000.

## 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).

### Early Childhood

#### Families Are Important

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

Sept. 27, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

#### Everything You Need to Learn Before Your Child Turns Three

Families will learn about the transition process from Part C Early Intervention services to Part B preschool services. Topics include transition requirements, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), inclusion, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives.

Oct. 22, 9 to 11 a.m. (PACER)

#### Understanding and Addressing Challenging Behaviors

Parents of young children with developmental delays and/or disabilities will learn about brain development and behavior, different temperament types, stages of development, and strategies to provide children with acceptable ways to get their needs met.

Nov. 10, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

### Emotional Behavioral

#### Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS): Effective Behavior Support at School and at Home

Learn the concepts behind SW-PBIS, how they are taught and reinforced at school, and how to expand those concepts and behavioral expectations for use at home. Focus will be on children with and without disabilities from early childhood through elementary school.

October (TBD)

#### Finding Hope, Getting Help

Find support for your child with mental health needs. This workshop will familiarize parents and others with the Minnesota Comprehensive Children's Mental Health Act, which was designed to provide children and youth with mental health needs an integrated system of care so that they can develop and function as fully as possible in all areas of their lives.

Oct. 6, 7 to 9 p.m. (Roseville)

#### Understanding Challenging Behaviors

Parents of young children with developmental delays and/or disabilities will learn about brain development and behavior, different temperament types, stages of development, and strategies to provide children with acceptable ways to have their needs met. Call 952-707-4150 to register.

Nov. 14, 7 to 9 p.m. (St. Cloud)

Nov. 29, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Marshall)

### Health Information, Advocacy

#### Getting the Help You Need

Families will learn about public programs such as Medical Assistance, TEFRA, home and community based waivers, consumer directed community supports, county services, and county grants.

Oct. 25, 6:30 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

#### Personal Care Assistance (PCA) Services

Participants will receive an overview on personal care assistance (PCA) services, benefits, and consumer options. Information on who is eligible for the service, how to request an assessment, locating a PCA service provider, and timely information on changes to the PCA program will also be covered.

Nov. 9, 7 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

### Parent Training

#### How Section 504 Changes Impact Your Child with a Disability or Special Health Care Needs: Update on Eligibility for Services

Participants will explore the impact of Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on the education of students with disabilities.

Sept. 15, 6:30 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

#### IDEA: Blueprint for Special Education

Parents can help build appropriate services for their child at school. Learn how to follow the "blueprint" for developing those services by using the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the special education process.

Sept. 22, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (PACER)

#### Transition: Pathway to the Future

Helps parents of children with disabilities understand how to use the special education transition process to help plan for life after

high school. Parents of students in ninth grade and beyond are encouraged to attend.

Sept. 27, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Red Wing)

Nov. 7, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

#### IDEA: Understanding the IEP

This Individualized Education Program (IEP) workshop explores new IEP requirements and components of IEP development, including evaluation, resolving disagreements, and an expanded section on writing measurable goals.

Oct. 3, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (Detroit Lakes)

Oct. 4, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (Grand Rapids)

Oct. 6, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (PACER)

#### Special Education: What Do Parents Need to Know

This workshop will help parents understand special education and learn how to communicate with school staff to encourage positive outcomes for children with disabilities.

Oct. 10, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

#### Focus on Behavior and Charter Schools

This workshop will focus on students in charter schools who are on Individualized Education Programs and how behavior can be addressed through the IEP process.

Oct. 17, 7 to 9 p.m. (St. Paul)

#### IDEA: Understanding the Special Education Process

Outlines the basic principles of special education with materials to help parents organize their child's special education records. Topics include free appropriate public education, evaluation, resolving disagreements, and the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Oct. 17, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (Mankato)

Oct. 18, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (Hutchinson)

#### The Journey to Adulthood: What Parents of Children with Disabilities Need to Know

Provides parents with information about the physical and social changes that occur during adolescence and puberty and gives tools and ideas to help prepare for adulthood.

Oct. 18, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

#### Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy

Explores six skills parents can use to become a more effective advocate for their child with a disability.

Oct. 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Rochester)

Oct. 27, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

## Workshops

### Getting and Keeping the First Job

Designed to help families understand the realities of employment for youth. Topics include career planning, the role of families, and suggestions to increase the likelihood of being hired for a job.

Oct. 25, 7 to 9 p.m. (Moorhead)

Nov. 29, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

### IDEA: Understanding the IEP with a Focus on Autism

For parents of elementary-age children with autism. Co-presented by PACER Center and the Autism Society of Minnesota.

Nov. 15, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (St. Paul)

### Is Your Child a Target of Bullying?

Offers intervention strategies for parents whose children with disabilities may be targets of bullying at school.

Nov. 17, 7 to 9 p.m. (St. Paul)

### Planning for Educational Inclusion

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

Dec. 6, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

## Simon Technology Center

### Making Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ACC) Work with the Educational Curriculum

Parents and professionals can learn teaching strategies to improve language skills for all children, including those who use augmentative and alternative communication. Workshop counts for 0.5 CEU's (Introductory level, professional area).

Sept. 29, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (PACER)

### Read and Write Gold Research Tools

Read and Write Gold is a robust tool for literacy that assists students who require extra assistance with reading or composing text. Space limited to 25.

Oct. 11, 1 to 4 p.m. (PACER)

### Technology for Girls Workshop Series

Middle school girls with disabilities can stay excited about science and technology by attending workshops sponsored in part by IBM. Registration is required and available online at [PACER.org/workshops/bydate.asp](http://PACER.org/workshops/bydate.asp). Learn more at :

[PACER.org/stc/exite/techforgirls.asp](http://PACER.org/stc/exite/techforgirls.asp).

### Puppy Palace – Technology For Girls Series

Use creativity, project management, and planning skills to construct a dog house out of paper following a family's special requests, and learn important skills needed for completing homework and projects for school.

Nov. 3, 6 to 8 p.m. (PACER)

### Watson —Technology For Girls Series

Students will learn what computers can and can't do and the challenges IBM inventors had when creating a computer called Watson that competed on a TV game show.

Jan. 10, 6 to 8 p.m. (PACER)

### Boardmaker for Beginners

Boardmaker is a picture communication symbol software program that allows the user to customize picture symbols to create schedules, worksheets, charts, and more. This hands-on workshop is for parents and professionals who are new to Boardmaker.

Nov. 7, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (PACER)

### iPad/iPod Touch Getting Started & iPad/iPod Touch Intermediate Tips and Tricks

The iPad and iPod Touch have made an impact on the assistive technology world. From 6 to 7:20 p.m., learn the basics of how the iPad or iPod Touch works from turning it on to running apps. From 7:40 to 9 p.m., learn more advanced tips and tricks. Topics include working with images, setting restrictions, using the accessibility features, and more.

Nov. 14, 6 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

### Accessible Instructional Materials

All students in all grades need access to curricular materials such as textbooks. Participants in this workshop will learn about alternatives to traditional textbooks that make books accessible to students with a disability.

Dec. 8, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. (Mankato)

### Apps for Autism

Learn about some of the best apps for children and adults with autism, and find out how to use the built-in camera on the latest iPad/iPod Touch to quickly create social stories. Participants are encouraged to bring their iPad/iPod Touch with favorite apps to share.

Jan. 16, 6 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

### All About Digital Books

Parents and professionals will learn how to find digital books for students with disabilities and use them in formats their student can use.

Jan. 23, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. (Mankato)

### Apps for Older Learners

Learn about iPod Touch/iPad apps designed for teens and adults with disabilities. Topics include organization, note taking, digital textbooks, and more. Participants are encouraged to bring their iPad/iPod Touch if they have one, with favorite apps to share.

Feb. 20, 6 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

## Transition

### Social Security for Transition-Age Youth

Topics include the difference between Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), application and appeal information, and "Work Incentives." (For age 17 and over).

Sept. 21, 1 to 3 p.m. (Rochester)

### Preparing for the Journey: Transition to Work and Independent Living

This workshop is for families of youth with disabilities who are in the transition process (age 14-21) and will provide parents with information about employment, independent living, and the physical, emotional, and social changes of adolescence and young adults.

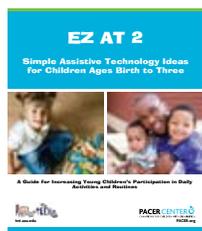
Oct. 27, 6:30 to 9 p.m. (International Falls)

## PACER's Housing Fair is Oct. 15

PACER's seventh annual Housing Resource and Information Fair is an opportunity for families of children and young adults and service providers to meet and discuss housing options, services, supports, and related issues for children and young

adults with disabilities. State and county representatives will be available to answer questions. The Fair will be Saturday, Oct. 15, 9 a.m. to noon, at PACER Center. To register, call 952-838-9000 or visit [PACER.org/housing](http://PACER.org/housing).

## New



### EZ AT II

New! A guide for parents and professionals who want to help infants and toddlers with disabilities participate more fully in daily activities with the use of assistive technology. For ages birth to 3.

■ \$5, 10+ for \$4 STC-24



### 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. 2011.

■ \$7 10+ copies, \$5 each PHP-a9

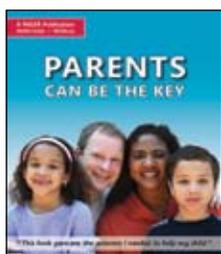


### Transition Trek Game

Updated! An innovative and engaging board game that helps youth and young adults plan for life after high school. Players draw cards with questions

related to careers, independent living, and self-determination. Six game pieces included. 2010.

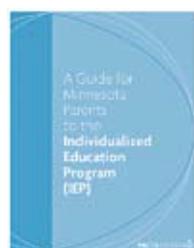
\$25 each ST-23



### Parents Can Be the Key

This handbook describes basic special education laws and procedures.

■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2 each PHP-a1



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

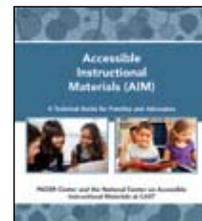
Helps parents work with schools to address each child's special needs through understanding the required components of the IEP. Includes examples from the Minnesota state-recommended form.

■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2 each PHP-a12

## New

### Accessible Instructional Materials: A Technical Guide for Families and Advocates

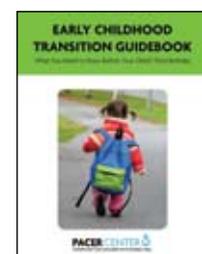
New! This guide describes what types of accessible instructional materials (AIM) are available, why a student may need AIM, the process for making decisions about AIM, and what supports are necessary to effectively utilize them. Also includes what types of specialized formats are available and how to promote their use.



■ \$3, 10+ for \$2.50 STC-22

### Early Childhood Transition Guidebook

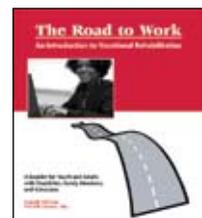
Helps parents understand the process that guides their child's transition from infant and toddler intervention services to other early childhood services at age 3 and includes strategies to use for a successful transition. 2010.



■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2.50 each PHP-a40

### The Road to Work An Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation

Discusses the issues related to the Rehabilitation Act, including eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services, transition planning for high school students, the Individual Written Rehabilitation Program, appeals procedures, legislation, and self-advocacy skills. Fourth Edition. 2009.



■ \$8 10+ copies, \$6.50 each VO-1

### Honorable Intentions: A Parent's Guide to Educational Planning for Children with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders, Fourth Edition.

This updated comprehensive guide includes information on comprehensive evaluation, functional assessments, positive interventions, effective communication, and writing meaningful Individualized Education Programs.



■ \$15 10+ copies, \$12 each PHP-a29

# 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

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 3). Payment must be in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank.

The items listed on these pages are also available through PACER's Catalog of Publications.

Order number	Name of publication/video ordered	Quantity	Per item cost	Total item cost
Total cost of all items ordered →				

**Amount of order:** Sales tax: \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

(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:

Parent       Professional       Other \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*If a parent:*

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

## PACER offers resources for surrogate parents

Surrogate parents have become increasingly important in special education because a growing number of children are living outside a traditional family for some period of their lives.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that special education programs offer all students with disabilities a free and appropriate public education. It also recognizes the

importance of active parental involvement in planning their children's educational programs, monitoring progress, and challenging inappropriate decisions. This child advocate role is usually filled by parents. However, the laws stipulates an alternative if the parents of a child with a disability are unknown or completely unavailable or if the child is a ward of the state. Surrogate parents fill the parental role in these situations.

PACER provides resources for families, foster families, and school and county professionals to ensure that each child with a disability has someone in the parent role representing them within the special education process.

Call PACER (952-838-9000) or e-mail [surrogate@pacer.org](mailto:surrogate@pacer.org) for more information.

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## Change Service Requested

## Explore assistive technology at PACER's Open House on Oct. 29

Join PACER Center's Simon Technology Center (STC) for its annual open house on Saturday, Oct. 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to learn about assistive technology and how it can make a difference for children with disabilities.

Improving academic achievement for children with any disability is a major goal of PACER and the Simon Technology Center, and Open House participants will be able to sample technology for all ages. Surveys completed at last year's Open House showed that 100 percent of attendees learned something new.

At this year's event, visitors will be able to tour the Simon Technology Center Library, participate in hands-on activities, meet with a variety of assistive technology vendors



### What people are saying about the Open House:

*"This was fantastic, and I really appreciated the opportunity to see and touch the technology available. Thank you."*

*"At the open house I learned about several computer adaptations and programs that may be helpful for my son. Thank you!"*

and community organizations, win prizes, and more. Visitors will also be able to learn about Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM), who benefits from AIM, and how they can start using these materials and resources.

Registration is preferred and can be completed online at [PACER.org/workshops](http://PACER.org/workshops) or by contacting the Simon Technology Center at 952-838-9000.