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May 2006

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May 2006

15 Monday 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Parent to Parent support meeting
2001 H Street Pam: 360-255-2056

15 Monday 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Spin Dance – Max Higbee Center
315 Halleck Street – 360-676-6985

20 Saturday 11:00 am - 2:00 pm
Down Syndrome Outreach Spring Fling
Hovander Homestead Park, Ferndale
Contact Sarah: 360-715-0170 X2

20 Saturday 7:00 pm
People First 315 Halleck St
Contact Susan: 360-738-2060

22 Monday 4:30 - 6:00 pm
Whatcom County DD Advisory Board
3333 Squalicum Pkwy
Contact Jessica: 360-676-6724 X32014

June 2006

5 Monday 4:00 – 6:00 pm
Arc Board of Directors Meeting
1111 Cornwall Ave #205
Contact Dana: 360-715-0170

6 Tuesday 12:00 – 1:30 pm
Interagency Coordinating Council
Garden Street Family Center
Contact: 360-715-0170 x4

10 Saturday 10:00 am
Human Race for Arc and People First
See special insert for more information
Maritime Heritage Park

14 Wednesday 12:00 – 1:00 pm
Down Syndrome Outreach Committee
1111 Cornwall Ave #205
Contact Sarah: 360-715-0170 X2

19 Monday 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Parent to Parent support meeting
2001 H Street Pam: 360-255-2056

All Events are in Bellingham unless otherwise noted

Bowling Fun



Steve Jacobson & Brooke Brennan



Paul Stratton



Tasha Hughes



Annette Kooistra

Front: Brooke and Paul

Back: Steve, Laura, Tasha, Tonja, Annette and Charlie.



The Second Annual bowling party took place on Saturday, March 11.

Community members gathered for the fun and excitement of knocking down those pins and enjoying the company of friends and family.

If you are interested in having some fun, opportunities to participate include:

Spring Fling at Hovander Park in Ferndale, Saturday, May 20, 2006, 11 am - 2 pm
Trip to Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle Wednesday, July 12, all day

For more information, contact Sarah at 360-715-0170 x2



New Planned Action Notice System Will Alert Clients of Eligibility and Service Denials, Reductions or Terminations

As part of a lawsuit settlement, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) is replacing its current client service notice system with a series of Planned Action Notices to provide participants and families with a written notice of decisions that result in denial, reduction or termination of DDD eligibility or services.

The change in the notification system is meant to improve communication with individuals, families and guardians about changes in eligibility and services, as well as better explain an individual's or family's rights to appeal those decisions.

The Planned Action Notices (PAN) cover changes in topics such as: waiver enrollment and termination, waiver services, provider denial or termination, Medicaid services, eligibility determination, State-Only funded services and eligibility denial, termination or expiration.

Each notice explains the decision that resulted in a change in eligibility or service delivery. The individual's or family's appeal rights are explained and contact information for a case manager who may answer additional questions is included. Forms to begin the appeal process and request a hearing are also available in the notice.

The new system requires that Planned Action Notices be sent within 5 working days of the decision date that resulted in a change in eligibility or services. In all cases, the PAN will be addressed to the client regardless of his or her age and to the client's representative (which may be a parent, guardian, legal representative, relative or other person or advocacy agency selected by the client).

The client's representative should receive a phone call from DDD before the PAN is mailed to answer any questions. When clients or their representatives receive a Planned Action Notice it is important they review the notice immediately and call the listed case manager with any questions. If the individual or representative wants to appeal the decision, complete the appeal paperwork right away to ensure a thorough review of the decision. If the individual does not tell DDD to discontinue services during the appeal, services will be continued until the appeal is over. *However, if the individual loses the appeal, he or she may have to pay back up to 60 days of the costs of those services.*

In order to appeal the decision, clients or their representatives must appeal within 90 days of receiving the Planned Action Notice.

For a digital video disc of the Fair Hearing Process call the Developmental Disabilities Council at 1-800-634-4473.

Source: Developmental Disabilities Council

How to Keep Your Section 8 Housing Voucher



Keeping your housing voucher is important, you don't want to lose your home. Here are some tips for protecting yourself and your voucher:

1. Attend the required recertification appointments and make your unit available for an annual inspection.
2. Limit time of overnight guests. Unauthorized person(s) are not permitted to move into your household without first gaining approval from the Housing Authority as well as your landlord. Guests may stay for no more than fourteen (14) consecutive days and no more than thirty (30) days total in a year. Your lease with your landlord may have more restrictions on length of stay.
3. Report ANY changes in income or family composition. You must submit, in writing, any increase or decrease in your income. Failure to do so may be considered fraud. An increase may not impact your rent portion until recertification. A decrease in income may result in a decrease in rent portion.
4. Abide by the law. You may not commit any criminal or drug activity while being assisted with a Housing Choice Voucher. You are also responsible for the actions of any guests in your household and will be terminated if a guest commits any criminal or drug related activity.
5. Respond to all Housing Authority requests for information. The Housing Authority is required to provide proper documentation of support.
6. Give notice if you are moving. Proper notice will help maintain your voucher eligibility.
7. Follow the rules of your lease with your landlord. An eviction by your landlord is reason for termination from the Housing Choice Voucher.

Source: Bellingham/Whatcom Housing Authority 04/08/06



Working Age Adults: Employment Support

Questions to Ask When Interviewing Vendors

- Would you be willing to interview with us at our home?
- How does your agency develop job leads for people?
- What companies have you placed people at and in what types of jobs?
- What is your marketing approach with a new, prospective employer?
- How many people does this agency serve in supported employment?
- Do you provide training for employers, employees or family members?
- What type of feedback on job development and training do you provide for the family? How often?
- When you are doing job development, will you provide transportation for the individual if necessary?
- Will the job developer also provide the on-the-job training or will another individual be hired to do so (i.e. job coach, natural support set-up, coworker trainer, etc.)?
- How long do you usually provide job coaching for a new worker and will you set up natural supports on the job site as part of the on-the-job training?
- Describe some factors you consider when matching an employment site and the individual.
- What kind of activities will you do with the individual to better acquaint yourself with them?
- What/how do you charge for your services?
- How do you determine your fee for the necessary services?
- Would your agency be willing to negotiate your fees?
- Would you be able to continue job development after the funding has run out?
- Do you help support or develop transportation services for the individual when a placement has been determined?

Things to Look for When Hiring a Job Developer/Vendor:

- Positive attitude.
- Dignity and respect for you and/or your son or daughter.
- A person who talks to both of you.
- Persistence and a sense of time: you need a person who can complete this process quickly—no more than 2 or 3 months.
- Focus on skills and interests (not just any old job will do).
- Uses person-centered planning techniques to help build a strong network of support.
- Listens to family preferences and choices.
- Has a good record of finding jobs for other people with disabilities.
- Doesn't depend solely on market analysis jargon to find jobs, but uses community connections and a knowledge of your son or daughter to make a good job match.
- No buzz words like "low productivity" or "less than minimum wage."
- Is creative, can tailor job description to your son or daughter's capacity and skills.
- Resourceful - quick to find elements that will build supports.
- Reasonable rates.
- Honest and dependable.
- Willing to share, teach, give information about their job developing process with you and your son or daughter.
- Teaches independence and is a person you both feel safe and comfortable with.
- Involves co-workers, employers to build supports.

From: Washington Initiative for Supported Employment's Individual & Family Empowerment Project - www.theinitiative.ws



Mark McCaffery hard at work!

A Matter Of Time
29th Annual
Employment Conference
June 21-23, 2006
Ellensburg, Wa

Join local and national
leaders in employment,
see old friends and colleagues,
make new friends and
contacts.

A limited number of
stipends are available.

Washington Initiative for
Supported Employment
16000 Christensen Rd., Suite 240
Seattle, WA 98188

Contact: www.theinitiative.ws
or 206-343-0881



"I want a job!"
Jeffrey Lane



Get Involved

Down Syndrome Outreach Woodland Park Zoo Trip

Wednesday, July 12
Contact: Sarah 360-715-0170 X2



Trout-Fest 2006: Fun for Everyone

Saturday, June 10, 2006



For all students with special needs in Whatcom, Skagit and Island County school districts. Fishing, games and other fun events.

Contact: Puget Sound Energy Education Services
1-888-225-5773 press option 5 then ext. 813455 or:
educationservices@pse.com

Down Syndrome Outreach Spring Fling

Saturday, May 20, 2006
11:00 am - 2:00 pm

Hovander Homestead Park, Ferndale
Contact: Sarah 360-715-0170 X2



Skagit Parent to Parent Coffee, Cookies and Cracker Jacks

Tuesday, June 6, 2006
7:00 - 8:30 pm

Presented by Joy Caldwell. Learn the how to's of...

- Coffee - making time for yourself
- Cookies - enjoying the simple pleasures
- Cracker Jacks - expecting and accepting the surprises of life

Limited childcare and spanish translation provided with a minimum of 48 hours notice,
Contact: Heather 360-416-7570 ext 401

Spin Dance

Monday, May 15, 2006
Monday, June 19, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Max Higbee Center, 315 Halleck
Music by The Chryslers (May)
Music by Whatcom Sound (June)

Contact: Amanda 360-676-6985



FATHERS NETWORK PICNIC/CAMPOUT

Father's Day Weekend
June 16 - 18, 2006

Washington Park, Anacortes

It's almost time for the Fathers Network Campout!!!

Come prepared for good weather, good food, and good fellowship.

Hey, let the good times roll.

Stay the weekend or stay the day; it's up to you.

What better way to get to know people than hanging out in shorts and a tee shirt, letting your kids go bonkers and barbecuing up a storm.

This event is open to all families (and family members) who have children with special needs.

If you know people who need a break or just want to have fun, bring them along.

Contact: Mike Etzell 360-678-7883 or
MikeEt@co.island.wa.us

WHIDBEY/CAMANO ISLAND FATHERS NETWORK

Monthly Meetings

Periodic social outings for men and their families

Contact: Mike Etzell 360-678-7883

E-mail: MikeEt@co.island.wa.us

Parenting Research and Resources

Friday, May 19, 2006
Birth to Age 5

Children's Hospital, Seattle

Info: www.seattlechildrens.org/education

Adaptive Cycling

Saturday, May 20, 2006
11 am-2 pm
Lottie St. at City Hall
Bellingham

Contact:
Amanda 360-676-6985



Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I'll remember.
Involve me and I'll understand.



Special Education, Children & Families

Summer Institute on Special Education

Partners in education:
Tracey Finch, parent and
Jan Dustrude special education teacher



The Combined Summer Institute will take place July 17-21, 2006 at the Yakima Convention Center. The Institute provides information on education strategies, assessment and intervention, support, research and networking. This Institute is intended for parents and educators.

Areas of focus include: autism, hearing impairments/deafness, visual impairments and blindness and other developmental disabilities. Visit www.ncesd.org/csi for more information.

Parent Scholarships are available through the Family Educator Partnership Project.
Call 1-888-754-8798 for details.

Summer Fun: Americans With Disabilities Act Makes Options Available

The arrival of spring prompts parents to begin the search for summer activities for their children. Besides extended school year special education services designed by school districts and a few programs that serve the needs of children with disabilities exclusively, parents of children with disabilities often have a difficult time finding social and recreational activities for their kids to participate in their community.

However, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should make more options available to families by ensuring their right to participate in community and neighborhood programs in integrated settings. School districts, park boards, community centers, libraries, and science, history and art museums that offer summertime classes, day camps, recreation programs, art activities, or nature hikes must make their programs accessible to individuals with disabilities. Parents can work with these kinds of programs to help meet their child's needs, too.

Q. Can a T-ball league run by a park board community recreation program exclude my son from participating because he has a disability?

A. No. A public (or private) entity may not deny participation in its programs based on disability. Your son must only meet the basic requirements required of other participants in the program such as appropriate age, residential status, enrollment deadlines, and payment of the application fee.

There are two exceptions to this rule: In cases where (1) the participation of an individual with a disability would pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or would (2) fundamentally alter the nature of the program. In order for a program to successfully prove that an individual would pose a direct threat it must be demonstrated that this risk is actual, and not based on stereotypes and generalizations, and that it cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by reasonable modifications to policies, practices or procedures. The Department of Justice example is of a person who uses a wheelchair that may be excluded from playing in a basketball league if the recreation center can demonstrate that it would be unsafe for the nondisabled players to play with the person who uses a wheelchair. *Deborah Leuchovius, PACER ADA Specialist*

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1111 Cornwall Ave. #205
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Choice and Self Determination

People with developmental disabilities and their families want services and supports delivered by a system that allows us choice and control over our own lives.

Promoting Self-Determination in Youth: How is Self-Determination Learned?

The capabilities needed to become self-determined are most effectively learned through real-world experience, which involves taking risks, making mistakes, and reflecting on outcomes. These experiences help a young person test his or her strengths and limitations and identify appropriate short- and long-term goals.

In addition to real-world experience, youth benefit from open discussion and supportive acknowledgement of their disability. There may be times when families, teachers and other well-intentioned people protect youth with disabilities from making mistakes and avoid discussing the details and potential ramifications of their disability. Instead, they focus on the positive and steer the youth away from many experiences where there is a potential for failure.

However, in order to direct their own futures, youth need to know themselves and understand how their disability might affect academic learning, relationships, employment, participation in their communities and need for supports. With this knowledge, they are better positioned to develop plans, make decisions and learn from experience.

Supporting a young person in becoming self-determined is not about simply removing limits and structure. It is, rather, about providing opportunities so a young person can make meaningful decisions about his or her own future. For families, teachers and other adults, supporting self-determination requires being open to new possibilities and taking seriously their dreams for the future.

Source: adapted from pacer.org



People First of Whatcom County

Encourage Problem Solving:

- Teach problem solving skills
- Allow ownership of challenges and problems
- Accept problems as part of healthy development
- Hold family meetings to identify problems (and solutions) at home and in the community
- Hold class meetings to identify problems (and solutions) in school
- Allow children and youth to develop a list of self-identified consequences (to their actions)

Promote Reasonable Risk Taking:

- Make choice maps listing risks, benefits, and consequences of choice
- Build safety nets through family members, friends, schools and others
- Develop problem solving skills
- Develop skills in evaluating consequences