

# PACESETTER

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

## PACER launches National Parent Center on Transition & Employment

For families of youth with disabilities, the transition from high school to employment, postsecondary education, and life in the community presents a variety of challenges. PACER is launching PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment, an exciting new project to support families, youth, educators, and employers as they help teens and young adults with disabilities reach their goals in adulthood.

The center will offer innovative tools, reliable research, and interactive training to address families' needs in ways that parents and children can easily use. "There is a tremendous need for useful resources that can help parents and youth with disabilities in transition and employment," said Gretchen Godfrey, PACER's assistant director. "In forming this new center, PACER is taking the lead to address that need."

Youth with disabilities often lack knowledge of where to start the planning and goal-setting process. Parents are in a similar situation — most have high expectations for their youth but lack specific information on how to help with the transition and become college and career-ready after high school.

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## Diana Ross reigns Supreme at PACER's 32nd Annual Benefit



*PACER's 32nd Annual Benefit honorary co-chairs Melonie (far left) and Chuck Barry pose with Diana Ross after her performance. Photo by Venture Photography.*

From the moment Diana Ross first stepped onstage as a teenager in Detroit, the audience knew she was something special. Decades later, more than 2,500 PACER supporters were equally impressed May 3 as the legendary performer appeared at PACER's 32nd Annual Benefit, presented by Whitebox Mutual Funds. Ross sang a variety of hits from her storied career, while thoroughly entertaining the Minneapolis Convention Center crowd. The performance highlighted a wonderful evening in support of PACER's innovative programs for children with disabilities and children who are bullied.

"She was amazing. It was great to see everyone standing and dancing in the aisles," said Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director. "Many people said after the show that she is one of the best performers we have ever had at the Benefit, and we have had some great ones!"

As the lead singer of The Supremes in the 1960s, Ross achieved the unprecedented feat of 12 number one singles, making the trio the most successful American group of all time. As a solo artist, she has earned six number one singles, 31 top 10 hits, and sold more than 100 million albums. With a resume like that, it's no wonder her performance had the audience on its feet.

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# Your gift to PACER's endowment will last a lifetime

Before PACER began its visionary work 35 years ago, there was very little help available for children with disabilities and their families. Today, they can count on PACER to help, and the organization's endowment campaign will ensure that PACER will be able to serve families for generations to come. "I think PACER has done a wonderful job meeting a real need in the community, and they are a great resource for parents," said Connie Kunin, whose contribution is one of many that has helped the campaign raise \$5 million toward a goal of \$10 million. "If people believe in this organization, then the way to ensure it continues is to support the endowment."

Over the years, PACER has grown in size and stature and now has more than 30 groundbreaking programs. Last year, 44,000 people requested help from PACER which continues to provide individual assistance, workshops, tools, and information to parents and professionals but has greatly expanded its national reach through programs such as PACER's Simon Technology Center, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, and the many helpful resources available online at PACER.org.

As a successful businessman, Al Lenzmeier understands the needs of a growing organization. "PACER now has an operating budget that requires diverse sources of income," said Lenzmeier, who has contributed generously to the campaign. "A meaningful endowment provides a guaranteed stream of

income that the organization can depend on to fund operations."

Nonprofits are always subject to the impact of economic downturns, government funding cuts, and changing needs in the community. An endowment reduces the impact of these variations and provides financial stability over time. Gifts to PACER's endowment are permanently invested and only the annual investment income is spent. "The endowment will enable PACER to fulfill its mission over an extended period of time so that children and families can continue to count on its services," said Lenzmeier, whose 10-year-old grandson has Down syndrome.

PACER is committed to innovation and will continue developing new programs such as PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment, and PACER's Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Project.

Kunin, who has a son with autism, came to PACER for assistance in the 1980s and has witnessed the organization's visionary commitment to children and families firsthand. "PACER continues to do great things and I like the fact that it keeps evolving. They are always coming up with new ways of serving the



community and that is a powerful thing," Kunin said. "Contributing to an endowment is a way to help the organization continue to do that in the future."

*To learn more about PACER's Endowment Campaign and how you can donate, please call Executive Director Paula Goldberg at (952) 838-9000.*

**“A meaningful endowment provides a guaranteed stream of income.”**

*-Al Lenzmeier, contributor*

## Be Recognized in PACER's Circles

PACER is pleased to recognize those individuals who have chosen to contribute generously to the endowment. The **Champions Circle** permanently recognizes individuals who have committed \$50,000 or more through gifts of cash, stock, or signed pledge commitments payable over five years. The **Pacesetter Circle** recognizes friends making gift commitments to PACER's endowment after their lifetimes by:

- Including a gift to PACER in a will or revocable trust.
- Naming PACER as a beneficiary in a retirement plan, will, insurance policy, or charitable remainder trust.

## Mongolian delegation of parents and educators visits PACER Center

The government of Mongolia has developed a number of initiatives to expand early intervention and inclusive education in the country. A nine-member delegation from the Asian nation visited PACER Center in February, a group that included representatives of the Mongolian Ministry of Education and Science, the Association of Parents with Disabled Children, and the International Open Society Foundation.

Members of the delegation met with PACER staff to learn about PACER's innovative programs for children with disabilities and their families. They also toured PACER's Simon Technology Center where they discovered the latest assistive technology available for children with disabilities. "PACER has a long history of working with parents and professionals from around the world to share best practices and creative ideas," said Executive Director Paula Goldberg. "We are honored that this high-level delegation from Mongolia would come to PACER as part of their visit to the United States."



*A delegation from Mongolia visited PACER Center in February to learn about PACER's innovative programs for children with disabilities and their families and meet with staff, including Shauna McDonald (front row, far left), Executive Director Paula Goldberg (front row, third from left), and Sue Folger (back row, third from right). The visit was organized by Scott McConnell (front row, far right), University of Minnesota Professor of Education Psychology, and Ann Bettenburg (front row, second from right), Special Education Director at Mounds View Public Schools.*

## New center offers practical resources for youth, families

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According to Sean Roy, Projects Director of Transition and Workforce Partnerships at PACER, "Parents need reliable, specific information and advocacy regarding employment, postsecondary education, and community life." The new center will provide that. "Transition has emerged as such an important focus area for families that PACER's leadership and staff felt it deserved its own level of attention," he said.

The center will offer a wide range of free resources including an innovative, easy-to-use website, informative workshops, and assistive technology supports. The website will provide

accessible online tools such as video tutorials and interactive polls that engage youth and involve them in shaping their own future.

Partnerships with colleges and universities, national centers, and disability organizations — and work with educators and employment program staff — will enable the center to maintain the most up-to-date practices to help parents and young adults navigate employment and college environments. PACER also engages racially and culturally diverse families and publishes materials in multiple languages.

Roy cited a statistic from the U.S. Department of Labor as evidence of the need for the center: Only 19 percent of adults with disabilities are either working or searching for work compared to 68 percent of the general population. "That's an outcome that needs to change," he said.

Roy added that the center is being launched with a sense of community in mind. "Eventually, every parent of a child with a disability will go through this transition period. We want families to have a national community that's built around transition. PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment is their place to start."

# New PACER project addresses Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders

For families of children with mental health and emotional or behavioral needs, it can be complicated trying to navigate multiple systems of care to receive supports and services for their child. The stigma associated with mental health issues doesn't make things any easier. PACER's new Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Project is designed to address these challenges by bringing together parents, youth, professionals, and the community to help individual families receive resources and support. The project will also promote increased understanding of children's mental health and emotional or behavioral needs.

"PACER has been helping children with mental health needs since 1984, and this project will enable us to do much more," said Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director. "We are calling it 'Inspiring Opportunities' because children who receive the services they need will have the opportunity to reach their full potential as adults."

An estimated 109,000 Minnesota children and youth (ages birth to 21) need services due to a serious emotional disturbance. The actual number is probably much higher because these needs often go undiagnosed as a result of fear or stigma, lack of knowledge or information, and inadequate supports. "The data indicates that 75 to 80 percent of children and youth who need mental health services do not receive them," said Renelle Nelson, project coordinator. "Families face so many barriers in accessing care."

Children's mental health and emotional or behavioral issues are

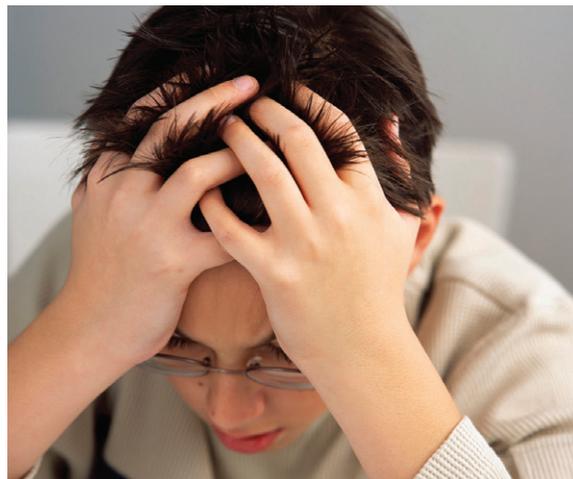
not easily addressed. They frequently involve multiple challenges, diagnoses, and co-occurring conditions. Children are often served by multiple systems (i.e. education, mental health, primary care, juvenile justice) causing families to feel overwhelmed and children to receive fragmented services. This project will provide family friendly, culturally competent resources to help parents be effective advocates for their child. These include:

**Support:** PACER will provide individual assistance to families to help them by developing strategies to support their child's mental health and behavioral needs at home, school, and in the community; understanding how to be effective advocates for their child; and learning how to partner and communicate with professionals.

**Educate:** PACER conducts workshops so parents can learn strategies to help their child. Topics include learning about Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS); understanding challenging behaviors; and managing children's mental health needs.

**Inspire:** PACER will promote change in the community by supporting a Youth Advisory Board to serve as mental health ambassadors; disseminating information to increase understanding and reduce stigma; developing an innovative website with free interactive resources; and developing a blog to share ideas.

One of PACER's most important roles is to promote change in the community to reduce stigma and increase understanding of mental



health issues. PACER's Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders advisory board is actively gathering input on community needs. PACER is also conducting in-services for school, county, and juvenile justice professionals, broadly disseminating information through print and video messages, and developing skilled parent leaders who can promote systems change.

"We know that treatment can make a tremendous difference for these kids," Nelson said, leading to better academic outcomes, lower dropout rates, less substance abuse, and decreased involvement with the juvenile justice system. "The bottom line is families need to know where to turn for help and information," Nelson said. "They need to know how to have their child evaluated, who they can contact in a crisis situation, and ways they can support their child. PACER now has more resources available for these children and their families."

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

# Teens have enjoyed 10 years of Fun Times



Kaitlyn Stanton and Kathleen Degnan enjoy Fun Times.

From home runs and hot dogs to bowling alleys and basketball, PACER's Fun Times program has offered teens with and without disabilities the opportunity to socialize together for the past 10 years. The group has done many different activities, including Minnesota Twins baseball games, Minnesota Timberwolves basketball, bowling, and more. About a dozen teens recently participated in painting lessons at the Simply Jane/Art Able Studio in Minneapolis, which provides art programming in an inclusive, accessible environment.

Fun Times was developed in 2004 by PACER volunteer Win Bennett with other high school students so that teens with disabilities could enjoy activities and have fun just like other teens. PACER is seeking volunteers and participants (ages 15 to 25) for activities this fall. Participant forms are available online at [PACER.org/funtimes](http://PACER.org/funtimes). For more information, contact Fun Times coordinator Andrea Moore at [andrea.moore@pacer.org](mailto:andrea.moore@pacer.org) or call (952) 838-9000.

## Register now for National PACER Symposium on Children's Mental Health and Learning Disabilities

Teachers, parents, and school administrators should make plans now to join PACER for an outstanding learning opportunity this summer. The Ninth Annual National PACER Symposium About Children & Young Adults with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities will be held on Thursday, Aug. 7 at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

The symposium, which fills quickly every year, is designed to enhance awareness and identify strategies for responding to mental health needs and learning disabilities in children and young adults from the perspective of teachers and parents. It features excellent national keynote speakers and breakout workshop presenters.

**Larry Wexler** is the Director for the Research to Practice Division of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and an accomplished national speaker. He will discuss seclusion and restraint, suspension, and disproportionality.

**Dr. Susan Jenkins** is the director of the Bluestem Center for Child and Family Development in Rochester, Minn. She is a child and adolescent psychiatrist recognized nationally for her work with youth and families, with a focus on those with disabilities.

**Jo Mascorro**, author of "Don't Look Now, Your Behavior is Showing!" is an outstanding national speaker with 30 years of experience in education. She provides training in behavior intervention, communication strategies, and programming for students with disabilities.

**Lise Fox**, who is Director of the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities at the University of South Florida, will present a workshop on early intervention. She has extensive experience in early intervention, positive behavior support, and family support.

### PACER Symposium

Thursday, Aug. 7, 2014

Minneapolis Convention Center  
\$25 per person including lunch

**Register online now**

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

# Join us Sept. 20 for PACER's Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying

Hundreds of people will gather Saturday, Sept. 20 in Bloomington, Minn., for the fifth annual Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying, presented by American Dairy Queen. Organized by the Friends of PACER, this fun event includes a four-mile run and a two-mile fun walk/roll at Normandale Lake Park, followed by live music, inspirational speakers, and family activities. The event, which kicks off PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month in October, is two weeks earlier this year.

"By getting a jump on October's activities, we'll be able to provide participants with resources and ideas they can take back to their communities to implement this year," said Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. "Of course the weather will likely be warmer, too!"

Students are encouraged to register as a group online and collect pledges to support PACER's bullying prevention programs in Minnesota.

## New national events webpage

There were more than 30 Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying events held across the country last year, and PACER has created a new webpage and Facebook page to help supporters stay informed about events in their area. To learn more, visit [PACER.org/bullying/nbpm](http://PACER.org/bullying/nbpm) and look for the "Run, Walk, Roll Events Across the Country" tab.

PACER also provides a free toolkit which outlines how to plan a Run, Walk, Roll in five easy steps. It includes tips, ideas, and resources to design an event, such as checklists, sample forms, and press releases. PACER encourages event organizers to be creative and add unique local activities that will generate community support and inspire action. "So many students are in need of support from adults, other students, and the community to address bullying," Hertzog said. "Community-wide efforts like this show students that there are people who really want to help."

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



Top photo: Participants of all ages are welcome at the Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying. Bottom photo: Supporters congratulate a runner on finishing 2013's Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying in Bloomington, Minn.

## Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying

Saturday, Sept. 20, 2014

Normandale Lake Park, Bloomington

## Register online

and collect pledges at  
[PACER.org/bullying/nbpm](http://PACER.org/bullying/nbpm)

# Safe and Supportive Schools Act will protect students and help educators prevent bullying

Governor Mark Dayton signed the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act into law on April 9, 2014. Now, the important collaboration between students, educators, administrators, and parents begins as schools develop safer learning environments for every child in the state.

Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, said, "Bullying has negatively impacted too many students for too long. Now that this law is in place, educators will have resources to address the behavior and students and families will know that they have the right to be safe at school."

With the passage of this law, Minnesota can now offer schools and families the clarity and specific tools they need to move forward. Key elements of the act include:

**Clear definitions:** The act defines what behaviors and patterns of behavior are considered bullying (also known as "prohibited conduct") in Minnesota schools, including behaviors that occur online.

**Local policies:** Districts can tailor bullying prevention policies to fit the unique needs of their communities.

**Designated advocates:** Each school will have a designated staff member to report incidents of bullying behavior.

**Support for students:** Schools will provide resources for those who are being bullied, implement restorative and responsive practices for those who engage in prohibited conduct, and educate all students on how to prevent and address bullying behavior.

**Students with disabilities:** Parents and teachers can work together to identify how students can respond to bullying — and how to prevent future instances of bullying — in the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.

**Additional support for schools:** School districts will receive



Students take part in a bullying prevention rally at the Minnesota State Capitol.

help in policy development and implementation from the School Safety Technical Assistance Center at the Minnesota Department of Education.

"PACER has been providing bullying prevention resources to families since 2002, and we are pleased to see that Minnesota is taking positive steps to protect our children," said Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director. "Each and every student deserves to feel safe at school, and this law will help with that."

## Wear orange on Unity Day

On Wednesday, Oct. 22, thousands of people across the country will choose to "Make it Orange and Make it End!" on Unity Day by wearing orange and uniting against bullying through events, activities, and outreach. The event has grown dramatically since PACER launched Unity Day in 2011 as students, teachers, businesses, and communities have embraced the opportunity to show their support for those who have been bullied. PACER, with assistance from Facebook, developed a web-based Student Event Planning Guide to make it simpler for teens to plan local Unity Day events.



# More than 2,500 Champions for C



Left: Emcees Amelia Santaniello (L) and Frank Vascellaro (R) with PACER's Executive Director Paula Goldberg. Right: Sharman Davis Barrett with Sylvia and Sam Kaplan



Hal and Rebecca Lieberman, and Dean Phillips



Steve and Judy Schumeister



Elly and Michael Zweigbaum

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Ross entered the stage wearing a sparkly gold gown with a chiffon wrap. She was charismatic and commanding as she sang many of her greatest hits including, “Baby Love,” “Stop! In the Name of Love,” and “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough.” At one point, Ross went into the audience where she warmly embraced PACER supporter Sam Troup, who has a disability. It was the night’s crowning moment.

The entire evening was equally spectacular, however, as emcees Frank Vascellaro and Amelia Santaniello of

WCCO-TV led the audience through a series of presentations about PACER’s programs and Frank put his auctioneering school diploma to work for the Live Auction. The Silent Auction was just as exciting, thanks to the work of countless volunteers and the generosity of hundreds of donors. The new three-minute PACER bullying prevention video “Imagine” — developed pro bono by the creative talent at Periscope Communications — made a major impact as well and can be seen at PACER.org.

“We couldn’t do this without the wonderful support of our corporate

sponsors and hundreds of volunteers, as well as the tremendous number of donors to our silent and live auctions,” Goldberg said. “They are truly Champions for Children.”

Proceeds from the Benefit support the work of PACER’s Simon Technology Center, Parent information, the COUNT ME IN® puppet program, PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center®, and many more important programs for children with and without disabilities.

**Mark your calendars now: PACER’s 33rd Annual Benefit is May 2, 2015.**

# Children support PACER's Benefit



Left: (L to R) Matthew Woods, Paula Goldberg, and Suzanne Woods. Right: Eliana Grossman, Diana Ross, and Lynne Singer Redleaf.



Alexandra and Irwin Jacobs with Muffy MacMillan.



Allen and Kathy Lenzmeier with Kelly and Alex Page.



Silent Auction co-chairs (L to R) Jennifer Rowland, Don McNeil, Nancy Kaysen, and Raleigh Segal.



Donald Davidson, Kathy Sears, Nicole Becker, Tracy Sears, and Marc Sears.

# 30-year-old memory of the PACER puppets resonates from one generation to the next

It was 30 years ago and Vanessa Nordstrom was in the 1st grade when she saw PACER's COUNT ME IN® puppet show at her Minneapolis elementary school. Apparently it made a lasting impression. In 2013, with her daughter Taylor struggling for acceptance among her classmates, Vanessa remembered the puppets' message of inclusiveness and called on PACER to help.

Taylor has epilepsy. In many ways she is a typical 7-year-old — she loves to dance and sing and she performs well academically — but social interaction is challenging, especially when her energy level drops and her frustration rises. At times, Vanessa says, her daughter's actions can frighten other children.

“My husband and I were trying to figure out how we could let the other kids know that Taylor has epilepsy, and how that sometimes impacts her behavior,” Vanessa said. “I remembered the PACER puppets from when I was 6 years old, and a friend urged me to contact PACER about having a puppet show at Taylor's school.”

Capturing the attention of young children isn't easy, but PACER's endearing, life-size, multicultural puppets do it well. Since 1979, more than 350,000 children have seen the COUNT ME IN® (disability awareness) and KIDS AGAINST BULLYING (bullying prevention) puppets. Led by volunteer puppeteers, the innovative, interactive presentations share age-appropriate messages, enabling children to learn through dialogue and question and answer.

Vanessa arranged to have the PACER puppets visit Taylor's school in the Twin Cities, and she later talked with the children about epilepsy. “Fortunately Taylor has not had any seizures at school, but because of that the other kids haven't seen her disability — only her behavior,” Vanessa said. “We talked about epilepsy, explained what happens when she has a seizure, and what happens when she is stressed.”

The children were curious and talked a lot about Carmen, the PACER puppet who has epilepsy. They asked good questions, and discussed how they could help. Just as the puppets had impacted Vanessa, they had now positively influenced a new generation.

“The feedback we receive is always positive,” said Charlotte Green, puppet programs co-coordinator, “but to know



*PACER's puppets are making an impact around the world. Natasha Babwah (center) coordinates a COUNT ME IN® puppet program in Trinidad and Tobago for the non-profit Caribbean Kids & Families Therapy Organization, which has conducted more than 150 puppet shows in the past year. Babwah recently visited with PACER staff Charlotte Green (left) and Lynn Dennis (right) during a two-day training session for the KIDS AGAINST BULLYING puppet program which will soon be implemented in Trinidad. Contact PACER to learn how you can purchase puppets and scripts for use in your community.*

that the message still resonates after so many years is very gratifying.”

Before the show, Taylor was anxious and a little concerned to be the subject of discussion. She spent much of the presentation glancing around the room to assess her classmates' reaction. It turned out to be positive. Now when Taylor has an issue, the other children are supportive and want to help. “Taylor's classmates are now showing empathy, and they are accepting her for who she is,” Green said. “That's what it's all about.”

*To learn more about the PACER puppet program, arrange a show in the Twin Cities metro area, or purchase puppets and scripts, visit [PACER.org/puppets](http://PACER.org/puppets), e-mail [puppets@PACER.org](mailto:puppets@PACER.org), or call (952) 838-9000.*

# It's not Star Trek: PACER robots enable children to attend school even when they can't leave home

Imagine if your son or daughter could not attend school because of a serious health problem or disability — a condition that has the child receiving instruction at home or in the hospital. Students in these situations must often rely on tutors, but this method can fall short of the personal, interactive experience of actually attending school.

That is now changing thanks to breakthrough technology that helps children attend school virtually. PACER's Simon Technology Center has an innovative new tool to help children with disabilities reach their full potential: robots. Created by Vgo Communications, Inc., the remote-controlled robots are operated by the child at home via a wireless connection. The child's face appears on the robot's screen, and his or her voice is heard via speakers, enabling teachers and other students to see and talk with the child through the robot. The robots utilize interactive communication powered by Verizon's 4G LTE wireless network.

"We're very excited to embrace this new technology that will make such a difference for children who cannot attend school," said Bridget Gilormini, Director of PACER's Simon Technology Center. "Now they have the opportunity not only to keep up academically, but also to grow and maintain relationships with teachers and peers. It's all about inclusion."

PACER currently has two robots, which were purchased with a grant from the Paul Adelman Children with Disabilities Endowment Fund. Children who are familiar with computers will easily be able to operate the robot by using a mouse or keyboard to remotely direct movement and speed. The Vgo weighs about 20 pounds, is approximately four feet tall, and can easily be transported



Staff of PACER's Simon Technology Center, including Director Bridget Gilormini (bottom right), are excited about having the new Vgo robots available to help children with disabilities and special health care needs achieve their full potential.

in the family car. At school, the child can direct the robot to the classroom where the teacher can see the child's face on the robot's monitor, and the child can see the teacher on his or her computer or iPad at home. The child can make eye contact with the teacher, read nonverbal cues, and answer questions. The robot can even join the child's classmates in the lunchroom!

Gilormini describes the experience of operating this exciting, futuristic tool as a thrill. "This isn't Star Trek," she said. "This is now!"

For more information on the Simon Technology Center's Vgo robots, call PACER at (952) 838-9000 or visit [pacer.org/stc/](http://pacer.org/stc/)

## Receive timely texts about technology for young children with disabilities

Are you looking for timely information on technology that can help young children? Sign up now to receive four text messages each month from PACER's TIKES project for children with disabilities ages birth to 5. You'll receive helpful information for parents and professionals, including upcoming workshops, new apps, do-it-yourself ideas, and more. Text "TIKES" to 51555 to sign up. Standard message and data rates may apply.



# Workshops

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

## CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH/EBD

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

PACER's Children's Mental Health Project will hold a Parent Leadership Summit on Children's Mental Health Aug. 22. Family members will receive training on state and local mental health issues, how to work with policymakers, and how they can participate on policy committees to impact the mental health system of care for children and their families. Space is limited. Please contact Renelle Nelson at (952) 838-9000 to be considered for this unique opportunity.

- **Aug. 22, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (PACER)**

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

### Making the Move From Early Childhood Special Education to Kindergarten

Kindergarten is a big step in any child's life. For a child with disabilities, being ready for that step often requires some intentional preparation. This workshop will help parents plan for this transition and learn strategies to help their child be successful and make that first school experience a good one.

- **June 23, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

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

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.

- **July 11, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

## PARENT TRAINING

### "Including Samuel"

PACER will host a showing of the documentary "Including Samuel," produced by award-winning filmmaker Dan Habib. The film is designed to help schools, families, community groups, and others work toward educational and social inclusion in an informed and innovative way. It features Habib's son Samuel, his family, and four other families of children with disabilities.

A question and answer session with a PACER parent advocate will follow the film.

- **July 14, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

### Individualized Education Program: Is your child's IEP individualized and appropriate?

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

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

### "Who Cares about Kelsey?"

Please join us for a screening of "Who Cares About Kelsey?" a powerful documentary by Emmy-nominated filmmaker Dan Habib. Kelsey Carroll is a troubled high school student who has dealt with tremendous challenges including homelessness, abuse, and ADHD. She was a likely high school dropout until she encountered an education revolution that is about empowering teens with emotional and behavioral disabilities. There will be a question and answer session with a PACER parent advocate following the screening.

- **July 28, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

### Tips for Talking with School Staff

Learn skills to communicate with school staff and how to resolve differences in effective ways. This workshop will provide parents of special education students with practical tips and interactive problem-solving experience.

- **Aug. 12, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Forest Lake)**

### Bullying Prevention: Everyone's Responsibility

Participants will learn about the dynamics of bullying (types of bullying, who is bullied, why children are bullied), how to intervene when bullying happens, and how to encourage students who witness bullying to take action. This session will also cover the roles schools play, laws and policies, and bullying prevention strategies.

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

### Use the IEP to Help Your Child: A Guide for Minnesota Parents to the IEP

This workshop will use the PACER booklet, "Guide for Minnesota Parents to the IEP," to lead parents through the development of each required part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Parents will gain knowledge about how to effectively participate at the annual IEP meeting.

- **Sept. 11, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

### Planning for Educational Inclusion

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

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

## SIMON TECHNOLOGY CENTER

### Beat the Summer Slump: Technology Tools to Keep Your Students Engaged

Research shows that many students regress during the summer and begin the next school year behind. Parents and professionals who participate in this free workshop will learn about new assistive technology (AT) tools to help elementary school students avoid the summer slump, including websites, apps and other engaging ways to keep students reading and writing.

- **June 4, 6 to 8 p.m. (PACER)**  
Streaming option also available

### Strengthening Your Core: An Approach to Developing Language and Literacy Skills in AAC Users

Core vocabulary are the words used most frequently in communication during a person's life span. When represented on augmentative and alternative communication systems, a core vocabulary approach can help increase language and literacy. Participants in this workshop will explore the use of core vocabulary and receive hands-on practice time. The discussion will include specific strategies for teaching this approach, as well as lessons, activities and classroom routines. This workshop is presented by AAC device manufacturers Saltillo and Prentke Romich Company. There will be an hour break for lunch on your own.

- **June 18, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. (PACER)**

## Science or Science Fiction? Star Wars Meets Technology for Kids

Have you ever wondered if it's possible to build a real droid? Can the "Force" actually be with you? Can you really fly from one planet to another in an X-Wing fighter? Your favorite "Star Wars" character in full costume will provide the answers to these and other important scientific questions as middle school students with disabilities learn about the science behind science fiction. Hosted by IBM and presented by members of the 501st Legion, Central Garrison, this interactive workshop will explore the science of "Star Wars" in a fun and engaging way.

▪ **June 21, 10 to 11:30 a.m. (PACER)**

## TRANSITION

### The Bridge to Work: Supplemental Security Income and Employment Planning

This workshop will provide information on how parents of youth with disabilities can apply for Supplemental Security Income and Vocational Rehabilitation Service benefits for young adults at age 18. Parents will learn how Social Security, the Ticket to Work program, and Vocational Rehabilitation can help their youth meet his or her postsecondary education, training, employment, and independent living goals.

▪ **July 16, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (St. Paul)**

### Social Security and Benefit Planning for Transition-age Youth: Ticket to Work

This workshop will provide information on how parents of youth with disabilities can apply for Social Security Disability and Supplemental Security Income benefits for young adults at age 18. Parents will learn how Social Security Work Incentives can help their youth meet his or her postsecondary education, training, and employment goals.

▪ **July 29, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. (Little Falls)**

## PACESETTER

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

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

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

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

*(Alternate format is available upon request.)*

## Join us for Simon Technology Center's Family Fun Day and Tech Expo Oct. 11

Children with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who serve them can discover the latest in assistive technology (AT) and take part in a variety of hands-on fun Saturday, Oct. 11, 2014, during the Simon Technology Center's Family Fun Day and Tech Expo! This free event, with activities appropriate for all ages, is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at PACER Center. For more information or to register online, visit [PACER.org/workshops](http://PACER.org/workshops) or call (952) 838-9000.



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

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

# Resources

## Now available translated

### Special Education Record Keeping Folders

Set of seven folders for parents to keep important papers related to their child's education. Each folder describes which records should be kept. Also includes helpful tips on working with your child's school. 2009. (Also translated in Somali, Hmong, and Spanish.)

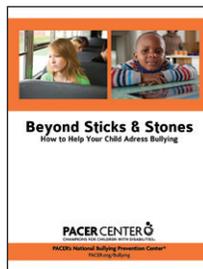
▪ \$9 | 10+ copies, \$7 each | PHP-a5



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

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

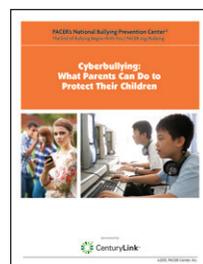
▪ \$10 | 10+ copies, \$8 each | BP-7



### Cyberbullying: What Parents Can Do to Protect Their Children

The Internet has become a place for some children to post mean and inappropriate comments about their peers. This 8-page booklet has information for parents on how to address cyberbullying and what steps to take if your child is being bullied online. 2013.

▪ \$2 | 10+ copies, \$1.50 each | BP-23



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

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

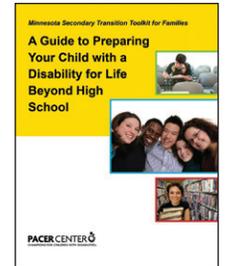
▪ \$8 | 10+ copies, \$6 each | PHP-a26



### Minnesota Secondary Transition Toolkit for Families: A Guide to Preparing Your Child with a Disability for Life Beyond High School

This toolkit was created to make transition planning easier and offers easy-to-understand information about the purpose of transition planning, the goal and importance of age-appropriate assessments, and the required rules that are used by schools. 2013.

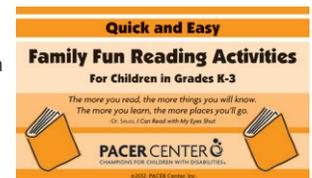
▪ \$9 | 10+ copies, \$7 each | ST-41



### Family Fun Reading Activity Cards

These activity cards help your child develop literacy skills that are important for reading and learning success. You can do these fun skill-builders at home, in your neighborhood, and on the go! For children in grades K-3. Now available in Spanish, Somali, and Hmong! 2012.

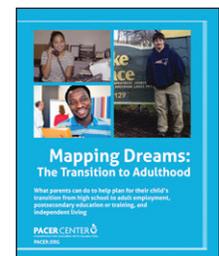
▪ \$4 | 10+ copies, \$2.50 each. 100+ copies, \$2 each | PHP-a43



### Mapping Dreams: The Transition to Adulthood

What parents can do to help plan for their child's transition from high school to adult employment, postsecondary education or training, and independent living. Includes "Talk to Your Child" sections, checklists, and a resource list. 2012.

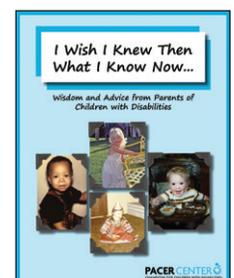
▪ \$8 | 10+ copies, \$6 each | ST-40



### I Wish I Knew Then What I Know Now

Advice from more than 20 parents of children with disabilities, sharing what they have learned while navigating health care, education, and social support systems, and what they would do differently if they did it all again. 2012.

▪ \$8 | 10+ copies, \$6 each | PHP-a42



## To order the listed materials...

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

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

■ Indicates one item is free to Minnesota parents or guardians of children with disabilities and to Minnesota young adults (age 14 and older) with disabilities. For foreign orders, please telephone or e-mail PACER (see page 13). Payment must be in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank.

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

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

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

Please complete the following with your order:

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

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

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

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

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

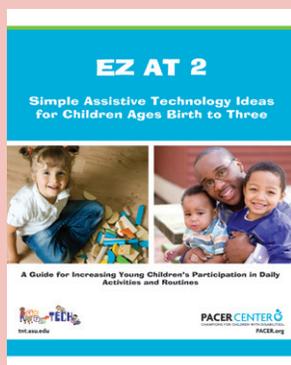
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*If a parent:*

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

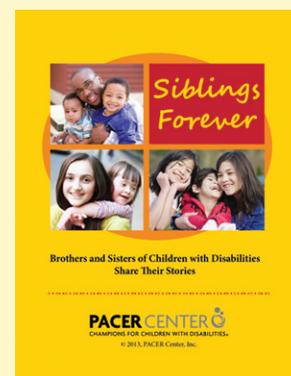
### New! EZ AT 2 iBooks Edition

PACER's popular "EZ AT 2" book is now available in an iBooks edition. Complete with video, picture examples, an interactive glossary, and the full support of iPad's built-in accessibility features, "EZ AT 2" brings creative ideas to life to help children ages birth to 3 with disabilities use assistive technology (AT) to participate more fully in daily routines and activities. Designed for newer generation iPads, the "EZ AT 2" iBooks edition can be downloaded free at the iTunes store.



### Siblings Forever: Brothers and Sisters of Children with Disabilities Share Their Stories

Having a sibling with a disability presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities for brothers and sisters. By sharing the feelings and experiences of 21 different siblings ages 5 to 47, this PACER booklet provides a way for families to explore the unique challenges and opportunities siblings may encounter. The booklet includes practical tips for parents on raising siblings of children with disabilities, along with resource and book lists that are suitable for all ages. Books are \$8 each or \$6 each for orders of 10 or more. Order online at [PACER.org](http://PACER.org) or call (952) 838-9000 and ask for item AP-44.



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**Change Service Requested**

## Derm Rowland's legacy will live on at PACER Center

Dermot Rowland was the type of person who could light up a room from the moment he walked in, and now one of those rooms has been named in his honor. The "Derm Rowland West Conference Room" at PACER Center was dedicated in January during a special visit by his family. "Derm was a special person who did so much for PACER over the years," said Executive Director Paula Goldberg. "He used his many talents to help in countless ways."

Rowland, who passed away in 2012, first connected with PACER when he leased office space to the organization in Minneapolis. He eventually became a trusted advisor and volunteer whose energy and enthusiasm were contagious. In his memory, Rowland's family elected to contribute to PACER's Endowment Campaign as a way of ensuring that his legacy would live on. The Endowment Campaign has raised \$5 million to date toward a goal of \$10 million, to create a sustaining fund that will enable PACER to continue serving children and families far into the future.

*To learn more about PACER's Endowment Campaign and how you can leave a legacy of your own, please turn to page 2.*



*Helen Rowland (fourth from the left) and her family were on hand at PACER Center in January when the Derm Rowland West Conference Room was dedicated in honor of her late husband, longtime PACER supporter Dermot Rowland. Family attending (left to right) included Helen's granddaughter Sophia McCabe, son-in-law Mickey McCabe, and daughter Sheila McCabe, along with son David Rowland, grandson Peter, and daughter-in-law Jennifer, who are active PACER volunteers.*