



The Utah Parent Center would like to give special recognition to the Luv 2 Dance Studio, American Expressions of Dance Studio, and to the dancers and their families and supporters for including the Utah Parent Center in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Create Hope Event held on January 10, 2015. All proceeds and additional donations from this event were given to the Utah Parent Center. Thank you to everyone who made this event possible and who recognize and support the work we do!

## Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy

The attitudes and expectations parents hold for their children can have a profound effect on their social, emotional, and academic development. The manner in which parents interact with their children can influence children's self-esteem and level of independence. By being persistent and maintaining high expectations for your child, you may instill confidence and foster greater independence—both of which promote self-determination.

Becoming self-determined is an ongoing process for all children and youth, whether or not they have a disability. The approaches you take may look different across the age span or depending on the individual strengths and needs of your child.

### What is self-determination?

Self-determination is believing you can control your own destiny. Self-determination is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for themselves, and to take the initiative to reach these goals. It is about being in charge, but is not necessarily the same thing as self-sufficiency or independence. It means making one's own choices, learning to effectively solve problems, and taking control and responsibility for one's life. Practicing self-determination also means one experiences the consequences of making choices.

### Developing self-determination skills

The development of self-determination skills is a process that begins in childhood and continues throughout one's life. Self-determination is important for all people, but it is especially important, and often more difficult to learn, for young people with disabilities. Well-meaning individuals sometimes "protect" children with disabilities by making all their decisions for them. Also, sometimes people assume that people with disabilities can't think for themselves.

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Self-determination involves many attitudes and abilities including: self-awareness, assertiveness, creativity, and pride, and problem solving and self-advocacy skills. To take charge of your own life, you must be able to set goals, evaluate options, make choices and then work to achieve your goals.

Since self-determination skills are most effectively learned and developed by practicing them, students with disabilities should be given ample opportunity to use their self-advocacy, decision-making and socialization skills well before they leave high school to prepare themselves for working and living in their community. There are many important skills a person needs to develop to become a self-determined individual. These include choice-making, decision-making, problem solving, goal setting, responsibility, independence, relationships, communication, self-advocacy and leadership.

## **New Self-Determination Training Video Available!**



Do you want to help your child with a disability live an included and productive life? Your son or daughter needs self-determination skills such as making choices, setting goals, and self-advocacy. The Self-Determination video will provide you with a foundation of how to teach these skills to your son or daughter.

**Watch the Self-Determination video in English or Spanish using the links below.**

- [Self-Determination: English Version](#)
- [Self-Determination: En Español](#)

Want a DVD copy of any of our videos for yourself? Contact the Utah Parent Center at 801-272-1051 or 1-800-468-1160 and get a free copy sent to you.

## **Tips from Parents**

The following are suggestions from parents who have a child with a disability and their strategies for holding high expectations and positive attitudes for their child:

- Appreciate your child for who she is as an individual. All children have varying abilities and unique strengths and interests. Recognize your child's particular attributes and her abilities.
- Focus on your child's abilities and strengths rather than her limitations. Think about what your child is able to do and how those strengths and abilities can be highlighted and emphasized in all settings.
- Use language focusing on your child instead of her disability. All people have a number of characteristics that combine to make them an individual. Your child's disability is not her only defining characteristic.
- Hold high expectations for your child. By gently and gradually pushing your child to grow and not setting limits on what she can do, you may help your child realize her potential.
- Treat your child the same as other children, including having the same expectations. Try not to let your child's disability become an excuse. While there may be some variance in expectations according to your child's abilities, strive to treat all children equally.

There are many resources that can assist you as a parent to promote self-determination skills for your child.

Information provided by the Waisman Center. Visit the following link for additional ideas.

<http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/naturalsupports/pdfs/FosteringSelfDetermination.pdf>

## Self-Determination Skills for Preschoolers

Families are vital in teaching self-determination skills to their children; especially their children with disabilities. Self-determination is deciding for yourself how you want to live your life. There are many skills that need to be taught at an early age for a child to become self-determined. To start with, it is important to realize you can make your own decisions. Some self-determination skills include independence, problem-solving, choice-making, decision-making, setting goals, and self-advocacy. For more information about this topic, please visit the following sites:



- [www.education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/articles/familyinvolve/mih\\_preadolesc/index.php](http://www.education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/articles/familyinvolve/mih_preadolesc/index.php)
- <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jzdivq7ajqq7jyo/AABWp5SJelXiE2sOnj2Q-cc4a?dl=0>

## Making Choices

Every day we are all faced with making choices. Some choices are simple, others complex, and yet others require a great deal of effort and thought. There are many steps to learning the skills necessary to make choices. Babies and toddlers acquire the ability to make choices in a variety of ways. Some examples are deciding what to wear, choosing a snack or a toy they want to play with, etc. For more information about how to teach your child to make choices, visit

- [www.parents.com/kids/responsibility/teaching/good-decision-making/](http://www.parents.com/kids/responsibility/teaching/good-decision-making/)
- [http://www-tc.pbskids.org/berenstainbears/caregiver/BB\\_Sec\\_3.pdf](http://www-tc.pbskids.org/berenstainbears/caregiver/BB_Sec_3.pdf)

## Promoting Self-Determination: A Model for Training Elementary Students to Self-Advocate for IEP Accommodations

Self-advocacy and self-determination are key elements of working to ensure positive in-school and post school outcomes, and the earlier students begin to develop and employ self-advocacy skills the better! This informative article, focused on empowering elementary students with disabilities, is organized by a "Ten-Step Process to Teach Students Self-Advocacy for IEP Accommodations," summarized in the picture shown here. The Utah Parent Center extends a special thanks to the authors, Sage Publishing, and Teaching Exceptional Children and PEAK Parent Center for allowing us to share this article. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

**Figure 1. Ten-Step Process to Teach Students Self-Advocacy for IEP Accommodations**

1. Obtain parental consent.
2. Assist students with academic goal setting.
3. Introduce accommodations and IEP concepts
4. Investigate and model accommodations.
5. Help students determine where and when they receive accommodations.
6. Help students understand the importance of their accommodations.
7. Help students determine how to ask for their accommodations.
8. Introduce the cue card and engage in role-play of the process.
9. Describe and practice action steps if student is not given accommodations.
10. Monitor student progress and troubleshoot areas of difficulty.

Note. IEP = individualized education program.

## **Utah Parent Center Self-Determination Resources**

- [What is Self-Determination? Information Sheet](#)
- [Self-Determination Training Video: English Version](#)
- [Self-Determination Training Video: En Español](#)
- [Accessing Services Across an Individuals Lifespan Videos](#)
- [Tips for Teens: Self-Advocacy](#)
- [Help Your Young Adult Learn About Accessing Accommodations](#)
- [Helping Your Child Prepare for the Age of Majority](#)
- [Helping Youth Develop Soft Skills for Job Success](#)
- [How Families Can Build Soft Skills at Home](#)
- [Moving Your Son or Daughter Towards Independence](#)
- [Career Exploration in Action](#)
- [Vocational Rehabilitation Can Help Students in High School](#)

## **Additional Resources**

### **[Utah State Office of Education: Special Education Self-Determination Resources](#)**

The USOE provides several documents to assist in student including: *Me! Lessons for Teaching Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy*, *Self-Determination: The Engine that Drives Successful Student Transition into Employment and Further Education*, *Student-Directed Transition Planning* and *Teaching Goal Attainment*

### **[Helping Youth Build Work Skills for Job Success](#)**

Employment is a crucial aspect of a youth's journey towards adulthood. Families of youth, play a vital role in helping youth explore careers that match their strengths and interests and in helping youth understand the importance of building basic work skills so they are prepared for employment. The term "work skills" may seem vague, but it simply refers to basic abilities and habits employers are looking for in their employees. Work skills are a combination of "hard skills," the foundational skills that employers desire like reading, writing, and math, and "soft skills," the common-sense, everyday skills, like getting along with others, that help youth succeed in all aspects of life.

### **[Helping Youth Develop Soft Skills for Job Success \(Podcast\)](#)**

This podcast series provides ideas for parents and families on activities they can do at home and include in their child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) to ensure he or she develops skills needed for job success by the time he or she completes high school.

### **[Youth In Action! Becoming a Stronger Self-Advocate](#)**

A self-advocate is someone who speaks up for themselves. Self-advocates ask for what they need and want, and try to have as much of a say as possible in making their own life decisions.

### **[Building Blocks to Self-Determination](#)**

The path to self-determination begins both at home and in school. The ability to make choices, set goals, and participate in society as an adult is a lifelong process, and students learn about self-determination from their parents, family members, teachers, community leaders, peers, and role models. There are numerous components that contribute to developing self-determination: education, work experience, social relationships, and individual decision-making and responsibility. As educators, service providers, parents, and students, you're already familiar with the K-12 process. But what about the job search? The working world? Being independent? How do these various elements work once the student has left the classroom?

## **Effective Behavior Management Strategies for Kids: Practical Magic**

Join the Utah Parent Center and Melisa Genaux for workshops that will provide strategies for preventing behavior escalation, for getting kids to follow directions, for improving behavior with siblings, for increasing other desired behavior (homework completion, social skills), and for decreasing severe misbehavior, such as meltdowns and aggression. In addition, she will cover easy methods for creating reinforcement systems and for correcting the common errors that sabotage their effectiveness. Many practical methods for behavior change will be discussed, that can be adapted to any age or cognitive level, and that can be implemented immediately at home.

**Please pre-register to ensure your spot. Space is limited at each location!**

### **Saturday, March 14, 2015**

**Single Day Event 9:00 am – 3:30 pm**

*Cosponsored by Clear Horizons*

Clear Horizons Academy

1875 S Geneva Rd, Orem, Utah

Online Registration for 3/14/2015: <http://conta.cc/1yNFN36>

### **Tuesday Evening Series**

**3 Evenings 6:30pm – 8:30 pm**

*Cosponsored by*

Sanderson Community Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

5709 South 1500 West, Taylorsville, Utah

Individual event registration is **required**.

**Tuesday, March 10: Preventing Behavior Escalation and Improving Compliance – Getting Kids to Follow Directions**

Online Registration for 3/10/2015: <http://conta.cc/1CwwXYD>

**Tuesday, March 17: Creating Effective Consequences for Difficult Behavior -- How to Respond to Noncompliance**

Online Registration for 3/17/2015: <http://conta.cc/1CwziCR>

**Tuesday, March 24: Getting More of the Behavior You Want – Common Mistakes that Sabotage Positive Reinforcement**

Online Registration for 3/24/2015: <http://conta.cc/1uE2fvz>

### **Saturday, March 21, 2015**

**Single Day Event 9:00 am – 3:30 pm**

*Cosponsored by Davis School District – Special Education*

Davis Professional Development Center, 70 East 100 North, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor; Kendall Bldg, Farmington

Online registration for 3/21/2015: <http://conta.cc/1uE2fvz>

## Upcoming Utah Parent Center Events



Sponsored by Davis School District Special Education and 504 Departments and Davis Applied Technology College

All students 5th grade and up who receive Special Education and/or 504 services are encouraged to attend to receive valuable information from dozens of outside agencies to help them "map their future" as they plan to transition from school to adult responsibilities. Parent and teachers are also encouraged to attend!

**Thursday, January 29**

**5:00-8:00 PM**

Davis Applied Technology College  
550 East 300 South, Kaysville, Utah, 84037

**Students, parents and teachers are all invited to attend.**

### Parents as Partners in the IEP Process

Parents are important members of the IEP team. They can and want to be effective partners with other members of the team in developing and delivering special education programs for their student with disabilities. However, they often lack information. This workshop will help parents understand their role, rights and responsibilities in the IEP process. Parents will also learn how to effectively prepare for, participate in and follow-up on IEP meetings held on behalf of their student.

**Thursday, January 29 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM**

Utah Parent Center

230 West 200 South, Suite 1101, Salt Lake City

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/1v0s34D>

### Navigating the Maze of Services and Resources

*Guest Speaker: Utah Family Voices*

This will be an interactive session on health care and community supports for children and youth. The overall goal of this session is to help parents identify services that will benefit their children and families. Information presented is to help families navigate a system where they have knowledge about potential funding, supports and services they may be eligible for. Information about Medicaid, SSI, community organizations and agencies are examples of what will be covered.

**Thursday, February 5 6:30 PM -8:30 PM**

Utah Parent Center

230 West 200 South, Suite 1101, Salt Lake City

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/1ujrOQ1>



## **Transition from Early Intervention to Special Education Preschool: What You Need to Know before Your Child's Third Birthday**

This is an exciting time for families and their children with disabilities and special needs! Families have had the benefit of receiving services from Early Intervention and are now preparing to receive school-based programs and services. Come learn about your roles and responsibilities in working with teams that support your child as s/he moves into preschool programs. Parents have specific rights and responsibilities as they navigate through transition from Early Intervention (EI) programs under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to preschool programs under Part B of IDEA. Families need training and information to assist them with knowledge and understanding to be effective participants with teams.

**Tuesday, February 10                      6:00-7:30 PM**

Kauri Sue Hamilton School

2827 W. 13400 S., Riverton

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/1pWDiTn>

## **Parents as Partners in the IEP Process**

Parents are important members of the IEP team. They can and want to be effective partners with other members of the team in developing and delivering special education programs for their student with disabilities. However, they often lack information. These workshops help parents understand their role, rights and responsibilities in the IEP process. Parents will also learn how to effectively prepare for, participate in and follow-up on IEP meetings held on behalf of their student.

**Thursday, February 12                      6:30-8:30 PM**

Vista Education Center, Rooms 1525 & 1535

97 South 200 East, Farmington, 84025

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/ZIClyd>

## **Parent/Educator Support Group Meetings in Nebo School District**

Our "Parent/Educator Support Group Meetings" in Nebo School District are ALWAYS on the second Thursdays of every month at the District Office (350 South Main Street, Spanish Fork). These are adults only and for ALL parents of children with any disability. (Nebo District prefers to decide topics month-to-month according to parent need.)

**Thursday, February 12                      7:00-8:00 PM**

350 South Main Street, Spanish Fork

## **From "NO Where" to "KNOW Where": Transition to Adult Services**

Families of youth and young adults with disabilities have learned many things, but most of admit that they have much more to learn. The transition to adult life can leave parents feeling they are "NO Where"- totally lost! Get to "KNOW Where" by learning about transition planning and related issues. We will also discuss how to prepare your teen to participate in the transition planning process. Transition Pathways specific to the SLCSO will be presented.

**Thursday, February 12 6:30 PM-8:30 PM**

Utah Parent Center

230 West 200 South, Suite 1101

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/1B37J5x>

## **Sensory Smart: A Parent's Primer on Sensory Strategies**

*Guest Speaker: Madelyn Mauer – Easter Seals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain*

During this workshop we will discuss how the way we all process sensory information can either help or hinder our participation in daily activities. We will focus specifically on how sensory sensitivities can make participation more difficult for children, and how certain sensory strategies and environmental modifications can help increase success in a child's "occupations," which include: play, academic related tasks, community participation, and self-care activities.

**Tuesday, February 17 7:00-9:00 PM**

Utah Parent Center

230 West 200 South, Suite 1101, Salt Lake City

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/1rIxYYP>

## **Applying for Social Security When Your Child Turns 18**

A parent consultant from Utah Family Voices will give a parent's perspective about the process for applying and maintaining Social Security eligibility for parents who have children with disabilities transitioning from high school.

**Thursday, February 19 6:30 PM-8:30 PM**

Utah Parent Center

230 West 200 South, Suite 1101

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/149EUFR>

## **Whose Decision Is It Anyway? Self-Determination and Helping Your Son or Daughter Make Good Decisions**

Parents will learn how to effectively support their son/daughter with disabilities in the post-secondary years. Learn how to be a mentor to your young adult as he or she learns how to manage his or her own life. A self-determined person can set goals, make decisions, speak for him or herself and solve problems. Parents will gain skills to achieve this objective.

**Thursday, February 19, 2015 6:30-8:30 PM**

Vista Education Center, Rooms 1525 & 1535

97 South 200 East, Farmington, 84025

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/1u6Sink>



## **Whose Decision Is It Anyway? Self Determination and Helping Your Son or Daughter Make Good Decisions**

Parents will learn how to effectively support their son/daughter with disabilities in the post-secondary years. Learn how to be a mentor to your young adult as they learn how to manage his or her own life. A self-determined person can set goals, make decisions, speak for him or herself and solve problems. Parents will gain skills to achieve this objective.

**Tuesday, February 24                      6:30-8:30 PM**

Canyons Technical Education Center (east building)

825 E. 9085 S. Sandy

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/1lxHtU8>

## **Plan for the Future: Employment and Post-secondary Education**

This workshop will help parents to understand vocational rehabilitation programs and services including how VR can be involved in the IEP; supported employment provided by the Division of Services for People with Disabilities; and how to access college/university support services.

**Thursday, February 26                      6:30 PM-8:30 PM**

Utah Parent Center

230 West 200 South, Suite 1101

Online Registration: <http://conta.cc/1zhJmw1>

## **Alpine District Parent Nights**

Alpine School District Special Education Department and the Utah Parent Center invite you to Parent Night. Parent Nights are held the 3rd Thursday of the month. Legacy Elementary Media Center, 28 East 1340 North, American Fork Preschool Parents: 5:30 - 6:30 PM , School Age Parents: 6:30-7:30 PM

### **Alpine District Parent Night on Transitioning to Kindergarten**

**Thursday, February 26                      5:30-6:30 PM**

### **Alpine District Parent Night on Transitioning to Middle School and High School**

**Thursday, February 26                      6:30-7:30 PM**

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## Utah Parent Center Information Disclaimer



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