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April 2007

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April 2007

16 Monday 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Parent to Parent Support Meeting
2001 H St.
Contact Jennifer: 360-255-2056

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

20 Friday 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Family Swim Social
Arne Hanna Aquatic Center
1114 Potter St.
Contact Jennifer: 360-255-2056

21 Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Parent Advocacy Training
2602 McLeod Rd.
Contact Beverly: 360-715-0170 ext. 306

21 Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Youth Self-Advocacy
2602 McLeod Rd
Contact Maureen: 360-715-0170 ext. 302
See page 4 for details.

25 Wednesday 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
The Road to Transition
3333 Squalicum Pkwy.
Contact Pat: 360-676-6724 ext. 32243
See page 4 for details.

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

May 2007

7 Monday 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Arc Board of Directors
2602 McLeod Rd.
Contact Dana: 360-715-0170 ext. 305

8 Tuesday 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Self-Advocacy
320 Pacific Place, Mt. Vernon.
Contact Malinda: 360-366-9395

19 Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
DsO Spring Fling Potluck
Hovander Hometead Park, Ferndale
Contact Sarah: 360-715-0170 ext. 307
See page 4 for details.

All Events are in Bellingham unless otherwise noted.

Making Her Own Decisions

Michelle is an independent and self-directed 28-year-old. In fact, it was important to Michelle that her story be shared with others. Her employment planning began several years ago, at Meridian High School, trying different vocations with the assistance of her teachers. After graduation, Michelle was able to work with a vocational agency to begin her journey into the world of work. She found employment in a nursing home, but the position did not work out and Michelle was back to the drawing board looking for a new vocational goal.

Michelle's mother, Cozette, played a key role in helping her to identify connections in the community. She assisted Michelle in obtaining a volunteer position with the hospital and another in her local church to gain valuable work experience.

Cozette kept networking and connected with a long time neighbor who owns Hardware Sales, resulting in a meeting with their human resources office. Together with her job coach, they began to identify essential functions and develop a task-based job description for re-stocking and taking inventory in the paint department. Michelle began working 5 days a week for 2 hours a day, with her job coach supporting her to learn the responsibilities of the job. Michelle started to independently use an employer-approved check list developed by her job coach, increasing her skill levels and reducing job coaching to once or twice a week check-ins. Just when things were going smoothly, several changes occurred - including bus routes!



Michelle was transferred from paint to the lighting department, which meant learning a new inventory and layout while working with a new supervisor. Although nervous, Michelle raised the bar and was able to meet these unforeseen challenges. Her vocational agency added support time and identified a new on-site support person to help develop similar processes in the new department. Jerry McLellan, Hardware Sales co-owner, says it is fun to watch Michelle's progress these last four years as she gets more comfortable with her new responsibilities, adding that, "She is like a part of the Hardware Sales family." Michelle would like to find another paid or volunteer job on the bus line and recently started volunteering for Habitat for Humanity, stating she "...Wants to stay busy and meet new people." Michelle recently moved into an apartment with a friend. She says she still talks to her mom all the time, but - like any adult daughter - she likes her independence and making her own decisions!



Source: Transition Success Stories



Family Voices of Washington

The Washington Family to Family Health Education and Information Network is directed by families who have children with special health care needs and a Partnership Committee called Washington Family to Family Network (WFFN).



This program acts as a clearinghouse to provide information and referral to resources and information about health care and support to families who have children with special health care needs age birth to 18 years old. The program surveys families on training and information in regards to health care, public and private health care systems, skills in navigating health care systems and information on health and wellness.

The program has established a list serve for families who have children with special health care needs and the Washington Family to Family Network to provide information on state and national health care, resources, and information on health and wellness. You can join the list serve at FVW-F2F@yahoogroups.com or you can send an e-mail to their list serve coordinator Andrea Sheehan at cwpave@nwinfo.net. For more information, visit www.washingtonpave.com or contact Cassie: 1-800-572-7368 (v/tty)

Source: Washington PAVE

Medical Assistance Grants for Kids

The United Healthcare Children's Foundation is offering support to meet the needs of children nationwide with assistance grants for medical services not fully covered by health insurance.

Parents and caregivers across the country are eligible to apply for grants of up to \$5,000 for health-care services that will help improve their children's health and quality of life. Examples of the types of medical services covered by the foundation grants include speech therapy, physical therapy and psychotherapy sessions, medical equipment such as wheelchairs, braces, hearing aids and eye-glasses, and orthodontic and dental treatments.

To be eligible for the grants, children must be 16 years old or younger. Families must meet economic guidelines, live in the U.S. and be covered by a commercial health insurance plan. For more information, visit: www.uhccf.org



Source: www.uhccf.org

Job Accommodations

Accommodations are often thought of as physical equipment or modifications. However, accommodations can include a wide range of non-physical modifications. It is helpful to consider these task barriers. This is not an all-inclusive chart, but one to give an idea of what each category can entail.

Type of Accommodation & Example Definition

Job Restructuring:

Adjustment to work procedures or to the order in which tasks are usually performed

- Change work schedule
- Rearrange the order in which task are done
- Decrease number of non-essential job duties

Assistive Device:

Objects that help an employee do the job or complete tasks with greater ease or independence

- Mechanical reacher
- Electric stapler
- Magnifying lens
- Non-skid material/surface/mat
- Voice-activated computer/software

Training:

Teaching methods that help an employee to learn or re-learn job duties

- Use a map to orient new employees
- Supply large print instructions
- Demonstrate a different way to perform a task
- Allow class to be audio-taped for note-taking task

Personal Assistant:

Person who assists an employee with job duties, work routines, or work-related aspects of a job

- Interpreter assists with communication
- Co-workers help with a task
- Job coach/mentor provides training or support

Building/Physical Modification:

Alterations to the physical environment that allow safe and equal access to facilities

- Lever added or replacing a round door knob
- Raised letters on elevators and signs
- Flashing lights on fire alarms and telephones

Source: Pacer Center



"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt."
- Margaret Atwood





Lynden Community Transitions Program

My name is Tomi, this article is to tell you what this school we attend is all about. So, here is my story.

The school that we attend is not like any other school. It is not a high school or a college. It is a job training school. What the teachers teach us at this school is job skills. Some of the skills we learn are, being on time, calling in if you are sick, dressing appropriately, quality of work, and independence. The things we learn at our school are how to cater, cook, and other things.



Students making dog biscuits

At the school we clean New Hope Center every Thursday and every Friday we clean our site. Every month we get to go out on a school outing and spend most of the day out of school.

The money that we use to go out on the outings is the money from our ASB account. We earn the money by cleaning, design vinyl signs, catering, and making dog biscuits. At our school we always have work and have fun at the same time. The students that attend this school experience disabilities.

Some of the students that attend this school use wheelchairs to get around the school and to do other things. At this school I teach an exercise group for the students that are in wheelchairs. Mostly every Monday I teach the exercise group. In the group are 3 to 4 students and we put music on and exercise. Every Thursday Mr. Seaholm's leadership class comes and we play games that help us learn social and communication skills.

Mr. Seaholm's class does an activity one week then our class is in charge the next week.

And this is the end of my story!

The end!



Students catering community events

Tomi, a student in the Lynden Community Transitions Program

Photos courtesy of the Lynden Community Transitions Program.

We've Moved!
Save the Date:
 May 30th - 3:00 - 7:00 p.m.
 The Arc's Dan Godwin
 Community Center
 Grand Opening



Special Olympics Winter Games

Athletes from Whatcom and Skagit Counties participated in the Special Olympics Winter Games in Wenatchee.

Speed Skating:

Dale Whipple
 Donald Russell
 Richard Roland
 Chassidy Parmenter
 Daniel Marty

Holly Kiel
 Daniel Grover
 Joan Good
 Jason Dykes
 Kathy Child
 Bryan Baker

Figure Skating:

Kimberly Menninga

Larry Simpson



Skater Kimberly Menninga

There were also three basketball teams from the area who participated in the Regional Tournament.

Master 7:

Janae Holladay
 Naomi La Vine
 Zach Dockins
 Chevalier Hadley
 Ronald Gourley
 Evelyn Case
 Sean Prater

Master 1:

Tyler Haggen
 Nicholas Rothbauer
 Jesse Rinard
 Chris Pike
 Todd Childs
 Lance La Fontaine
 Taylor Walser
 Mark Teeter
 Erik Bromley
 Kim Gordon

Master 5:

Darin Haak
 Katie Barthlow
 Zachary Levi
 Trisha Galbraith
 Alvin Westman
 Laura Rawlins
 Josh Johnson
 Matthew Citron
 Tyler Kalsbeek

Individual Skills:

Ricky Rupke
 Levin Drewes
 Tiffany Ypma
 Tim Miner

Congratulations Athletes!

Cyclist Joan Good to compete in 2007 Summer World



Skagit County Special Olympics Athlete Joan Good was selected to represent Special Olympics Washington and Team USA at the 2007 World Games this October in China.

Source: Special Olympics Washington



Get Involved

Parent Advocacy Training

Saturday, April 21
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.



You will learn how to better advocate for yourself or a family member with developmental disabilities. All are welcome.

The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Rd, Bellingham

Contact Beverly: 360-715-0170 ext 306, Please RSVP

Down syndrome Outreach Spring Fling Potluck

Saturday, May 19
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



Family and friends are welcome. Please bring a salad, main dish, or dessert to share. Water and paper goods are provided. Activities & sport games for the kids, young and old! Door Prizes!

Hovander Homestead Park - Brick Pavilion, Ferndale
Contact Sarah: 360-715-0170 ext. 307

Parent to Parent Support Meeting

Monday, April 16
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.



Topic: General Nutrition

2001 H Street, Bellingham
Contact Jennifer: 360-255-2056

Spin Dance

Monday, April 16
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.



315 Halleck Street, Bellingham
Contact Amanda:
360-676-6985 or 360-738-7366 TTY

The Road To Transition

Wednesday, April 25

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.



Katherine Carol will show you how to move from **transition terror** to **transition terrific**.

St. Luke's Health Ed. Center
3333 Squalicum Pkwy., Bellingham
Contact Pat: 360-676-6724 ext. 32243

Skagit County Events:

Positive Relationships

Tuesdays, April 17 & 24
6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Topics covered: safety, appropriate boundary setting, Self-determination, intimacy and communication. Youth are encouraged to attend on the 17th.

320 Pacific Place, Mt. Vernon
Contact Malinda: 360-336-9395

Sponsored by: Skagit County Parent to Parent

SSI and Medical Coupons

Tuesday, May 1
6:00 - 7:30 p.m.



Learn from a leading expert in Washington State about effective use of Social Security Benefits and Programs.

320 Pacific Place, Mt. Vernon
Contact Malinda: 360-336-9395

Sponsored by: Skagit County Human Services & Parent to Parent

Youth Self-Advocacy Group

3rd Saturdays of the month
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Registration required - Ages 18 to 25 only.

This event is held every third Saturday of the month.

Have a Dream? Join our Group

Have fun learning about Self-Advocacy
Make Friends and Work Together!



The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Rd, Bellingham

Contact Maureen: 360-715-0170 ext 302

Sponsored by: Whatcom County Developmental Disabilities Program

Safety Awareness and Sexuality Support Group

Every Monday
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Registration required - Ages 18 and older.

Presented by John Davis and Jan Jung, Husband and Wife Team of Mental Health Counselors. An opportunity to learn all about personal safety and awareness.

Sessions run for 5 weeks.



The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Rd, Bellingham

Contact Maureen: 360-715-0170 ext 302

Sponsored by: Whatcom County Developmental Disabilities Program

Family Swim Social

Friday, April 20
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.



Arne Hanna Aquatic Center
1114 Potter St.

Contact Jennifer: 360-255-2056

Sponsored by: Parent to Parent

Infant & Early Childhood Conference

May 2-4

Topics Include: Effective Services for Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Joyful Journey to Literacy

Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue, WA

Contact Tracy: 360-629-8181



Arc events are held in accessible locations. For sign language interpreters service, assistive listening devices or communication material in an alternative format, large print or audiotape, please call 10 days in advance.



Special Education, Children & Families

How Will I Know If My Child is Making Progress?

Children go to school to learn, of course. But parents of children with disabilities often ask, "How will I know my child is learning and making progress?" Parents can answer that question by looking at a variety of data, including information from special education and general education sources and information from outside the school.

Special education sources



The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as amended in 2004 (IDEA) is the special education law that emphasizes educational outcomes for students in special education. IDEA guidelines require that schools track educational progress for children with disabilities. Here are four of the best sources:

(1) The results of a student's most recent evaluation.

The initial evaluation provides a baseline for measuring progress and developing an individualized education program (IEP). Once a child has an IEP, the school will reevaluate or review existing evaluation data at least once every three years. You can compare the most recent evaluation report with earlier reports to gauge your child's progress.

(2) Measurable annual goals. Your child's IEP must include measurable annual goals. For each goal area, the IEP must record your child's beginning level of performance, either in a section on 'present levels of educational performance' or in the goal statement. You will receive reports outlining your child's progress toward meeting these goals.

(3) Progress reports. The IEP document must identify how often your child's progress toward annual goals will be measured and how you will be informed of the progress. Periodic report cards, other written reports, and meetings are among the many ways parents can keep informed about their child's progress.

(4) Annual IEP review. A new IEP is written annually for children in special education. The IEP must include a statement of the child's present level of educational performance. Parents can compare this statement to the statement made the previous year. For example, how much has the child's reading level advanced? How much has the child's on-task behavior increased?

Observing skills at home and in the community

You can observe whether your child has generalized a skill taught in school. This means that your child can use the skill in many environments, such as the home and community, as well as in school. For example, is your child's speech understandable at home and to the server in the restaurant?



What if my child is not making progress?

If you think your child is not making meaningful educational progress, you can request a meeting to discuss revisions to the child's IEP. The school cannot guarantee that a child will achieve the goals in the IEP; however, the school must make a 'good faith effort' to assist the child to do so.

An IEP team meeting can be held to discuss and plan revisions to improve opportunity to make progress. Your child may need changes in special education or related services, assistive technology, curriculum or method of instruction, educational setting.

Source: Pacer Center

Learn more about advocating for your child at our upcoming Parent Advocacy Training.
Saturday, April 21, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
Contact Beverly: 360-715-0170 ext 306

The Parent Coalition of Whatcom County newsletter
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360-715-0170 or
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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.

Coach Steve



Last month Steve Jacobson had the honor of being the Honorary Coach of the Western Washington University Mens Basketball team. Steve was included in every part of the coach and player activities. He attended a pregame meeting with the coaches and players and took the game ball to center court to give it to the officials to start the game. He sat with the other coaches and players on the bench, participated in time out strategy sessions, and even was available after the game to sign autographs on his page in the Down syndrome Outreach calendar.

That is the news about the event...want to know the fun story?

Steve was asked by his mom to get his 'Western' clothes together in preparation of the big night. He informed her that he wasn't interested in wearing his 'Western' clothes as he was going to be a coach and would therefore be wearing a suit.

Steve had a cheering section of about 20 people. Some made signs that said "We love Coach Steve."

Each time that a Western player would come out of the game they gave Steve a high five on their way back to the bench.

At the conclusion of the game, when the players and coaches shook hands, Coach Steve was observed to get not only the traditional hand shake, but a lot of 'back slapping' by the visiting team. Although Coach Steve has a 0-1 record now he fully expects Western to be calling him any day for another shot at coaching.

Source: Sharon Allen, sister of Coach Steve



Coach Steve, far right