



Volunteer Connections

Dear Volunteers,

February is a month dedicated to loving and appreciating those we support and care about. As you celebrate Valentine's Day, I hope you remember you are truly the **'heart'** of our organization. It has been said that the **heart** of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others. As you use your leadership skills to reach out and serve others in your communities, their lives are enriched, they are more easily able to handle the unique challenges of being a parent of a child with disabilities.

Thanks for all your heartfelt work!



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/volunteerreporting>

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!

IEP COACH CORNER – New Publications

New Cost-Sharing Program for Students Using Accessible Instructional Materials

The Utah State Instructional Materials Access Center (USIMAC) provides accessible instructional materials to students with print disabilities within the state of Utah. USIMAC has collaborated with the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) and the local School Districts and Charter schools (LEAs) to develop a new cost-sharing program that will provide more accessible materials to all students who qualify under the Chaffee Amendment.

Read More:

<http://www.utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/USIMAC-letter-to-CCPD-and-parents-students-1-12-13.pdf>

Questions and Answers about NEW Standards Based IEP's

A standards-based IEP is the process and document that is framed by the state standards and contains goals aligned with and chosen to facilitate the student's achievement of state grade-level academic standards. "Standards-based IEPs provide students with better access to academic content, stimulate conversation between special educators and general educators, and can help initiate discussion about schooling using the same curricular language (McLaughlen, Nolet, Rihm, Henderson, 1999)."

Read More:

<http://www.utahparentcenter.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/02/Standards-Based-IEPs.pdf>

New Interagency Agreement between the Utah State Office of Education, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, and Local Education Agencies

This document has been developed to establish procedures to ensure effective communication and relationships with the USOE, USDB, and LEA's. This document will also further explain agency roles, services for students with sensory disabilities, financial obligations to students and participating entities, and a basic process for resolving disagreement among the parties.

Link to Interagency Agreement:

www.schools.utah.gov/sars/DOCS/law/iaa-usdb.aspx - 2013-01-07

New Parent & Family Supports – Autism Specific Resource List

<http://www.utahparentcenter.org/publications/autism-resource-lists/autism-supports>

UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

FAMILY LINKS EVENT - REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

2013 Family Links Statewide Conference which will be held on March 8 and 9, 2013 at Vivent Technologies in Provo, Utah. **This year's two-day event will feature Jo Moscarro - "When Go to Your Room Isn't Quite Far Enough."** Jo provides strategies in teaching children ownership and management of their behavior. Participants will be engaged in a variety of activities that will develop skills. Jo Mascorro engages her audience with humor and practical wisdom. Jo is a nationally renowned trainer on the topics of behavior intervention practices, effective communication, parenting skills and programming for students with severe disabilities. This is an event you will not want to miss. For additional information and to register please go to <http://www.utahparentcenter.org/2012/11/16/2013-family-links-conference/> I hope to see as many volunteers as possible at this event.

Salt Lake County Transition Mini-Conference is sponsored by the Utah Parent Center, Canyons School District, Granite School District and Salt Lake City School District.

Get Your Teen with Special Needs Ready for Transition in 2013!

March 12-13, 2013 from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM at the Canyons District Administration Bldg.

From No Where to Know Where: Transition to Adult Life -As families of children and young adults with disabilities we have learned many things – but most of us admit that we have much more to learn. Topics will include: Getting and Keeping the First Job, The Journey to Adulthood, Skills for Teaching Effective Self-Advocacy, a Panel of Transition Experts, and much more. The cost for this event is \$15 which includes lunch and materials for both days. Register online at <http://conta.cc/VoZttT>

The Learning Disabilities Association of Utah 2013 Annual Conference will be held on **March 15th at Weber State University at the Shepherd Union Building.** Keynote Speaker, Dr.

Jerome Schultz is a clinical neuropsychologist on the faculty of Harvard Medical School in the Department of psychiatry. Dr. Schultz will be signing his new book "Nowhere to Hide: Why kids with ADHD and LD hate school and what we can do about it" Breakout sessions will be available for both teachers and parents. For more information visit, www.ldau.org.

Registration will be up soon. **A minimal amount of scholarships are available to attend this conference, if you are interested in this applications are available at:**

http://www.utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/SCHOLARSHIP-APPLICATION_March-2013.pdf

Foundations of Autism 2013 Annual Conference is put on by the Utah Personnel Development Center and the Utah State Office of Education for both parents and professionals who support students on the autism spectrum. This informative event will be on **March 6 & 7th at the Red Lion Hotel in Salt Lake City.** Topics will include "The Alert Program for Self-Regulation" presented by Mary Sue Williams OTR and Sherry Shellenberger OTR. "Responding to Challenging Behavior in Students with Autism" will be presented by Jo Mascorro, M.Ed. Registration is now open. For additional information please go to:

http://www.utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/SCHOLARSHIP-APPLICATION_March-2013.pdf

Utah Parent Center Volunteer Connections: February 2013

Utah Down Syndrome Foundation's 1st Annual Conference, "Limitless Possibilities", will be held on Saturday, April 20th from 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM at the Doty Education Center at Intermountain Medical Center in Murray. The Keynote Speaker will be Jim Faber, President of the National Down Syndrome Congress. For a workshop schedule and to register early go to: <http://udsf.org/conference2013/>

Latest E-Connections, for more resources and events including a schedule of upcoming UPC workshops: <http://www.utahparentcenter.org/publications/electronic/e-connections/>

ONGOING 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 for our Salt Lake Network

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/2013/02/SCHOLARSHIP-APPLICATION_March-2013.pdf

LOVE UT GIVE UT FUNDRAISING EVENT FOR THE UPC-SEEKING YOUR PARTICIPATION

The Utah Parent Center needs your help! The Center is participating in the *Love Utah Give Utah* online fundraising opportunity on March 22, 2013. On that day the Community Foundation of Utah will lead a state wide effort to bring together Utahns for 24-hours of unprecedented giving. Every donation made to the Utah Parent Center during *Love UT Give UT* will help qualify the Center for even more challenge grants and awards, making your donation impact the Center in more ways than one. If you cannot make a donation on March 22, 2013 you will be able to set up your donation in advance to go through on March 22nd. *Love UT Give UT* is about raising money from the community for the community. More information about how you can help will be included in the next newsletter. Please start getting the word out about this upcoming opportunity for the Utah Parent Center now. To learn more about the Love Utah Give Utah movement please visit http://loveutgiveut.razoo.com/giving_events/utah13/home.

SPECIAL INTEREST: DISABILITY ISSUES IN THE NEWS

After four decades, disability champion, Tom Harkin is leaving congress: Read more
<http://www.disabilitycoop.com/2013/01/29/after-four-decades-congress/17198/>

Three Tennessee homecoming king nominees made a unanimous and touching decision that no matter who won, they would give the crown to a beloved student with a genetic condition.

<http://gma.yahoo.com/homecoming-surprise-tennessee-teen-200343676--abc-news-topstories.html>

“Students with disabilities must be given a fair shot to play on a traditional sports team or have their own leagues”, the Education Department says. “This is a landmark moment for students with disabilities. This will do for students with disabilities what Title IX did for women,” said Terri Lakowski, who for a decade led a coalition pushing for the changes. “This is a huge victory.”

Read more: <http://www.ksl.com/index.php?sid=23848746&nid=294&title=schools-must-provide-sports-for-disabled-us-says>

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

It's important that the parents you work with understand the difference they can make by sharing their personal stories and experiences with their legislators. As the legislative session gears up, our representatives need to hear both the successes and needs of the systems that support children and adults with disabilities. As volunteer leaders you can invite your designated representative to hear the needs of the families in your area. Many parents take the time to write thank you notes to their representatives. Contacting and educating the legislators/committee members is CRUCIAL this year. There are many new legislators and budget cuts are already being discussed. Please take time to share your story. The following agencies and contacts have dedicated their time to legislative advocacy and would be happy to teach you more about how to get involved in the legislative process:

- **Legislative Coalition for People with Disabilities (LCPD):** Joyce Dolcourt, Chair of the LCPD; [\(801\) 718-3013](tel:8017183013). To join the coalition and learn how to get involved go to <http://www.lcpdut.org/>.
- **Grassroots Advocacy Partnership (GAP):** To join the Network Partnership, find your regional representative and stay up to date on current legislative happenings go to www.utahgap.org.

The following information pieces on public policy will guide you on how to be actively involved.

Public Policy Work/Month to Month Advocacy:

<http://www.utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Month-to-Month-Advocacy.pdf>

Public Policy – The Basics

<http://www.utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Section-8-Public-Policy-Work-Section-for-Participants-Handbook.pdf>

Interested in giving public testimony? Contact Debbie Benson at (801) 538-1034 if you are interested in providing testimony on a specific budget. February 21st is a day set aside for legislators to hear parents testify on any of the social services budgets. Let your voice be heard!

Remember, if legislators don't hear from you, they assume everything is okay.



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

Life Skills Activities for Special Children by Darlene Mannix – This book will provide you with a collection of practical, easy-to-use, open-ended activities to assist in teaching life skills to special children. Many types of skills are required today, not only to survive but to experience independence and success in everyday living. Included in this book are 145 ready-to-use lessons with reproducible worksheets to help children develop the basic skills necessary for independence and everyday living. **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 the Utah Parent Center for a full listing of books available in the Lending Library.**

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:

- Using assistive technology
- Participating in a community based activity.
- Showing off a talent.
- 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
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Parent Consultant and Trainer

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