

Volunteer Connections

OCTOBER 14, 2013

Dear Volunteers,

This has been an exciting year for the Utah Parent Center. We are celebrating our 30 year anniversary! In September we held our first fundraising breakfast to celebrate this milestone. The event was very successful in raising community awareness of the Center's programs and the fundraising donations we received will help support projects including our volunteer programs. A special thanks to our Family to Family Leaders and IEP Coaches who volunteered their time and energy before, during and after the event. Your support made a big difference!

We just completed another IEP Coach training. Our new Coaches are trained and ready to provide assistance to parents who need help navigating the IEP process. During our training we had a surprise visit from Mia Love. It was completely unexpected! She commended our volunteers for the quality work they do throughout the state. Mia also made a donation to support the programs of the Center. The Utah Parent Center does not endorse political candidates however we are always happy to educate any candidate who seeks to learn about the issues that affect parents who have children with disabilities.

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

IEP COACH CORNER:

Steps for Success in Supporting Parents through the IEP Process

1. Explain to parents the IEP process is designed to be a partnership where everyone works together to meet the needs of the child. The process is outlined in detail in the law, but the purpose is to provide a structure that allows the team process to work to serve the child.
 2. Help parents realize the importance of their participation as an equal member of the team in deciding what the goals and services for their child will be. The information they share about their child is very important in helping the team understand their child.
 3. Help parents prepare for the IEP meeting by encouraging them to review their child's records. Parents can review files from previous programs that will help them plan more effectively for future programs and needs. If these records are not in the parent's possession, encourage them to obtain copies from the school if necessary. You could encourage parents to prepare a written profile describing their child and bring copies to share with the team. You can also encourage parents to bring a picture of their child.
 4. Encourage parents to share copies of any independent professional evaluations they may have.
 5. Have parents make a list of the needs that their child has. They may also wish to list any goals or services that they would like to discuss with the team. Make sure parents have a copy of the proposed goals or a draft of the IEP ahead of time. Sharing ahead can help everyone to be more prepared for discussion and negotiation.
 6. Remember that the goals and services are based upon the needs of the child. If the parent is able to explain the concerns they have about their child so that all team members understand them, they will have a better opportunity to have them addressed for their child. If the parent has ideas for goals and services, help them make a list and prioritize what is most important. Help them to be able to explain how the goals and services address the needs of their child.
 7. Encourage parents to write down any questions that they may have about evaluations or any of the services and make sure they have the opportunity to ask them. Have parents ask for clarification if they do not understand something the team is discussing.
 8. Help parents understand and follow the process.
 9. Encourage parents to include their child in the process as appropriate. Participating in or leading the team meeting can be very empowering for a student, and can help the student to "buy in" to the goals and the program. It is also important for students to learn to advocate for their needs and interests as early as possible.
 10. Coach parents to communicate clearly and directly about their concerns and needs.
 11. After the IEP meeting, encourage parents to follow up to see that the agreed upon program and services are being implemented. Ask the parent to monitor the child's progress on the IEP goals.
 12. If parents have concerns about their child's special education, work within the system to resolve them. Help them follow the chain of command in the school district and take advantage of the expertise of the professionals in their district.
- Download this document at www.utahparentcenter.org/services/volprogs/i-am-a-volunteer/

Bullying Info and Facts

What is bullying? At first glance, many people might think this behavior is easy to define. Their first image of bullying might be of a physically intimidating boy beating up a smaller classmate. While that can still be considered bullying today, parents need to know that bullying behaviors can be much more complex and varied than the stereotype.



For example, harmful bullying can also occur quietly and covertly, through gossip or on the Internet, causing emotional damage.

As a starting point let's consider a few other features that have been included in definitions of bullying. Although definitions vary from source to source, most agree that an act is defined as bullying when:

- The behavior hurts or harms another person physically or emotionally.
- The targets have difficulty stopping the behavior directed at them, and struggle to defend themselves.
- Many definitions include a statement about the "imbalance of power", described as when the student with the bullying behavior has more "power", either physically, socially, or emotionally, such as a higher social status, is physically larger or emotionally intimidating.



Stop Bullying Now!

Bullying can have devastating effects on its victims. Students with disabilities are more susceptible to being targets of bullying. It takes a community effort to prevent bullying. As volunteers and leaders, become better informed about the issues surrounding bullying. The following information sheets located on the Utah Parent Center's website will educate you about bullying, its impact and strategies for prevention and remediating the effects.

Bullying Information Sheets

The following information sheets are available for download on the Utah Parent Center website.

Visit www.utahparentcenter.org/publications/infosheets/bullying-info-sheets/

- Common Views and Myths about Bullying
- Drama: Is it Happening to YOU?
- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Bullying
- Is Your Child being Bullied in Cyberspace?
- Notifying School Administrators of Incidents and Concerns
- Record Keeping and Bullying
- Say NO to Bullying
- Steps to Take if Your Child is Being Bullied at School
- Talk with Your child about Bullying
- Telling Classmates about Your Child's Disability
- What Every Kid Needs to Know About Bullying
- What if Your Child is the Bully
- PACER Center's National Center for Bullying Prevention
- Bullying in the Workplace and What You Can Do if You are Being Bullied



Feds Urge Schools to Tackle Bullying of Kids with Disabilities

In new guidance sent to educators across the country, federal education officials say that schools may be liable if they don't properly address bullying of students with disabilities.

The [guidance](#) issued Tuesday in a four-page "Dear Colleague" letter details the unique obligations that schools have under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to ensure that children with disabilities are not victimized.

Specifically, officials from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services said that bullying can lead to a denial of a student's right to a free and appropriate public education, or FAPE, if it "results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit."

Read More: <http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2013/08/21/feds-schools-tackle-bullying/18557/>



More Online Resources on Bullying Prevention

Utah Parent Center: www.utahparentcenter.org/resources/bullying

The Human Rights Education Center of Utah: www.hrecutah.org

Pacer's National Bullying Center: www.pacer.org/bullying

Kids Against Bullying: www.pacerkidsagainstabullying.org

Teens Against Bullying: www.pacerteensagainstabullying.org

Pacer's WE WILL Generation: www.pacer.org/bullying/wewillgen/

Bullying Prevention: www.stopbullying.gov

Bullying Prevention Resources Guide: www.bullyingprevention.org

National Crime Prevention Council: www.ncpc.org/newsroom/current-campaigns

International Bullying Prevention Association: www.stopbullyingworld.org

UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

Family Leadership Summit

Received your personal invitation? Register NOW! Space is filling up quickly.

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. To register for the Family Leadership Summit please use the link indicated on your personal invitation.

For a listing of upcoming events, please visit www.utahparentcenter.org/upcoming-events

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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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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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

Sequester Hits Special Education like 'Ton of Bricks'

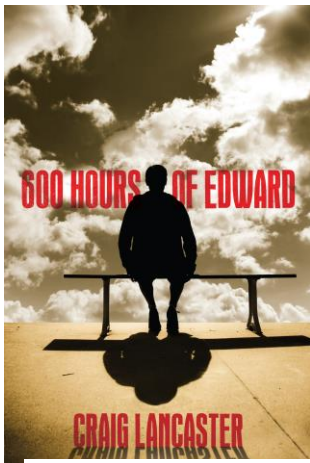
Across the country, advocates for children with disabilities are grappling with the impact of sequestration, the automatic budget cuts that kicked in when Congress failed to reach an agreement to reduce the federal budget. Although the cuts took effect March 1, the impact did not reach schools until the start of the current school year because of the way many education programs are funded.

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2013/09/10/sequester-sped-bricks/18689/>

New Federal Rule Seeks to Boost Disability Employment

Under a final [rule](#) announced Tuesday, most federal contractors will be expected to ensure that people with disabilities account for at least 7 percent of workers within each job group at their companies. If businesses meet that threshold, the U.S. Department of Labor estimates that it could mean as many as 585,000 jobs for people with disabilities within the first year.

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2013/08/28/new-rule-employment/18604/>



BOOK OF THE MONTH – Available for loan from our Lending Library
600 Hours of Edward a novel by **Craig Lancaster**– Edward Stanton is a man hurtling headlong toward middle age. His mental illness has led him to be sequestered in his small house in a small city, where he keeps his distance from the outside world and the parents from whom he is largely estranged. For the most part, Edward sticks to things he can count on...and things he can count. But over the course of 25 days (or 600 hours) several events puncture the walls Edward has built around himself. Edward faces having to open his life to experience and deal with the joys and heartaches that come with it, or remain behind his closed door, a solitary soul.

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.
- Working at a job site.

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- 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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