



Volunteer Connections

July 9, 2013

Dear Volunteers,

School is out and summer is upon us! I hope you are enjoying the extra time with your families! I want to thank each of you for going the extra mile for the families you serve. I have talked to both parents and educators who have appreciated the professional and thoughtful way you provide support to families. A special thanks to those volunteers who continue to participate in our parent panel presentations. Sharing your parent perspective will help new educators be prepared to serve students with disabilities. I also want to thank our IEP Coaches who continue to attend conferences and trainings in an effort to remain "highly qualified."

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!

Utah Parent Center Volunteer Connections: July 2013

The Department of Health is pleased to announce the open enrollment dates for the Medicaid Autism Waiver Program. This program assists children 2-6 who have been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. The Department will be accepting applications to fill 35 openings. From June 17, 2013 to July 12, 2013, interested families can apply online at <http://health.utah.gov/autismwaiver> or by mail or fax. Printable copies of the application will be made available on the website. For additional information about eligibility requirements contact Kristi Hall, Autism Waiver Liaison at (801) 538-6357.

IEP COACH CORNER: *Improving Employment Options through Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Services through Vocational Rehabilitation*

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, otherwise known as Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), provides a wide variety of individualized services to people with disabilities who need assistance to become employable. Vocational Rehabilitation has been working hard to improve services for high school students. Check out the May 15, UPC E-newsletter titled "How Are Transition Services Different from General Vocational Rehabilitation Services?" to find out more about Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Counselor's roles and responsibilities.

For instance did you know . . .

- A student can start working with a counselor as early as 16 years old?
- An assigned VR Transition Counselor can attend a student's IEP or Section 504 planning meetings?
- And, a VR Counselor has been assigned to every public school in the State of Utah?

Take the time to find out more by reading the article in the UPC E-Newsletter.

As volunteers, take the time this summer to find out who the VR Transition Counselor is in your school district. If you have further questions about Vocational Rehabilitation you can contact Linda Smith, a transition specialist at UPC at (801) 272-1051 or (800) 468-1160.

NEED HELP WITH TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ADULT LIFE?

The Utah Parent Center is implementing statewide activities designed to provide information, training, outreach, and referral services for transition-aged youth and young adults (ages 15-26) with all disabilities and their parents. The project is called the COURIER Project (Child Outreach – Utah's Referral, Information and Education Resources) and is sponsored by the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Utah State Office of Education. Emphasis will be placed on training and information for parents of students on: Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 Plans and Special Health Care Needs.

New workshops have been developed for parent and youth concerning different employment supports, training and college options, and teaching effective self-advocacy skills. Emphasis is being placed on students who are on Section 504 Plans and Special Health Care Needs Plans. Too often these students do not receive transition planning but still need the help of adult services such as vocational rehabilitation. If you are interested in the UPC coming to your area for a workshop or need questions answered about adult services please contact Linda Smith, COURIER Coordinator at UPC at (801) 272-1051.

KEEPING KIDS ENGAGED AND LEARNING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS APPS

With over a thousand apps now available to help individuals with special needs it has become increasingly difficult to find and choose the right special needs app. Back in January Friendship Circle launched the [Special Needs App Review](#) to make it easier for you to find the right special needs app. Below is just a sampling of the many apps available to choose from.

SoundMatch

The goal of Soundmatch is to match the sounds with their corresponding images. Just like a memory game, Soundmatch gives the player a set of cards that when flipped will reveal a sound or an image. Soundmatch helps children improve their perception and auditory discrimination process that ultimately have a direct impact on speech, language and writing skills.

Price: \$3.99 **Platform:** Apple [Read the Full Review](#)

Smart Charts

Smart Charts, by Happy Face Kidz, is a tool for parents and teachers to track, reward and reinforce positive behaviors, chores and responsibilities for kids. This app is perfect for parents and teachers working with children with special needs, teachers within the classroom and parents working with teachers to create a school-home connection.

Price: \$2.99 **Platform:** Apple [Read the Full Review](#)

Happy Geese

Happy Geese helps young children and children with special needs to learn to play Snakes and Ladders and the Game of the Goose, one step at a time. Easily configure our beautiful boards with those features most suited to your children. Available in English, Spanish, Catalan and French, and planning to launch more languages.

Price: \$3.99 **Platform:** Apple [Read the Full Review](#)



Kid in Story

Kid in Story makes it easy and fun to create visual stories to support learning, social modeling, and early literacy with your child as the star character. Kid in Story was developed by an award-winning team of game designers and is inspired by children with autism, Down syndrome, ADD, ADHD, auditory processing issues, and cognitive disabilities.

Price: \$6.99 **Platform:** Apple [Read the Full Review](#)

VASTtx – Therapy Samples

VAST is an innovative application of video technology to facilitate and improve communication abilities for individuals with speech-impairments. Following close-up video of

mouth movements allows these individuals to speak full sentences. The simultaneous combination of visual, auditory and, written cues, allows these individuals to readily produce speech.

Price: \$3.99 **Platform:** Apple [Read the Full Review](#)

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

US Autism & Asperger Association World Conference & Expo will be on August 15-18 at the Sheraton Salt Lake City Hotel and Conference Center. Over 40 of the world's most respected experts will discuss new treatment regimes and effective therapies. Keynote Speakers will include Temple Grandin, PHD who is one of the most accomplished and well known adults with autism in the world and Martha Herbert, MD, PHD who is an Assistant Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School and a Pediatric Neurologist at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. For more information, go to www.usautism.org or call (801)816-1234.

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. Breakout sessions will be instructed by a multidisciplinary group of experts who will share their research and best practices. For more information go to: <http://www.uvu.edu/uc/adhd/>

Save the Date! Family Summit – October 25th & 26th at the Utah Parent Center. The Summit will include parent leaders from several organizations including our Utah Parent Center volunteers. This conference will teach participants the leadership skills needed to be effective parent leaders and advocates in their communities. More information to come!

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

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.
- 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](#)

Utah Parent Center Volunteer Connections: July 2013

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/2013/02/IEP-Coach-Opportunity-Program_2012.pdf

Seeking Table Captains for UPC's 30 Year Celebration Breakfast on Tuesday, September 10, 2013 at the Marriott Hotel (75 South West Temple, Salt Lake City). The breakfast begins at 8:00 AM and ends at 9:00 AM. This fundraising event will increase awareness of the Utah Parent Center and its mission to help families who have children with special needs and will help raise funds to support the Center's programs that help children and families. As a Captain you will be responsible to invite 9 people to join you at a table to enjoy a free full breakfast and a program to learn more about the work of the Utah Parent Center. Your family, friends, clients, neighbors and work colleagues make excellent potential guests. During the program, guests will be asked to consider a contribution, although a gift is not required and there is no minimum level. The UPC's job will be to inspire your guests to make a donation. Please contact me at (801) 272-1051 if you are interested in participating!



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SPECIAL INTEREST: DISABILITY ISSUES IN THE NEWS

"Never Give Up!"

Dana Ross, a support group leader for the UPC's Family to Family Network in Duchesne shares her son's story of inclusion. Danny born with CP and his father Brian form Team Ross, as they participate in a local triathlon. https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=umUltU77zMc

Local Student with Down Syndrome Selected for Eisenhower Junior High Cheer Squad

With pompoms at the ready, Lily Smith is joining the Eisenhower Junior High Cheerleading squad for her 9th Grade year. Lily and her mother, Suzie, were guests Friday afternoon on ABC 4 Utah. Suzie Smith is a UPC Community Resource Volunteer!

<http://www.abc4.com/mediacenter/local.aspx?videoid=4080350>

University of Utah Receives Grant for Groundbreaking Down Syndrome Research

Studies including Utah families will provide insights into the human brain and treatment strategies for mental disability. Read More: <http://www.innovationutah.com/blog/university-of-utah-receives-grant-for-groundbreaking-down-syndrome-research/>

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

The Motivation Breakthrough – 6 Secrets to Turning On the Tuned-Out Child by Richard Lavoie - Motivation is the key to learning. But very few parents and teachers have an effective arsenal of techniques at their disposal. Lavoie's practical, innovative approach begins with a quiz that helps a parent or teacher identify, using six different possible models, a child's motivational style. He then explores each motivational style in depth, presenting proven techniques that can be used in the classroom and at home to break through a child's apathy and encouragement and inspire him to succeed and achieve. **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.**

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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