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August 2006

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August

9 Wednesday 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Down syndrome Outreach Committee
1111 Cornwall Ave, #204
Contact Sarah: 360-715-0170 X2

21 Monday 6:30 - 9 p.m.
Ice Cream Social and Spin Dance
315 Halleck St.
Contact Amanda: 360-676-6985,
360-738-7366 TTY

21 Monday 6:30 - 9 p.m.
Parent to Parent Support Meeting
2001 H St.
Contact Jennifer: 360-255-2056

26 Saturday 7:00-8:30 p.m.
People First 315 Halleck St.
Contact Susan: 360-738-2060

Monday 8/28 - Monday 9/4
The Arc of Whatcom County will be closed.
We will re-open on Tuesday, Sept. 5.

September

11 Monday 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
The Arc Board of Directors Meeting
1111 Cornwall Ave #204
Contact Dana: 360-715-0170

13 Wednesday 12 noon – 1:30 p.m.
Down syndrome Outreach Committee
1111 Cornwall Ave, #204
Contact Sarah: 360-715-0170 X2

18 Monday 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Parent to Parent support meeting
2001 H Street
Contact Jennifer: 360-255-2056

18 Monday 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Spin Dance – Max Higbee Center
315 Halleck Street
Contact Amanda: 360-676-6985,
360-738-7366 TTY

Friday through Sunday, 22-24
People First of Washington Convention
Tacoma, WA See page 4 for details

23 Saturday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Parent Advocacy Training Program
511 E. Holly St.
Contact Beverly: 360-715-0170 X4

25 Monday 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Whatcom County DD Advisory Board
3333 Squalicum Pkwy
Contact Jessica: 360-676-6724 X32014

All Events are in Bellingham unless otherwise noted

Danielle's Road to Employment

Danielle's road to employment started at Ferndale High School, where she had an opportunity to try different jobs in her community. She started working after graduation with support from a vocational agency funded by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and is now successfully employed, saving and budgeting her own money.

Danielle has worked for property manager April McAllister for two years at Sycamore Square, an office building in Fairhaven. Danielle's primary duty is cleaning the public areas of the building, although several tenants have been so impressed with her work, they've hired her to clean their individual office suites. April often sends Danielle out on errands, and has Danielle work on special projects with her. It's easy to understand why; Danielle is a lot of fun to be around.

Initially, Danielle required a great deal of support to learn her job. Now, however, a job coach checks in with her just a few times a week. Occasionally, Danielle refers to her task list to make sure she's completing her duties.

Every weekday, Danielle takes two early morning buses to get to work by 7:40a.m. Danielle uses the bus in her spare time too, and has gotten to know some of the Whatcom Transit Authority (WTA) drivers in the process.

Belle, Danielle's mom, has noticed a positive change in Danielle over the last two years. "I was hesitant about Danielle working at first," she admitted. Since then, however, she has been very impressed with the tremendous growth she's seen in Danielle.



Though only 23, Danielle is already serious about saving money. She's set up savings bonds with help from her brother and has created a budget to manage her money. Careful planning has given her flexibility to spend money on things she really enjoys.

Danielle has been able to do some traveling, including flying alone to visit family in New York and Texas, using money earned while working. She also enjoys jogging, walks to the library and listening to her iPod, which she purchased with her own money.

Danielle has plans for the future, perhaps someday working in a restaurant. She's considering the possibility of culinary school and has already looked into options at the local technical and community college. Whatever she ends up doing, you can bet that it will be her choice.

Source: Whatcom County Developmental Disabilities Program Transition Success Stories



Danielle has been successfully employed at Sycamore Square for two years.



President's Budget Cuts Money For Special Education

The Federal 2006-2007 Budget singles out saving \$9 billion in Medicaid. This would eliminate certain claims for Medicaid reimbursement for related services provided by public schools to Medicaid eligible students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The loss of these funds will likely force school systems to drastically reduce IDEA related services, such as speech, physical and occupational therapies, transportation to health services, tube feeding and other medical interventions needed for a child to stay in school, assessments and social work services, and others, for the poorest students.



The Administration is targeting these cuts after determining that certain school districts, by using outside firms to bill Medicaid, may have used shoddy accounting systems and poor data to bill Medicaid. It is possible that the Administration will attempt to secure these huge savings through regulatory or other administrative mechanisms this summer. This could mean wholesale changes in the school year that starts in late summer.

If Medicaid reimbursements are cut, schools are likely to scale back or eliminate IDEA related services that are already part of a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), resulting in chaotic situations at the beginning of this school year.

It is unclear when and how the Administration, acting through the Centers on Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), will seek to secure these savings through policy changes.

Source: Arc of the U.S.

New Medicaid Identity Verification Requirements

The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 requires states to verify U.S. citizenship for Medicaid applicants and recipients. The requirement came into effect July 1, 2006 and the State of Washington began implementation July 3. Requiring additional paperwork undoubtedly will cause some people otherwise eligible to lose benefits, as illustrated by the large Medicaid population drop recently in Washington.

The significant features of implementation are:

1. *Recipients should expect changes.* The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) plans to request document copies or the affidavit in mid-August for clients with September reviews. If the recipients do not return the materials, DSHS expects to instruct staff members to recertify them anyway, and then will follow up on the verification issues.

2. *Applicants at risk for denials.* Applications ultimately will be denied if the person does not provide copies of documents or the completed affidavit. Fair hearing rights will be given. The instruction to workers states that "No denials will be made if the client is making a 'good faith effort' to submit the affidavit or obtain the documentation."

3. *Exceptions.* Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash recipients and foster care children in relative placement will be asked to verify citizenship/identity but will not be denied benefits if the information is not provided. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients will not be denied for failing to provide the information.

4. *Copies allowed.* DSHS intends to ask only for copies of documents, not originals, policy staff confirmed. They do not intend to require face to face applications for medical-only applications.

5. *Affidavit alternative.* People who do not have the documents can complete an affidavit instead. It asks for information from which DSHS can seek the verification directly - and DSHS will pay expenses if required. For kids under 16, this affidavit also serves as the required identity document.

Source: Adapted from Ann Vining, Northwest Justice Project



Inclusion Presentations Available

Terri Hansen, Inclusion Advocate, offers presentations on the following subjects: Person Centered Planning, Top 10 Strategies to Support People with Disabilities, Rights of Individuals with Disabilities, Diversity and Accessibility.



Terri Hansen, Inclusion Advocate

For more information call The Arc of Whatcom County at (360) 715-0170 X5 or admin@arcwhatcom.org

Source: Terri Hansen

Street Law: Talk to a Lawyer

Free legal advice and referral
Aug. 12, 19, and 26
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.



Corner of Railroad Ave. and Magnolia St. Street Law is a first-come, first-served program where anyone can obtain legal information, advice and referral.

Sponsored by Law Advocates and the Whatcom County Bar Association

Federal Program Offers Free Visual Smoke Alarms

The Foundation for Safer Housing is offering free visual smoke alarms to the deaf and hard of hearing who meet financial requirements. The alarms are free and simple to apply for.



The alarms offered are plug in units that can be placed in the bedroom, preferably near a door. These would alert the individual to the presence of a fire.

To apply or for more information, contact The Foundation for Safer Housing, Inc Phone: (303) 591-9895 E-mail: info@saferhousing.org

Source: www.saferhousing.org

Guidelines for Using an Interpreter

- Speak directly to the Deaf or hard-of-hearing person. The interpreter is a professional who is there to facilitate communication between the two of you. There is no reason to ask the interpreter to tell something to the Deaf person. Speak as you normally would to any individual and leave the rest to the interpreter. Relax. Talk at your normal speed, the interpreter will only be a few words behind. That is the nature of interpreting one language to another. Use normal expressions and gestures.

- Locate the interpreter near the speaker so the Deaf or hard-of-hearing person can see both the interpreter and the speaker. Avoid direct light or window background, or shadows which make lip movements difficult to see

- Remember that hearing loss does not affect intelligence, and Deaf people have the same feelings and needs as you.

- Interpreters are trained to bridge the gap between different languages, regardless of education or level of communication.

- If more than three people are present during a discussion, be sure to have each person speak one at a time. Confusion takes place if more than one person talks simultaneously or if people interrupt one another.

- Typically, an interpreter should have a break from continuous interpreting once an hour, or alternate with another interpreter every forty-five minutes. When an interpreter is on a break or during a meal, remember to give the interpreter an opportunity to relax and eat. If an interpreter is employed for lunch meetings, the interpreter expects to work and not eat.

Contributor's Note: People first language is generally rejected by the largest segment of individuals who grew up with profound hearing loss. The term Deaf (with a capital D) refers to this cultural minority group and is a matter of embraced identity rather than diagnosis. Members of this group most often use American Sign Language as their primary language, socialize predominantly with other Deaf people, and believe that hearing loss has no bearing on their capabilities. This is the preferred and most respectful term for this minority group. People with less profound hearing loss may still identify and socialize with this group and may refer to themselves as Deaf or Hard of Hearing, depending on a number of factors. The term deaf (with a lower case d) is rejected by this minority group, even when phrased using people first language, as it is viewed as a medical term which presumes a level of functional incapacity.

The much larger segment of the general population with hearing loss acquired their hearing loss after adulthood. These individuals most often do not view themselves as a cultural minority but rather as individuals with a common medical condition. Individuals in this segment rarely use interpreters, usually preferring Real Time Captioning or Assistive Listening Devices as accommodations. People first language (i.e. individuals with hearing loss) would probably be most respectful for this segment.

For more information, Contact Joel Bergsbaken with the Hearing, Speech and Deafness Center at: (360) 640-0910 or (360) 647-8508 TTY

Source: *The Hearing, Speech and Deafness Center*



American Sign Language Sign for an Interpreter



Get Involved

Social and Life Skills Classes

Sessions (6 weeks) 4:00-5:00pm

Sept. 28, Oct. 5, Oct. 11, Oct. 19, Oct. 26, Nov. 2
Location: St Luke's Health Education Center
3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham

Self-Concept & Self-Worth: Learning to like me
Relationships – family, friends and formal:
Recognizing boundaries

Dealing with my emotions: Feelings are okay
Communication: More than talking

Individuals must be 18 or older, accompanied by a family member, friend or other support AND eligible with the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

Classes are free but registration is required!

Space is limited. Register: Call Pat at
(360) 676-6724 Ext. 32243 pfisher@co.whatcom.wa.us.

Sponsored by Whatcom Co. Developmental Disabilities Program



Parent Advocacy Training Program

Saturday, September 23
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

511 E. Holly St., Bellingham

Free session! Sign up now! Gain practical information on accessing services, unscrambling confusing language, becoming an effective advocate and supporting families. Learn to understand and navigate the complex systems for social services and special education.

Contact Beverly: (360) 715-0170 X4

"From Emotions to Advocacy" Training Event

Saturday, Sept. 30

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

PUD Auditorium, 2320 California St., Everett
(425) 388-7259 or ddinfo@co.snohomish.wa.us

Equestrian Therapies Ranch Skagit County Meetings



4th Monday of the month
6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Anacortes Public Library,
1920 10th Street

4th Tuesday of the month
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Burlington Public Library,
900 East Fairhaven Ave.
More Info:

www.equestriantherapiesranchofskagitcounty.org

Ice Cream Social and Spin Dance

Monday, August 21

Ice Cream 6:30-7 p.m.

Dance 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

315 Halleck St. Bellingham

Music by Motown Cruisers



COST: FREE, but participants MUST reserve a space prior to event. Call (360) 676-6985
(360-738-7366 TTY) for reservations.

Parent to Parent Support Meeting

Monday, August 21

7:00-8:00 p.m.

2001 H St. Bellingham

Parent Advocate and School Advocacy

Contact Jennifer: (360) 255-2056

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Summer Camp

Aug. 23-27

Camp Volasuca

Contact: Julie Gelo (206) 940-2832



Washington Assistive Technology Summer Workshops

Where to Find Start Up Business Funding

August 21 Seattle

Home Ownership Responsibilities for People with Disabilities

Aug. 23 Seattle

Better Budgeting

Aug. 29 Everett



Is Self-Employment Right for You?

Aug. 30 Bremerton or Sept. 7 Everett

Contact: Andrea Dimond 800-214-8731 or info@watf.org



People First of Washington Convention

September 22-24

King Oscar Hotel, Tacoma, Wa

Advocacy, workshops, election of officers

Contact: Ken Larson (360) 738-2060

Father's Network Statewide Conference

Saturday, October 28

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

South Seattle Community College, Brockey Center
www.fathersnetwork.org



Back to School Thoughts

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design: *Universal design means that environments and curricula are designed, right from the start, to be flexible and usable by students of widely varying abilities.*



Examples of Universal Design for Learning

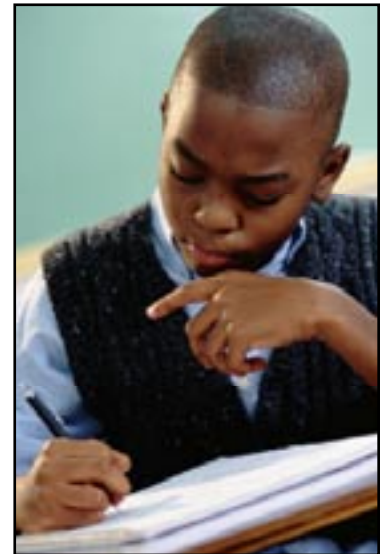
- If a student learns best through listening, he or she can use a computer to read stories and information aloud, or to pronounce new words.
- If a student learns more easily with large print, curriculum materials can easily be provided in this format.
- If a student can explain things best by using word processing software and a keyboard rather than using pencil and paper, then that will be the method of choice.
- If a student struggles to identify the most important points or organize information, he or she can use a computer program that helps students learn by doing.

Source: *The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST)*

Checklist for Home-School Communication

It's important to establish and maintain strong home-school communications to get the best help for your child. Use this checklist as a guide to get you started.

- Keep lines of communications open with your child's teacher, and listen carefully if she describes problems with aspects of your child's learning. If you think the problems are serious enough to require special attention, ask the teacher if alternate instructional approaches might help address the problem and ask if any have been tried.
- Keep track of the instructional practices used to help address your child's problems and record how well they assisted your child's learning.
- Discuss whether there are cultural factors that might make a difference. If so, explain your child's background so the teacher and other educators can understand your child's behavior and actions. The information provided by parents and family members can be crucial to understanding a child's learning difficulties.
- Try to understand the way your child learns and be able to communicate what you think will help the teacher better understand your child's specific learning style. Observe and provide all the information you can to help the educators develop a better understanding of it.
- Find out if supplementary educational services such as tutoring are available at your child's school and investigate the programs to see if any would benefit your child.



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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.

2006 Special Olympics Summer Games

Over 2300 athletes, 550 coaches and 2,500 volunteers came together to participate in the 2006 Summer Games for Special Olympics Washington. Athletes from around the state gathered in June to participate in Aquatics, Track & Field, Cycling, Power Lifting and Soccer.

North Whatcom County Special Olympics sent a delegation of 30 athletes and 6 coaches to participate in Soccer, Track & Field and Aquatics.

Whatcom County Special Olympics started the Summer Games helping Law Enforcement from around the county run the torch from Peace Arch Park to the Skagit County line. This year Special Olympics had 4 athletes participating in the run along with Law Enforcement from Sumas and Blaine Customs Border Protection, Whatcom County Sheriff, and Ferndale, Lynden and Bellingham Police Departments.

If you would like to learn more about Special Olympics either as coach, volunteer or participant, please contact Mary or Keith Rothbauer, North Whatcom County Coordinators, at 354-7654 or maryrnuts@hotmail.com.

Source: Mary Rothbauer



Kim Menninga won gold and silver medals.

Whatcom County Medal Winners

Gold

Katie Barthlow
Kim Menninga
Nicholas Rothbauer
Kimmer Gordon
Mark LeLacheur
Denise McClaskey
Chris Pike
Sean Prater

Bronze

Matthew Citron
Tyler Kalsbeek
Naomi LaVine
Mary McDonough
Ricky Rupke
Evelyn Case

Silver

Lisa Truchan
Katie Barthlow
Ronald Gourley
Doug Hershey
Tyler Kalsbeek
Naomi LaVine
Mary McDonough
Kim Menninga
Kelton Nix
Ricky Rupke
Kyle Buschko
Levin Drewes
Whatcom Soccer Team

National Games Update

The 2006 Special Olympics U.S. National Games were held in Ames, Iowa in July, 2006. Matthew Citron of the North Whatcom Special Olympics team was one of the athletes that earned the privilege of attending and representing his local team and Team Washington, competing in aquatics. Matthew brought home Gold medals in 25M Backstroke and 50 M Freestyle and a Bronze medal in the 25 M Freestyle. He also set personal best in all three events, shaving a total of 15 seconds off his events. Congratulations to Matt and all Special Olympians.