

# Connections in Special Education

## Harford County

Spring 2009



### Partners for Success Resource Center (PFS)



Kimberly Marchman

LaTanya Leavy-Green

Center for Educational Opportunity  
253 Paradise Road Aberdeen, Maryland 21001  
Phone 410-273-5579 Fax 410-273-5599  
Email [partners.success@hcps.org](mailto:partners.success@hcps.org).

#### Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Partners for Success Resource Center assists with providing the skills and knowledge that will enable families of individuals with disabilities and Harford County Public School professionals to function as equal partners in education.



**Did you know that Partners for Success has Board Maker, a computer and a laminator for parent use? Call to set up an appointment.**



### Lending Library

The Partners for Success Resource Center (PFS) has an extensive lending library with valuable resources for both parents and professionals. There are a few ways to select the materials.

1. Set up a time to come to the office to peruse the lending library. (410-273-5579)
2. Call Partners for Success (410-273-5579) to ask for book suggestions about specific topics and then set up a time to pick them up.
3. Send an email to [partners.success@hcps.org](mailto:partners.success@hcps.org) to request a book and then set up a time to pick it up.



***Would you like to receive emails about upcoming workshops and news in regards to the Partners for Success Resource Center? Please send an email to [partners.success@hcps.org](mailto:partners.success@hcps.org) with the subject "add me" to the email list.***



# Parent Survey



*“I just filled out a survey, why am I being asked to do this again?”*

Your input matters! The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) required the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) develop a State Performance Plan (SPP) and submit it yearly to the Federal Office of Special Education (OSEP). The SPP for special education service for children with disabilities ages 3 -21 includes 20 indicators. Baseline data was collected in 2004-2005. Indicator 8 is directly related to parents of children with disabilities.

Indicator 8 is:

*Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities*

MSDE measures Indicator 8 by using the Parent Survey. The survey you completed in January/February was for the school year 2007-2008. Thank you for your support of completing this survey. The one you receive in April/May is for the current school year 2008-2009. In the future you will be asked to complete only one survey per school year.

The next page of this news letter is the Frequently Asked Questions about the Parent Survey by MSDE.

Anyone can access the Maryland State Department of Education State Performance Plan which is posted on the web.

**MSDE Public Website of State Performance Plan Results** <http://mdideareport.org/>

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## Do you have questions about Harford County's Results on the MSDE State Performance Plan?

On May 14, 2009 Eileen Watson and Kimberly Marchman will present the Harford County SPP data to the Harford County Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC). This meeting is open to all who are interested.



Special Education Advisory Committee  
Harford County Public Schools  
102 South Hickory  
Bel Air, Maryland 21014  
May 14, 2009  
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.



## **PARENT SURVEY - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### ***Who completes the parent survey?***

- ◆ Parents of children ages 3 to 21 who are receiving special education services through their local school system.
- ◆ Parents of children ages 3 to 21 who are receiving special education services who are placed in a nonpublic facility by the child's local school system.

### ***Why am I filling out another survey when I just finished filling out one in January?***

- ◆ The survey you completed in January/February was for the school year 2007-2008.
- ◆ The one you receive in April/May is for the current school year 2008-2009.
- ◆ In the future parents will be asked to complete only one survey per school year.

### ***I have more than one child who is in a special education program. Can I just fill out one survey for all of them?***

- ◆ **NO.** Please fill out one survey per child.

### ***Do I have to participate? If I choose not to participate, will it negatively impact my child's services?***

- ◆ Participation is completely voluntary.
- ◆ Your child's services will not be negatively impacted in any way.
- ◆ Please choose to participate and make your opinions heard.

### ***What is the purpose of this survey? Where does the survey come from?***

- ◆ To determine how well your child's school is partnering with you and promoting parent involvement in your child's education.
- ◆ The survey was developed by the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (<http://www.monitoringcenter.lsuhs.edu>). All states must collect these data as part of their State Performance Plans as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

### ***How is the confidentiality of my responses protected?***

- ◆ The survey is designed to be anonymous.
- ◆ The survey does not ask for any identifiable information such as name, address, or student identification number.

### ***How will I get this survey? How do I return it?***

- ◆ The surveys will be distributed by your local school system around April 20, 2009.
- ◆ Each survey packet will contain an introductory letter, one survey, and a postage-paid envelope that you may use to return the survey directly to REDA International, Inc., 11141 Georgia Avenue, Suite 517, Wheaton, MD 20902-4680 who will be compiling the data for the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

### ***How do I fill out the survey? How can I make sure that my answers are counted?***

- ◆ Use a blue or black pen or a #2 pencil to **fill in ONE bubble for each question.**
- ◆ **Send in the survey by the due date – JUNE 12, 2009**

***Please watch for this important survey. We are looking forward to hearing back from you regarding your opinions of your involvement in your child's special education program!***

***Thank you!***

## Summer Reading Tips for Parents

Summer should not mean taking a break from learning, especially reading. Studies show that most students experience a loss of reading skills over the summer months, but children who continue to read actually gain skills. Efforts should be made during the summer to help children sustain reading skills, practice reading and read for enjoyment.

**Children who continue to read actually gain skills.** Reading builds visualization, thinking and language abilities. Taking the time to read with your child can help you evaluate your child's reading skills. If you discover that your child is having trouble with reading, he or she may have a learning disability. Eighty percent of children with a learning disability have difficulty with basic reading and language. But early identification of such a disability gives a child the chance to develop ways to learn how to read effectively, and obtain skills that lead to a successful and productive life. A recent National Institute of Health study showed that 67 percent of young students at risk for reading difficulties became average or above average readers after receiving help in the early grades.

Parents should remember that children need free time in the summer to relax and enjoy the pleasures of childhood. So summer reading should be fun. The following are a few tips to make reading enjoyable for your children this summer:

- Read aloud together with your child every day. Make it fun by reading outdoors - on the front steps, patio, at the beach or park. Also, let your children read to you. For younger children, point out the relationship between words and sounds.
- Set a good example! Parents must be willing to model behavior for their children. Keep lots of reading material around the house. Turn off the TV and have each person read his or her book, including mom and dad.
- Read the same book your child is reading and discuss it. This is the way to develop habits of the mind and build capacity for thought and insight.
- Let kids choose what they want to read, and don't turn your nose up at popular fiction. It will only discourage the reading habit.
- Buy books on tape, especially for a child with a learning disability. Listen to them in the car, or turn off the TV and have the family listen to them together.
- As you go through the day - cooking, gardening, grocery shopping, playing games - utilize this time as an opportunity to pick out words or read sentences.
- Take your children to the library regularly. Most libraries sponsor summer reading clubs with easy-to-reach goals for pre-school and school-age children. Check the library calendar for special summer reading activities and events. Libraries also provide age appropriate lists for summer reading.
- Subscribe, in your child's name, to magazines like Sports Illustrated for Kids, Highlights for Children, or National Geographic World. Encourage older children to read the newspaper and current events magazines, to keep up the reading habit over the summer and develop vocabulary. Ask them what they think about what they've read, and listen to what they say.
- Ease disappointment over summer separation from a favorite school friend by encouraging them to become pen pals. Present both children with postcards or envelopes that are already addressed and stamped. If both children have access to the Internet, e-mail is another option.
- Make trips a way to encourage reading by reading aloud traffic signs, billboards, notices. Show your children how to read a map, and once you are on the road, let them take turns being the navigator.
- Encourage children to keep a summer scrapbook. Tape in souvenirs of your family's summer activities -- picture postcards, ticket stubs, photos. Have your children write the captions and read them aloud as you look at the book together.



*From the Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities*

*The Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities (CCLD) is a collaborative public awareness effort of 7 national organizations on learning disabilities, including LDA, and supported by the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation.*



# Upcoming Events

**Sibshops in Harford County will be held on the following Saturdays, 10 AM - 2 PM**  
April 2                      May 2                      June 6  
Cost is \$30 for three sessions

The Maryland Coalition of Families  
for Children's Mental Health  
Harford County Office  
**Open House**



**DATE: May 7, 2009**  
**TIME: 9AM – 11AM**  
**PLACE: 19 Newport Drive Suite 203**  
**Forest Hill, MD 21050**

Representatives from several public and private agencies will be present to answer questions regarding services provided by their organizations.

**Business card drawing and prizes awarded!!!**

**Mountain Christian Church, Timothy Hall**  
**1824 Mountain Rd, Joppa, MD 21085,**  
**For more information or to register**  
**410-578-5169 or 1-800-999-9442, ext. 51**  
*\*A limited number of scholarships are available.*

## Sixth Annual World of Possibilities Expo

## Sign Language Classes

Slavie Federal Savings Bank  
1614 Churchville Road  
Bel Air, MD 21015



6:30 to 8:30 pm.

May 7, 2009

Please RSVP to the Partners for Success  
410-273-5579 or email  
Partners.Success@hcps.org.

Disabilities,  
Healthy Aging & Independent Living

May 6 & 7, 2009  
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Maryland State  
Fairgrounds  
Timonium, MD  
Something for Everyone!  
Admission \$3.00

Family Conference information is on next page.

<http://expo.caringcommunities.org>

**FREE WHEELCHAIR REPAIR TOO!**



## Special Education Advisory Committee

Harford County Public Schools  
102 South Hickory  
Bel Air, Maryland 21014  
May 14, 2009.  
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m

**Be sure to visit the Harford County  
Public Library website**  
[http://www.harf.lib.md.us/](http://www.harf.lib.md.us) to find out  
information on the summer reading  
program.

## Understanding Assessments and Evaluations

**S a t u r d a y, M a y 9, 2009**  
9:30 a.m. — 1:30 p.m.  
Mountain Christian Church, Overlook Room  
1824 Joppa Road, Joppa, MD 21085  
Presented by: Lauren Weingard, M.S., C.A.G.S.  
Certified School Psychologist. BCPS  
Please RSVP to Terri Augustine  
410-836-7177, ext. 349  
Or email at [taugustine@arcncr.org](mailto:taugustine@arcncr.org)  
by May 4, 2009.

## Self-Directed Supports (SDS)

Wednesday, May 6, 2009  
6:00pm Registration & Light Dinner  
6:30-8:30pm Presentations  
Presentations by:  
Tim Quinn, Executive Director, Arc NCR  
Patti Scott, CEO, Neighbours, Inc.  
The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region  
4513 Philadelphia Road, Aberdeen, MD  
RSVP by Friday May 1, 2009  
Sue Rattman: (410) 836-7177 x320  
[SRattman@arcncr.org](mailto:SRattman@arcncr.org)



## **\*Family Conference Announcement\***

### **Mini-Conference for Families of Students with Disabilities At the *Sixth Annual World of Possibilities Expo!* May 6<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009 – MD State Fairgrounds, Timonium**

Sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services

#### **11:00am - May 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>      [How to be an I.E.P. \(Informed & Effective Parent\) Team Member](#)**

A child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) is the cornerstone of his or her special education program. IEP team members (parents and the local school system) have the opportunity to combine their special areas of expertise and jointly craft an appropriate education program for the student. Please join us to learn how to be a more informed effective parent as part of the IEP team by increasing your knowledge of the school system's procedures, while learning skills in organizing and presenting observations about your child, and enhancing your role as an informed and active participants in the special education process.

#### **12:30pm - May 6<sup>th</sup>      [Meet Dan Keplinger – “King Gimp”](#)**

Come meet and talk with Dan Keplinger. You'll forget he has cerebral palsy and you'll remember his inspiration. Enter Dan's universe through his art as you explore the richness of a virtual gallery of his paintings and hear his commentary on being an artist.

#### **12:30pm - May 7<sup>th</sup>      [Successful Transitions – Life After School](#)**

Meet Andrea and Jesse and listen to their success stories about moving on in the adult world. Hear their advice about successful transitions and what has worked for them.

#### **2:00pm - May 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>      [Positive Visions and Practical Solutions for Inclusion](#)**

This training will provide participants with ideas and tools to create positive visions for children with disabilities. In addition, practical and creative ideas and solutions for inclusion will be presented and discussed. Participants will walk away with real life examples of how positive visions and inclusion can truly benefit children with disabilities.

**[No Pre-Registration Required. Space is Limited.](#)**