



NEW SCHOOL, NEW TEACHERS AND NEW RULES

Parents who have students transitioning into middle school or junior high in the fall may have a lot of anxiety about the change in school, new teachers, new rules, new kids and so much more. What can parents do make the transition smoother both parents and student?



- First, take a deep breath! Transitions are a natural part of life for everyone. Going to a new school, moving to a new state, starting a new job, getting married, or having a baby are just a few of the natural transitions that can occur in life.
- Transitions take time and require learning to adapt and preparing for the new experience. As parents, teachers and caregivers, our role is to help prepare kids for these types of transitions in school.

Here are a few ideas to help you and your son feel better about the new adventure:

- Visit the new school. Take the opportunity to visit with your child so he can get a sense of the school, see how classes are structured, meet some of the teachers, and practice opening the "infamous" locker (a big milestone between elementary and middle school). Take a few pictures of the school so you can have them, if needed, for a social story or a daily picture schedule.
- Address concerns you have about transition with the IEP team. Spend time in your IEP meeting determining any accommodations and/or modifications that may be helpful during the transition to the new school. Remember to build on your son's strengths and interests to design the IEP to support all of his needs in middle school.
- Take advantage of summer programs. Some schools have academic and/or recreational summer programs. These can be great opportunities for your son to gain some skills in navigating the school and an opportunity to meet new students before school starts.
- Embrace all the new possibilities. Middle school offers a lot of new opportunities for your son including extracurricular sports and clubs, classes, and social activities.

Here are a few suggestions to help you, as his parent, survive the middle school transition:

- Get connected with the school. Go to back-to-school nights, open houses, parent-teacher conferences and other events where you can connect with the school staff and other parents.
- Be a resource for the teachers. Meet with the new teachers and other school staff and let them know how you can support them in working with your son. It is also important to express any concerns you might have. Communication is key!
- A little planning can go a long way in making this a smooth and successful transition for both you and your son. Remember to listen to your son and encourage him as he starts one of the biggest transitions in his young life!
- The Utah Parent Center is happy to support you in this journey. Please feel free to call us at 801.272.1051 or toll-free in Utah at 1.800.468.1160 or email us at info@utahparentcenter.org

Adapted and used with permission from Peak Parent Center's SpeakOut Newsletter. www.peakparent.org

SCHOOL'S OUT FOR SUMMER

With the school year coming to a close, many parents are looking for activities and programs that will provide structure for their children with special needs during the summer months. There are many great programs to choose from. Through our journeys to find programs and activities for our own children, we've found the following tips helpful to consider:

First, look for programs geographically close to your home. Convenience matters! For example, start with your local recreation center and ask to speak with someone knowledgeable about adaptive programs. Most children with disabilities do well in an inclusive environment with their non-disabled peers. Participants with more significant disabilities can also participate in programs with non-disabled peers with the help of a peer buddy or an aide.

Search the UPC's Summer Activities List for programs that compliment your child's strengths and interests. Schedule an orientation with the program provider to determine if it will meet your child's unique needs.

Summer Activities List 2013: http://www.utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Summer_Activities_List_2013.pdf

Upcoming Events Listing: www.utahparentcenter.org/upcoming-events

For teens, explore volunteer opportunities that help develop job skills. I personally have had success finding volunteer opportunities at Deseret Industries and the Bishop's Storehouse. Agencies such as the Utah Food Bank, Splore, Camp Kostopolus and the Hogle Zoo also use volunteers. For more ideas go to the United Way's Volunteer Center at <http://www.uw.org/211/>.

SUMMER FOOD PROGRAMS

Thousands of children across the state of Utah participate in the free or reduced price school meal program each year. In the 2012 Fiscal Year that amounted to more than 28 million free or reduced lunches served in the state of Utah. Listed below are some resources available to assist families in need.

Head Start's Summer Dinner Program

Don't miss out on the opportunity to participate in the free summer dinner program. Head Start's Central Kitchen will be participating in the summer food program and offering free dinner at four locations in the valley.



Who: All Children Ages 0 – 18 Years Old
When: June 6 – August 23, 2013
Where: Midvale, Salt Lake City and West Valley City
More: [Click here to download flyer.](#)

Breakfast and lunch programs are also available. More information about Summer Food Programs in your area is available at: <http://www.uah.org/food-assistance/summer-food/>. Or to find a food pantry in your area, visit www.utahfoodbank.org/need-help



DIPLOMAS AT RISK: A CRITICAL LOOK AT THE GRADUATION RATE OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

The National Center for Learning Disabilities has released “[Diplomas At Risk: A Critical Look at the Graduation Rate of Students with Learning Disabilities](#)” authored by The Advocacy Institute. This publication provides an analysis of exiting data for students with learning disabilities and looks at the new Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate for all students with disabilities as well as diploma options and allowances to graduation requirements across states. The full document is available for download or [view the webinar](#) about the report.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date: Saturday, June 1, 2013 Time: Begins at 9:30 AM

Event: 4th Annual Walk with Angels Fundraiser

Location: Wines Park, 500 N Center St, Lehi, Utah

The United Angels Foundation is proud to announce the Fourth Annual Walk with Angels Fundraiser. This event provides an opportunity for family, friends, and members of the community to show their support for parents that have children with special needs. For more information, visit

<https://www.unitedangelsfoundation.org/walkwithangels/>

Date: Wednesday, June 5, 2013 Time: 4:00 -5:30 PM

Event: Community Social Club Monthly Event: Hawaiian Luau

Location: Layton Commons Park, Back Pavilion, Wasatch Dr., Layton

For more information, call Sherry at 801.648.7437

What is Community Social Club? Social Club meets on the first Wednesday of each month and provides an opportunity for people with disabilities to make friends, network, participate in activities, and have fun in a safe and social environment. It is based on a monthly party that is pre-planned by participants and advisors of the Community Social Club. Anyone is invited, all ages, family included! We encourage you to bring something to share or \$2, but it is not required.

Date: Saturday, June 8, 2013 Time: All Day

Event: Utah Free Fishing Day

Location: Statewide, Varies

[Click here for more information.](#)

The one day you don’t need a license to fish in Utah is Saturday, June 8, 2013, which is Free Fishing Day.

Everyone in Utah can fish for free that day, but please remember that all of the state’s other fishing laws and rules still apply.

Date: Saturday, June 8, 2013 Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Event: **Project Strive Activity – National Federation of the Blind Utah**

Location: Jordanelle State Park Reservoir

For more information contact Project Strive at the NFB at 801.463.6632 or email projectstrivemail@gmail.com

Project Strive Participants are invited to come enjoy this fun end of the school year activity. Join us as confident, capable blind people enjoying the sunshine, beach, friends, water sports, and barbeque. Come enjoy the beach and maybe learn a new skill and build confidence at the same time.



Date: June 12-13, 2013 Time 8:30 AM -3:30 PM

Event: Utah Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Effective Practices Conference

Location: Davis Conference Center, 1651 North 700 West, Layton, Utah, 84041

Registration is required. Visit <http://www.updc.org/umtss-conf/> for more information.

UMTSS is a set of activities designed to support the implementation of a data-driven, problem-solving model within a multi-tiered delivery system. It is a continuous-improvement model in which problem solving and evidence-based decision-making occurs in an on-going way and across multiple levels of the educational system. UMTSS will positively impact student outcomes by creating capacity for an integrated academic and behavior support system that can be implemented with fidelity, is sustained over time, and utilizes data-based decision making at all levels of implementation.

Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Event: Community Social Club Summer Kickoff Dance

Location: Golden Spike Elks Lodge (South Door), 1875 West 5200 South, Roy, Utah 84067

For more information, contact Sherry at 801.648.7437.

Be sure to eat dinner before you come. Refreshments (punch and cookies) will be served.

Date: August 8 – 9, 2013 Time: TBD

Event: Utah Institute on Special Education Law

Location: Eccles Conference Center, 2415 Washington Blvd., Ogden, Utah

Registration is required. Visit <http://www.cvent.com/events/2013-utah-institute-on-special-education-law/event-summary-4532d43177334cd18d4ae9b89af96239.aspx> for more information. This annual conference is designed for administrators, educators, service providers, parents, families, and others responsible for the implementation of IDEA 2004 and the accompanying regulations.

UTAH PARENT CENTER INFORMATION DISCLAIMER

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Projects of the Utah Parent Center:

Utah Family Voices - Family to Family Health Information Center

Autism Information Resources at the Utah Parent Center

Family to Family Network – A Network Supported by the Utah Parent Center

Phone: (801)272.1051 • Toll Free Utah: (800)468.1160 • Fax: (801)272.8907

Email: info@utahparentcenter.org • Website: www.utahparentcenter.org

Our Mission: To help parents help their children with disabilities to live included, productive lives as members of the community. We accomplish this through the provision of information, training, and peer support.

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