

PACESETTER

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

New Minnesota bullying bill to be heard in 2014

When the next Minnesota legislative session begins Feb. 25, the proposed Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act is expected to be reintroduced by Senator Scott Dibble (DFL-Minneapolis). Dibble, who proposed the bill in 2013 along with Representative Jim Davnie (DFL-Minneapolis), is encouraging voters to contact their legislators.

“It’s important that representatives and senators know that voters support the passing of this bullying prevention bill,” he said during a recent visit to PACER Center.

The proposed legislation would strengthen Minnesota’s current bullying prevention law which, at 37 words, is the shortest in the United States. The bill passed the Minnesota House of Representatives last spring by a count of 72-57, but the session ended before it could be voted on in the Senate.

Citizens can locate the names and contact information for their state representative and senator at www.gis.leg.mn/OpenLayers/districts/.

Diana Ross to headline PACER’s May 3 Benefit

Diana Ross, one of the most remarkable entertainers of all time, will bring her legendary sound to PACER’s 32nd Annual Benefit on Saturday, May 3, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Ross is a music icon with such hits as “Stop! In the Name of Love,” “You Keep Me Hangin’ On,” and “You Can’t Hurry Love.”

As the lead singer of The Supremes, Ross helped shape the sound of popular music, achieving the unprecedented feat of 12 number one singles, and making The Supremes the most successful American group of all time. Ross, whose musical repertoire includes R&B, soul, pop, disco, and jazz, earned six number one singles and 31 top ten hits as a solo artist, and has sold more than 100 million albums. She is also an Oscar-nominated actress and winner of both Golden Globe and Tony Awards.



Following her sold-out performance last summer in the Twin Cities, Minneapolis Star Tribune reviewer Jon Bream raved about her voice and said Ross “sang the up-tempo numbers with gusto” and “her Supremes classics with infectious glee,” adding that “she had the kind of passion that made the performance truly memorable.”

Benefit tickets start at \$70 and include Ross’ performance plus silent and live auctions. A post-concert patron party is included with tickets valued at \$150 or greater. To reserve tickets, please use the form on page 2, visit PACER.org, or call (952) 838-9000. The Benefit supports free programs for children with disabilities and their families and PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center.



Holocaust survivor Rose Naiman (center) visited PACER Center in September to share her powerful story about escaping Poland and a German concentration camp in World War II when she was just 15 years old. Naiman, who now resides in Florida, regularly speaks to school groups about her experiences. She is pictured with (left to right) PACER Executive Director Paula Goldberg and staff members Sarah Busch, Sue Folger, Jenna Hanson, and Kasey Miklik.



Kirk Muhlenbruck (left), Vice President of Market Development for Think Mutual Bank, recently presented a check to PACER Center Executive Director Paula Goldberg (middle) and PACER staff member Sue Folger. Think Mutual Bank is headquartered in Rochester, Minn., and has four locations in the Twin Cities.

Reservations for PACER's May 3rd Benefit Featuring Diana Ross

To reserve your tickets for the 2014 PACER Benefit on May 3 featuring Diana Ross, 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 indicate number of each)

\$70 Friend
 \$100 Supporter
 \$150 Patron*
 \$225 Benefactor*
 \$300 Sponsor*
 \$600 Champion*
 Total amount: \$_____

My check (payable to PACER Center) is enclosed.
 Please charge my credit card.
 VISA MC AMEX DISCOVER Account # _____ Exp. date: _____
 Name on card _____ Billing address _____ City/State/Zip _____
 Phone (h) _____ (w) _____ (c) _____ E-mail _____
 Names of persons for whom you are purchasing tickets: _____

I need: Wheelchair seating (# of spaces _____)
 Sign language interpretation
 Assistive listening device
 Other _____

* Includes post-performance patron champagne and dessert party

Other Contributions/Volunteer Opportunities

Please contact me about:
 donating to the Silent Auction
 being a Corporate Sponsor (includes ticket package and ad)
 advertising in the Benefit Playbill
 volunteering on a Benefit committee
 I am unable to attend the Benefit. Please accept my gift of: check charge
 \$600 \$300 \$225 \$150 \$100 \$50 Other \$_____

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

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

Families learn and play at PACER Open House

More than 300 people were on hand Sept. 21 at PACER's Simon Technology Center (STC) for the free Family Fun Day & Open House, where they participated in games and activities while learning about the latest in assistive technology (AT). "We had wonderful comments from so many families," said Bridget Gilormini, STC director. "It's very helpful for families to experience assistive technology in a hands-on environment, and the children have a great time with all of the fun activities."

This year's event had a special emphasis on assistive technology for

early childhood. It also featured a new mobile technology station, along with "Ask an Advocate" and do-it-yourself AT. Children had fun making tie-dye T-shirts and exercising their creativity with adaptive art. Parents learned about new technology for education and recreation, including apps for a variety of mobile devices designed to assist individuals with disabilities of all ages.

For more information on assistive technology and PACER services, visit PACER.org/stc or call the Simon Technology Center at (952) 838-9000.



PACESETTER

Published by PACER Center, Inc.

Three times a year

Circulation: 126,042

©2014 by PACER Center

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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

FAPE site: fape.org

MN SEAC site: mnseacinfo.org

BULLYING: PACER.org/Bullying

PACERKidsAgainstBullying.org

PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org

(Alternate format is available upon request.)



Middle school girls can discover the magic of science and technology at EX.I.T.E. Camp



Attention middle-school girls with disabilities! Are you ready to get messy while discovering the magic of science and technology? Don't miss the 12th Annual Exploring Interests in Technology and Engineering (EX.I.T.E.) Camp coming this summer. You'll conduct amazing experiments, make life-long friendships, and discover how much fun science,

technology, engineering, and math (STEM) can be. Participants in this free five-day camp take part in hands-on projects and work alongside industry professionals. Applications are due May 1, and enrollment is limited. For more information, call (952) 838-9000 or visit PACER.org/stc.

Parents as Teachers program offers pediatric residents a new perspective

Some knowledge simply can't be gained from a book. For young physicians at the University of Minnesota, that might include discovering firsthand what it is actually like for parents to care for a child with special health care needs or a disability at home — education they acquire through PACER's Parents as Teachers Pediatric Resident Training Program.

Former resident Andrew Barnes described the insight he gained as “transformative.” Recent resident Aaron Graumann called it an invaluable experience. “My primary interaction with children and parents before this had essentially been limited to the hospital or clinic setting,” he said. “Being in the home gave me a greater perspective on the struggles experienced by my patients and their families on a typical day.”

As part of the program, first-year pediatric residents learn about the medical home principle — a family-centered, coordinated care approach. Families share about the skills and abilities they have developed over time while caring for their child, and they tell residents how physicians can best support families like theirs. The doctors also gain valuable insight into the enormity of the challenges involved in caring for a child with complex medical needs and disabilities.

“The program offers the perfect venue to explain to young medical professionals what our reality looks like,” said parent Pat Lang, whose 16-year-old daughter Maddie has significant health care challenges and disabilities. “It lets pediatricians hear and see what they have learned in books. They don't see the same thing in a hospital or clinic that they see in my house.”

Lang likes to get to know the residents on a personal level, usually sharing a meal with the young doctors at her home in the Twin Cities, and involving the whole family in the experience, too. It is an approach, Lang believes, that fosters openness and honesty.

More than 600 residents have participated in the program over the past 20 years. Thanks to a three-year grant from the Federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the effort was expanded in 2011 to provide greater resources, increase the number of home visits, and incorporate more cultural aspects of care into the program.

Physician Christina Russell said she was able to see for herself the adjustments families make to adapt to their child's needs. “It was also great to meet with the child when they were doing well,” Dr. Russell added. “So often we only see these children when they are ill.”

Parents want medical professionals to treat their child as a unique human



Wendy Ringer (left) is the coordinator of PACER's Health Information Center. Linda Goldman Cherwitz (right) joined PACER recently as a health advocate and coordinator of PACER's Parents as Teachers Pediatric Resident Training Program. Linda is a neurologist who was in private practice in St. Paul, Minn., for 15 years.

being, Lang said. “She's my daughter, not the child in room 6 with a life-threatening illness or disability. I want to be a partner in my daughter's care and this program fosters partnerships better than any other I have been involved in. The more we share and listen to each other,” she added, “the more successful we will be.”

The Parents as Teachers Pediatric Resident Training Program is a project of PACER's Family-to-Family Health Information Center. To learn more, visit PACER.org/health or call (952) 838-9000.

Receive health updates from PACER via text message

Are you always on the go? Families of children and young adults with special health care needs and disabilities can receive timely health information updates via text message from PACER's Family-to-Family Health Information Center. This convenient text message service provides specific information on PACER programs, including notice of upcoming workshops, helpful reminders, brief tips and ideas, and new resources. To sign up, text “Health” to 27138. Please note: By subscribing you agree to the terms and conditions. To cancel, text STOP to 51555. Messaging frequency is one message per week. Standard message and data rates may apply.

Senior U.S. Department of Education official Michael Yudin visits PACER

Michael Yudin, acting assistant secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) at the U.S. Department of Education, visited PACER Center Aug. 20 to meet with staff and speak at a PACER special event for school administrators, special education directors, teachers, and parents. Yudin is the principal adviser to Secretary

of Education Arne Duncan on the education of children and youth with disabilities, as well as employment and community living for youth and adults with disabilities.

In his talk, Yudin addressed inclusion, equity and opportunity for children with disabilities and their families, and the importance of parent/family

partnerships with schools. He also spoke about bullying of students with disabilities. Among the special guests at the event were Minnesota's Commissioner of Education Brenda Cassellius, state Director of Special Education Barb Troolin, and Kim Peck, director of Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services.



Far left: Kim Peck, Director of Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Michael Yudin, and Barb Troolin, Minnesota Director of Special Education. Left: Brenda Cassellius, Minnesota's Commissioner of Education, with Yudin.

Housing Resource Fair is April 12 at PACER

It's important for parents of children and young adults with disabilities to explore options for independent living and housing as early as possible. To learn more, families can attend PACER's 10th Annual Housing Resource and Information Fair on Saturday, April 12, from 9 a.m. to noon at PACER Center. Families will have the opportunity to meet with service providers and discuss housing options, services, supports, and related issues for children and young adults with disabilities. State and county representatives and resource and referral organizations will be available to answer questions.

Upcoming Housing Workshop Series

PACER is also offering a three-part Housing Workshop Series in February and March. "Most parents aren't sure how to begin planning for this transition but the workshop series will help families get started," said Susan Shimota, PACER's Housing Project coordinator.

Topics will include first steps to independent living, housing eligibility and funding, and individualized housing services and options. Parents are encouraged to attend all three workshops in the series. More information is available in the Workshops section on page 11, or e-mail susan.shimota@pacer.org or call (952) 838-9000.

Challenge grant supports PACER's Housing Project

Thanks to a challenge grant from the Beverly Foundation, PACER supporters can double their donation to support PACER's Housing Project, which helps youth with disabilities find the resources and options they need to achieve maximum independence in the community of their choice. The Foundation will match tax-deductible gifts. Donations may be sent to PACER Center, 8161 Normandale Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55437 or given online by using the "donate" button at PACER.org.

Committed Students, Corporate Partners Make PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month a Giant Success

Unity Day is all about people coming together during PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month in a show of support for those who have been bullied. Some wear orange T-shirts, others hold school assemblies or fundraisers, but 16-year-old Jacob Law took it to a new level. The high school junior from Delaware turned his passion for bullying prevention into a community-wide event on Oct. 9, one that included schools, businesses, hundreds of caring individuals, and a proclamation from the mayor.



Students from Blue Earth Area schools gather at the Green Giant statue in Blue Earth, Minn. for Unity Day.

“Jacob’s efforts are truly inspirational,” said Julie Hertzog, director of PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center. “He demonstrated the true spirit of Unity Day by uniting individuals who typically wouldn’t interact and bringing them all together for a common cause.”

Unity Day Message Goes Viral

PACER initially launched National Bullying Prevention Month in 2006 as a one-week awareness campaign, and it has grown into a major international movement throughout the month of October. People come together in October in many different ways, both large and small. Thanks to one of PACER’s corporate partners, this year’s effort was gigantic.

The Raise a Giant campaign was created to help parents and children find the courage to speak up and take action against bullying. PACER partnered with Green Giant on a national campaign centered around an online open-letter writing campaign at raiseagiant.com, where parents can use the power of storytelling to stand tall against bullying. As part of the campaign, the 55-foot tall Green Giant statue in Blue Earth, Minn., wore an orange toga and the town was temporarily renamed Orange Earth.

Green Giant also made it possible for PACER to

share its new WE WILL Generation™ bullying prevention curriculum with 18,000 teens at the “We Day” youth empowerment event in St. Paul, Minn. Students doing service learning projects across the country will now be using the WE WILL Generation™ in their schools.

Many corporations have supported PACER’s programs in the past year, including Facebook, Galderma, IBM, FlagHouse, and Disney. PACER partnered with Disney’s Friends for Change — an initiative that inspires kids and families to take action — to create a Bullying Prevention Action Kit that teaches children how to recognize the signs of bullying so that they can make a difference. Disney also supported PACER in October with a multi-media outreach effort featuring ABC Family star Keegan Allen.

For the second year in a row, CustomInk — the “design online” custom T-shirt company — led the “Be Good to Each Other” campaign that takes a stand for kindness and tolerance and uses the power of custom T-shirts to do good. Frito-Lay raised awareness by including a pair of orange shoelaces and a bullying prevention message in its Frito-Lay Classic Mix Variety Packs as part of its “Lace Up Against Bullying Campaign.”

“We have heard from people all over the world who have been taking action in their own ways,” Hertzog said. “It doesn’t matter whether these activities are led by a major corporation or a committed group of students in a small elementary school. What matters is people are coming together to help children be safe.”

Hundreds Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying

Nearly 500 people made their way around Normandale Lake Oct. 5 in Bloomington, Minn., at PACER's fourth annual Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying. Presented by American Dairy Queen and the Friends of PACER, the event featured a 4-mile run and a 1.5-mile walk/roll followed by live music, guest speakers, and family fun. All proceeds support PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center which provides innovative resources for students, parents, educators, and communities nationwide. Similar events were held across the country in October as communities came together to help prevent bullying.



Above: Men's winner Chris Gordon pushes his child as he is greeted with cheers. Above right: A Girl Scouts troop poses with their homemade signs to promote bullying prevention. Right: Pearson's Candy Company CEO Michael Keller (far right) presents the first place female runner, Jennifer Brady-Johnson, with a 25-pound Salted Nut Roll with help from emcees (from left) Christina Wagner and Alec Fischer.



Join the WE WILL Generation™

Research shows that peer support is an effective way to address bullying. PACER's new WE WILL Generation™ is a web-based, peer-to-peer bullying prevention curriculum that teaches students how to respond when they see a bullying situation. It includes a series of five lesson plans designed for students to teach other students — an approach that capitalizes on the social influence and role modeling of peers. Students will have the opportunity to contribute their insights and ideas, as well as participate in formal, outcome-based evaluation of the curriculum. The WE WILL Generation™ is available free of charge. For more information visit PACER.org/WeWillGen.



Campaign awards \$5,000 to California school for one student's bullying prevention tip

One California teen's willingness to speak up on behalf of her peers and take action to prevent bullying has earned a \$5,000 award for her school from Galderma Laboratories, L.P., the makers of Epiduo® Gel. Galderma partnered with PACER for the "Banish Bullying" campaign, which was promoted by *Seventeen* magazine. Teens from across the country shared their stories and tips on how to prevent bullying in their schools and communities. Iris Z. submitted the winning tip, but there were hundreds more that have inspired positive action among teens.

Locate free assistive technology online in five easy steps: A guide for parents

From groceries to gadgets, just about anything can be found on the Internet — including free assistive technology and learning resources for your child. The key to finding the right tools is knowing how to look.

Trish is a Minnesota parent whose son was struggling with learning geography. Unsure what to do, she contacted PACER's Simon Technology Center, which works to make assistive technology more accessible to children and young adults with disabilities. "We recently found out about my son's learning challenges, and at first it can be overwhelming," said Trish, whose son was diagnosed with dyslexia. "The information from PACER opened a new door for us."

PACER assistive technology specialist John Newman helped Trish locate a good website for her son's needs (sheppardsoftware.com) and offered advice on how to locate other free web- and tablet-based tools. His suggestions are outlined here.

How to search for helpful assistive technology online

With so many free resources available, it helps to pinpoint what your child needs before you begin your online search. Jump-start your exploration by following these five steps!

Step 1: Have a positive discussion with your child

Children can be self-conscious about their disability or learning difference, so it's important for you to stay positive and talk about their strengths. Acknowledge your child's struggles but provide assurance that there are helpful tools available. Ask your child how he or she would like to use technology. Present the search for the right assistive technology as an opportunity to explore and make new discoveries together.

Step 2: Identify what your child needs the technology to do

Choose a challenging skill area that your child thinks is important. You can ask, "What would be one thing you'd like technology to do to make this task easier or more fun?" If they give a general answer such as 'writing,' ask for specifics. Is it coming up with ideas about what to write, learning how to spell, or something else? "My son's main struggle was remembering the location of each country on a map, as well as the volume of material to be learned at one time," Trish explained.

Step 3: Discuss how technology could make the task easier

Assistive technology can add helpful features and offer new ways of doing things. A traditional atlas wasn't working for Trish's son, and she wondered how technology could



Assistive Technology Specialist Kasey Miklik demonstrates how to use an iPad application during a consultation.



Simon Technology Center (STC) staff, from left, Meghan Kunz, John Newman, Director Bridget Gilormini, Julie Herbers, Jonathan Campbell, and Tara Bruss. Other STC staff members include Tina Hanson, Kasey Miklik, Rachel Magario, and Terri Rosen.

help. The answer was a website that added other features regular maps don't have.

"The website we found shows each country in a different color, and when you click on a country the website speaks the country's name," she said. "This reinforces what he is learning."

Once you have identified potential features to make the task easier, you are ready to begin searching for practical online tools.

Step 4: Choose the right keywords for your search

Simply typing the features you've identified in Step 3 into Google will often direct you to a useful tool. Does your child want text on the computer to be read aloud? Googling "free online tool to read text aloud" generates Free Natural Reader, a high-quality program that voices text you have highlighted on a computer. Common keywords to incorporate in your searches include "free online" or "free online tool." When searching for apps, use "lite version."

To locate quality resources, it is sometimes necessary to use technical language you may not be familiar with. The "Tip Sheet for Exploring Free Web- and Tablet-based Assistive Technologies" is a free online guide available at PACER.org/stc.

Step 5: Have your child try the technology

Once you have discovered a potential AT resource, have your child give it a try to see if it fits his or her learning style. If a tool seems beneficial, talk about how it can be used. Also identify other learning challenges your child has that could be made easier by assistive technology.

For Trish's son, the search for AT has opened the door to new possibilities, and he's excited to find out what other tools might make learning easier. "We are just starting to scratch the surface with assistive technologies," Trish said. "My son's stress level has lessened greatly. It's good to know we can go to PACER's Simon Technology Center if we need more help."

Tech Matters: A Personal Note



By John Newman, Assistive Technology Specialist

Last year, I came to PACER as a new staff member in the Simon Technology Center with a degree in Scientific and Technical Communications, a zest for the subject of usability, and the gung ho attitude of a typical new college graduate. I also had a great deal of empathy for the children and families we serve. That's because not long ago I was walking in their shoes.

As a child, I was diagnosed with ADHD and dysgraphia. My family always said I had potential, but I couldn't sit still very long, my handwriting was barely legible, and my capabilities were not always obvious. People with dysgraphia struggle with spelling and handwriting and often have difficulty organizing letters, numbers, and words.

Sometimes I wonder what would have happened if not for PACER's assistance in the 4th grade. I was able to "test drive" solutions and secure some simple yet vital accommodations — electronic note-taking methods, extended time for tests, frequent use of word processors, and others. These played a major role in helping me earn a degree from the University of Minnesota. As a result, I was able to capitalize on my strengths instead of being sidelined by sloppy handwriting and a wandering mind.

Now I have the privilege of working with truly inspiring families and individuals. Every day at STC, we see children and young adults move beyond their disabilities and learning differences and go on to achieve great things. This is what PACER has done for me and my family, and I am honored to do the same for you and yours.

PACER's Juvenile Justice Project provides helpful resources for parents, professionals

Youth with disabilities are at a higher risk for involvement with the juvenile justice system, and studies show that these students are arrested and incarcerated at much higher rates than their non-disabled peers. Since 1994, PACER's Juvenile Justice Project has been providing parents and professionals with important information, guidance, and training to help youth.

It is estimated that 60 to 75 percent of youth in the juvenile justice system have one or more diagnosable disabilities, including emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), learning disabilities, or developmental disabilities. "Having a disability doesn't excuse or rationalize illegal behavior, but there are some behaviors associated with disabilities that can lead to charges being brought against youth," said Lili Garfinkel, project coordinator.

Juvenile court can be confusing and parents need guidance on how they can be effective advocates for their youth in the system. PACER provides parents with insight into the process, seeks to learn more about their circumstances and contributing factors, and informs them of their child's rights in both education and the courts.

"Sometimes we talk to the public defender if they have one," Garfinkel said. "In the larger counties the public defenders usually don't have more than 10 minutes to talk with these kids so I try and provide meaningful information."

Parents are grateful for the assistance. "PACER has been so helpful throughout a very long struggle with

my son," said parent Linda Huber. "Lili has always given me knowledge and tangible information that I could take and share with others. PACER has been a lifesaver."

A variety of resources for families are available at PACER.org/jj including the practical new guide, "Students with Disabilities & the Juvenile Justice System: What Parents Need to Know." Written in plain language, it provides step-by-step guidance for families to help them protect their children's rights.

Attitudes are changing

Twenty years ago there was limited research and little understanding about the connection between disability and juvenile justice until PACER began assembling resources and providing training to parent centers across the country. At the same time, schools were adopting zero tolerance policies which effectively criminalized student behaviors that may have occurred because interventions agreed to in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) were not carried out.

"Clearly the schools have a primary responsibility to protect students, but the needs of students with mental health issues also have to be taken into consideration," Garfinkel said.



"Fortunately, educators are becoming more aware of these issues."

PACER also trains professionals — police officers, prosecutors, public defenders, attorneys, and social workers — and attitudes are slowly shifting as authorities learn more about disabilities. "When the police are trained and have a better understanding of mental health issues it really changes the dynamic," Garfinkel said.

There are also more alternative responses available such as restorative justice, yet the number of referrals to the courts from schools has held steady despite a marked decline nationally in overall crime rates.

"Things are changing for the better," Garfinkel said, "but the bottom line is we need to keep kids in school."

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.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH/EBD

From Naughty to Nice: The Road to Positive Behavior Interventions

Challenging behaviors in children and youth are often misunderstood. This workshop will explore the purpose of behavior, offer strategies and tips for changing challenging behaviors, and discuss supports and interventions that can help sustain appropriate behavior at school, at home, and in the community.

- Feb. 25, 6:30 to 9 pm (St Cloud)
- March 18, 6:30 to 9 pm (PACER)
- March 27, 6:30 to 9 pm (Elk River)
- April 10, 6:30 to 9 pm (Owatonna)

EARLY CHILDHOOD

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 own children. Participants will be encouraged to ask questions and share their experiences.

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

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 kindergarten often requires some preparation. This workshop will help parents plan for the transition and learn strategies to help their child be successful.

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

Early Childhood Special Education: What Do I Need to Know?

This workshop will provide an overview of the early childhood special education process including evaluation procedures, timelines, writing appropriate outcomes/goals and family rights throughout the process.

- March 3, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)

Families Are Important!

This workshop features an overview of families' rights, roles, and responsibilities within the early intervention system. It also addresses services in the natural environment, the

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and child and family outcomes.

- March 15, 9 to 11 a.m. (PACER)

Early Childhood Family Leadership Summit

The Family Leadership Summit is a free event for parents of young children with developmental delays or disabilities. This dynamic, interactive one-day training will help parents of young children enhance their communication and leadership skills. It includes skill-building sessions and networking opportunities. Contact Judy Swett for more information. E-mail jswett@PACER.org.

- April 5, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (PACER)

Early Childhood Family Information and Networking Night

This workshop will provide parents with tips on how to advocate for their children within the special education system, as well as opportunities to meet and network with other families of young children.

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

Everything You Need to Learn Before Your Child Turns Three

This workshop will help families understand the transition process from Part C Early Intervention services to Part B preschool services. Topics include transition requirements, Inclusion, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives.

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

HOUSING

Three-Part Housing Workshop Series – Part 1: First Steps to Independent Living

Will you be ready when the time comes for your son or daughter to move to a place of their own? Most parents aren't sure how to begin planning for this transition, but this workshop will help you get started. You'll receive an overview of available housing and services options and person-centered planning concepts to help your son or daughter develop his or her vision for independent living, housing, and services.

- Feb. 10, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Three-Part Housing Workshop Series – Part 2: Housing Eligibility and Funding

Parents will gain a "big picture" view of how housing is funded through federal, state, and county resources, and learn how their son or daughter can become eligible for and access funding. Topics include income supplements and budgets.

- Feb. 24, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

Three-Part Housing Workshop Series – Part 3: Individualized Housing & Services Options

This interactive workshop will provide a more detailed explanation of individualized housing and services options so that parents and young adults can consider what might be a good fit for them. A panel of parents, young adults, and providers will share their journey through the housing process.

- March 10, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)

PACER's 10th Annual Housing Resource and Information Fair

The Housing Fair is an excellent opportunity for families of children and young adults to meet with service providers and discuss housing options, services, supports, and related issues for children and young adults with disabilities.

- April 12, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (PACER)

PARENT TRAINING

"Including Samuel"

Please join us for a screening of "Including Samuel," a documentary by filmmaker Dan Habib about inclusion. He documented his family's efforts to include their son Samuel in all facets of their lives, a journey that transforms each of them. Q & A with a PACER Advocate will follow the film.

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

IDEA: Understanding the Special Education Process

This workshop outlines the basic principles of special education and provides materials to help parents organize their child's special education records. Topics include evaluation and resolving disagreements.

- Feb. 6, 6:30 to 9 p.m. (St. Paul)

Tips for Talking with School Staff

What's the difference between saying "I want" and "my child needs?" Find the answer by participating in this workshop that provides parents of special education students with practical, easy-to-use tips for communicating with school staff and effectively resolving differences.

- **Feb. 11, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Maple Grove)**

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

This practical new workshop will help parents understand the required parts of the Individualized Education Program. Parents will gain knowledge about how to be an effective advocate for their child at IEP meetings.

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

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and the IEP: Understanding IDEA's Requirements and Development of the IEP for Students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs)

This Individualized Education Program (IEP) workshop will explore new requirements and components of IEP development, including evaluation, resolving disagreements, and writing measurable goals with emphasis on students affected by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Workshop co-sponsored by the Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

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

Special Education: What Do I Need to Know?

This workshop will help parents understand special education, learn how to resolve disagreements, and discover their role as parents in the process.

- **March 4, 6 to 8 p.m. (Minneapolis)**
- **April 29, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Worthington)**

Life Planning for Persons with Disabilities

This workshop consists of two sessions, each covering different information, including guardianship-conservatorship laws, power of attorney, trust and other issues. Participants should plan to attend both sessions.

- **March 13, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)**
- **March 27, 7 to 9 p.m. (PACER)**

"Who Cares About Kelsey?"

Please join us for a screening of "Who Cares About Kelsey?" by filmmaker Dan Habib. Kelsey

Carroll was a likely high school dropout until she encountered an education revolution that's about empowering teens with emotional and behavioral disabilities. Q&A with a PACER Advocate will follow the film.

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

Six Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy

Parents will explore six skills they can use to become more effective advocates for their child with a disability: understanding the child's disability, using effective communication, becoming well-organized, and knowing how to resolve disagreements.

- **April 8, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (International Falls)**

Planning Ahead for Graduation and Life

This workshop is for families of youth with disabilities who are planning for life beyond high school. Information and strategies will be offered on completing high school and moving towards postsecondary education, work, and adult services.

- **April 10, 6:30 to 9 p.m. (PACER)**

SIMON TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Literacy for All: Helping Children with Significant Disabilities Learn How to Read, Write, and Communicate

Being able to read and write is an important skill in the development of all children, but for children with significant disabilities this can be challenging. This workshop will present a framework for understanding how children develop literacy skills. Parents will learn how to help their child become a reader and writer. (Live captioning available)

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

Microsoft Accessibility Features

Having trouble seeing things on your computer screen or accessing files? Participants in this beginner-level workshop will discover how to make a Windows computer easier to see, hear, and use by taking advantage of Microsoft's built-in accessibility features.

- **Feb. 3, 6 to 7:30 p.m. (PACER)**

Literacy for All: Exploring Alternative Pencils for Children with Significant Disabilities

Conventional writing starts with the scribbles children make when they are exploring the

concepts of print. But how do you scribble when you cannot grip or use traditional writing tools like pencils or crayons? This workshop will explore a variety of alternatives that children with significant disabilities can use to become writers. (Live captioning available)

- **March 20, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**
Streaming option also available

How to Make Your Computer More Accessible

For people with disabilities, accessing the computer to use e-mail, surf the web, or write papers may be difficult. Assistive technology (AT) has made computers more accessible, and participants in this beginner-level workshop will learn how to utilize AT with their Mac or PC. Topics include alternative keyboards and mice, switch access on the computer, and built-in accessibility features.

- **March 31, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**
Streaming option also available

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. This interactive workshop will explore the science of "Star Wars" in a fun and engaging way.

- **April 26, 10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. (PACER)**

Literacy for All: Everyone Needs a Way to Communicate

The ability to communicate thoughts and feelings is powerful but a child with a significant disability may not be able to communicate with his or her voice. This workshop will explore communication options and strategies to help children with significant disabilities use augmentative alternative communication to develop their voice. (Live captioning available)

- **May 15, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**
Streaming option also available

An in-depth Look at iOS 7's Accessibility Features

iOS 7, the latest iPhone and iPad operating system, has a new look and new accessibility features. This workshop will explore the following in detail: Switch Control, with built in support for switch access users; VoiceOver, with built in support for blind users; AssistiveTouch which allows users to turn a single touch into

a powerful gesture; and share tips and tricks to make touch devices more accessible.

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

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 Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits for young adults at age 18. Parents will learn how Social Security Work Incentives, Vocational Rehabilitation, and employment programs can help their youth meet his or her postsecondary education, training, and employment goals.

- **Feb. 5, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

- **March 5, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (St. Paul)**
- **April 2, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Anoka)**

Transitioning to Employment and Independent Living

This workshop for families of transition-age youth will provide information on career exploration and planning. Parents will learn how to help prepare their youth for employment and learn about agencies that provide independent living, financial, and employment services and supports.

- **Feb. 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Anoka)**
- **March 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Roseville)**
- **April 16, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Owatonna)**
- **May 7, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Plymouth)**

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 and Supplemental Security Income benefits for young adults at age 18. Parents will learn how the Ticket to Work can help their youth meet his or her postsecondary training and employment goals.

- **Feb. 12, 1 to 3 p.m. (Rochester)**
- **March 11, 1 to 3 p.m. (Mankato)**
- **April 16, 1 to 3 p.m. (Austin)**

Taking the Next Step: Planning for Success in Postsecondary Education

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

- **April 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (PACER)**

Don't miss popular national speakers at PACER in April



Donna Erickson, bestselling author, popular host of “Donna’s Day” on PBS television, and a nationally syndicated columnist, will lead a workshop titled “**Families that play together...**” on Tuesday, April 8 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at PACER Center. This fun, creative workshop

will feature both simple and more complex activities and easy recipes for families to do together, depending upon a child’s age and abilities. Erickson will help PACER families of children with disabilities “find the play in the everyday.”



Parents looking for ways to help their child who is experiencing anxiety should not miss dynamic national speaker Rebecca Kajander on Thursday, April 24 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. for the workshop, “**How do I help my child who is anxious?**” Kajander, an award-winning nurse

practitioner and author of numerous books, will share practical, take-home suggestions for parents.

For more information or to register for these workshops, call (952) 838-9000 or visit PACER.org/workshops.

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.

PACER’s ninth annual Creative Kids Contest is March 8

Children with disabilities, ages 4 to 17, are invited to join celebrated artist Anthony Whelihan for PACER’s ninth annual Creative Kids Contest on Saturday, March 8, from 10 a.m. to noon at PACER Center. It will be a morning of imagination, creativity, and fun, and the winning design will be featured on the 2014 PACER greeting card. To register or donate art supplies, e-mail Danna.Mirviss@pacer.org or call (952) 838-9000. Space is limited.

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 | ST-41

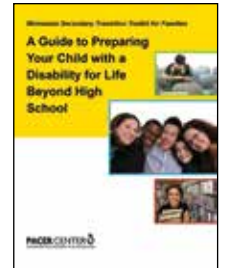


New

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

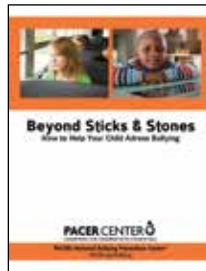


New

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

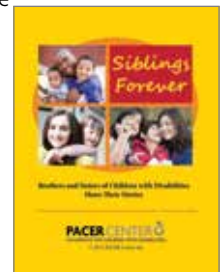


New

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

By sharing the feelings and experiences of 21 siblings from age 5 to 47, this booklet provides a way for families to explore the unique challenges and benefits siblings of children with disabilities may encounter. Tips for parents are also included, along with resource and book lists for all ages concerning the sibling relationship. 2013.

▪ \$8 | 10+ copies, \$6 each | AP-44



New

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.

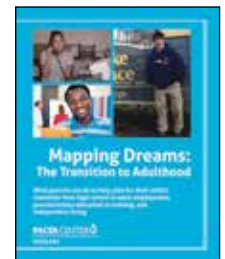
▪ \$2 | 10+ copies, \$1.50 each | BP-23



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.

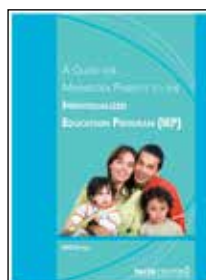
▪ \$8 | 10+ copies, \$6 each | ST-40



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

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.

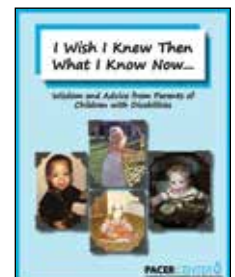
▪ \$3 | 10+ copies, \$2 each | PHP-a12



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



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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. 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 ordered	Quantity	Per item cost	Total item cost

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(Minneapolis residents, 7.75%; Hennepin County residents, 7.275%; Anoka, Ramsey, Dakota, Washington counties, 7.125%; most other Minnesota residents, 6.875%)
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If a parent:

Birth date of child with disability: _____ Disability: _____

Choose Orange

Choose Orange is a national campaign to raise awareness for bullying prevention in a powerful, visual way. By wearing and sharing Choose Orange snap wrist bands, people are choosing to prevent bullying through kindness, compassion, and positivity. Made of 100 percent medical-grade silicon, the snap bands are 9 inches long and 1.75 inches wide and carry a powerful message. A portion of the proceeds from the campaign support the work of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. Order yours today at chooseorange.org.



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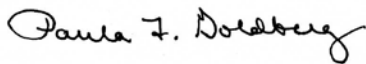
Dear Friends,

Welcome to 2014! Thank you so much for all that you have done over the past year to support children with disabilities and their families, and prevent bullying of all children. When you contribute your time, talent, or financial resources to PACER, you are helping children have a brighter future. Thanks to you, PACER is making a positive difference in the lives of children and their families.

PACER's Annual Benefit is May 3 in Minneapolis. You can make a donation to the silent auction, become a corporate sponsor, or simply purchase tickets for a wonderful evening with Diana Ross. You can help year-round by volunteering during PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month in October, serving on a Benefit committee, or making an individual contribution. Please call PACER at (952) 838-9000 to learn more.

Thank you again for all that you do. You are truly Champions for Children!

Warmest regards,



Paula Goldberg, PACER's Executive Director

