

PACERSETTER

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

U.S. education law debate continues

The current version of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), named No Child Left Behind when it became law in 2001, is four years overdue for revision.

Both the U.S. House and Senate are working separately at reauthorizing ESEA, but exactly when an overhaul plan might gain full Capitol Hill approval is uncertain, says Heather Kilgore, PACER's public policy director.

In the meantime, the Obama administration has created a process so states may apply for waivers to some parts of ESEA law. Minnesota and 10 other states applied for waivers in the fall of 2011. The waivers will be effective for the 2012-2013 school year if they are approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

Congress is debating several reauthorization proposals. In the House, Chairman John Kline (Minn.) and the Education and Workforce Committee have been working to pass several small bills that update the ESEA but do not amount to a full reauthorization.

"Some of the more controversial elements of the existing law, such as accountability, have not been

(Continued on page 3)

Earth, Wind & Fire to headline May Benefit

Earth, Wind & Fire, one of America's top-selling musical groups of all time, is bringing its soul-funk fusion to PACER Center's 30th Annual Benefit on Saturday, May 5, at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

"They sold out the house when they performed at a previous PACER Benefit," says Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director. "People were dancing in the aisles at that show, and we're looking forward to another fantastic evening."



Earth, Wind & Fire

Inducted into both the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Vocal Group Hall of Fame, Earth, Wind & Fire has earned six Grammy Awards and four American Music Awards alongside numerous other accolades. The band recently received the prestigious Legend Award at the 2011 Soul Train Awards on Nov. 27, 2011.

On Jan. 31, the band will release a new album, "Now, Then & Forever," what Legacy Recordings calls "the ultimate single-disc celebration of Earth, Wind & Fire."

In addition to the Earth, Wind & Fire concert, PACER's Benefit includes silent and live auctions. Tickets start at \$65. A pre-benefit gourmet dinner is available by separate ticket, and a post-concert patron party is available for people purchasing Benefit tickets of \$140 or more.

The Benefit supports free PACER Center programs for children with disabilities and their families as well as the National Bullying Prevention Center. To reserve tickets, see page 2, visit PACER.org or call 952-838-9000. Corporate sponsor packages are also available.

Join PACER and Rock for Kids on Jan. 28

Local band Brat Pack Radio and its high-energy “supershow” highlights PACER Rocks for Kids on Saturday, Jan. 28. The dance party begins at 8 p.m. at the Fine Line Music Café in downtown Minneapolis.

The annual event is organized by the Friends of PACER, a group of young professionals committed to supporting PACER’s programs for children.

Tickets are \$30 per person in advance, \$35 at the door. Funds

raised at the event will go toward two PACER programs for children, the National Bullying Prevention Center and the Simon Technology Center.

For more information and to purchase tickets for the event, visit PACER.org/rocks or call 952-838-9000.



RESERVATIONS FOR PACER’S MAY 5 BENEFIT FEATURING EARTH, WIND & FIRE

To reserve your tickets for the 2012 PACER Benefit on May 5 featuring Earth, Wind & Fire, please complete the form below and fax or mail it to PACER Center. Reservations can also be made at PACER.org or by calling 952-838-9000.

Benefit Tickets:

Please send me:

- (# of) _____ \$65¹ Friend
- (# of) _____ \$90¹ Supporter
- (# of) _____ \$140² Patron*
- (# of) _____ \$200² Benefactor*
- (# of) _____ \$275³ Sponsor*
- (# of) _____ \$550³ Champion*
- Total amount: \$ _____

Dinner Tickets (\$95 per person)

Number of tickets: _____

Total amount: \$ _____

Other Contribution/ Volunteer Opportunities

Please contact me about:

- donating**
_____ (item)
to the Silent Auction
- being a Corporate Sponsor
(including ticket package and ad)
- advertising in the Benefit playbill
- volunteering on a Benefit committee

Tax values are listed in the following categories:
1 = \$40 value; 2 = \$50 value; 3 = \$60 value. The ticket price in excess of the value is tax deductible.

* Includes post-performance patron champagne and dessert party

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

E-mail: _____

If you wish to sit with friends, the reservations must arrive before April 16.

I need: Wheelchair seating (number of spaces) Sign language interpretation

Assistive listening device Other _____

My checks, separate for the Benefit and dinner, are made payable to PACER Center and are enclosed. (Tickets will be mailed April 27.)

Total charge \$ _____ to VISA Mastercard AmEx Discover

_____ Exp. _____

I am unable to attend the Benefit. Please accept my gift: check charge

\$550 \$275 \$200 \$140 \$90 \$65 Other: _____

Many companies match gifts. Please ask your employer for a matching gift form and enclose it with your contribution or ticket order.

Names of persons for whom you are purchasing tickets (including yourself):

Please mail or fax to: PACER Center, 8161 Normandale Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55437-1044 Fax: (952) 838-0199

U.S. education law debate continues

(Continued from page 1)

addressed yet by the House,” Kilgore notes.

In the Senate, Chairman Tom Harkin (IA) and the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee moved a bill for full reauthorization out of committee on Oct. 20, 2011. The next step for the proposed legislation is consideration by the full Senate.

“Because of these different approaches, and because of some policy differences, it appears reauthorization of ESEA may not happen for a while,” Kilgore says.

PACESETTER

Published by PACER Center, Inc.

Three times a year

Circulation: 118,000

©2012 by PACER Center

8161 Normandale Blvd.

Minneapolis, MN 55437-1044

Voice: 952-838-9000

Toll-free: 800-537-2237 (Minnesota)

Toll-free: 888-248-0822 (National)

FAX: 952-838-0199

E-mail: PACER@PACER.org

PACER Executive Director:

Paula F. Goldberg

Senior Writer-Editor: *Julie Holmquist*

PACER Center expands opportunities and enhances the quality of life for children and young adults with disabilities and their families, and promotes bullying prevention for all children. The mission is based on the concepts of parents helping parents and working in coalition with others. An Equal Opportunity Employer, PACER is funded by grants from the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Services and other sources, and from foundations, corporations and individuals. Views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Departments or other donors. Contributions to PACER are tax-deductible. For information, call Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

PACER website: PACER.org

ALLIANCE National PTAC site:

ParentCenterNetwork.org/national

FAPE site: fape.org

C3 site: c3online.org

BULLYING: PACERKidsAgainstBullying.org

PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org

MN SEAC site: mnseacinfo.org

(Alternate format is available upon request.)



(L to R) Paul Luehr, of Stroz Friedberg, LLC and the Vice President of PACER's Board; Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center; Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director; Donald E. Oswald, FBI Special Agent in Charge, Minneapolis; Kyle A. Loven, FBI Division Counsel/Media Coordinator, Minneapolis; Ron Cutlip, FBI Community Outreach Specialist, Minneapolis.

PACER receives FBI award

FBI Special Agent in Charge Donald E. Oswald presented the 2011 FBI Director's Community Leadership Award to PACER Center and its National Bullying Prevention Center on Nov. 16, thanking PACER for “addressing America's most alarming and violent trends against children.”

Oswald, of the Minneapolis FBI office, presented the prestigious award to Paula F. Goldberg, PACER's executive director, and Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, at PACER Center in Minneapolis, Minn. The official award trophy will be presented by FBI Director Robert Mueller, III in Washington, D.C. on March 16, 2012.

“Each year, the FBI is proud to recognize a champion from our community which has had a tremendous impact on the community through the reduction of crime or improving the quality of life,” Oswald said.

Since 1990, the Director's Community Leadership Award has been the FBI's way of recognizing individuals

and organizations which have made extraordinary contributions to crime prevention, violence prevention, or education in the community.

“PACER Center, without a doubt, fits all three categories,” Oswald said. He praised PACER's services on behalf of children with disabilities as well as PACER's bullying prevention efforts for all children.

“PACER Center continues to organize events to bring awareness to a crime that seldom gets the attention it deserves,” he added. “Bullying, whether it is committed in person or conducted on the Internet – is unacceptable.”

Oswald honored Goldberg for her “persistence, guidance, and vision” in addressing bullying, and recognized Hertzog for the day-to-day management of the bullying prevention program.

“We know your program is making a difference, and we commend you for it,” he said.

iLearn, iGrow, iPlay: New technology

The Simon Technology Center offers devices for families to try

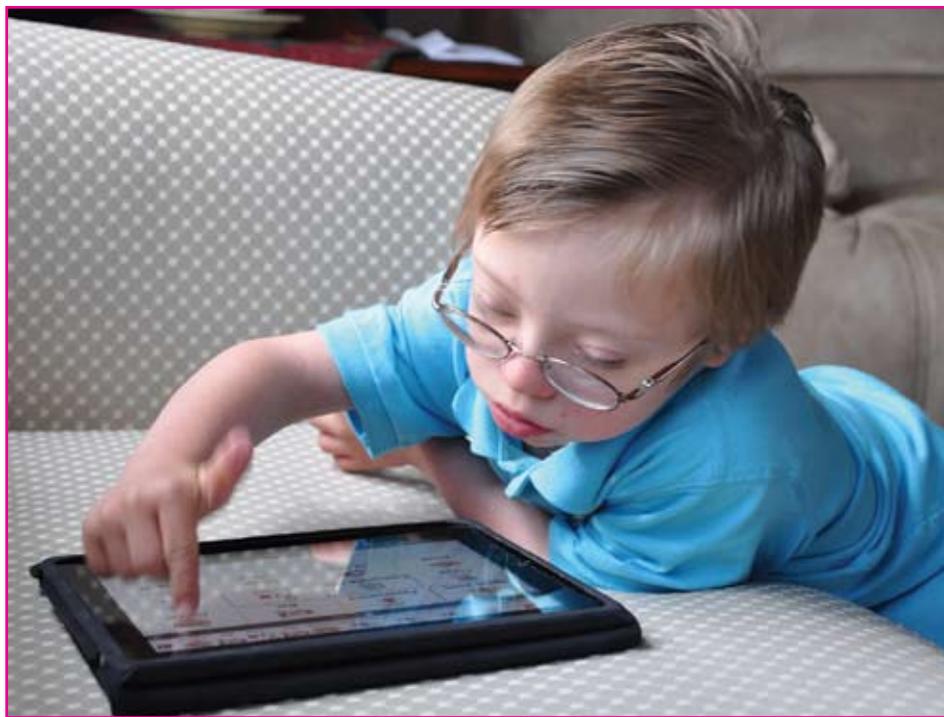
Until six months ago, 5-year-old Leo Foley, who has Down syndrome, communicated primarily through sign language. When his mother, Brenda, couldn't understand a sign, he would become upset and start having tantrums. The situation was frustrating for both Leo and the entire family, Brenda says.

"We just could not always figure out what he wanted," she says. "Sign language was working, but we didn't always know the signs that he knew. One night he was really, really upset, and we just could not figure out what to do."

That's when she decided to purchase Leo an iPad to help him communicate. Now, when Leo needs or wants something, he uses his iPad, customized with pictures and phrases such as "I'm hungry" or "I need to go to the bathroom," to tell his parents. Because his parents can easily understand him now, Leo's behaviors have become more positive.

"It has improved his ability to let us know what he needs," she says. "With the iPad, there are so many communication possibilities that it's almost unlimited."

For Minnesota parents looking into the iPad or iPod touch, PACER's Simon Technology Center (STC) Lending Library has both devices available for families to check out before purchasing. Parents can make an appointment with the STC by visiting



Leo Foley uses his iPad to communicate.

PACER.org/stc or calling 952-838-9000. PACER also holds workshops throughout the year on iPod/iPad apps for children with disabilities.

"Before we had the iPad, I used the STC Library several times," Brenda says. "They gave us such great ideas. They really understand what kids like, and they know so much."

Although the iPad has been on the market for less than two years, it's become a very popular device for people with disabilities. Some of its factors – such as its easy-to-use touch screen and thousands of inexpensive applications ("apps") – make it a quality assistive technology device for young children with disabilities as well.

In addition to the iPad, there's also the smaller iPod touch or iPhone, both of which offer similar features and apps,

as well as other smart phones, such as the Android or Blackberry. All of these devices offer apps for young children, with many specifically for children with disabilities. E-book readers, such as the Kindle or Nook, also have educational games for young children.

These devices offer many benefits for young children with disabilities, especially for children with speech or language delays, autism, or developmental delays. They are customizable, lightweight, and appealing to all children, both with and without disabilities. They can also help increase a child's independence and participation in early childhood settings, such as home or child care. Certain apps, such as Proloque2Go for the iPad, help children communicate through pictures on the screen. Other apps use videos to teach children social skills.

aids young children with disabilities

Deciding on a Device

Because there are so many assistive technology devices available, it's important to consider all options before acquiring an iPad, iPod touch, or other similar device. Families should ask:

- What are my child's needs?
- How will my child use the device?
- How will my child access the device?
- How much memory do I need?
- Who will own the device, the family or the school? If the school obtains the device for your child, discuss this question with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.

Mike and Carolyn Thomson's 5-year-old son Finn has Cornelia de Lange Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder. They have been considering the iPad for several months as a communication device for Finn. Because he also has limited motor skills, Mike and Carolyn believe the iPad's larger size and sensitive touch screen would work best for him.

"For Finn, the larger tablet would be most conducive to his learning and would also help him communicate," Mike says. "He could show us when he's hurt or hungry, and we could respond immediately. Communication is our biggest challenge by far, and I think the iPad will greatly improve his quality of life."

Tonya Hilyard, whose 3-year-old son Sam has speech apraxia, is also thinking the iPad could replace Sam's choice board as his main method of communication.

"I'm waiting until we write his IEP and we can see exactly where the need is," Tonya says. "I believe the iPad would help him communicate better

and help everyone understand him better."

Sam already uses the Nook Color, Barnes & Noble's e-book reader, to play educational games. "I have puzzles and apps for learning colors and letters," Tonya says. "If he answers a question correctly, there are fireworks on the screen. It's great to see him receive praise for doing it correctly."

To make sure the iPad will be the best choice for Sam, Tonya plans to visit PACER's Simon Technology Center and compare similar assistive technology devices.

"I want to rule everything else out before I decide on something," Tonya says. "I just want to find what will work best for him."

The Sky's the Limit

Many parents and professionals are realizing the sky's the limit with these new technologies, particularly for young children with disabilities.

"The way technology is going, it's making it easier for kids who wouldn't have learned to communicate otherwise," Mike Thomson says. "Many

parents understand the desperation of trying outlets that come up short. That's why this technology is so inspiring."

Katie Duff, who has used different devices with her 4-year-old daughter Macy, including Skype and the iPad, predicts that technology will play a big role in Macy's life for years to come.

"This technology is empowering for kids with disabilities," she says. "They need something they can do themselves and be proud of. I don't want anything to stop my daughter, and I know technology will be a big part of that throughout her life."

To learn more about iPads and other assistive technology devices, call PACER's Simon Technology Center at (952) 838-9000 or visit PACER.org/stc.

For more information on PACER workshops on apps and other assistive technology, visit PACER.org/workshops. For a basic overview on iPods, iPhones, and iPads, download PACER's free guide "There's an App for That: iPod/iPad 101," available at PACER.org/publications/stc.asp.

Use SurveyMonkey, help PACER!

Now anyone can take a survey and help PACER at the same time, thanks to SurveyMonkey.

First, sign up on SurveyMonkey Contribute, and then fill out surveys from SurveyMonkey customers who need people's opinions. For each survey completed, SurveyMonkey will donate

50 cents to PACER. Participants have a chance to win \$100 in an instant win game. SurveyMonkey only shares survey answers and basic profile data with surveyers, not names or home addresses, so participants' identities are confidential. Sign up at: contribute.surveymonkey.com/charity/pacer.

Communities show UNITY during PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month

Parents, students, and schools across the country joined the bullying prevention movement during PACER's sixth annual National Bullying Prevention Month in October.

PACER kicked off the month with the second annual Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying on Oct. 1. Nearly 400 eager PACER supporters of all ages and abilities came together at Lake Normandale in Bloomington to run, walk, or roll their way to the finish line and help promote bullying prevention.

Special guests included U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar, WCCO news anchor Frank Vascellaro, and author Robert Kroupa, who gave free autographed copies of his new children's book, "Just Like You," to participants. Farm Law, Inc. was once again the event's major sponsor.

The Run, Walk, Roll also debuted PACER's Unity Dance, choreographed to the song "You Can't Take That Away From Me" by Tim Akers and Libby Weaver. The song conveys a message that personality and character are more important than popularity and outward appearances.

Parent centers in Kentucky, New York, Alaska, Nebraska, Nevada, Washington D.C., the Virgin Islands and other states also organized bullying prevention events. Schools, organizations, and businesses nationwide joined the movement to "Make it Orange and Make it End" by wearing orange on Oct. 12, Unity Day.

Unity Dance Day wrapped up the month on Oct. 26. The top dance videos posted to PACER's Facebook page were also posted on Facebook's



Safety page, which reaches more than 600,000 people.

"We're delighted that so many people participated during the month to support bullying prevention," says Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director.

She also extended a special thank you to WCCO-TV and Ellen DeGeneres. WCCO-TV, PACER's media partner for the Run, Walk, Roll Against Bul-

lying, promoted the event by producing and broadcasting public service announcements (PSAs). Talk show host Ellen DeGeneres appeared in the PSAs and has supported PACER's bullying prevention efforts through her television show and website.

For more information on PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, visit PACER.org/bullying.

PACER's project for student physicians to expand

For the past 20 years, PACER's Parents as Teachers/Pediatric Resident Training Program has helped hundreds of pediatric medical students at the University of Minnesota learn firsthand how providers can support families of children with special health care needs.

Now PACER has received a three-year grant from the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau that allows the expansion of the program.

As part of the program, first-year pediatric residents learn about the medical home principle — a family-centered, coordinated care approach for a child with special health care needs. They also spend several hours in the home of a family of a child with special health care needs.

Family members share with a pediatric resident how they incorporate the needs of their child into their daily and community lives. They also tell the resident about the skills and competencies they've developed over time while caring for their child, and let residents know how doctors can

best support families such as theirs. The expanded program will also include information about cultural aspects of care and the transition of a child's health care to the adult system of services.

"The experience I had with Parents as Teachers has helped me and countless others better meet the needs of children and youth with special health care needs," says Andrew Barnes, M.D.

"Because of PACER's intimate and longstanding commitment to this program, nearly 600 residents have experienced these significant face-to-face educational opportunities with families," notes Dr. Daniel Kohen, director of the Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics Program & Clinic at the University of Minnesota.

"Residents have consistently rated Parents as Teachers as among the most significant learning experiences in their residency training," Kohen says.



(L to R) Heather Kilgore, coordinator of the Pediatric Resident Training Program and Wendy Ringer, director of the Pediatric Resident Training Program.

PACER staff will design and implement the expanded program in collaboration with the University of Minnesota's Medical School. New project resources will be developed, including a replication toolkit.

The Parents as Teachers/Pediatric Resident Training Program is a project of PACER and its Family-to-Family Health Information Center. To learn more about the program, visit PACER.org/health or call 952-838-9000.

Give a car, help a child!

Donating your car or other vehicle to PACER is a win-win solution for both children and you.

Your donation helps raise money to support PACER's programs and services for children and teens, and it provides you with a tax deduction. You can also avoid the hassle of selling your vehicle or receiving a low trade-in value.

Donating your vehicle to PACER is as easy as 1, 2, 3. Just gather your keys, vehicle title, and lien release (if applicable).

2. Call PACER at 952-838-9000 to arrange a time to deliver your vehicle to PACER or to have your vehicle picked up. After the vehicle has been sold, PACER will provide you with a written acknowledgement of the final value of donation. Please keep the letter with your other tax records, as all donations are tax deductible.

3. Donate online by visiting CarsWithHeart.com/donate, filling out the online form, and scheduling a time for your vehicle to be picked up.

Make sure to select PACER Center as the organization to receive your donation. A receipt will be provided at the time of pick-up.

By donating a vehicle to PACER, you are making a tremendous difference in the lives of children, including those with disabilities.

For more information on the Give a Car, Help a Child program, call PACER at 952-838-9000 and ask for Jean Lipkin.

Use positive strategies to protect you

Jane has a severe learning disability and delayed social skills. Taking advantage of this, a group of popular girls invited her to join them on “clash day,” when they said they would all wear outlandish clothes. On “clash day,” Jane was the only one to dress in this manner. The stares, laughter, and name calling from classmates humiliated her.

School staff thought Jane was deliberately disrupting classes and suspended her for the day. She was too embarrassed and hurt to explain. After this experience, Jane never raised her hand in class, did not attend extracurricular activities, and her grades plummeted.

By Julie Holmquist

While any child can be a target of bullying, children with disabilities like Jane can be especially vulnerable. Although few studies exist concerning children with disabilities and bullying in the United States, the studies available indicate an increased risk for children with special needs.

Like other children, a child with disabilities who is bullied may grow angry, resentful, frightened, or apathetic at school, and is at risk for low self-esteem, school avoidance, depression, lower grades, and increased violence.

Parents can help protect their children with disabilities from bullying and its devastating effects if they promote effective strategies such as PACER’s Peer Advocacy Program, use the Individualized Education Program (IEP) as a tool, work with the school, and know their child’s rights under the law.

Promote Peer Advocacy

Before Julie Hertzog became the director of PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center, she was a concerned parent. Because her son David

was born with Down syndrome, was nonverbal, and had a Pacemaker and a feeding tube, she was worried that he would be vulnerable to bullying.

As she advocated for her son with school staff, she realized how much student interaction happens outside the view of adults. Recognizing that David’s classmates could be powerful allies for her son in bullying situations, Hertzog worked with the school to create a unique support for him while he was in sixth grade.

A group of his classmates received training on how to prevent bullying and speak out on David’s behalf. They called these students peer advocates. If they see bullying they intervene, ask the bully to stop, or report the situation to an adult.

The idea worked for David. Now what started with four children in sixth grade has evolved to a schoolwide project. More than 40 students volunteer to become peer advocates so they can help David and other students who are different. It’s a strategy that any parent can explore and discuss with school staff.

For more information about the peer advocacy program or how to start one, visit PACER.org/bullying/resources/peer-advocacy.asp.

Use the IEP

Students with disabilities who are eligible for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will have an IEP. The IEP can be a helpful tool in a bullying prevention plan. Every child receiving special education is entitled to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE), and bullying can sometimes become an obstacle to receiving that education.

The IEP team, which includes the parent, can identify strategies that can be written into the IEP to help stop the bullying. It may be helpful to involve the child, when appropriated, in the decision-making process. Such strategies include:

- Identifying an adult in the school whom the child can report to or go to for assistance
- Determining how school staff will document and report incidents
- Allowing the child to leave class early to avoid hallway incidents
- Holding separate in-services for school staff and classroom peers to help them understand a child’s disability
- Educating peers about school district policies on bullying behavior
- Reassurance from the school staff to the student that he or she has a right to be safe and that the bullying is not his or her fault
- Shadowing by school staff of the student who has been bullied; shadowing can be done in hallways, classrooms, and playgrounds

Work with the School

It’s important for parents to believe

Protect your child with disabilities from bullying

their child if he or she tells them about a bullying situation. Parents should communicate support to their child, explain that being bullied is not his or her fault, and that no one deserves to be treated this way.

Once parents have reassured their child in this way, they can meet with the principal and share what they know, explain how the situation is affecting their child, and ask the principal what the school can do to keep their child safe at school and on the bus. It's also a good idea to ask if the school has a written policy on bullying and harassment. If it does, request a written copy. Keep a written record of what happened at this meeting, including names and dates.

If a bullying situation is not resolved after meeting with the principal, parents should send a brief, factual letter or e-mail to the district superintendent requesting a meeting to discuss the situation. Copies of this letter can also be sent to the principal, special education director, and chair of the school board. Parents should make sure to keep a copy. A sample letter pertaining to children with disabilities is available at PACER.org/bullying.

Families may also wish to contact a parent center or advocacy organization for assistance. To find a local one, visit ParentCenterNetwork.org or call 888-248-0822.

“Remember, you are your child’s best advocate,” says Julie Hertzog, Director of PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center. “If your child does not feel safe, you may decide to change schools. Your child’s safety and well-being are of the utmost importance.”



Know the Law

If bullying is based on a child’s disability, it may violate that child’s federal legal rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

In a Letter to Colleagues issued on October 26, 2010, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) informed all U.S. public schools that bullying and harassment, including harassment of one student by another, can be a form of prohibited discrimination.

Federal law prohibits discrimination, including harassment, in education programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, or disability. Read the OCR letter at PACER.org/link/ocr-letter-oct-2010.asp.

According to the OCR and Department of Justice, however, not all bullying constitutes “harassment,” and the specific conduct must be examined to determine if civil rights were violated. Read the definition of “disability harassment” as stated by the OCR and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services at: PACER.org/link/ocr-letter-july-2010.asp.

Although children with disabilities face a higher risk of being bullied, parents can take proactive steps to ensure their child’s safety. Promoting innovative ideas such as PACER’s Peer Advocacy Program, using the IEP as a bullying prevention tool, working with the school, and knowing the law can help parents protect children with disabilities from bullying. Learn more at PACER.org/bullying.

Young boy soars with PACER's KITE Project

Four-year-old James Gladen has a form of cerebral palsy and uses a motorized wheelchair, but he still likes to do what other children his age do. So he felt discouraged when he had trouble writing the alphabet and using the computer in his inclusive preschool last year.

“He was frustrated with not being able to figure out how to maneuver the mouse on the computer,” says Allison, his mother. “We just didn’t know what to do to help him.”

That’s when James’ preschool teacher suggested that Allison sign up for PACER’s Project KITE (Kids Included through Technology are Enriched), a half-year program for teachers and parents that focuses on integrating technology into early childhood classrooms and homes.

The trainings offer an introduction to assistive technology, with a focus on visuals and graphics to support learning, multimedia, augmentative and alternative communication, and universal design for learning.

Project KITE also offers participants the opportunity to try out a variety of assistive technology, including software, digital cameras, printers, and computers.

Having the opportunity to access an adaptive computer and a different type of computer mouse proved to be extremely beneficial for James. He learned how to double click and drag items on webpages, and thanks to the adaptive mouse, he could finally use the computer with his classmates at preschool.

“The course really opened my eyes to what assistive technology and adaptive equipment is available,” Al-



James Gladen uses his adaptive computer mouse.

lison says. “There’s so much information out there that it’s hard to figure out what will work best for your child. Project KITE helped, because it allowed me to try some things with him that I would never have even thought about. It worked out great, because we figured out what James could do and what he needed without spending a lot of money.”

Project KITE also helped Allison realize how much technology will continue to benefit James as he grows older. “Any technology that can help him gain the same education at the same rate as his peers will create long-term independence and growth for him,” she says.

To find that assistive technology, she’ll turn again to PACER. “PACER will always be there to inform us of the latest assistive technology,” Allison says. “They help us to see what will work for James. In the future, we will definitely be taking advantage of all that PACER offers.”

The Project KITE program is funded in part by CVS Caremark Charitable Trust. “We greatly appreciate the generous support from CVS and others who help to make this program possible,” says Paula F. Goldberg, PACER executive director. For more information about the project, call 952-838-9000 or visit PACER.org/STC.

Girls can apply now for EX.I.T.E. Camp

Middle school girls with disabilities can apply now for PACER’s EXploring Interests in Technology and Engineering (EX.I.T.E.) camp scheduled for August.

Girls will participate in fun projects alongside scientists, engineers,

and other professionals during the summer day camp.

Applications will be accepted until May 1. Visit PACER.org/stc/exite for more information, or call PACER’s Simon Technology Center at 952-838-9000.

PACER's Project PRIDE points families to Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the future

As Erica Bertilson neared the end of her high school years, she and her family began planning for the future. Because Erica has mild cognitive disabilities and ADHD, finding the right job training, employment, and living situation for her in a small town proved difficult, says her mother Brenda.

“There are only so many opportunities in a small town,” Brenda says. “We needed to see what options were out there and what funding was available. We needed to get ideas about where we could go from here.”

With the help of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), which is funded by the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Erica was able to consider the options. A VRS counselor met with Erica and her mother and helped Erica make decisions about her future. The counselor also located an occupational skills program that would prepare Erica to find employment. With VRS funding

her education and transportation costs, Erica was on the way to a new life.

The counselor checked with Erica from time to time while she studied in the one-year program, and joined in Erica's exit interview from the program to help her make decisions about the next step.

With this guidance and funding from VRS, Erica was able to prepare for and find a job, and live as independently as possible.

Brenda says she was fortunate to know that Vocational Rehabilitation Services existed, “but I didn't know exactly what they could do.”

“The whole point of RSA is to provide good career counseling that will lead young people with disabilities to employment,” says Judy Moses, coordinator of PACER's Project PRIDE (PACER's Rehabilitation Act Information & Disability Education). “Project PRIDE tries to be the link that

helps parents understand what Rehab Services can offer,” Moses says.

Project PRIDE provides workshops and information on topics such as the Rehabilitation Act, the federal law that makes provisions for training, equipment, and other services that people with disabilities may need in order to work and live independently in their communities.

Now after six years of independent living, Erica “is really grateful for that help and very happy,” her mother says. “Her job provides a lot of variety. She's settled in very well, has lots of friends, and there is so much to do in Brainerd.”

To learn more about the Rehabilitation Act, programs and services in Minnesota, independent living, postsecondary education, Americans with Disabilities Act, transition planning, and more, visit PACER.org/pride or call Judy Moses at 952-838-9000.

Upcoming speakers to address Tourette syndrome, inclusion

PACER Center is hosting two popular national speakers in March and April.

Renowned filmmaker Dan Habib will screen portions of his new film, “Education Revolution,” which explores how students with complex emotional/behavioral challenges are being successfully included in general education. His presentation on March 22 at

PACER will also include time for discussion. Habib's film, “Including Samuel,” was an Emmy-nominated documentary.

On April 19, speaker Josh Hanagarne will speak at PACER Center. Hanagarne, a librarian at Salt Lake City Public Library, will share the hope-filled story of his mother's belief in him and his journey from letting Tourette syndrome control his life



Dan Habib (L), Josh Hanagarne (R)

to becoming “the world's strongest librarian.” For more information or to register for the workshops, call 952-838-9000 or visit PACER.org.

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

Families Are Important

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

March 24, 9 to 11 a.m. (PACER)

Everything You Need to Learn Before Your Child Turns Three

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

April 28, 9 to 11 a.m. (PACER)

IFSPs/IEPs: The Building Blocks of Early Childhood Special Education

This workshop will help parents of young children with developmental delays or disabilities understand the essential components of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

March 13, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Waite Park)

April 2, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

If I Knew Then What I Know Now

A panel of experienced parents of children with disabilities will share insights gained while raising and educating their children. Participants will be encouraged to ask questions and share insights and experiences.

April 24, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

Making the Move from Early Childhood Special Education to Kindergarten

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.

May 1, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

Family Leadership Summit

This one-day training is free for parents of young children with developmental delays or disabilities. Parents will enhance their communication and leadership skills, and have the opportunity to network with others.

Contact Judy Swett at 952-838-9000 for more information.

May 12, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (PACER)

Understanding and Addressing Challenging Behaviors

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

June 2, 9 to 11 a.m. (PACER)

Emotional Behavioral

Understanding Challenging Behaviors

This workshop will help parents think about behavior as communication and consider ways to manage challenging behaviors and those that may indicate mental health concerns. Topics include effective interventions, how to find services and referrals, alternatives to punishment, and school-related supports.

Jan. 23, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

Finding Hope, Getting Help

Find support for your child with mental health needs as you learn about the Minnesota Comprehensive Children's Mental Health Act. It was designed to provide children and youth with mental health needs an integrated system of care so that they can develop and function as fully as possible in all areas of life.

Feb. 27, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (St. Cloud)

March 12, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Apple Valley)

Housing

Three-part Series: Creating Your Independent Living Plan

Learn about person-centered planning and begin creating your son or daughter's housing plan in the first of a three-part housing workshop series. Participants are encouraged to attend all three workshops in the series.

Feb. 13, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Three-part Series: Housing Eligibility & Funding

Learn about requirements for housing funding from a variety of sources and options.

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

Three-part Series: Creative Housing & Services Options

Explore creative housing options and services and hear personal stories about the journey through the housing process.

March 12, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Juvenile Justice

Juvenile Justice and Special Education: What Do Parents Need to Know?

Some students are referred to court because of behaviors that are closely linked to their disability. In this session, parents and professionals will learn about this connection and about strategies that can be included in IEPs that meet the needs of youth with challenging behaviors.

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

Special Education and Zero Tolerance Policies: How Can Parents Advocate

Schools have incorporated zero tolerance policies for many years to reduce the potential for violence. In this session, parents and professionals will learn how to advocate for children with disabilities when these policies conflict with needs identified in an IEP.

April 23, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Special Education, Juvenile Justice, and Foster Care: Working Across Systems to Keep Kids Out of the Justice System

A proportion of youth with disabilities in the foster system and are involved in the juvenile justice system. Participants will learn why this population is at greater risk and discover new trends in working with youth and families in systems that often overlap.

May 10, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Parent Training

A Parent's Guide to the Use of Restraints and Seclusion on Children with Disabilities

Dan Stewart, attorney with the Minnesota Disability Law Center, will review the new law on restraint and seclusion and the use of prone ("face or front down") restraints in Minnesota schools. Topics include types of restraint and seclusion practices; when, how, and why they can be used in schools; and strategies on reducing their use.

Feb. 23, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Feb. 28, 9 to 11 a.m. (PACER)

Workshops

Children Taking Medication for Mental Health Reasons

Parents of children who are already taking medications will learn techniques for talking to their children about medications, listening to their children's feelings, and encouraging their children to take the medications.

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

IDEA: Blueprint for Special Education

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

March 8, 6:30 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Getting and Keeping the First Job

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

March 13, 7 to 9 p.m. (Marshall)

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.

March 13, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Education Revolution: Exploring Inclusion for Children with Emotional/Behavioral Challenges

Renowned filmmaker Dan Habib will screen portions of his new film, "Education Revolution," which explores how students with complex emotional/behavioral challenges are being successfully included in general education.

March 22, TBD (PACER)

Three-part Workshop Series on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

A new three-part series helps parents of children who receive special education services understand the special education process and their own child's IEP (Individualized Education Program). Parents are encouraged to attend all three workshops.

1) Understand the Special Education Process

Helps parents understand special education, including how to resolve disagreements.

March 20, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

2) Understand the IEP Process

Explores the IEP requirements and components of IEP development.

April 3, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

3) Understand Your Child's IEP

Helps parents take a close look at their own child's IEP using Minnesota's recommended IEP form and PACER's booklet, *A Guide for Minnesota Parents to the IEP*.

April 17, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Unlimited Possibilities: Pete Winslow's Story

Join 17-year-old Pete and his mom, Carolyn, to hear Pete's story of being born without legs, no right hand, and only three fingers on his left hand to becoming an elite athlete, jazz trombonist, and World Cup soccer player. Parents, professionals and students are encouraged to attend this motivational session.

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

Managing Tourette Syndrome: A Story from the World's Strongest Librarian

Josh Hanagarne, a librarian at the Salt Lake City Public Library, shares the hope-filled story of his mother's belief in him and his journey from letting Tourette syndrome control his life to becoming "the world's strongest librarian."

April 19, TBD (PACER)

What I Could Have Said: Parents Share Communication Tips

A panel of parents of children with disabilities will share communication insights gained through years of experience at Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. Participants will hear the top ten tips for parent/professional communication.

April 26, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Transition: Pathway to the Future

This workshop will help parents of children with disabilities understand how to use the special education transition process to help plan for life after high school. Parents of students in the ninth grade and beyond are encouraged to attend.

May 1, 7 to 9 p.m. (Mankato)

Life Planning for Persons with Disabilities

Each of two sessions covers different information, including guardianship-conservatorship laws, power of attorney, trust, and other issues. Participants should plan to attend both sessions.

May 8, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)
May 22, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Simon Technology Center

Apps for Older Learners

Come learn about iPod Touch/iPad apps designed for teens and adults with disabilities.

Feb. 21, 6 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Accessible Instructional Materials and Digital Books Workshop Series: Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)

This workshop addresses how to identify students who would benefit from the use of accessible reading materials in place of traditional reading methods and how to acquire AIM from a variety of sources.

March 21, 6 to 8 p.m. (Mankato)

Technology for Girls: What is Your Reality

Middle school girls with disabilities will be inspired by technology during this interactive presentation about human-computer interaction and augmented reality. Don't miss the cool demonstrations!

April 12, 6 to 7:30 p.m. (PACER)

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) and Digital Books Workshop Series: All About Digital Books

This workshop helps parents and professionals sort through the options for accessing digital books for students with print-related disabilities. Participants will learn how to find and use digital books in formats students can use.

May 9, 6 to 8 p.m. (Mankato)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) workshop series.

This series informs and trains parents and professionals on the variety of AAC devices and tools available to help children and adults develop speech and language. Learn more at PACER.org/workshops/bydate.asp.

Minnesota Funding Sources for Speech-generating Devices

Learn about funding sources in Minnesota for AAC, as well as requirements and necessary documentation to obtain funding.

Jan. 26, 12 to 3 p.m. (PACER)

Intro to Communicator: A Comprehensive Communication Program

Become familiar with Communicator 4 Premium, which runs on Tobii Technology
(Continued on page 15)

New

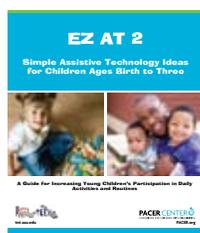
A Guide for Minnesota Parents to the Individualized Education Program (IEP)



Newly updated for 2012. 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. 2012.

■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2 each PHP-a12

New



EZ AT II

A guide for parents and professionals who want to help infants and toddlers with disabilities participate more fully in daily activities with the use of assistive technology. For ages birth to 3. 2011.

■ \$5, 10+ for \$4 STC-24



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

Helps families of children with disabilities or delayed development understand Minnesota's early intervention system and how to access services for their child. 2011.

■ \$7 10+ copies, \$5 each PHP-a9

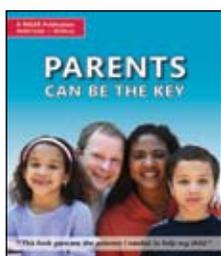


Transition Trek Game

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

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

\$25 each ST-23



Parents Can Be the Key

This handbook describes basic special education laws and procedures.

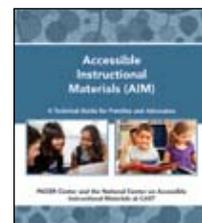
■ \$3 10+ copies, \$2 each PHP-a1

New

Accessible Instructional Materials: A Technical Guide for Families and Advocates

This guide describes what types of accessible instructional materials (AIM) are available, why a student may need AIM, the process for making decisions about AIM, and what supports are necessary to effectively utilize them. Also includes what types of specialized formats are available and how to promote their use. 2011.

■ \$3, 10+ for \$2.50 STC-22

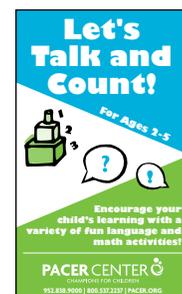


New

Let's Talk and Count! Activity Cards

Let's Talk and Count! is an easy and fun way for parents to interact and help your child be ready for reading and counting. No special supplies are needed, just you and your child. 2011. (See Translations for Spanish and Hmong and Somali.)

■ \$4 10+ copies, \$2.50 each,



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

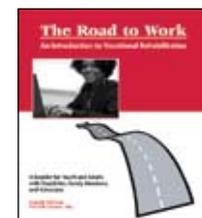


The Road to Work

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



Resources

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.

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: _____

Workshops

(Continued from page 13)
communication devices.

Feb. 2, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (PACER)

Introduction to Unity

Learn more about Unity, the language representation model used in Prentke Romich Company augmentative communication devices.

Feb. 16, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (PACER)

April 5, 12 to 3 p.m. (PACER)

Personalizing Visual Scenes

This workshop will focus on personalizing visual scenes with personally relevant images/ photographs for DynaVox Series 5 (Vmax, V and Maestro) devices.

March 1, 9 to 11:30 a.m. (PACER)

Reality AAC

Learn how to integrate any type of augmentative communication device

into a classroom.

March 19, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (PACER)

Communication Solutions for Autism

Discuss how the strengths people with autism often possess lend themselves to favorable use of AAC devices.

May 14, 12 to 3 p.m. (PACER)

Play and Explore with Tobii Communicator 4

Explore the features that include using photos, environmental controls, cell phone features, and more on the Tobii C Series devices.

May 24, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (PACER)

Transition

Social Security for Transition-Age Youth

Topics in these two back-to-back work-

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

Feb. 16, 6 to 7 p.m. and 7 to 8 p.m. (Faribault)

Preparing for the Journey: Transition to Work and Independent Living

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

April 18, 7 to 9 p.m. (Alexandria)

Inside

Earth, Wind & Fire!	1
ESEA debate continues	1
PACER Rocks for Kids	2
FBI awards PACER	3
iLearn, iPlay: technology for young ones	4
Program expands	7
Protect children with disabilities from bullying	8
Project PRIDE	9
Workshops	12
Resources	14

Change Service Requested

Change the world, one puppet show at a time!

*"Very thorough
in a kid-friendly
way. Loved it!"
-Minnesota teacher*

Schedule PACER's new KIDS AGAINST BULLYING puppet show for your metro-area school!

PACER's **KIDS AGAINST BULLYING Puppet Shows** are available for scheduling in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area. The show helps children in grades 1-3 and adults learn about bullying prevention.

Five endearing multicultural, child-size puppets that portray children with and without disabilities share the definition of bullying, ways children can respond, how to help others being bullied, and much more!

The show focuses on different types of bullying (physical, verbal and social/exclusion), and lets children know that no one ever deserves to be bullied. Throughout the interactive presentation, children can learn through dialogue and question/answer.

To learn how you can schedule a show in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area or purchase the puppets for your community, visit PACER.org/puppets or call 952-838-9000.



For more information, e-mail puppets@PACER.org or call PACER at 952-838-9000.