

Volunteer Connections

SEPTEMBER 10, 2013

Dear Volunteers,

I want to thank each of you for your continued efforts in providing support to families in your communities. It makes such a difference in the lives of families who have children with disabilities. Last month was the 2013 Utah Institute on Special Education Law. Staff from the Utah Parent Center and many of our IEP Coaches attended this premier conference. It provided a great opportunity to enhance our knowledge on special education rules and regulations. The information received will be used to effectively support families as they go through the IEP process. A special thanks to our IEP Coaches who took time out of their busy lives to attend.

If I can help you with any ideas or suggestions please let me know.

Rebecca

VOLUNTEER REPORTING:

Please take the opportunity to report any volunteer activities you've been involved in. The link below will provide you with 6 different types of activities you can report on such as:

- Direct support to families.
- Conferences and trainings.
- Helping parents with IEP related support.
- Serving on committee's that promote systems change for families who have children with disabilities.
- Outreach promotion of UPC services and events.
- Sharing your family story with educators or participating on a parent panel.

If you have participated in any of these activities, select "yes" when your activity appears on the survey. You will then be asked: When did you participate in the activity?; How much of your time was involved?; and How many people were served?

Reporting Link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Volunteer_reporting

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION GIFTS:

ALL volunteers who have provided service and have fully completed the reporting survey will receive an appreciation gift! This is our way of thanking you for your time and dedication in serving parents who have children with disabilities and telling us about it! Each gift will include its own message of appreciation. Please take the time to do your reporting so we can recognize your good works!

CELEBRATE THE HISTORY OF IDEA

Prior to 1975 individuals with disabilities were excluded from education in our schools. Many individuals with significant disabilities were placed in state institutions to live out their lives in a segregated setting. In 1975 congress enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. This act articulated a compelling national mission to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for all children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. For the first time children with disabilities attended school with their typical peers. The enormous capabilities of individuals with disabilities were finally discovered. Over time the laws were enhanced and in 1990 the name of the law changed to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Please take a moment to reflect on how far we've come! The following video was produced by the U.S. Department of Education for the 35th Anniversary Celebration of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

[Click here to view the IDEA Video.](#)

IEP COACH CORNER:

Making a Difference in the Lives of Individuals with Disabilities through Assistive Technology

Facts about Assistive Technology and the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

1. Assistive technology needs must be considered along with the child's other educational needs.
2. Needs for technology must be identified on an individual basis.
3. Identification of technology needs must involve family members and a multidisciplinary team.
4. Parents or IEP members can ask for additional evaluations or an independent evaluation to determine assistive technology needs.
5. When an evaluation is being conducted, consider fine-motor skills, communication, and alternatives to traditional learning approaches.
6. Lack of availability of equipment or cost alone cannot be used as an excuse for denying an assistive technology service.
7. If included in the IEP, assistive technology services and devices must be provided at no cost to the family and, if so indicated, devices must be allowed to go home with the student.
8. Parents always have the right to appeal if assistive technology services are denied.

The need for assistive technology must be considered like other needs, on a case-by-case basis. Assessments can also be requested through the IEP process. IEPs that include assistive technology should be written so that students have access to these accommodations not only for in-class work, but also for projects and all types of tests, including high-stakes assessment. To support the need for assistive technology, parents and professionals should document precisely how the student benefits educationally. For instance, documentation could include information such as: "Mary usually takes 1 hour to do 8 long division math problems. With a voice output (talking) calculator, she can do the same number of problems in 20 minutes."

Assistive Technology E-Journal

The Utah Parent Center (UPC) created this e-Journal to provide information to the families of children with disabilities and special health care needs in Utah about assistive technology and how it can be used to enhance the lives of their children. Read this publication to become more informed about assistive technology, AT in schools, AT and young children, parent stories, and assistive technology resources. Read Here: <http://www.utahparentcenter.org/publications/e-journals/>

Special monograph edition of the Utah Special Educator: Technology: Enabled, Engaged, Empowered

The March 2012 special issue of the Utah Special Educator journal is dedicated to teaching us how technology is used as a tool to support instruction. Find out what is different about teaching 21st century learners. **Journal PDF Link:** http://essentialeducator.org/?page_id=112

New Assistive Technology Information Sheets Available on the UPC Website

<http://www.utahparentcenter.org/resources/assistive-technology/>

- ✓ Assistive Technology Glossary
- ✓ Assistive Technology Solutions
- ✓ Assistive Technology 101
- ✓ Assistive Technology for Infants, Toddler and Young Children with Disabilities
- ✓ Simple, Inexpensive Devices Can Assist in Communication
- ✓ Techniques and Devices Can Help a Child Learn to Communicate
- ✓ Augmentative Device Helps Max Speak
- ✓ Switch Activities Promote Classroom Inclusion for Young Students
- ✓ Technology that Empowers People with Memory Loss

The Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT) - <http://ucat.usor.utah.gov/>

is a statewide resource that offers information and technical services to help people with disabilities acquire and use assistive technology devices. We provide services for people with disabilities identify and obtain assistive technology that will enhance the quality of their lives. Our services are free to people with disabilities within the state of Utah. UCAT helps identify and access information that is vital in acquiring equipment. We provide the following services:

- Help to define seating and positioning needs to ensure maximum effectiveness and seating solutions.
- Help clients learn to use aids to daily living (ADLs) including electronic ADLs, which increase independent activity.
- Assess job and home-sites to determine the best way to facilitate client access.
- Assess aptitude for using voice input technology for computer access by people who cannot use other methods.
- UCAT has an extensive loan bank allowing clients to use a device for up to 30 days ensuring that the proper device is successful for each individual client.
- Driving evaluations for individuals with physical impairments.
- Funding advice. Lack of funds can sometimes be a big barrier to device acquisition. Our funding specialist can help identify appropriate funding sources, assistance in contacting funding sources and applying for services and conflict resolution throughout the funding process.

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- Design and custom solutions. Sometimes a commercial, off-the-shelf device is just not quite right to fill a need or allow independence, UCAT has a well-equipped shop and skilled staff who can modify equipment or fabricate solutions for each individual.
- UCAT is a complete information and referral service. We have a good presence within the school districts, local advocacy in differing arenas, Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living.

Computer Center for Citizens with Disabilities (CCCD)

http://www.usor.utah.gov:81/ucap/ucap_computer_center.htm

UCAT also houses the Computer Center for Citizens with Disabilities (CCCD) which is an integral part of UCAT. THE COMPUTER CENTER is a member of the Alliance for Technology Access (ATA), a network of over forty resource centers across the country. The ATA is committed to improving the lives of persons with disabilities through technology. Linked by e-mail, centers share computer solutions and help one another keep current as to the latest technological developments.

- Workshops - We provide workshops for parents and professionals concerning all aspects of applying computer technology to the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Information - As a technology resource center, we can answer questions and provide information on many types of adaptive equipment and special software.
- Augmentative Communication - THE COMPUTER CENTER has a contract to work with the Utah Augmentative Alternative Assistive Communication and Technology teams (UAAACT) in the public schools throughout the state of Utah. Under this agreement with the Utah State Office of Education, we can loan augmentative devices and adaptive equipment to teachers and therapists on the augmentative teams for their use in assessing the oral and written communication needs of students. See the web site for more information: www.uaaact.org

UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

Dual Diagnosis Conference

Monday September 23 from 9-4 PM at the Utah Parent Center

The Utah Parent Center is excited to bring you an in-depth training on the topic of Dual Diagnosis. Dual Diagnosis is when a person with a developmental or intellectual disability also has a mental health need (anxiety, depression, OCD and other mental illness diagnoses). The information provided at this training is also intended for parents who have children who are at risk for getting Dual Diagnosis.

Experts in the field will help parents do the following:

- Understand Dual Diagnosis and its challenges
- Analyze what your child's behaviors could be telling you
- Determine other medical causes to rule out
- Look at medication uses and side effects with a medical professional
- Learn from other families who will share their experiences about working with professionals and how a dual diagnosis impacts a family.

Pre-registration is required. Register online at <http://conta.cc/1bmkOKI>

or call the Utah Parent Center at 801.272.1051 or toll-free in Utah at 1.800.468.1160. For questions and/or information about travel stipends, please contact the Utah Parent Center at [801-272-1051](tel:801-272-1051).

2nd Annual UVU Conference on ADHD, Co-Sponsored by CHADD of Utah will be held on September 27, 2013 at the Student Center at Utah Valley University. This year's keynote address will be given by Dr. Edward Hallowell, one of the world's leading experts in ADHD. The conference is designed for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and professionals who are interested in learning about ADHD, treatments, education and family life, available services, and practical resources. For more information go to: <http://www.uvu.edu/uc/adhd/>

Family Leadership Summit

Select Volunteers will be Personally Invited

Dates: November 8th and 9th 2013

Location: Sanderson Center Lecture Hall, 5709 S 1500 W in Taylorsville

Times:

- Day 1 - 9:00 AM – 5:15 PM
- Day 2 – 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

The Utah Parent Center and Utah's Mental Health Coalition is pleased to announce our upcoming Family Leadership Summit on November 8th and 9th. This 2 day training is designed for active leaders and volunteers currently providing services and support to families in their respective communities. This valuable training will help **YOU** develop leadership skills to positively impact families, individuals with disabilities, local communities, and service systems that can improve outcomes for people with disabilities.

The Family Leadership Summit will help develop leadership skills in the following areas:

- Developing relationships with other parent leaders and various disability organizations across the state;
- Understanding the impact of having a child with a disability and the impact on different family systems and cultures;
- Understanding the unique role parents play including the development, and implementation of services and programs;
- Identifying individual leadership strengths and training needs;
- Developing effective communication skills, telling their own story, and skills regarding interest-based negotiation and problem-solving;
- Developing positive, effective advocacy skills;
- Learning organizational skills such as working as a team, planning and leading meetings, community mapping, presenting before groups, and building networks;
- Developing and sustaining parent groups and advocacy groups;
- Sharing knowledge about the organization of public agencies and programs serving children with disabilities;

The Utah Parent Center and Utah's Mental Health Coalition values the work you do in behalf of people with disabilities! We hope you will take advantage of this rare opportunity to further develop your leadership skills.

University College, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the School of Education are pleased to present the 2nd Annual ADHD Conference. This conference is designed for students, parents,

teachers, administrators, and professionals who are interested in learning about ADHD, treatments, education and family life, available services, and practical resources.

We invite you to listen to one of the world's leading experts in ADHD, Dr. Edward Hallowell, and join in the breakout sessions instructed by a multidisciplinary group of experts who will share their research and best practices. Conference registration (lunch included) is \$30 for early bird and \$35 for walk-on, CEU credit is available for professionals, and student registration is FREE. University College, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the School of Education are pleased to present the 2nd Annual ADHD Conference. This conference is designed for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and professionals who are interested in learning about ADHD, treatments, education and family life, available services, and practical resources.

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<http://www.utahparentcenter.org/publications/electronic/e-connections/>

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please contact me at rebeccat@utahparentcenter.org or call at (801) 272-1051 if you are interested in participating in any of the following volunteer opportunities. I would love to hear from you!

Seeking new Family to Family Support Group Leaders and/or Co-Leaders Statewide

New Network Leaders should be receiving services, on the waiting list, or in the process of determining eligibility with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities. This allows Leaders to be a resource for individuals and families using these services as well as for other organizations. A Co-Leader or other Network Officer is not required to meet these criteria. New Leaders will receive ongoing support from the Utah Parent Center and existing Network Leaders.

Parent Panel Requests: The Utah Parent Center is asked several times a year to speak to students at the college level going into both general and special education. Our current parent panel requests come from the University of Utah and Westminster College. Volunteers who participate on the panel share information about their child with a disability and provide insights about their child's educational experience to future educators. It provides parents with a great opportunity to share what has worked well with their children and offer advice and tips on what needs to work better. The students benefit greatly from the 'parent perspective.'

IEP Coach Training: The Utah Parent Center has an ongoing need for parent volunteers who have been trained to help parents successfully go through the IEP process. If any volunteers are interested in receiving this training or know of someone who would make a good IEP Coach, please let me know. New volunteers will need to take our New Volunteer Training as a prerequisite to the IEP Coach Training and will need to fill out a New Volunteer Application. All IEP Coaches need to support parents by attending a minimum of 3 IEP meetings per year to remain active. For more information about this

training program please review the following information piece: http://www.utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/IEP-Coach-Opportunity-Program_2012.pdf

SPECIAL INTEREST: DISABILITY ISSUES IN THE NEWS

Kids' Attitudes About Disabilities Improve With Exposure:

Children who are exposed to people with disabilities, either directly or indirectly, have more positive attitudes about those with special needs. In a survey of 1,520 kids ages 7 to 16, researchers found that increased familiarity with those who have disabilities led to less anxiety and better attitudes.

<http://www.disabilitycoop.com/2013/08/30/kids-attitudes-disabilities/18615/>

Special Education Testing Standards May Soon Be Tightened

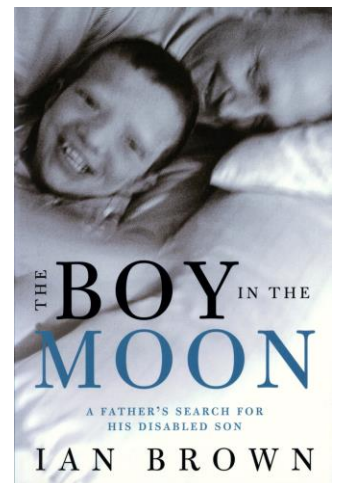
The U.S. Department of Education wants to do away with a rule that allows states to count some students with disabilities as academically proficient even if they do not meet grade-level standards. In a [proposal](#) published in the Federal Register late last week, the Education Department formally signaled its intention to end what's known as the "2 percent rule."

<http://www.disabilitycoop.com/2013/08/26/sped-testing-tightened/18581/>

BOOK OF THE MONTH – Available for loan from our Lending Library

The BOY in the MOON by Ian Brown – This book is a father's journey to understand his extraordinary son, Walker Brown, who was born with a genetic mutation so rare that doctors call it an orphan syndrome. At thirteen, Walker is still in diapers; he is globally delayed, he can't speak, and he has to wear cuffs on both arms so he won't constantly hit himself. He will require constant care for the rest of his life. With tender imagination, humor, and unblinking honesty, *The Boy in the Moon* tells the story of one frail boy and the tiny constellation of people who love and care for him. From this intimate perspective, Ian Brown opens out a profound meditation on what life is worth, and what it means for all of us.

If you are interested in borrowing a copy of this book please call the Utah Parent Center at (800) 468-1160. We would be happy to mail you a copy.



CALL FOR PICTURES

The Utah Parent Center is looking for pictures of children or young adults with disabilities engaged in the following types of activities:



- Family Photos – Showcase your family including your child with a disability.
- Using assistive technology
- Participating in a community based activity.
- Showing off a talent.

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- Working at a job site.
- Demonstrating a skill.
- Participating in a school based activity

The Utah Parent Center wishes to use these pictures in training and marketing materials which promote the Center's goals and objectives. All parents will be asked to fill out a media release authorizing the use of your pictures. Please e-mail all pictures and completed media release form to cassandra@utahparentcenter.org. **Media Release Form:** [Image/Media Release Form](#)

Please send me information on any event or resource you feel would be valuable to other volunteers. Don't forget your reporting!!! Thank you everyone!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Turley
Volunteer Programs Coordinator
Parent Consultant and Trainer
[\(801\)272-1051](tel:(801)272-1051) / rebeccat@utahparentcenter.org