

# SPEAK OUT

Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Inc.

Volume 21 Number 1 • Fall 2004

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## Learning From Experience

*This back to school issue of SPEAK OUT focuses on resources to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. While we recognize the need to share information that is based on scientifically-based research, we also value the voice of experience offered by students with disabilities. Our cover article was written by a high school student who attended a presentation by Jonathan Mooney, author of Learning Outside the Lines. After attending the presentation at Southern Connecticut State University with her mother we asked the student to give us some of her impressions of Jonathan's experiences. Her thoughts remind us that strategies and accommodations alone do not guarantee student success. Parents and teachers alike need to ensure that we also provide opportunities for students to understand their learning differences, build confidence, recognize their strengths and feel connected to their peers.*

I was not excited to go at all except that I was glad to get out of school early that day. I thought it sounded boring and was afraid that I would be the only kid there. I liked walking around a college campus which is where it was held. At first I didn't think it was gonna be interesting but after a while it felt like he was telling a story about me. I could really relate to what he was saying, like how he hated school, and how he used to go to the bathroom when it was his turn to read out loud because he didn't want the other kids to know that he couldn't read. It makes you feel dumb. That's the same as me. I don't blame him for quitting school because I wished I could do that also.

School is really hard and it feels like the teachers don't like it if you don't understand what they are saying. It was so good to hear that somebody else has been through the same thing as me. I wished so much that there were more kids there to hear him because I think it could help them to want to keep on trying in school.

***.....It was good to hear that somebody else has been through the same thing as me.....***

The best part of his talk was that I got to meet him and talk to him afterwards. For once I felt like somebody knew what I felt like. I almost started crying when I was talking. He was really cool and we just talked about how hard school is when you have dyslexia and learning disabilities. It made me believe that I can make it through college too. I told him that the teachers don't always follow my IEP. We also talked about how much time our moms have spent trying to get the school to give us the help we needed.

*Learning Outside the Lines*, by Jonathan Mooney and David Cole, is available at CPAC. If you are interested in borrowing this book, please call CPAC at 1-800-445-2722 or email [cpac@cpacinc.org](mailto:cpac@cpacinc.org).

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There seem to be a number of questions regarding the federal legislation, No Child Left Behind. CPAC has a workshop entitled "Understanding No Child Left Behind." If you would like us to present to your school or parent group, please contact us at 1-800-445-2722 or via email at [cpac@cpacinc.org](mailto:cpac@cpacinc.org) to schedule a workshop!!



**The Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Inc.**

is a statewide non-profit organization that offers information and support to parents of children with disabilities and the professionals who work with them. The center is staffed primarily by parents of children with disabilities who assist other parents in understanding how to participate more effectively in their children's education. A range of services is available, including telephone consultation, workshops and in-service presentations for parents, schools and service providers, a website, and a lending library of books and videotapes.

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## Speaker Fund Now Available

The Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education, has set aside funds for parent organizations to help cover the cost of speakers they may wish to bring in to talk with families and professionals about education-related topics. The Bureau established this fund to support their efforts to promote parent involvement throughout the state. Training and dissemination of information are viewed as key components of the plan to prepare parents and school personnel to work together as partners in the planning and implementation of a child's educational program.

CPAC will be accepting the applications from interested organizations who are seeking funds to support parent training in their communities. General guidelines for funding include: funds are available once per year for each group; maximum amount granted is \$500; presentation topic must relate to education of students with disabilities; program must be publicized and open to the public; and events must be held in an accessible location.

For a complete set of guidelines and an application, please contact Annie Stockton at CPAC at 1-800-445-2722 or [astockton@cpacinc.org](mailto:astockton@cpacinc.org).

### CPAC's Wish List

If you have been interested in supporting CPAC, but never knew how you could help, the following are a few things that we can use:

- Paper goods, cups, plates and napkins
- New PC laptop computer
- Stamps
- DVD player
- Staples gift card
- Children's books
- Borders/Walden books gift card
- Digital camera

Donation by check, PayPal or through United Way  
(see our website for more information)

## Connections in Connecticut: How Parents are Making a Difference

If you know of parent activities that you'd like to share with others, please let us know! We will be happy to add your information to our website, and publish it in our next issue of SPEAK OUT if space allows.

### **Sibling Support Groups**

This year the Autism Spectrum Resource Center will be offering two sibling support groups for those with brothers and sisters on the autism spectrum, that would include: Aspergers, PDD, and High Functioning Autism. One group will be for sibs ages 10-14, and the other group for sibs ages 7-9 years of age. The groups will meet on Saturdays, monthly, at High Roads Student Learning Center in Wallingford. The meeting times will be 10am to 12:30pm and will start on October 23rd. The cost for the entire year will be \$80 for each child participating. Please contact Lois Rosenwald at ASRC for further information at 203-248-5222.



### **SECASA**

Southeastern CT Autism Spectrum Association, Inc (SECASA) is a nonprofit organization created by families and professionals who are dedicated to working together to meet the needs of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Together we are committed to gaining knowledge, providing information and networking within the community. By forming a partnership between families, professionals, disciplines and agencies we will be better able to serve and support individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families. Please join us on the last Thursday of each month at the Preston Public Library from 6:30pm - 8:00pm. For further information please contact SECASA, Inc at (860) 917 - 3108, hmileski@aol.com or sallysherman@sbcglobal.net.

### **Citizens for Quality Sickle Cell Care, Inc.**

This group, based in New Britain, is made up of parents, families and friends of people living with, as well as professionals interested in providing quality care and support for children and adults with Sickle Cell Disease. Members are provided with educational materials, training, advocacy referrals, counseling, individual and group support. If you would like more information about this group please call (860) 223-7222, email citizens2003@yahoo.com or visit their website at cqsc.netfirms.com.

### **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program of The Consultation Center in New Haven offers a free support group for grandparents and other relatives raising kin children. The group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday evening of each month at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 830 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, from 7:00pm – 9:00pm; child supervision provided for children ages 3-12. Each meeting features refreshments, conversation and a speaker. For additional information, contact Barbara Abraham, Program Coordinator, at 203-789-7645 or babraham@theconsultationcenter.org.

### **A New Group in Wallingford**

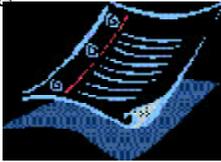
All parents, grandparents, and caregivers of children with disabilities are invited and encouraged to attend this exciting and informative new group in Wallingford. Harmony Group is dedicated to improving the lives of children with disabilities by creating positive changes and enhancing public awareness. In addition, they are a key starting point for advocacy, education and information in the pursuit of better education for children with disabilities. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Please contact Michelle at 203-269-0088 or Lucy at 203-675-0001 or visit their website at [www.HarmonyGroupCT.org](http://www.HarmonyGroupCT.org) for more information.

### **Adults With Autism Spectrum Disorder**

If you are an adult with Aspergers Syndrome, High Functioning Autism or PDD who is 18 or older, there is a support group for you. Meetings will take place on the second Friday of every month from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at High Roads School in Wallingford. For further information, please contact Lois Rosenwald at ASRC at 203-248-5222.

## New Guidelines for Paraprofessionals

The Connecticut State Department of Education has recently published a working draft of the "Guidelines for Training and Support of Paraprofessionals Working with Students Birth to 21." If you would like a copy of this book, contact Kjell Fenn at the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) at 860-632-1485 ext. 312 or email him at fenn@ctserc.org.



## Supporting Paraeducators

Increasingly, paraeducators, *also known as paraprofessionals*, are providing instructional and learner support to students with disabilities under the supervision of licensed teachers, a major shift from 40 years ago when paraeducators had primarily clerical responsibilities. Paraeducators should be accepted as part of the school community and valued for their contributions to the child's educational team. However, they should never replace or supplant the classroom teacher.

A clear recognition of paraeducator roles and responsibilities is essential to ensuring that they are being used appropriately. For example, neither research nor common sense supports assigning paraeducators to provide primary or exclusive instruction to students with disabilities. Educators should be very careful not to create a double standard whereby students with disabilities receive their instruction from paraprofessionals, while students without disabilities have ongoing access to qualified professional educators.

*Supporting Paraeducators: A Summary of Current Practices* by Cynthia Warger, ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education Arlington VA. ERIC/OSEP Special Project, 2002.

For a full copy of this article, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to CPAC, 338 Main Street, Niantic, CT 06357.

Statewide Paraprofessionals As Partners Conference, November 18th in Trumbull and December 10th in Cromwell. For information or to register contact Debbie Williams at SERC at (860)632-1485 ext. 227.

## Using Scaffolded Instruction to Optimize Learning for All Students

Scaffolding is a process in which students are given support until they can apply new skills and strategies independently. When students are learning new or difficult tasks, they are given more assistance. As they begin to demonstrate task mastery, the assistance or support is decreased gradually in order to shift the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the students. Thus, as the students assume more responsibility for their learning, the teacher provides less support.

For example, a young child or a child with physical disabilities likely would need assistance when learning how to use a playground slide. At first an adult might carry the child up the steps and slide with the child several times. Then some of the scaffolding or support would be removed when the adult placed the child on the lower portion of the slide and allowed him or her to slide with little guidance. The adult would continue to remove the scaffolding as the child demonstrated that he or she could slide longer distances successfully without support. Research shows that scaffolding is one of the principles of effective instruction that enables teachers to accommodate individual student needs.

*Common Ground*, Spring 2004 by Martha Larkin

For a full copy of this article, please contact CPAC at 1-800-445-2722 or email cpac@cpacinc.org.

### ***Now available at CPAC...***

**Differentiating Instruction in the Regular Classroom: How to Reach and Teach All Learners, Grades 3-12** by Diane Heacox, Ed.D. Some children learn easily, while others struggle. How can teachers make sure that every child has opportunities to develop his or her talents? The answer is differentiation: changing the pace, level, or kind of instruction in response to learners' needs, styles, and/or interests. Any curriculum can be differentiated—even a standard or mandated curriculum. This book teaches people how to differentiate instruction in a wide variety of scenarios to provide variety and challenge in how teachers teach and in how students learn.

*Call CPAC at 1-800-445-2722 if you would like to borrow this book.*



## **Dear Parent Advocate,**

My son will be in the third grade this year. He has been in special education since kindergarten and has always had a one-on-one aide. This year the school has told me that his aide will be used by a number of the children in his class. I am concerned that he will not get the help that he needs and that he will fall further and further behind. Can the school do this? What can I do to get my son's aide back?

*Anxious Mom*

*Dear Anxious Mom,*

You raise several important questions. First, the school can not change services that are specified in your child's IEP without holding a PPT meeting. You should review your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) to see whether or not it specifically states that your son requires one-on-one assistance throughout the day or during specific activities.

If you disagree with what the IEP says, you can always request another PPT meeting to discuss changing the level and intensity of services and supports you feel that your child needs.

You may want to consider current research which indicates that students with disabilities who are placed in general education classrooms with a one-on-one paraprofessional had less general education teacher engagement than when the paraprofessional is classroom-based (Giangreco, 2001). With the increased emphasis on ensuring students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum, your son may actually benefit by changing the role of the paraprofessional.

For additional information about the roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals, please refer to resources identified on page 3 of this newsletter.

### **Differentiated Instruction**

Not all students are alike. Based on this knowledge, differentiated instruction applies an approach to teaching and learning so that students have multiple options for taking in information and making sense of ideas. The model of differentiated instruction requires teachers to be flexible in their approach to teaching and adjusting the curriculum and presentation of information to learners rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum. Classroom teaching is a blend of whole-class, group and individual instruction. Differentiated Instruction is a teaching theory based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms.

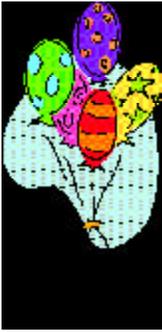
To differentiate instruction is to recognize students varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, and to react responsively. Differentiated instruction is a process to approach teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting

each student where he or she is, and assisting in the learning process.

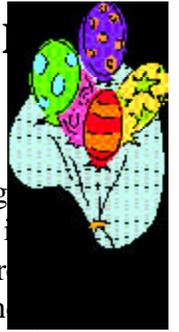
The design and development of differentiated instruction as a model began in the general education classroom. The initial application came to practice for students considered gifted who perhaps were not sufficiently challenged by the content provided in the general classroom setting. As classrooms have become more diverse with the introduction of inclusion of students with disabilities, and the reality of diversity in public schools, differentiated instruction has been applied at all levels for students of all abilities.

Many authors of publications about differentiated instruction strongly recommend that teachers adapt the practices slowly, perhaps one content area at a time. Additionally, these experts agree that teachers should work together to develop ideas and menus of options for students together to share the creative load.

*Differentiated Instruction by Tracey Hall, Ph.D., Senior Research Scientist, National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum [www.cast.org/ncac/index.cfm?i=2876](http://www.cast.org/ncac/index.cfm?i=2876). For a copy of the complete article, contact CPAC at 1-800-445-2722 or via email at [cpac@cpacinc.org](mailto:cpac@cpacinc.org).*



# The Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center Celebrates 20 Years of Serving Families



The Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Inc. (CPAC) has served as the Parent Training and Information Center for the State of Connecticut for the past 20 years. The Center is committed to the idea that parents can be the most effective advocates for their children given the confidence that knowledge and understanding of special education law and procedures can bring. It is CPAC's mission to support families in their efforts on behalf of their children with disabilities.

Through outreach efforts and referrals from schools, social service agencies and other parents, the number of families that the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center serves has grown dramatically over the past 20 years. We continue to take pride in providing prompt and personal assistance to all who contact us.

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The measure of CPAC's success as an organization is determined not only by the quality of information, training and support we offer to parents, but more importantly by how effectively parents are able to utilize that information to make a positive difference in the lives of their children. The majority of parents who were contacted during this year's annual telephone survey report that the information they received from CPAC, either by phone or after attending a workshop, was useful and helped them to make decisions about their child's education. Furthermore, parents report that these decisions often result in their child receiving more appropriate services. Examples cited by parents include: a young child who was able to attend a community-based early childhood program, a child who received extended school year services and a child who was able to receive services from a teacher of the deaf.

Of course, services alone are not the answer to our children's success. Parents and teachers must work together to build success that is based on a positive vision for each child's future and taking the steps to ensure that the future holds opportunities for gainful employment, independent living, and community participation.

It seems only fitting then, that CPAC celebrates its 20 years of successful service to families and professionals throughout Connecticut by honoring and thanking each of our supporters. It is your commitment, hard work and expectations which will ultimately secure a future that fulfills the promise of each and every child.

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## CPAC's Board of Directors

- Dianne Ahlberg
- Shannon Aiello
- Jane Allen
- Margaret Avallone
- Margaret Benton
- Mike Maus
- Marge Quinn
- Karen Stockton



## A W O R L D O F

## T H A N K S !

The Fair Haven Community Health Center in New Haven continues to support our work by providing CPAC with space for our satellite office. Parent Educator, Carmina Lizardi, works out of that office, providing parents in New Haven and the surrounding area with information and support. We are extremely grateful to the Fair Haven Center for their on-going support and wish to thank them for their generosity.

CPAC would like to thank our Board of Directors for all the time and hard work they have volunteered to help CPAC grow and continue to serve families.

And a great big **THANK YOU** to all of the families who have used our services. We hope that you continue to contact us if you need assistance.

## Celebrating the Arts

As part of CPAC's twentieth anniversary celebration, an art show sponsored by CPAC was held at the Mystic Art Association to honor students and the arts. The event was planned in conjunction with our regional conference of Parent Centers in the Northeastern United States which was held in Mystic. Artwork was donated by students of all abilities from around the state. Students' artwork was represented from preschool all the way through high school.



Families came to see their children's artwork displayed while guests ate light refreshments and mingled both inside and outside on the patio. Guests were entertained by the Norwich Sign Language Choir, directed by Maria Weingart, who performed a selection of songs from their spring program. CPAC would like to thank everyone who helped make the event a success. A Time To Celebrate

American School For the Deaf  
Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School  
Connecticut College Children's Program  
Diocese of Norwich Sign Choir  
East Lyme Middle School  
Griswold Middle School  
Hygenic Art Gallery  
Mystic Art Association  
Norwich Free Academy  
Norwich Public Schools  
Seabird Enterprises  
Lindsey Bolles  
David and Starr Champion  
Linda Osbourne  
Andrew Reel  
Chris Reel  
Jake Smith

All of the Students Who Submitted Artwork

You can view more pictures of the art show on the web at [www.cpacinc.org/cpac\\_photo\\_gallery.htm](http://www.cpacinc.org/cpac_photo_gallery.htm)

## FUN IN THE SUN!!

On July 17, 2004, over 150 people, including CPAC staff, board members and families, from around the state attended a picnic celebrating CPAC's 20 years of serving as Connecticut's Parent Training and Information Center for the State of Connecticut. The picnic was held at Camp Harkness in Waterford. Camp Harkness provided everyone with many things to do, from playing in the sandy beach and swimming in the ocean water, to swinging, and sliding on the handicap-accessible playground. Parents had an opportunity to meet and talk to other parents, while children of all ages participated in activities throughout the day, such as blowing bubbles and face painting. The Mystic Aquarium provided a fun hands-on activity for children and adults alike where people learned about and got to touch live lobsters, sea-stars, hermit crabs, and clams!



The picnic provided CPAC board and staff with the opportunity to show their appreciation for all of the families that have helped to make CPAC's mission a success. Thank you to everyone who participated and a special thanks to Hayden Obuhanick, CPAC's summer intern, for organizing the picnic! We would like to thank the following organizations and people for making this event possible:

Big Y Supermarket  
BJ's Wholesale Club  
Cavanagh Springs  
Coca-Cola  
McDonald's  
Mystic Aquarium  
Stop & Shop Supermarkets  
WalMart

Youth Volunteers from Crossroads Presbyterian Church  
CPAC Board Members, staff, and their families



## LEGISLATION

### Parent Involvement In No Child Left Behind

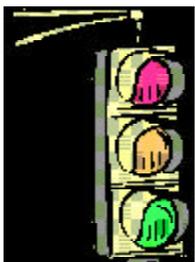
The U.S. Department of Education recently released guidance on parental involvement to help states, school districts and schools ensure that parents—as their child’s first teacher—have the information they need to help improve their child’s academic achievement.

The guidance is designed to assist state education agencies, local school districts and schools in administering the parental involvement provisions of the law. It outlines their responsibilities and provides sample templates that might be used for the development of a district-wide parental involvement policy and for a school-parent compact. It clarifies aspects of the law that have been brought to the Department’s attention by local education leaders, parents and others. For an online copy of the guidance, visit [www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc](http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc).

*Source: U.S. Department of Education, The Achiever, June 1, 2004.*

Although the requirements for school and district parent involvement policies apply only to those receiving Title 1 funds, The Connecticut Department of Education encourages all schools and districts to develop and implement parent involvement policies. For more information or to see your districts parent involvement policy contact your Superintendent’s office.

*For questions related to parent involvement or for a copy of Questions Parents Ask, call CPAC at 1-800-445-2722 or email [cpac@cpacinc.org](mailto:cpac@cpacinc.org).*



### IDEA Reauthorization Update

There have been no new developments since May 13, 2004, when S1248, the bill to reauthorize the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), passed the Senate by a vote of 95 to 3. The next step is for conferees to be appointed by each party from both houses; they will then meet in conference committee for final resolution. The bill will then go to the President for signature.

### Que ningún niño se quede atrás y la participación de los padres

El Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos acaba de publicar una guía sobre la participación de los padres para ayudar a los estados, distritos escolares y las escuelas a posibilitar que los padres -como primeros maestros del niño-tengan la información que necesitan para ayudar a mejorar el nivel académico de sus hijos.

La guía está diseñada para asistir a las agencias educativas estatales, locales, distritos escolares y escuelas a implementar las disposiciones de la ley sobre la participación de los padres.

La guía desglosa las responsabilidades y provee modelos que pueden ser usados por todo el distrito para que éstos desarrollen unas normas sobre la participación de los padres.

La guía también esclarece aspectos de la ley que padres, educadores y otras personas han traído a la atención del departamento.

Puede obtener una copia de la guía visitando: [www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc](http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc).

*US Department of Education, The Achiever, June 1, 2004.*

Aunque los requisitos para las normas sobre la participación de padres aplican sólo a aquellas escuelas que reciben fondos de Título 1, el departamento de educación del estado de Connecticut invita a todas las escuelas y distritos a desarrollar e implementar normas de participación de padres. Para más información o para ver la guía sobre la participación de padres de su distrito, puede contactar la oficina del superintendente.

Si tiene alguna pregunta relacionada a la participación de los padres en la escuela o si quiere una copia de las Preguntas para padres, llame a CPAC:1-800-445-2722.

## An ADHD Tool Kit for Parents, Pediatricians & Educators

The National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quaterly has created a useful set of downloadable handouts, assessment scales, and more for parents, teachers, and pediatricians who are concerned about a child who may have Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. Visit [www.nichq.org/resources/toolkit/](http://www.nichq.org/resources/toolkit/) or send a check for \$2.00 (to cover copying and postage) to CPAC, 338 Main Street, Niantic, CT 06357.



F.A.C.E. (Families Advancing Craniofacial Excellence) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for children in Connecticut with craniofacial differences. The mission of F.A.C.E. is to address the medical, financial, emotional and educational concerns relating to craniofacial condition and provide education to the community with the hope of bridging the gap of misconceptions. Some of the programs and services offered through F.A.C.E. are a support center, a resource center, school programs, community education programs, FACE-to-FACE networks, and scholarship programs and medical financial assistance program (when funds are available). F.A.C.E. is also looking for volunteers to serve as board members as well as on several committees.

For more information about F.A.C.E. and to find out how you can help, please visit their website at [www.smilesforchildren.org](http://www.smilesforchildren.org) or contact Erin McCall-Goldie at (860) 673-1829.

## [www.disabilitystudiesforteachers.org](http://www.disabilitystudiesforteachers.org)

This website developed by the Center for Human Policy at Syracuse University contains lesson plans and materials designed to help teachers integrate disability studies into social studies, history, literature, and related subjects in grades 6-12. The plans and materials can be adapted for use in postsecondary education. Lesson plans and essays on "disability studies" examine disability as a social, cultural, and political phenomenon. Among the topics: a history of deaf education, efforts to reform poorhouses in the 1840s & 1850s, P.T. Barnum & "freak shows," conscientious objectors during World War II who exposed horrific conditions at state institutions and an introduction to disability studies.

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### **Autism Ally**

Autism Ally, [www.autism-ally.com](http://www.autism-ally.com), provides environmental modifications to help manage behaviors at home, school, or daycare. Autism Ally offers families solutions to safety issues that they may encounter with their child who has Autism. Some of the products they sell are selective monitoring systems, stop sirens, and portable door alarms. Visit their website for more information or call CPAC for information on some of their products at 1-800-445-2722 or via email at [cpac@cpacinc.org](mailto:cpac@cpacinc.org).



### ***Another addition to CPAC's library***

[Educating Children with Autism](#). National Research Council. This book outlines an interdisciplinary approach to education for children with autism. The committee explores what makes education effective for the child with autism and identifies specific characteristics of programs that work. Fundamental issues that this book examines include supporting families, how to better prepare teachers, state, federal and local policies, and effective programs and strategies. National Academy of Sciences, 2001.

Please call or email CPAC at 1-800-445-2722 or [cpac@cpacinc.org](mailto:cpac@cpacinc.org) if you would like to borrow this book.

## Connecticut Youth Leadership

The following article was written by Lindsey Bolles who attended The Connecticut Youth Forum at the University of Connecticut this year. The goal of the forum is to help young adults with disabilities meet the challenges of the future, overcome obstacles, and become leaders so that they can make a difference in their communities and for others with disabilities. Each year, for one week, more than 30 of the state's top high school students with various disabilities gather on the campus of the University of Connecticut for intensive leadership training. This forum gives students the chance to build the leadership skills they will need to succeed and excel as young adults.

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Hello, my name is Lindsey. I am 19 years old and next year I will graduate from High School. This summer I attended the Youth Leadership Forum for students with disabilities at the University of Connecticut. I stayed at UConn for 3 nights and 4 days. There were about thirty-five other students from Connecticut who also attended with all different types of disabilities. During the day we had a lot of activities to go to. One of my favorites was the Outdoor Adventure Course at Camp Hemlocks in Hebron, Connecticut. My teammates had to carry me through a wire maze without touching it. We went very slowly and worked hard but we did it! That day we had a lot of fun and we all had to help each other through the different activities. We always had breakfast, lunch, and dinner at the cafeteria near the dorm rooms. It was so cool because we went by ourselves. The food was very good and we had a lot of choices. After dinner we always had an activity. The talent show and dance were a lot of fun. At the talent show some students sang songs and we all sang along. At the dance everyone danced and we all laughed a lot.

I made many new friends at the Youth Leadership Forum. My team plans to get together in the future and build a handicap ramp and donate it to a public place. The three night, four day experience went by so fast. I wish I could have stayed longer.

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*For more information on Youth Leadership, contact Karen Halliday at the State Department of Education at (860) 713-6923 or via email at Karen.Halliday@po.state.ct.us*

My Future My Plan: A Transition Planning Resource for Life After High School  
This curriculum is designed to motivate and guide students with disabilities and their families as they begin early transition planning for life after high school. It promotes positive attitudes and self-advocacy, and assists students, parents, and professionals to make the transition planning process more effective. The curriculum package includes a videotape and discussion guide, a planning notebook for students, and a guide for family members and teachers. Developed by State of the Art, Inc. in collaboration with the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition at the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota.

If you are interested in borrowing this curriculum from CPAC, please call us at 1-800-445-2722 or email us at cpac@cpacinc.org.

### Planning for Your Child's Future.....

Metlife offers estate planning for families of children and other dependents with special needs through their MetDESK program. For information on this program, contact CPAC at 1-800-445-2722 or contact Metlife at 1-800-METLIFE or visit MetLife's website at [www.metlife.com](http://www.metlife.com).

Thursday, October 28, 2004  
ARI of Connecticut, Inc. is hosting a fair and conference including a seminar on transition:  
***Creating Transition Pathways from the Teen Years Through Adulthood***  
UConn, Stamford Campus  
For more information, contact Judy Katzen at 203-324-9258 ext. 3002 or via email at KatzenJ@ARICT.org.

*Correction - In our last issue of Speak Out, we shared information about High Hopes, a Therapeutic Riding Program, but the phone number was incorrect. The correct phone number for Katie Guernsey at High Hopes is (860) 434-1974 ext. 15.*

## Homework Help . . . .

1. Put his papers on a clipboard, get him a pencil with a rubber gripper, break points down to be included on the worksheet into thoughts and post them on Post-its around his writing area to help him keep the thoughts "in mind" while he writes.
2. Break writing tasks into brief chunks.
3. Work on your own projects near your child. You can pay bills, write letters, or read a book. This way, you can create a sense of "We're all in this together."

*CIRCUIT, Learning Disabilities  
Association of CT, Fall, 2001.*

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## Querido padre o madre:

Estamos comenzando un nuevo año escolar con mucha energía y deseos de ayudar a nuestros hijos que reciben servicios de educación especial. Aquí le voy a dar unas cuantas sugerencias para que investigue y se informe muy bien sobre los servicios de educación especial que recibe su hijo@.

- Lea cuidadosamente el IEP de su hijo@:
  - ¿ qué servicios de educación especial recibe mi hijo@?
  - ¿ cuáles son las metas y objetivos para este año escolar?
  - ¿ cuándo es la próxima reunión de PPT para discutir su progreso?
  - ¿ participa mi hijo@ del currículo general?
  - ¿ cuánto tiempo pasa mi hijo@ con estudiantes típicos (regulares)?
  - ¿ tiene que tomar los exámenes estandarizados del estado? (CMT; CAPT)

Si usted no encuentra la respuesta a estas preguntas en el IEP de su hijo@ y nos quiere consultar, puede hablar al teléfono siguiente: Carmaña Lizardi - (203) 776-3211.

Les deseo un buen año escolar y recuerde que somos los padres quienes mejor conocemos a nuestros hijos.

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The cost of a one-year subscription is \$10.00 for parents and \$15.00 for professionals.

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An Office of Civil Rights (Section 504) complaint can now be filed online at the Department of Education Web site at <http://ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>.

For more information about Section 504 and how it relates to special education call CPAC at 1-800-445-2722.



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**Printing costs continue to rise. If you would like to receive SPEAK OUT via email, please contact CPAC at 800-445-2722.**

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## **SAVE THE DATE!**

- October 2, 2004      **Inclusive Education: Promising Practices**, Saxe Middle School, New Canaan, CT. This conference focuses on educational practices that promote the inclusion of students with developmental disabilities in general education. Twenty workshops will be presented designed to appeal to all members of the school community. For more information, please visit [spednetconference.org](http://spednetconference.org) or contact Beth Lurie at [beth@spednetconference.org](mailto:beth@spednetconference.org) or at 203-966-2982 (en espanol 203-972-1163).
- October 20, 2004      **Seventh Annual Conference on Educating Students with Disabilities in the General Classroom**, Radisson Hotel, Cromwell. This conference features keynote speaker Marilyn Friend, Ph.D; along with concurrent workshops on the benefits of education in the regular classroom setting, modifications and accommodations, and integrating speech and language services. For more information, or to register, please contact SERC at 860-632-1485 ext. 241.
- November 10, 2004      **ARC Parent and Community Conference, Stamford**. This conference, entitled "Voices for Friendships - How Schools Help or Hinder The Development of Social Relations," will feature speaker Carol Tashie, Inclusion Facilitator, Author, and International Trainer. For more information or to register, please visit [www.arcgreenwich.org](http://www.arcgreenwich.org).
- November 19, 2004      **A Critical Need: Early Identification and Treatment of Children's Mental Health Disorders**, Ramada Plaza Hotel, Meriden, CT, sponsored by the Mental Health Association of Connecticut. This conference will consist of a keynote address: *Recent Advances in Identifying and Treating Children's Mental Health Problems: How Can We Do Better?* and workshops to follow. For more information Contact the Mental Health Association at 1-800-842-1501, ext. 10 or at [mntlhlth@tiac.net](mailto:mntlhlth@tiac.net).

Visit the CPAC website, [www.cpacinc.org](http://www.cpacinc.org), for more Upcoming Events!