

Rockin' Benefit raises support

Everyone had something to crow about following PACER's 29th Annual Benefit on May 7 with Sheryl Crow – especially 7-year-old Sophia Doebbert.

Sophia was treated to a surprise at the end of the concert at the Minneapolis Convention Center. After the final song, the band's drummer made his way off the stage to give his drumsticks to Sophia, who has spinal muscular atrophy.

"It was so touching," says Andrea Doebbert, Sophia's mom. "He said, 'She's beautiful, and she made my night.' Sophia was super excited." Sophia's family has long made use of PACER's various services. "Last year the advocate services were extremely helpful," Andrea says.

Funding those services is what the Benefit is all about. "Thanks to major sponsors, 2,300 ticket buyers, 400 volunteers and many generous people, this year's Benefit will again help support PACER services through the coming year," says Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director.

"We couldn't do this without our outstanding Benefit committee, our corporate sponsors, our silent and live auction donors, and the support of so many businesses and individuals," says Mary Schrock, PACER's chief operating and development officer. "It's truly a team effort!"

(Continued on page 8)



President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama speak to the 150 people invited to the March 10 White House Conference on Bullying Prevention.

PACER staff members attend White House conference

By Julie Holmquist

PACER advocate Lynn Miland, her daughters Maggie and Kelly, and PACER Executive Director Paula F. Goldberg were a few of the 150 students, parents, nonprofit leaders, business leaders and others invited to attend the White House Conference on Bullying Prevention on March 10.

President Barack Obama, the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services welcomed people to the conference who have been affected by bullying, as well as those who are taking action to address it.

"It was an honor to be invited to the conference," Goldberg says. "For the past six years, PACER's National

Bullying Prevention Center has been working to educate communities about this serious issue and provide people with the tools to prevent bullying. We're delighted to see that the President has made this a priority."

During the conference, the President and First Lady Michelle Obama called for a united effort to address bullying and encouraged schools, communities and the private sector to join together to keep students safe.

"Bullying can have destructive consequences for our young people," Obama said in his speech at the conference. "And it's not something we have to accept. As parents and students; teachers and communities, we

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Join PACER in a Run/Walk/Roll Against Bullying Oct. 1

Schools, businesses and organizations around the country are encouraged to participate in a Run/Walk/Roll Against Bullying on Saturday, Oct. 1, as part of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month.

"Every child has the right to a safe learning environment," says Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. "Organizations wishing to support this issue can easily coordinate an

event in their community using a toolkit from PACER."

In Minnesota, the second annual event will begin with registration and race packet pick-up at 9 a.m., followed by a four-mile run or 1.5-mile fun walk/roll at 10 a.m. around Mt. Normandale Lake, Normandale Blvd. and 84th St., Bloomington. The entry fee is \$20 per person, and each participant will receive a complimentary T-shirt. Snacks and additional fun will

also be provided at the Normandale Lake Bandshell.

There will be the opportunity for sponsorships and pledges. All proceeds from the Run/Walk/Roll Against Bullying will go to PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, which educates communities nationwide to prevent bullying through creative and interactive resources. For more information, visit PACER.org/Bullying.

PACER staff members attend White House conference

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can take steps that will help prevent bullying and create a climate in our schools in which all of our children can feel safe."

Every day, thousands of children, teens and young adults around the country are bullied. Estimates reveal that nearly one-third of all school-aged children are bullied each year — upwards of 13 million students.

Kelly Miland was one of those students. Kelly, 19, has autism and was verbally and physically bullied during her school years. Sitting in the White House East Room and listening to the president of the United States stress the importance of the issue stood in stark contrast with the days Kelly was bullied and told by adults to "ignore it."

Kelly was "amazed" by the invitation to the White House. "I think it was the best day of my life," she says, adding that bringing awareness to the issue is important. "If you want to make a difference, then you need to hear about what people like me have gone through every day of our lives. We don't want any more kids to take their lives because of bullying."



(L to R) Maggie and Lynn Miland, Paula Goldberg, and Kelly Miland at the White House Bullying Prevention conference.

When Kelly's mother, Lynn, first discovered her daughter had been bullied, she called PACER Center for advice. With PACER's help, she was able to work successfully with school administration to keep Kelly safe at school. Lynn was later hired as a PACER advocate.

"I was fully supported by PACER — an incredible organization that helps all children across the nation who are being bullied," Lynn says.

Lynn's other daughter, Maggie, has seen the effects bullying had on her sister and others. She is now tak-

ing action to prevent bullying and create awareness of the issue at the Northfield, Minn. high school where she is a junior. She painted a mural titled "Northfield High School Stands Up to Bullying," which hangs in the school's entryway and contains hundreds of student signatures.

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center provides information on bullying prevention for children, teens, schools and communities, as well as tools that everyone can use to take a stand against bullying. Learn more at PACER.org/bullying.

Uzbekistan woman inspired by PACER Center visit

When Nargis T. Ziyavatdinova of Uzbekistan first visited PACER Center as part of the U.S. State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program in 2002, she was impressed.

"My visit to PACER was most profound," Ziyavatdinova told a reporter for the Star Tribune, a Minneapolis-based newspaper. "I was inspired by what I observed, and returned full of passion."

That passion led Ziyavatdinova to create a plan for educating children with disabilities in Uzbekistan. By 2004, she had secured funding from the local government and opened the Specialized Education Center of Termez for students with disabilities.

Word spread, and young people began arriving at the school asking for an opportunity to learn to read and write. Today, the school has about 78 students from the ages of 7 to 17, and 28 of the school's students are now included into mainstream classrooms.

In addition to opening the school, Ziyavatdinova also serves as the founder and director of the non-governmental organization Imkon (Hope). She promotes inclusive education through activities such as teacher training, building networks of people active on disability issues, lobbying education officials and raising public awareness.

Ziyavatdinova returned to Minnesota in February as part of a State Department tour of distinguished alumni of its program, and once again she visited PACER. At PACER, Ziyavatdinova met with advocates and other staff members to discuss several ideas for Imkon, including its new "disability hotline" for parents.

"What Nargis has been able to accomplish is astounding," says Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director. "She's made a major impact in her country. We know she'll continue to expand opportunities for children with disabilities in Uzbekistan."

New Minnesota seclusion, restraint law takes effect Aug. 1

A new Minnesota law governing the use of seclusion and restraint procedures for children with disabilities takes effect Aug. 1.

According to Minnesota Statute 125A.094, each school that intends to use physical holding or seclusion must maintain and make publicly accessible a restrictive procedures plan for children with disabilities.

Before using a room for seclusion, schools must receive written notice

from local authorities that any room used for seclusion complies with applicable building codes. Schools must also register the room with the Minnesota Department of Education.

In addition, the new law prohibits physical holding that restricts or impairs a child's ability to breathe.

To find a link to the law, visit PACER.org/newsandevents.

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PACER website: PACER.org
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C3 site: c3online.org
BULLYING: PACERKidsAgainstBullying.org
PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org
MN SEAC site: mnseacinfo.org
(Alternate format is available upon request.)

PACER's Hertzog wins Leadership Award

Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, was recently chosen to receive the 2011 Youth Ambassadors Leadership Award by the National Tourette Syndrome Association (TSA).

Hertzog was chosen for the award

because of her hard work and dedication in educating children, families, teachers, schools and the general public about the effects of bullying and the best practices for ending and preventing bullying across the country. To learn more about bullying prevention, visit PACER.org/bullying.

Parents can promote inclusion at

The picnic basket is ready, the Frisbee® is in the car, the camera is loaded...you're off to the family reunion. Before you go, however, you might also want to bring along some tips on including children with disabilities at family events.

Amid all the fun and love when relatives gather, there sometimes can be tension when a child with disabilities is part of the clan. Some family members may not understand your child's special needs and what kinds of accommodations are needed. Others may have questions about the disability but be uncomfortable asking them. Still others may even be afraid. The result can be unintentional hurtfulness.

Carolyn Anderson, Virginia Richardson and Dao Xiong know firsthand what it's like. All three PACER advocates have grown children with disabilities and remember well the challenges they faced in the early years when family would gather.

If you would like a three-step plan for creating an inclusive family environment for your child, take a CUE from them: Communicate, Understand, Educate.

Communicate

No matter how much they love you and your child, relatives are not mind readers. They need you to share information about your child's skills and interests, his or her disability, accommodations you may need, realistic expectations for what your child can do, and your expectations for the family. They also need to know whether it's okay to ask questions about your child's disability.

Richardson puts it this way: "I expect my family to be supportive. But I have



to give them enough information to be supportive in the way I want them to be." For her, that meant letting people know that her daughter Deborah's seizures weren't life threatening. "I didn't want them to be afraid of her or to think that she was so fragile that every seizure was a Code Blue," she recalls.

She also made sure that they knew who Deborah was as a person. "I let people know what she was doing in school, that Deborah was participating in gymnastics," she says.

"I was still crying my way through the world at that time," she adds, so she enlisted her sister, Jessie, to be her spokesperson. "I wanted to give factual information about Deborah's disability, and I wanted people to know what we were working on at the moment so they could ask," she explains. "I was interested in the right information being conveyed. I wanted them to ask the family and not be afraid they were going to hurt anyone's feelings."

These days, families could consider

referring people to recommended websites with information about their child's disability, Richardson says.

Xiong, whose daughter Tsai has an intellectual disability, notes that when it comes to talking about a child's disability, keep in mind that there may be cultural differences in how and when such communication occurs.

"In the Hmong community, for example, even though the parent is open to discussion, people aren't likely to come forward publicly and ask a direct question about the child," Xiong says. "Instead, they might indirectly ask how the child is doing. That might lead to a more direct private conversation."

Understand

Even in the most loving, well-intentioned families, there are bound to be times when someone does or says something insensitive to your child. Anderson remembers family gatherings where no one communicated

family gatherings this summer

with her son Matthew, who is deaf. If people learned any sign language, it was for words like “no” or “stop”—negative things.

“You do the best you can,” she says, noting that she tried to teach family members some sign language and show them how to speak to Matthew so he could read their lips. “Just try not to be judgmental,” she says.

“Remember, if it wasn’t your child, you might be acting the same way. You have the opportunity to inform others.”

Educate

Family members won’t automatically know the right ways to interact with your child with a disability. You, however, can help them learn skills and attitudes by modeling them yourself.

“We talked about Matthew’s deafness openly,” Anderson explains. “We had a positive attitude toward the disability. We also modeled good communication rather than just telling people what to do. For example, we would tap Matthew on the shoulder to catch his attention before we talked with him.”

Xiong encourages parents to help other family members to find ways for the child with disabilities to participate. “Parents may need to say, ‘I want my child to play. Let her join.’ They might need to point out specific things the child needs in order to participate, like asking the other children not to chase her too fast in a running game.”

At the heart of all these CUEs is a philosophy of belonging. As Xiong says with a smile, “Any family gathering is a time to include the children.”

PACER supporter leaves legacy through bequest

Plan your own donations to PACER

It’s a commonly accepted fact that childhood experiences can later influence a person in many areas of life. For one generous man, a friendship forged in boyhood led him to make a substantial bequest to PACER.

The late Jerry Lavin and the late Mel Goldberg’s friendship began in childhood, when they were both members of the same Boy Scouts troop. As the years went on, their friendship continued and grew stronger. Because Jerry always respected the work of Mel’s wife, PACER Executive Director Paula Goldberg, he decided to leave a gift to PACER in his will.

“He wanted to share his success in business to help children with disabilities well into the future,” Paula says. Sadly, Jerry’s legacy has been realized much too soon. Three years after that initial phone call to PACER, Jerry

was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, and he passed away last June. But because he had thought about his future while he was healthy and active, planning was not a burden when he became ill.

Planning for the future can be a difficult topic to discuss, but it must be done to make sure that any funds you want designated to an organization are actually donated.

If you have questions or would like to make a planned gift to PACER, please call Mary Schrock, chief operating and development officer, at 952-838-9000. You can make a difference in a child’s life now and far into the future.



The late Jerry Lavin and Paula F. Goldberg, PACER’s executive director.

Financial guide for parents of children

Parents of children with special needs face a unique combination of financial challenges. They need to meet the day-to-day stresses and expenses of caring for a child with a disability, plan for that child's lifetime-care needs, and still provide for the financial needs of the whole family.

To help parents meet those challenges, the National Endowment for Financial Education® (NEFE®) teamed up with PACER Center in 2001 to produce a booklet called "Possibili-

ties: A Financial Resource for Parents of Children with Disabilities." The guide now has been rewritten and launched in a new online format.

Since NEFE and PACER released "Possibilities," the guide's easy-to-read format has been a hit with parents, according to Don McNeil, a former president of PACER's Board of Directors.

"It becomes a basic bible of how to organize and plan financially to support a child with disabilities," says

McNeil, a father of two children with disabilities.

The guide offers tips and information on:

- organizing financial records
- managing money
- dealing with debt
- preparing income taxes
- understanding health, life and disability insurance
- meeting retirement and savings goals
- dealing with estate planning

Teen plans adaptive ski lessons with PACER's help

When 16-year-old Rolf Tengdin saw a girl acting like a "speed demon" on the ski hill, he knew his Eagle Scout project for teens with disabilities was a success. The girl, who uses a wheelchair, was one of 10 students with disabilities from PACER's Fun Times program who learned how to ski during the four sessions planned by Rolf.

"It turned out great," Rolf says of the adaptive learn-to-ski program he organized and completed in February to earn the rank of Eagle Scout. "All of the kids said they wanted more sessions and longer sessions."

Rolf, a top skier on the Edina, Minn. High School ski team, assembled a team of instructors and staff, as well as the necessary adaptive equipment and other elements needed to make the learning experience a positive one.

Rolf knew he wanted his Eagle Scout project to be service-oriented. "He really wanted to do something for kids who have disabilities," says his Eagle

Scout mentor and ski coach Kevin Shields. After deciding to combine that desire with his love of skiing, Rolf turned to PACER, which had assisted his family in the past since Rolf's brother has Asperger's.

"In addition to providing lessons, Rolf's vision was to introduce students to a lifelong sport that involves family and helps them integrate into the community," says Susan Shimota, PACER's Fun Times coordinator "That's what PACER's mission is all about."

To help make the project a reality, PACER worked with the other organizations on Rolf's team — Special Kid Care, Buck Hill, the Boy Scout Council and the Edina High School Ski Team. "Ski instructors, parents and students with and without disabilities were amazed at the progress each skier made, and



Participants in adaptive ski lessons had fun on the slopes in February.

everyone's enthusiasm was contagious. They want to do it again next year!" Shimota says.

To learn more about Fun Times, visit PACER.org/funtimes or call Shimota at 952-838-9000.

with disabilities expands online

“We have created well-organized material that clearly lays out the options, choices, and considerations available to parents,” says Brent Neiser, CFP®, senior director of strategic programs and alliances at NEFE.

Staying organized is essential for parents caring for children with disabilities, says Deborah Leuchovius, a project director at PACER.

“The medical issues alone can be mind-boggling. You have to stay on top of things,” Leuchovius says. “Whatever you can do to organize that information is going to make your life easier.”

The new online guide provides families with information and resources well beyond the original booklet. Each section provides links to resources that parents can go to for additional help, such as the National Parent Center Network, which connects families to local help from one of 107 parent centers throughout the country.

The online guide includes tips on helping children with disabilities develop the skills they need to become financially independent as adults, as well as information on planning and funding a child’s primary, secondary and postsecondary education.

It also provides housing and career guidance for young adults with disabilities, including a listing of resources on employment options and support, links for job-search websites for workers with disabilities, and options for independent living.

“Parents need to start early in understanding the unique circumstances they find themselves in,” McNeil says. “If they stay organized and proactive, it should remove unnecessary stress from their lives.”

Find the guide at PACER.org/publications/possibilities. *(Article adapted from the NEFE Digest, March/April 2011)*

Tips for finding recreation for children with disabilities

Exercise and recreation are important for everyone, including children and youth with disabilities.

Opening Doors for Youth’s Project Adventure, a program based in Boston, Mass., offers resources for people wishing to support children with special health care needs and disabilities in community recreation.

At a recent Project Adventure symposium held at PACER Center, families and professionals learned how to find recreation programs in their own communities for children with disabilities. PACER Center works with Opening Doors for Youth to promote access to recreation for underserved children with disabilities.

Here are a few tips when looking for a recreation program for your child:

- Match classes and activities to your child’s interests, goals and medical

considerations. “Always make sure activities are safe and age-appropriate,” says Kelly Horan of Project Adventure.

- Make sure your child receives clearance from a physician before participating in any physical activity.
- Adapt equipment, activities or behaviors only when necessary.
- Alter conventional rules when appropriate. For example, initiate a “no strike-out” rule in baseball or allow two-handed dribbling in basketball games.
- Consider using adaptive equipment, from Velcro baseball mitts to sports-specific wheelchairs.
- Remember that each child is an individual with unique strengths and abilities. If adaptations are necessary, work with a physical therapist, doctor or coach to determine what adaptations to use.
- Think of other ways you can help



your child be active. Take walks with your child, have a dance party at home and even use exercise tapes together. “It’s important to think about all the ways you can add activity to daily life,” says Emily Davidson of Project Adventure.

For more tips on finding the right recreation program for your child with a disability, visit openingdoorsforyouth.org.

2011 Benefit successfully raises su

(Continued from page 1)

Major sponsors of the Benefit were SuperValu and P&G, The Simon Family Foundation, Allen and Kathy Lenzmeier, Whitebox Advisors, Best Buy, Starkey Hearing Foundation, Sears Imported Autos and Princess Jewelry.



Wayne Hanson and Mary Lee Hanson purchased "Something to Crow About" by Tony Whelihan.



Benefit co-chairs (L to R): Colleen McGough-Wood, Jessica Broyles, Judy Schumeister, Mary Holmes.



(L to R): Brad Forseth



Seated (L to R): Naomi Cramer, Melonie and John Mulligan. Standing (L to R): Jodee Kozlak, Dave Cramer, Madison Cramer, Colin McGlennen, Ann McGlennen, Kelly and Jim Hillier.



(L to R) Don Davidson, Sheryl Crow, Joanne Davidson.



Sitting (L to R): Rachel Erickson, Etta Barry, Michael Barry. Standing (L to R): Bret Erickson, Louis Inks, Sandra Scherling, Bonnie Platt, Andy Platt, Melanie Barry, Chuck Barry.



Seated (L to R): John Valente, Dawn Zinda-Valente, Andrew Kruger, Mary Holmes. Standing (L to R): Alison Sweasy, Bill Sweasy, Carol Sweasy, Bob Anderson, Anne Deardorff, Adam Gettings.

Support for PACER programs



h, Teri Austin, Greg Austin.



Standing (L to R):
Jessica and R.J. Broyles,
Kathy Lenzmeier,
Sarah Chmielewski,
Allen Lenzmeier, Pat
Broyles. Seated (L to R):
Xiaojing Zou, Maggie
Broyles, Nick Lenzmeier,
Kelly Lenzmeier Page.



(L to R): Adele
Watkins, Isabel
Redleaf, Sheryl
Crow, Lynne
Singer Redleaf.



Above, (L to R): Amy Shahin,
Sheryl Crow, Leon Bergmann.
Left, (L to R): Muffy MacMillan
and daughter Mara, Marnie
Stimpson. Right: John Kirkinni,
Suheyra Kirkinni, Edessa Kirkinni
of Princess Jewelry with Sheryl
Crow.



Silent auction co-chairs (L to R): Julianne McNeil,
Jean Lipkin, Don McNeil, Teri Moore, silent auction
coordinator Trish Lies, and Sarah Meek.



Sitting (L to R): Joel Shapiro, Gary Devitt, Nancy Luger, Kathi
Elfendein. Standing. (L to R): Jethra Brand, Duane Kelm, Cindy
Shapiro, Eva Kieffer, Shel Kieffer, Faye Jacobsen.



(L to R): Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director;
Teri and Michael Moore; Mary Schrock, PACER's chief
operating and development officer.

Apps 101: Exploring iPhone, iPod, iPad

By Julie Holmquist

The debut of the iPod touch and iPhone in 2007 and the iPad in 2010 has created new opportunities for children with disabilities.

With their touch-screen technology, mainstream look, built-in accessibility features and thousands of web apps (applications) that are inexpensive and readily available, these technologies offer a wealth of new educational tools worth exploring, says Bridget Gilormini, director of PACER's Simon Technology Center (STC).

"Part of their appeal is that these devices don't say, 'I'm an assistive technology device,'" Gilormini says. "A lot of students don't want to be different than others, and by using an iPod or an iPad, they're not."

The devices can also open new worlds for children with disabilities, a fact highlighted in a 2010 New York Times article about seven-year-old Owen Cain. Owen is medically

fragile and has lost nearly all of his muscle movement, but the iPad's sensitive touch screen allows him to turn the pages of an e-book by himself.

Apple includes assistive technology (AT) in its products as standard features at no additional cost. For example, the iPhone, iPad, iPod and Mac OS X include screen magnification and VoiceOver, a screen-access technology for people who are blind and have visual impairments. Apple provides many other accessibility features for vision, hearing or cognitive impairments.

In addition to the many built-in accessibility features provided by Apple, a variety of hardware and software products are sold separately that adapt the iPhone, iPad and iPod touch for special needs.

Apps 101

Before deciding if one of these devices would be helpful, families should ask the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the device?
- How will the user access the device?
- How long will the battery last compared to other AT devices?

When considering a device, parents and educators are usually concerned with durability, sound and any barriers to its use, says Jonathan Campbell, assistive technology specialist with the STC.

"The iPad is not as fragile as a traditional laptop," he says. The glass is reinforced "gorilla glass," the aluminum back is sturdy, and it has no sharp edges. "It's a pretty tough piece of machinery, and it's scratch resistant," Campbell says, noting that it can be damaged by water, however. Purchasing a rubber case for the iPad will make it even more durable.

Adding inexpensive speakers gives the iPad good sound capabilities, and other add-ons allow users to use a

Recommended apps for children with disabilities

Keeping in mind that there are thousands of apps, with news ones coming on the market every day, PACER's Simon Technology Center shares its top app choices in several categories for families to explore.

Books and reading: iBooks, which uses the popular open book format ePub (many can be downloaded free from the library); Vooks, Audiobooks

Autism: Storykit, iPrompts, Picture Planner

Communication: Proloquo2Go, Sounding Board, Talk Assist

Organization: Toodledo, reQuail, iPlanner

For text to speech/speech to text: Neo Paul/Kate/Julie, Dragon – Dragon Search, Google Translate

Early childhood: ABC Phonics, Animal Writing HD, I hear Ewe, Peekaboo

Special education: IEP Checklist, Percentally, ArtikPix

Medical: Medsy, ICE (In Case of Emergency), WebMD

Sensory/Cause and Effect: Pocket Pond, Pet the Animals, Gloop

Timer and choice: iChoose, TymeLynz, Time Timer

Art and music: Toontastic, Toy Story, ComicStrip

Social studies/science: Experimenter, Periodic Table, This Day in History

apps for children with disabilities

switch with the device. “But families should realize that not every app will be compatible with all accessibility features and hardware add-ons,” Gilormini says.

App resources

Once a family has an iPhone, iPod or iPad to use, the Simon Technology Center can help parents find appropriate apps for their child. Here are several resources to consider.

- App resources are continually updated on a STC electronic document called “iPod/iPad for Education: App 101.” This 17-page document is listed on PACER’s website at PACER.org/publications/stc.asp under Presentation Handouts. It provides links to many in-depth app sites that are regularly updated, including app recommendations for students with autism, apps for special education and TOP 40 free iPhone apps. It also



provides video examples of how apps are being used and links to companies creating accessories for the iPod and iPad.

- A regular feature called “App Corner” includes updated information on various apps. Find it in the STC Tech Notes monthly e-newsletter at PACER.org/stc/news.asp.

- More updated information is posted to the STC blog at simontechnologycenter.blogspot.com.

App trials

Because most apps are inexpensive, app developers generally do not provide trials for consumers. However, parents have several ways to view an app before deciding if it is appropriate to write its use into an Individualized Education Plan. Families can borrow iPods and apps from the STC Lending Library, and a quick search on YouTube also usually turns up demonstrations of many apps, Campbell says.

For more information on web apps, the STC Lending Library or assistive technology, call the Simon Technology Center at 952-838-9000 or visit PACER.org/stc.

Mann Symposium inspires teachers, parents

Minnesota teachers, parents and administrators will explore a variety of topics at the Sixth Annual Ted and Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation National Symposium about Children’s Mental Health and Learning Disabilities on Aug. 9 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The Symposium is co-sponsored by PACER Center and the American Dairy Queen Corporation.

To register for this year’s event, call 952-838-9000 or visit PACER.org. Registration fee is \$15.

Speakers at the Symposium will address many issues regarding children’s mental health and learning disabilities,

including effective treatment planning and proactive, positive teaching strategies and interventions. This year’s keynote speakers include:

- David S. Goldbloom, M.D., senior medical advisor, education and public affairs at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto, Canada.

- Josh Hanagarne, author of the novel “The Knot” and the blog “World’s Strongest Librarian.” He focuses much of his blog on his struggles and triumphs with Tourette’s syndrome.

- Dr. Read Sulik, M.D., a child and adolescent psychiatrist, adult psychiatrist and pediatrician. He speaks exten-

sively on depression, anxiety, trauma, suicide, ADHD and more.

The Symposium is made possible through the Ted and Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation. Sadly, Dr. Roberta Mann Benson, a longtime PACER friend and supporter, passed away last October. Because of her passion for helping children with learning and mental health disabilities, this important Symposium has continued to inspire teachers, parents and the community each year.

PACER would like to offer a special thank you to Roberta’s family.

Boost your child's learning over the summer

By Deborah Ottman

For most children, summer vacation means freedom from responsibilities, such as homework and tests, but it can also mean a loss in academic skills and knowledge during this time away from school. Parents can help their children keep academic skills sharp, however, with a few simple ideas that still allow for a fun and relaxed school break.

Children and youth who participate in hands-on and interesting activities while not in school show a greater ability to retain academic content learned during the school year. The key is to keep your child's developing mind engaged and active, even if the activities themselves don't pertain to specific subjects covered in the classroom.

Your child can also stay sharp academically if you reduce the amount of time he or she spends:

- watching television alone
- using the computer for non-educational purposes
- playing video games or even using a cell phone

Consider trying some or all of the following strategies:

Read!

The library has many resources. Magazines, comic books, story hour, book clubs for different ages, music, DVDs – these are all typically found at your local library, and all encourage reading. Librarians can also help you find books that are appropriate for your child's age and interest levels.

MINNESOTA PARENT CENTER Minnesota PIRC A project of PACER



Count!

Asking your child to help bake cookies, estimate the mileage to a favorite destination, work a jigsaw puzzle or play a board game with you all require math skills. Look for everyday activities where math is used.

Surf!

The Internet has many safe, engaging sites that can provide your child with information on interesting topics and activities. The Internet is a great source for word and math games, brain teasers, art and crafts projects, captivating photography and video and current world events. When possible, visit the sites with your child or teen and talk about what you find.

Do!

Summer programs, classes or camps can be a rich source of activity and learning for your child. They offer children the opportunity to explore and develop interests and skills they don't have time to work on during the school year.

Parks and recreation departments, public school districts, and places such as museums and zoos are good places to look for these type of programs. Some programs can be difficult to take part in because of cost, location or both. Ask if help is available.

Talk!

Ask your child's classroom teacher and other school staff for ideas. They can point you to resources and activities on specific subjects that can build your child's academic skills.

Move!

Encouraging your child to be physically active contributes to both body and brain health. Find an activity you can share with your child, such as walking or swimming. School breaks are also a great time for your child to explore a new sport.

Learn more by reading "Help Your Child Learn with After-school and Summer Programs," (*July 2010, Volume 6 Parent Pages*) at PACER.org/mpc/parentpages.asp. For more information, call the Minnesota Parent Center, MN PIRC, at 952-838-9000 or visit PACER.org/mpc.

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.

Early Childhood

Early Childhood Development and Strategies to Support Early Learning Skills

Parents of children birth to age 5 with developmental delays and/or disabilities will learn about the typical stages of child development and strategies to support emerging learning skills in their young children.

June 20, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

Tips to Help Your Child be Successful

Parents are their child's first teacher. This workshop will provide parents of children from birth to age 7 with developmental delays and /or disabilities with ideas on how to be active participants in their child's early education and set the foundation for future learning.

Aug. 22, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

Parent Training

Special Education 101 for Grandparents

Grandparents often wish they knew more about the special education process. This workshop will outline the basic process of special education so grandparents can be

supportive. There will be ample time for questions and answers.

July 19, 9 to 11:30 a.m. (PACER)

Academic Success: Helping Children with Disabilities Learn What All Children Learn

There is a new or renewed focus on academic success and helping students with disabilities learn what all children are learning. This workshop will help parents understand concepts involved in this process so they can participate more effectively.

Aug. 30, 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 "blue print" for developing those services by using the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the special education process.

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

Transition: Pathway to the Future

Parents of children with disabilities can learn how to use the special education transition process to help plan for their child's life after high school. Parents of students in the ninth grade and beyond are encouraged to attend.

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

STC

Getting Started with Dynavox AAC

Learn more about communication options available for children and adults who use alternative methods to communicate. At this free workshop, parents and professionals will learn more about Dynavox devices. Owning a device is not necessary to attend the training. Space is limited to 25 participants.

June 30, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (PACER)

Making AAC Work with the Educational Curriculum

Parents and professionals can learn strategies to improve language skills for all children, including those who use augmentative and alternative communication. How to adapt classroom material and high-tech and low-tech support materials will be discussed. The presenter is also a parent of two children with disabilities. This workshop is offered for 0.5 CEUs (introductory level, professional area).

Parent Leadership Summit will focus on mental health needs

The Minnesota Statewide Family Network will hold a leadership summit at PACER Center this summer focusing on children's mental health needs.

Participants will explore how to most efficiently serve children with mental health needs within the current system and prioritize ways to improve services. The goal of the summit is to find ways to expand services using current resources.

Parents of children with mental health needs, cultural groups, veterans' organizations and other parent organizations will be invited to attend.

Watch for the date and flyer on MinnesotaStatewideFamilyNetwork.org. Call 952-838-1360 for more information.

Save the date! STC Open House is Oct. 29

Parents, children, educators and professionals can discover the wonderful world of assistive technology (AT) or keep up with the latest AT tools at the Simon Technology Center Open House on Oct. 29.

People new to AT can learn about the range of tools available that can help learners with disabilities improve their ability to read, write, learn and interact.

People who have attended previous Open Houses can discover

the latest in the world of technology.

At this year's event, everyone can learn more about accessible instructional materials. These materials can help students of all ages, whether they are in Early Childhood programs or postsecondary classes.

The Open House will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at PACER Center. Details about this popular event will be posted online and in PACER publications.

New



**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.

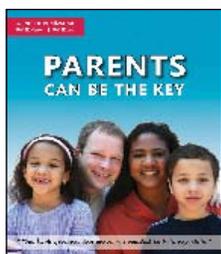
■ \$7 10+ copies, \$5 each PHP-a9



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.

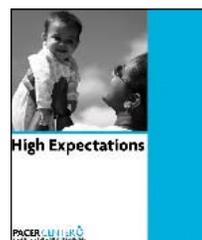
\$25 each ST-23



Parents Can Be the Key

This handbook describes basic special education laws and procedures.

■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2 each PHP-a1



High Expectations

Having and maintaining high expectations for your child with a disability is very important. This booklet outlines how to have high expectations, challenge your child and encourage high expectations from others.

■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2.50 each PHP-a34



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.

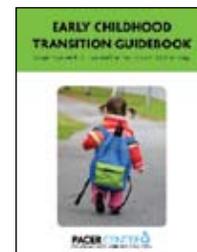
■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2 each PHP-a12

New

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.

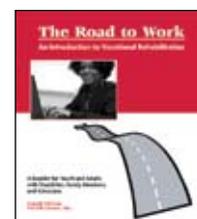
■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2.50 each PHP-a40



**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.

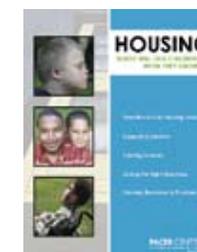
■ \$15 10+ copies, \$12 each PHP-a29



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

Parents of youth with disabilities will find that this attractive, easy-to-use book answers many questions about future housing choices to make with their child. From housing options to a resource directory, this book has a wealth of information.

■ \$8 10+ copies, \$6 each PHP-a26



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's statewide assessment webpage offers resources for Minnesota families

All Minnesota students, including students with disabilities, must take statewide assessments in certain academic areas. For parents of children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), it's important to understand these required assessments, as well as testing options that may be available.

PACER's statewide assessment webpage, (PACER.org/statewideassessment) helps parents understand the purpose of these assessments and how they can help their children plan for them effectively. New resources will be added to the page in the future.

Don't miss PACER's e-news!

Interested in breaking news affecting children with disabilities or the latest updates on PACER events?

Don't miss the latest news!

Send your e-mail address to PACER@PACER.org to receive PACER's monthly e-news.

Change Service Requested

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Doggone good PACER greeting cards designed by Creative Kids contest winner

PACER Center’s 2011 greeting cards are sure to fetch smiles. That’s because this year’s cards feature Tank, the service dog of 11-year-old Juliet Heinen.

Juliet won PACER’s Sixth Annual Creative Kids Contest and the cover of the greeting card with a portrait of her lovable companion. This energetic girl with arthrogryposis has a special interest in dogs and wolves.

She’s creating her own animated series about the adventures of a stray black lab and has posted “Swift: an MS animated paint series” on YouTube. She’s also writing her first novel titled “Moon, the Story of a Wolf.”

Proceeds from the sale of the cards support PACER programs. A set of eight greeting cards featuring “Tank and the Crystal Snow” can be purchased for \$10 by ordering online at PACER.org/help/creative2011.asp or calling 952-



Juliet Heinen with artist Tony Whelihan. Tank, Juliet’s service dog, was the inspiration for the winning design.

838-9000. Cards are also available for the holiday season in large quantities for businesses or individuals.

PACER extends a special thanks to artist Tony Whelihan, the brainchild of the Creative Kids contest, and Creative Kids sponsors: Gallery Service and Bloomington Art Center.