



# PLUK News

*United as parents, all our children succeed*

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## PLUK Welcomes Our New Executive Director, Dennis Moore

Dennis Moore has assumed the helm as PLUK's new Executive Director as of mid-September. He moved to Billings from Olive Branch, Mississippi, a community near Memphis, Tennessee. His wife Vicki and daughter Katie will be joining him soon, after Dennis settles and they sell their home. Dennis and Vicki also want Katie, a high school student, to have a little time to "warm up" to the idea of moving to Montana.

Dennis' degree and background is in the counseling field. He worked with the Mississippi State Department of Youth Services, first as a counselor, and then as director of a three-county Juvenile Court Services Office.

In 1980, he founded a therapeutic group home for victims of severe child abuse. For the first nine years of the program, he served as the director in a voluntary capacity, becoming the Executive Director in 1989. He is leaving a healthy program in northern Mississippi that now has 40 licensed beds in three homes — one for girls, one for boys, and a co-ed emergency shelter. The program also provides parenting training, outpatient group therapy, and runs an active Thrift Shop.

In recent years, Dennis focused on the development of community support for his program in northern Mississippi. Eighty percent of the funds for the program came from contributions and development. Dennis



PLUK Photograph by Roger Holt

*Welcome to Dennis Moore*

has extensive experience in working with volunteers.

Besides his work with group homes, Dennis volunteered as Scoutmaster of a Boy Scout Troop since 1975, receiving awards for his work including the District Award of Merit and the Silver Beaver Award.

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Join us for the PLUK Open House on October 19, 2000. Meet our new Executive Director and see what's new around the office.



*Continued from page 1*

Twenty-five young men made it to the rank of Eagle Scout while under his guidance. He also served as Advisor to three Explorer Posts, President of Mississippi's Child Care Facilities Association, and Chair of his county's Inter-Agency Council.

When they were here in August and considering the job at PLUK, Dennis explained that he and Vicki have always wanted to live in the West. Vicki observed that all of the dogs they have recently owned were named for western cities. They share a great interest in our local history and landscape.

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## Back to School in Style

*by Kathy Kelker*

Another school year has begun — one that is full of possibilities for your child to grow and develop in new ways. To get the year off to a good start, here are some things you may want to do:

△ Dust off your child's IEP. Your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) is intended to be a "living document," one that you and the school staff refer to over and over again. Spend some time reviewing what was planned for your child this year. As you familiarize yourself with the IEP, be alert to whether or not your child is receiving the services outlined in the plan. Also, consider whether or not the IEP still describes your child's needs accurately. Does the IEP seem appropriate? Perhaps your child has acquired some new skills over the summer or has changed in some way. If your child's needs are significantly different from the time when the IEP was written, ask for an update of the IEP so that it addresses your child's current needs.

△ Make sure that the school staff working with your child are familiar with the IEP. Sometimes the information in a student's IEP is not shared with all of the school staff who need to know about it. Check with your child's special education teacher to make sure all of your child's teach-

ers and therapists are aware of the IEP and your child's special needs. Sometimes it is helpful to have a meeting at the beginning of the year



PLUK Photograph by Roger Holt

*Kathy Kelker, always great advice*

with all of the school personnel to go over the IEP and to set up lines of communication. The need for this type of meeting tends to be greater at the middle school and high school levels where the students have multiple teachers.

△ Establish a way of communicating regularly with your child's teacher. Work out a communication system that is not burdensome to you or the

teacher — maybe a telephone call every two weeks, a notebook that goes back and forth, a regular visit. Regular, friendly communication is the best way to keep abreast of what is happening in the classroom and to lend support from home if it is needed.

△ Communicate in positive ways. Teachers are busy at the beginning of the school year. It takes a while for routines to get established and for teachers to get to know individual



students. Be sure that your communications with the teacher begin on a positive note and continue in that vein. Be encouraging and offer to help problem-solve when there seems to be a snag. Just as we like to hear positive things about our children, teachers like to hear positive words from us, too.

△ Think of ways to support your child's special education program. Volunteer to be a room parent or to participate in Booster Club, PTA or Parent Advisory Committees. Ask your child's teacher if there are things that you can do like typing, making bulletin board items, providing supplies, going on a field trip, sharing expertise in the classroom. Let the teacher know that you care about the program and are willing to do your part. If your child is in middle school or high school, make a particular effort to learn about the special education program and how you can support it. There is a tendency for parents to be less connected to

special education once their children are out of elementary school, but often it is when children get older that there is the most need for parents and school personnel to work together.

△ Talk with the teacher. Conferences with classroom teachers give parents the chance to convey concerns and hopes and allow the teacher to share observations about your child's development. Before you go, write out your questions for the teacher and sit down with your children and ask if they have any topics that they would like you to discuss.

**Examples**

- ☆ How has my child adjusted to the class, and how is the work progressing?
- ☆ What subjects is the class studying this term? How can I help at home to reinforce certain topics?
- ☆ Are my child's homework assignments complete and on time?
- ☆ Is my child developing problems? Would you suggest extra help or special attention?
- ☆ Are there ways I could help contribute to the classroom?

△ After the conference, remember to follow up on your teacher's recommendations and, most importantly, to share your discussion with your child.

△ Network with other parents. Ask your child's teacher if it would be possible to have an open house or some kind of get together for the parents in your child's special education program. In an informal social gathering you and the other parents can learn from the teacher what he or she has planned for the year, and you can get to know the other

parents. Rules of confidentiality do not allow the teacher to give out names of parents, so it is sometimes difficult to find out who the other parents are. A social gathering provides an easy way for parents to meet and share information. Some parents in the group may even want to meet regularly or to work together to assist the program with projects.

△ Find out what is going on in the total school program. Sometimes parents of children in special education tend to focus strictly on their child's program and are unaware of the educational program in general. Special education is part of the whole system, so it is wise to learn all that you can about how your school district is funded, how the administration is organized, and how parents can be involved in the total program. It is particularly important to learn about the school district's policies concerning inclusion and about the programs which should be available to all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities.



△ Send your child off with a smile. All children experience some anxiety as they face a new school year. Reassurance and enthusiastic support from home can help a student feel more confident about doing well in school. School days are so important to all children. Send your child off to school feeling good about himself or herself, knowing that you are available to provide support in all school activities.

## Letters to PLUK Readers

Parents who receive grants from PLUK often write to us to express their appreciation and to share what they have learned. The following are a few of these letters.

### Worthwhile Opportunity

My name is Dorothy See. I am a mother of a 7-year-old boy named Travis who was recently diagnosed with Autism. Thanks to PLUK for generously awarding me a grant to attend the National Autism conference in Atlanta this last July, I am able to share what I learned with the rest of my family, our school, our family support specialist, hab-aides, and respite providers. The amount of knowledge I was able to acquire is astronomical. I am still pumped up about it!

Many other resources were made available to me while at the conference. This includes ones that I might not have known about had I not attended the conference. There were talks and exhibits set up on every imaginable topic related to Autism, including one on Autism with a visual impairment, and Autism with a hearing impairment. My son is also visually impaired so that really caught my attention.

The categories ranged from Communication, Education, Family and Community to Adulthood. And each day were different topics within those categories. Eustace Cutler and Temple Grandin's mother spoke and was simply captivating. I as a parent, was especially intrigued by her.

Music Therapy was presented and explained in very informative, fun and effective ways. There were many talks and presentations for parents and done by parents. A wonderful presentation was given by the author of "Thee Visual Strategies" series, Linda A. Hodgdon.

I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to tap into so many experienced and professional people. Thank you, PLUK!!! Best Wishes.

— Dorothy See

### Parent Project Annual Conference

June 23-24, 2000

Duchenne is a monster of a disease, which primarily affects boys. Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) must be stopped. It is the most common fatal childhood genetic disease in the world. It affects 1 in every 3,500 boys born. Because it often appears as a new mutation, as it did in our family, it cannot be eliminated by genetic counseling. Everyone is a potential carrier. Any research breakthroughs in Duchenne will benefit all of mankind.

Since the Dystrophin gene is so large, scientists are more capable of working on it and then applying their research and findings to the smaller genes in the body.

This conference attracts worldwide scientific attention. I met parents and made contacts from around the globe. We shared information on our boys and what works for them in the way of treatments. We learned that a treatment or cure is a reality with DMD. Some of the more promising research

included the following:

1. Gene therapy
2. Cell therapy with myoblast transfer.
3. Strategies to repair mutations of the gene.
4. Protease inhibitors

The conference also had break out sessions for physical therapy, school issues and dealing with stress. Other care topics of discussion included Scoliosis in DMD boys, Cardiology and Respiratory Care. We also learned about the government's role in the progress of DMD research. Some of those topics included the National Institute of Health funding for DMD, The role of the FDA, and information relating to clinical trials involving Duchenne boys.

If you would like to obtain further information about the Parent Project for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy please feel free to contact me at rherrea@imine.net.

— Ron & Nina Herrera

### Autism

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. The result of a neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain. Autism and its associated behaviors have been estimated to occur in as many as one in 500 individuals. Autism is four times more prevalent in boys than girls and knows no racial, ethnic or social boundaries. Autism interferes with the normal development of the brain in the areas of social interaction and communication skills.

Children and adults with autism typically have difficulties in verbal and nonverbal communication, so-

cial interaction and leisure or play activities. The disorder makes it hard for them to communicate with others and to relate to the outside world.

Over half a million people in the US today have some form of autism. It's prevalence rate now places it as the third most common developmental disability. Yet most of the public, including many professionals in the medical, educational, and vocational fields, are still unaware of how autism affects people and how to effectively work with individuals with autism.

My husband and I had the opportunity to attend the National Autism Convention in Atlanta, Georgia July 16,2000. We had the opportunity to listen to many professionals that deal with communication for nonverbal and verbal children, sensory integration, medical research, education, legal issues and toilet training. The last was a big issue for my daughter. We listened to a lot of parents tell their stories about their child affected with autism and what it is like to live with them day in and day out.

My primary goals were:

1. Communication skills
2. Social interactions
3. Leisure play activities
4. Potty training

They also had a session just for dads only. I thought that was fantastic! It gave my husband an opportunity to listen to other dads with similar situations as him.

I appreciate the generosity of the grant from PLUK that made our trip a reality instead of just a dream. If you have any questions or just want to talk, feel free to contact me at 406-778-2540 and ask for Louella.

—Louella Halmens

## The Joys of PLUK

by Emmy Hayworth

In our role's as Family Support Consultants with PLUK we have the pleasure of working with some of the most wonderful parents. No matter what challenge they or their child face they handle it with strength, dignity and usually a strong sense of humor. They become the best advocate their child could ever have.

These outstanding parents seem to have three common characteristics. They are articulate, persistent and optimistic. Articulate in their advocacy for their child. Persistent in getting to the goals they have set for their child. And Optimistic, not only for their child's future, but for the educational, medical and professional services their child may use as well. Their's is no "Pollyanna" optimism but rather a concrete belief in themselves, their child, and the future.



Emmy Hayworth, ready to help

PLUK Photograph by Roger Holt

*A teacher should be a prospector, looking for gold.*

— Nathaniel Branden,  
The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem

### Characteristics of the Tough Minded Optimist

1. Optimists are seldom surprised by trouble.
2. Optimists look for partial solutions.
3. Optimists believe they have control over their future.
4. Optimists allow for regular renewal.
5. Optimists interrupt their negative trains of thought.
6. Optimists heighten their powers of appreciation.
7. Optimists use their imagination to rehearse success.
8. Optimists are cheerful when they can't be happy.
9. Optimists believe they have a nearly unlimited capacity for stretching.
10. Optimists build lots of love into their lives.
11. Optimists like to swap good news.
12. Optimists accept what cannot be changed.

— Secrets of Self-Employment By Sarah and Paul Edwards 1996

# Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask

**Q** We have a foster daughter who is three years-old. She has some developmental delays and has received services from a Child and Family Service Agency. I was told that at age three she should receive services from the schools, but our local elementary school principal said our school doesn't provide preschool services. He told me to call Headstart. What should I do?

**A** Every school district in Montana is responsible for finding all of the children in their area who may be eligible for special education. Your foster daughter should be evaluated by the school district to determine whether or not her developmental delays are significant enough to make her eligible for special education. If so, then your local

school district will have to provide her with a program, either by creating one within the school or by contracting with some other agency like Headstart or a private preschool. The child's special education program has to be delivered or at least planned and supervised by a properly certified special educator.

**Q** Our son, who is six and has multiple disabilities, has been integrated into a regular kindergarten class with an aide who is supposed to meet his critical care needs and provide his special education instruction. The kindergarten teacher is resentful of having our son in her class and has made no effort to include him. The aide has no clout in the situation, and she has been given no direction about what she is supposed to do with our son. In fact, the aide has never seen our son's IEP and she is never invited to the meetings we have about our son's program. We are frustrated and discouraged. What can we do?

**A** Your son's IEP is supposed to be implemented by an appropriately qualified and licensed special education teacher. The teacher does not always have to be present, but the teacher should be designing the activities for your son and should be working with the aide and the kindergarten teacher to plan your son's daily program.

It sounds as though your school district has not worked out a system for implementing a program in the regular classroom. In order to get a system going, it might be productive for you to meet with the administrator in charge of special education. Explain that your son's IEP is not being met and that the aide is basically unsupervised and has no direction for how to operate in the classroom with your son. Ask the administrator to describe for you how he or she thinks the system should work. Try to get some clarity about what the special education teacher's re-

sponsibilities are supposed to be. Take notes (or have a friend take notes for you). Make it clear that you are expecting the school district to provide a structure which will allow your son's IEP to be implemented.

Once you have clarity about who is responsible for planning and implementing your son's program, ask for an IEP meeting to review with the special education teacher, the kindergarten teacher, and the aide just how your son's school day is supposed to go.

If your school district is still having trouble with this whole process, you might suggest that they get some technical assistance from the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). OPI has trained some practicing teachers to be Inclusion Consultants. One of these individuals might be able to come to your district and provide inservice training. PLUK also provides training on inclusion strategies.

## Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy

**A** The use of stimulant medications, particularly Ritalin, for treating hyperactivity has been going on in the United States since the 1930's. Over the long history of its use, Ritalin has proved to be effective in curbing the symptoms of hyperactivity, while causing few significant side effects.

Despite the relatively positive history of the use of Ritalin, this medication has come under attack from various groups. The most notable anti-Ritalin campaign occurred from 1986-1990 when the Church of Scientology opposed its use.

Members of the Church of Scientology instigated numerous lawsuits beginning in 1986 as an outgrowth of an anti-psychiatry campaign. In many cities, this campaign was successful in frightening parents about medication side effects and professionals about possible liti-

gation. It was not until 1990 that the anti-Ritalin campaign faded when the Church of Scientology shifted its focus to an anti-Prozac campaign.

The actual use of Ritalin to treat hyperactivity symptoms has remained relatively constant, but the drug is now being used more frequently because it is being used to treat additional conditions, including ADD in adults, attending and conduct problems in youth, and borderline cases of ADD. It is estimated that in the 1990's 20 percent of stimulants are given to non-hyperactive youths with attentional and learning problems.

The relative safety and effectiveness of Ritalin have made it the drug of choice to curb behavior that cannot otherwise be controlled through self-monitoring, behavior modification or therapy.

**Q** Ritalin has proved to be a "miracle drug" for our twelve year-old son. We were very reluctant to try it at first, but now are so glad that we did. Our son has gone from making straight F's to getting A's and B's and he hasn't been sent to the office once this year for inappropriate behavior. Now that our lives have settled down (partly due to the availability of medication), we are wondering where all the negative notions about Ritalin originated. We think it would be too bad for a family not to try medication if it has potential for helping a child.

**A** The IEP does not need to be changed unless your daughter's needs have changed. The IEP is supposed to outline goals and objectives for your daughter to achieve in a year's time and the related services she may need to support her educational program. If your daughter's needs have not changed substantially over the summer, there shouldn't be any reason to change her IEP goals.

What might be helpful is to have a meeting with the resource teacher and an administrator from the junior high to talk over your daughter's needs. Perhaps there is something about the IEP that is not clear to

them and could be explained.

If the resource teacher wants to change the IEP in order to remove a service that was agreed upon earlier, then indicate that you do not think the service should be removed. Suggest that the school staff try implementing the IEP for a trial period (e.g., a month) to see if the program works. Ask the staff to keep data on your daughter's performance so that there is an objective way to determine whether or not your daughter is making reasonable progress. If the IEP proves to be successful for your daughter, there is no reason to change it.

**Q** We wrote an IEP for our daughter last spring at the end of her sixth grade year. This fall when school started and our daughter entered junior high, the resource teacher wanted to rewrite the IEP because it didn't "fit the schedule" at the junior high level. Do we have to change the IEP so soon?

*More answers on the next page*

# Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask

*Continued from page 7*

**Q** We recently moved to Montana from another state. Our ten year-old son who has Down Syndrome has had all of his schooling to this point in the regular classroom with supports. His IEP from his former school calls for a regular classroom placement with a full-time aide. In our new school, they have reluctantly placed our son in a regular fourth grade class, but he has no aide. We have been told that he will not be getting an aide because "there is no money for one." We have also been told that the new school has a right to change the old IEP because "things are done differently in Montana." What can we do?

**A** The special education law is a federal statute so its provisions apply to every state. Special education practices in Montana do not differ substantially from those of other states.

As you know, your son has the right to a school placement in the regular classroom. Since your son has a record of success in the regular classroom with the assistance of an aide, there is no reason to believe that a similar arrangement would not be successful for him in his new school.

Under Montana law, the IEP Team is not supposed to write into the IEP how (e.g., with what staffing) the IEP is to be implemented. Choices about staffing are left to the school district's discretion. Normally, you would not see "needs a full-time

aide" written into an IEP. But the goals and objectives and related services would be described in such detail that it would be clear that the only way the IEP could be implemented properly is with the assistance of a classroom aide.

At this point what you need to do is to ask that the existing IEP be implemented and that data be kept on your child's progress. If your son is not provided with appropriate supports in the regular classroom and he is not making progress, then ask for an IEP Team meeting and indicate that you plan to file a complaint with the Office of Public Instruction because the IEP is not being properly implemented and your son is not receiving enough support in the classroom.

**Q** My daughter has a degenerative muscle disease. She will be entering third grade this fall. The school district tested her last year for special education and said she was not learning disabled. She gets chapter I help with mathematics and reading, but the school district has refused to provide her with an aide to help her with bathrooming and walking. Also, she cannot participate in regular physical ed so she just watches the other children in gym. We are disappointed that the school is not more helpful. She dreads going back to school. Is there anything we can do?

**A** Was your daughter evaluated for any other type of disability besides learning disabilities? Clearly your daughter's physical problems are interfering with her ability to participate in physical education. Physical education is part of the regular curriculum. She may qualify for special education as orthopedically impaired.

Contact the principal of your child's school or the special education director and ask to have your child evaluated in terms of a possible orthopedic impairment. If your daughter qualifies for special education, be sure that her IEP provides

her with adaptive physical education and whatever supplementary aids and services she needs in order to remain in the regular classroom.

If she does not qualify for special education as orthopedically impaired, she will certainly be eligible for a Section 504 plan and accommodations in regular education. If she needs assistance to get around the building safely or to use the bathroom, these services can be written into a Section 504 plan.

## Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy • Ask Kathy

**A** IEP meetings are often hard on parents emotionally. It is not surprising that you may have "lost it" when your emotions became too strong. You do, of course, need to get back into communication with the school so that you can continue to work with your son's teacher and make sure that his program is appropriate.

In order to reestablish the relationship, ask for a private meeting

with the person you like best on the IEP team--the special educator, the counselor, the principal--whoever is comfortable for you. Explain your feelings to this individual without going into a lot of detail. Ask for a recap of the meeting. If there are still decisions to be made, request another IEP Team meeting. This time take someone with you to support you emotionally.

**Q** I recently attended an IEP meeting for my eighth grade son and I am afraid I made a fool of myself. Suddenly I just couldn't hold back. I started to cry and I am sure I didn't make any sense. The school staff looked stunned. I just got up and left. Now I am too embarrassed to return to the school. I don't know if they completed the meeting without me. My son is horrified I made such a display. What do I do?

**A** Good for you for wanting to establish a positive relationship with the new principal! Here are a few suggestions which may help:

Be a contributor to the school. Volunteer for PTA or classroom activities.

Support school events.

Communicate often with the principal on issues which are neutral or positive. (Don't get a reputation for being a nag by only communicating negative comments.)

Make positive comments about things which are being handled well in the school (e.g., "Congratulations on a great open house. I really felt welcome.")

When you need something for your child, make requests instead of demands.

Be clear about which things are your legitimate right to request and which things are a matter of nego-

tiation. For example, principals usually have complete discretion about which teacher a student may have.

If your child has unique needs, make an appointment to discuss your child with the principal. Ask the principal for his or her suggestions for how to meet the child's needs.

Never call the principal when you are "hopping mad." Give yourself at least 30 minutes to cool down. Make sure you have the facts before you call. However, be honest that you have been upset.

Don't threaten to contact the principal's superior before you have given the principal a chance to respond.

Use the chain-of-command for problems by starting first with the classroom teacher and then moving on to the principal, if necessary. If you can't resolve an issue at the principal's level, the next step would be the superintendent.

**Q** I would like to get off on the right foot with the new principal in my son's school. My relationship with the former principal was strained at best. I'm not sure what I did wrong, but he certainly didn't like me.

Ask questions online of our great friend and advisor, Kathy Kelker, on special education issues for review by a public audience. Please make questions general rather than pertaining to a specific person or school.

### Post message

ASK\_Kathy@egroups.com

### Subscribe

ASK\_Kathy-subscribe  
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### URL

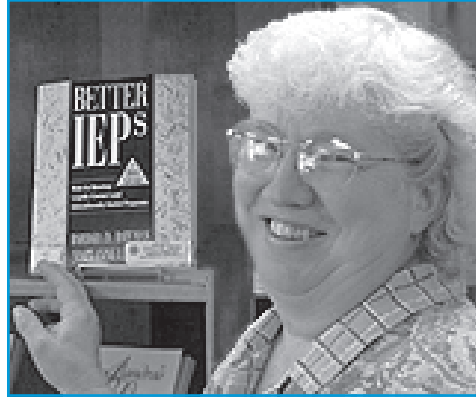
[http://www.egroups.com/group/ASK\\_Kathy](http://www.egroups.com/group/ASK_Kathy)

*A Seasoned PLUK Trainer*  
**Reflections  
 from Nancy**

by Nancy Staigmiller

Through the years of participation with Parents Let's Unite for Kids, there have been many opportunities to drive many miles to support families by attending IEP meetings, conferences, and participating in parent training opportunities. What seems like a lot of driving really has become a rather welcome chance to view spenderous scenery, of which I never tire, and to do a lot of self reflection and planning that goes with the job.

People ask if I listen to a lot of books on tape. Instead I prefer music because I can sing along, and I find familiar tunes quite soothing. I love



PLUK Photograph by Roger Holt

*Nancy Staigmiller, loves to help*

my job and the people I meet and work with, but there are indeed frustrations and many hurdles encountered. It is the nature of the job to encounter many challenges and to share in "IDEA" sharing and conflict resolution.

One of my favorite songsters is by Don Eaton, and I would like to share

a song that has great significance and meaning to me. My spiritual life is what keeps me committed to PLUK but I don't have opportunity to share my inner motivations, except to say that everyone is indeed a child of God. But please let me offer this song for you, as a parent or professional person. May you also do a bit of reflection regarding it's message.

*Remember...*



**Election Day • November 7**

*The Wall*

Once upon a time someone built a wall  
 That cut across the heart of the city.  
 Walling something in, walling something out.  
 A wall of death such a sorrow such a pity.

Something there is that doesn't love a wall.  
 Something there is that wants it down.  
 Something in you and me, in the heart of humanity.  
 That doesn't love a wall that wants it down.

Somewhere, sometime you'll build a wall  
 With hearts of stone we build a wall inside us.  
 Walling someone in, walling someone out.  
 Until we find the faith to let love guide us.

Something there is that doesn't love a wall.  
 Something there is that wants it down.  
 Something in you and me, in the heart of humanity.  
 That doesn't love a wall that wants it down.

After all these years the walls come tumbling down.  
 We were dying now we're dancing on the wall.  
 And all around the world you can feel the celebration.  
 All around the world hear freedoms call.

Something there is that doesn't love a wall.  
 Something there is that wants it down.  
 Something in you and me, in the heart of humanity.  
 That doesn't love a wall that wants it down.

Easy to see a wall someone builds across the city.  
 Easy to see a wall that's made of stone.  
 Harder to see the wall we build around our hearts.  
 The wall of fear that keeps us all alone.

Something there is that doesn't love a wall.  
 Something there is that wants it down.  
 Something in you and me, in the heart of humanity.  
 That doesn't love a wall that wants it down.

— Don Eaton, song writer

## What's New at the Library

The TRIC/PLUK Library has added new materials. Contact the librarian at jsand@pluk.org, or call 800.222.7585 or 406.255.0540 for more information or to check out these items. Materials will be mailed out to anywhere in Montana at no charge.

*A guide to understanding and living with epilepsy* Devinsky, Orrin, MD (F.A. Davis Co. 1915 Arch St., Philadelphia, PA 19103) Epilepsy: EPI129

*Adults with attention deficit disorder* Phelan, Thomas W., Ph.D. (Child Management, Inc., Glen Elyn, IL) Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity: V-ADD47

*Aging people with mental retardation*, Kopp, Donna, R.N. (Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services, 700 Hoffmann Dr., Watertown, WI 53094) Staff Development: V-AGE26

*Asperger syndrome*, Klin, Ami, Volkmar, Fred R., Sparrow, Sara S. (Guilford Press, 72 Spring Street, New York, NY 10012) Asperger's Syndrome: AUT258

*Asperger syndrome, a practical guide for teachers*, Cumine, Val, Leach, Julia, Stevenson, Gill (David Fulton Publishers, Ormond House, 26-27 Boswell St., London WC1N3JD) Asperger Syndrome: AUT259

*Asperger syndrome and difficult moments, practical solutions for tantrums, rage, and meltdown*/Smith Myles, Brenda, Southwick, Jack (Autism Asperger Publishing Co., PO Box 23173, Shawnee Mission, KS 66283) Asperger Syndrome: AUT260

*Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, what every parent wants to know 2nd Edition*, Wodrich, David L., Ph.D. (Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., PO Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285) Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity: ADD246

*Becoming acquaintances or friends, Friendship series #2* (YAI National Institute for People with Disabilities, 406 West 34th St., New York, NY 10001) Social Skills: V-SOC25

*Being a friend, Friendship series #3* (YAI National Institute for People with Disabilities, 406 West 34th St., New York, NY 10001) Social Skills: V-SOC26

*Better IEPs 3rd Edition, How to develop legally correct and educationally useful programs*, Bateman, Barbara D., Ph.D., J.D., Linden, Mary Anne, M.S., J.D. (Sopris West, 4093 Specialty Place Longmont, CO 80504) IEP'S: ADV227

*Brailleways*, Menville, Douglas, Editor (Braille Institute, 741 North Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90029) Books in Braille: VIS210

*Breakthroughs: How to reach students with autism, A hands-on, how-to manual for teachers and parents*, Sewell, Karen (Attainment Co., Inc., PO Box 930160, Verona, WI 539593) Autism: AUT263

*Building bridges through sensory integration, occupational therapy for children with Autism and other Pervasive Developmental Disorders* Yack, Ellen, M.Ed., B.Sc (OT), Sutton, Shirley, BS (OT), Aquilla,

Paula, BS (OT) (Building Bridges through Sensory Integration, 132 Queen's Dr., Weston, Ontario M9N2H6) Autism: AUT261



*By the ages, behavior and development of children pre-birth through eight*, Allen, K. Eileen, Marotz, Lynn R. (Delmar Thomson Learning, 3 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12212) Infant/Toddler/Preschool: INF308

*Challenging behavior of persons with mental health disorders and severe developmental disabilities*, Wieseler, Norman A., Ph.D., Hanson, Ronald H., Ph.D., Siperstein, Gary, Ph.D. (American Association on Mental Retardation, 444 North Capitol St., NW, STE 846, Washington, DC 20001) Behavior Modification: BEH402

*Childhood depression* (Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Ctr., Lebanon, NH) Emotions: V-EMO27

*Conflict resolution in the middle school, a curriculum and teacher's guide*, Kreadler, William J. (Educators for Social Responsibility, 23 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138) Social Skills: SOC97

*Creating a home personal computer learning center for young child with developmental disabilities: A case study*, Palmer, Chuck ( ) Technology: TEC65

Continued on page 12

*New at the Library*  
*Continued from page 11*

*Creative conflict resolution, more than 200 activities for keeping peace in the classroom*, Kreidler, William J. (Scott, Foresman & Co., Glenview, IL) Social Skills: SOC98

*Dealing with challenging behaviors in a community-based setting*, Ford, Debby, M.S. (Bethesda Lutheran Homes & Services, Inc., 700 Hoffmann Dr., Watertown, WI 53094) Behavior Deceleration: V-BEH69

*Deinstitutionalization report April 1, 1975–June 30, 1977* (Developmental Disabilities Division, Helena, MT 59601) Deinstitutionalization: DEI54

*Desensitization training* Field, Dorothy, Ebert, Kris (Bethesda Lutheran Homes & Services, Inc., 700 Hoffmann Dr., Watertown, WI 53094) Staff Training: V-STAI08

*Developing friendships* Zwart, Jan (Bethesda Lutheran Homes & Services, Inc., 700 Hoffmann Dr., Watertown, WI 53094) Social Skills: V-SOC27



*Disability and motherhood* (Films for the Humanities & Sciences, PO Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543) Parenting: V-PAR48

*Doing your own banking: Provider version* Heuer, Tom (Bethesda Lutheran Homes & Services, Inc., 700 Hoffmann Dr., Watertown, WI 53094) Independent Living: V-IND22

*Doing your own banking: Client version. Ryan cashes his paycheck and Ryan's savings account* (Bethesda

Lutheran Homes & Services, Inc., 700 Hoffmann Dr., Watertown, WI 53094) Independent Living: V-IND23

*Eagle doctor, stories of Stephen, my child with special needs* Nelson, Chrissy L. (Pangaea, 226 Wheeler St S., St. Paul, MN 55105) Physical Disabilities: PHY78

*Exercise for people with severe physical disabilities* Morstad, David, Moderator (Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services, 700 Hoffmann Dr., Watertown, WI 53094) Staff Training: V-PHY16

*Functional assessment and program development for problem behavior, a practical handbook 2nd Edition* O'Neill, Robert E., Horner, Robert H., Albin, Richard W., Sprague, Jeffrey R. (Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 511 Forest Lodge Rd., Pacific Grove, CA 93950) Assessment & Measurement: BEH399

*Getting your child's regular education teachers to do what the law requires them to be doing for your child* Martin, Reed, J.D. (Matthews Media, PO Box 487, Morgantown, WV 26507) Education: ADV220

*Having a good relationship, Boyfriend/Girlfriend series: Tape 2* (YAI National Institute for People With Disabilities, 460 West 34th St., New York, NY 10001) Interpersonal Relationships: V-SOC22

*Help 4ADD @ high school*, Nadeau, Kathleen G., Ph.D. (Advantage Books, 4400 East-West Hwy. Suite 816 Bethesda, MD 10814) Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity: ADD244

*Helping kids handle anger, teaching self-control*, Huggins, Pat (Sopris West, 4093 Specialty Place,

Longmont, CO 80504) Social Skills: SOC96

*Helping parents, youth, and teachers understand medications for behavioral and emotional problems: A resource book of medication information handouts*, Dulcan, Mina K., M.D., editor (American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1400 K Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20005) Medication: REF



*I would if I could: A teenager's guide to ADHD/Hyperactivity* Gordon, Michael (GSI Publications, Inc., PO Box 746, DeWitt, NY 13214) Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity: ADD245

*Infection control: Standard precautions* Ford, Debby, Winter, Donna (Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services, 700 Hoffmann Dr., Watertown, WI 53094) Staff Training: V-SAF40

*It's just attention disorder: A video guide for kids* Goldstein, Dr. Sam (Neurology Learning & Behavior Center, 230 South 500 East, Ste 100, Salt Lake City, UT 84102) Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity: V-ADD48

*Life Management Skills I: Reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators* Korb-Khalsa, Kathy L., Leutenberg, Estelle A, Azok, Stacey D. (Wellness Reproductions Publishing Inc., 23945 Mercantile Rd, Beachwood, OH 44122) Life Skills: SKI136

*Life Management Skills V: Reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators* Korb-Khalsa, Kathy L., Leutenberg, Estelle A. (Wellness

**We Thank You → We Thank You → We Thank You**

Reproductions Publishing Inc., 23945 Mercantile Rd, Beachwood, OH 44122) Life Skills: SKI137

*Life skills activities for secondary students with special needs* Mannix, Darlene (Center for Applied Research in Education, West Nyack, NY 10994) Life Skills: SKI138

*Living with seizures* Tuttle, Heather (Tuttle Press, PO Box 1147, Rootstown, OH 4272) Children's Books: EPI127

*Managing oppositional youth: Effective, practical strategies for parents and teachers to manage the behavior of oppositional kids and teens*, Robin, Arthur L., Ph.D., Weiss, Sharon K., M.Ed. (Specialty Press, Inc., 300 NW 70th Ave., Plantation, FL 33317) Behavior Modification: V-PAR49

*Mom, I have a staring problem: A true story of petit mal seizures and the hidden problem it can cause: learning disability* (Buckel, Marion Carla, Buckel, Tiffany, (MC. Buckel, PO Box 692633, Orlando, FL 32869) Epilepsy: EPI128

*One on one: Working with low functioning children with autism and other developmental disabilities*, Chassman, Marilyn (IEP Resources, PO Box 930250, Verona, WI 53593) Autism: AUT262

*Raising kids with special needs* (Attainment Co., PO Box 930160, Verona, WI 53593) Parenting: V-PAR47

*Reading too soon, how to understand and help the hyperlexic child*, Miller, Susan Martins (Center for Speech and Language Disorders, 479 Spring Road, Elmhurst, IL 60126) Hyperlexia: LEA302

PLUK sends out a collective thank you to Grolier, IBM, and Microsoft for donations of software and a laptop computer to the organization.

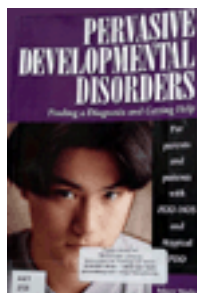
Grolier provided copies of their CD-ROM titles Kids Mensa, Mensa Ultimate Challenge and World's Greatest Museum for evaluation in the software library.

Through IBM's Corporate Community Relations program PLUK has received a laptop computer and several educational software titles. Les

Dyrud, a retired IBM employee and volunteer in the PLUK computer lab, enabled us to apply for the program.

Microsoft made a gift of a half million dollars worth of software to the Alliance for Technology Access network of community-based assistive technology centers. PLUK, as a part of this network, received \$36,000 worth of software including multiple copies of Office for both Mac and PC, Windows and server software, and dozens of educational and reference CD-ROMs.

*Seizure free: From epilepsy to brain surgery, I survived and you can, too 2nd Edition*, Chilton, Leanne (English Press Pub, PO Box 742945, Dallas, TX 75374) Epilepsy: EPI130



*Sensory challenges and answers*, Grandin, Dr. Temple (Future Horizons, Inc., 720 N Fielder Rd., Arlington, TX 76012) Autism: V-AUT72

*Sensory processing for parents: From roots to wings* (Aquarius Health Care Videos, 5 Powderhouse Lane, Sherborn, MA 01770) Sensory Development: V-PAR50

*Shouting at the sky: Troubled teens and the promise of the wild*, Ferguson, Gary (St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010) Behavior Modification: COU28

*Skillstreaming in early childhood: Teaching prosocial skills to the pre-*

*school and kindergarten child*, McGinnis, Ellen, Goldstein, Arnold P. (Research Press, 2612 North Mattis Ave., Champaign, ILL 61822) Social Skills: SOC99

*Special diets for special kids: Understanding and implementing special diets to aid in the treatment of Autism and related developmental disorders*, Lewis, Lisa S., Ph.D. (Future Horizons Inc., 721 W Abram St., Arlington, TX 76013) Autism: NUT132

*Success in college and career with attention deficit disorders*, Bramer, Jennifer S., Ph.D., Fellman, Wilma, M.Ed., LPC (Specialty Press, Inc., 300 NW 70th Ave., Plantation, FL 33317) Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity: V-ADD46

*Supported employment using a natural supports approach: A handbook for parents*, Urbain, Cathleen, Ph.D., Wright, Beth, Editor (Pacer Center, Inc., 4826 Chicago Ave. S., Mpls. MN 55417) Supported Employment: VOC496

## Tribute to Kathy Kelker

by Jan Spiegle Stinger

In the fall of 1983, four moms from Missoula were "talked into" attending and presenting at the Annual DD Conference. They were told it was their mission and responsibility to "teach professionals what it is really like to be you — to deal with a child who has a disability day in/day out." The idea of parents presenting at a conference was novel in those days and the moms worked hard and long on their "Parent Perspectives" presentation. The real, but unofficial and unadvertised, title of the presentation was "Things Professionals Did That Drove Us Nuts and Made Us Crazy."

For four moms to arrange to take four days off from doing what they did every day (a total of four husbands and ten children, four with disabilities, two of whom had very severe disabilities!) was nothing short of a Herculean effort. After four months of planning, several stabs at filling out travel advance requests, and drinking much more caffeine around kitchen tables than anyone's blood pressure can actually stand (picture lots of children mostly crying, but sometimes laughing in the background), they actually took off! Remember, now, that this was a group of women in their twenties and thirties who hadn't left their homes, much less town, for an average of two years. Well, it is true that three of them had made emergency flights to Denver and Salt Lake with their children, but that doesn't count — none had actually had official "time off."

To say that freedom was intoxicating would most definitely be an understatement. Twelve hours and 339 miles later, they arrived in Billings, the location of the conference that year. Yes, there were numerous

stops for potty breaks, shopping sprees, and arguments about map-reading. There also was much eating of calm and unhurried meals in real restaurants, no fast food or drive-thru's allowed. After two moves to a bigger room to accommodate the size of the crowd, they presented to a packed audience. When it was over, the room was filled with both smiles and tears. Eventually, a booklet was published bringing together all the information they had presented (and more) in print form, a resource still much requested by families and professionals.

I write about this memory as if it were yesterday. Indeed, I can hardly fathom that nearly 17 years have passed since I was coerced into joining this "experiment in whether they will ever listen to parents." I write about the memory for this month's newsletter to make a point about how much influence just one person can have on the world around them. Suffice it to say that the reason the four of us found the courage and the chutzpah to believe we had something worthwhile to say and that people would actually want to listen

was Kathy Kelker. Kathy cajoled and badgered and encouraged and forced and finally, with her guidance and flagging support, we became the professional's nightmare: vocal parents bent on lifelong advocacy!

I was both saddened and happy to hear that Kathy Kelker, long time advocate and friend to all people with disabilities, as well as their families and the professionals who work with them, is leaving PLUK. Sad- dened, because this wonderful, com- passionate, knowledgeable, high- energy lady will no longer be on the other end of the line when the toll- free number rings in Billings. Happy, because as someone who person- ally knows the toll we sometimes pay for living life without taking a break, I realize that this move is most likely the best thing Kathy could do for herself and her family.

**A**s all of us at DDP Central Office have reflected on Kathy's im- pact on "the system" of services for this state, her accomplishments far outstrip the space we have available to talk about them. I alone manage two programs of service that might never have existed in the state with- out Kathy's advocacy and caring: Montana's Self Sufficiency Trust, which allows some of the nicer things in life, like vacations and birthday presents, to be purchased for indi- viduals with disabilities; and the Re- spite Services that are a part of nearly every Individual Family Service Plan written in the state. If you magnify the impact of those two programs by the literally hundreds of ways that Kathy influenced the system in her actions and her writing ( e.g., *Part- ners in Policymaking*, *The Family*

*Continued bottom of page 15*

## Maggie Remembers

*DDP's Director, Maggie Bullock, offers the following thoughts as all of us at the Developmental Disabilities Program send Kathy our respect, our thanks, and our tribute*

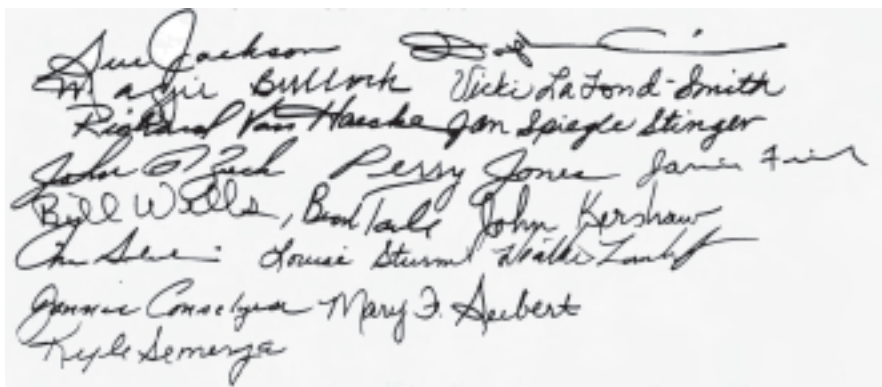
The first time I met Kathy, she came to me when I was the Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator, somewhere around 1986, strictly as a mom/advocate (the two titles go together without saying), who wanted VR to provide more services to people (especially students) with learning disabilities.

I tried to convince her that VR already did a fine job working with people with learning disabilities. I offered to continue to meet with her and other parents, if she chose to bring more people to the table. Well, of course, she did, and, of course, she was right. VR needed to improve what it was doing and do more. So,

at that time just as I do now, I listened and learned from her.

The last time I saw Kathy was on a 757 late last fall (1999), as we were boarding in Salt Lake City to fly to Washington, D.C. Since my return to Montana in 1996, I hadn't seen her, but of course had seen the *PLUK Newsletter*. She really hadn't changed much in appearance, but I had obviously, because she only recognized me after I spoke to her. Anyway, just in talking with her that short period of time, I realized that she still seemed to have the same level of energy and was still a "pioneer" woman, as Justin Dart likes to call activists for disability rights. I will always be thankful that her path and mine crossed and that she will remain involved, in whatever capacity. She's another treasure of our Treasure State.

Kathy — from all of us at DDP — good luck, God Bless, and keep on keepin' on!



*Tribute, continued from page 14*

*Friendly Rules Guide, the First Steps Handbook, etc., etc.) and just generally made "good things happen" in the state, what is there to say? Truly, her accomplishments are awesome!*

The first time I met Kathy, in Billings at that 1983 conference, my daughter Sara was 7 months old and my family was head-over-heels

in disarray, dealing with the loss of the dream baby we'd expected and the serious medical complications which demanded Sara's 24-hour care. I've never forgotten Kathy's advice to me at that first meeting. She said four things that I have carried with me always, and that I've passed on to some other moms and dads as my path has crossed their lives. She said:

☺ "Become political, because if

## Participate in the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Planning Process

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is soliciting input on improving results for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities. Information will be used by OSEP to develop a long range, comprehensive plan for the part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act that funds programs which reflect best practices to states, school systems, and families.

You can participate by completing the survey online at <http://www.OSEPplanning.org>.

To request a paper, Spanish, large print or Braille version of the survey, please call (800) 510-1668 (800/813-5812 for TTY), send email to [OSEPplanning@westat.com](mailto:OSEPplanning@westat.com), or write to Westat, OSEP Comprehensive Planning Project, 1009 Slater Road, Suite 110, Durham, NC 27703.

you want the best for Sara, you have to."

- ☺ "Make friends with the professionals. You need them. Nurture the friendships."
- ☺ "Pick your battles. You can't possibly make everything wrong about the system right. So, choose your fight."
- ☺ "You can do this, Jan. Keep on keepin' on."

Thank you, Kathy, from one Mom to another for being who you are and for doing what you've done!

## Communication Assistant

YSpeak is a free computer program for speech-and-motor-disabled users. It is designed to assist in communicating in a variety of ways, reducing the input from the user to the minimum.

YSpeak provides functions that eases the work which the user has to perform. It speaks typed text in any of 25 voices, both male and female. The user has a choice of having the text spoken word-by-word, by line, by sentence, or when requested.

The text can be customized in any of the available fonts and font sizes, colors and styles. iBook users will like the inverted text option that lets others read the text when the iBook display is folded back.

YSpeak contains 2 dictionaries, one with 1000 of the most commonly used words, and one with 25,000 words. When the user starts typing, YSpeak instructs the dictionaries to look for the words and to display possible selections in a separate window. YSpeak also attempts to predict the next word to be typed.

### Other features included in YSpeak:

- Five word lists that allow up to 35 words to be entered by typing a single key.
- An on-screen keyboard for those who have difficulty using a standard keyboard.
- Forty-two on-screen buttons that speak user-defined phrases that may be entered phonetically, allowing the use of any language.
- The ability to save to a Disk File in a format that can be read by all word processing programs.

When not in use for a period of time, the program also provides a

## In the Know...

Don't be left out of the loop. Join the fun in the PLUK e-mail lists. They are all accessible from the home page of our web site at as well as through the addresses listed below. You can participate in the PLUK e-mail lists as a contributor or a listener. Best of all, they're free!



### PLUK eNews

PLUK eNews is an e-mail newsletter for families of children with disabilities in the state of Montana.

Subscribe: [PLUK\\_eNews-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:PLUK_eNews-subscribe@egroups.com)  
 Unsubscribe: [PLUK\\_eNews-unsubscribe@egroups.com](mailto:PLUK_eNews-unsubscribe@egroups.com)  
 URL to this page: [http://www.egroups.com/group/PLUK\\_eNews](http://www.egroups.com/group/PLUK_eNews)

### PLUK Parent Chat

This chat group is for parents of children with disabilities in the state of Montana and others interested in their issues. Anyone is welcome to join.

Post message: [PLUK\\_parentchat@egroups.com](mailto:PLUK_parentchat@egroups.com)  
 Subscribe: [PLUK\\_parentchat-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:PLUK_parentchat-subscribe@egroups.com)  
 Unsubscribe: [PLUK\\_parentchat-unsubscribe@egroups.com](mailto:PLUK_parentchat-unsubscribe@egroups.com)  
 URL to this page: [http://www.egroups.com/group/PLUK\\_parentchat](http://www.egroups.com/group/PLUK_parentchat)

### ASK Kathy

Ask our great friend and advisor, Kathy Kelker, questions on special education issues for review by a public audience. Please make questions general rather than pertaining to a specific person or school.

Post message: [ASK\\_Kathy@egroups.com](mailto:ASK_Kathy@egroups.com)  
 Subscribe: [ASK\\_Kathy-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:ASK_Kathy-subscribe@egroups.com)  
 Unsubscribe: [ASK\\_Kathy-unsubscribe@egroups.com](mailto:ASK_Kathy-unsubscribe@egroups.com)  
 URL to this page: [http://www.egroups.com/group/ASK\\_Kathy](http://www.egroups.com/group/ASK_Kathy)

screen saver that is compatible with energy-saving devices on laptop and desktop computers.

YSpeak is designed to be easy to use. The functions can be accessed by pull-down menus, through on-screen buttons, or with the use of the Function keys.

In addition, YSpeak can be customized by users to better fit their particular needs.

- Platform: Macintosh only
- Home Page: <http://www.stazsoftware.com/YSpeak.htm>

## Looking for an iMac?

PLUK is a Macintosh User Group and any one of our readers may purchase items on the internet in the Macintosh User Group Store.

<http://www.applebugstore.com/login> ..... G4  
 password ... CUBE

You may purchase refurbished items at great prices. When ordering, just mention that you are a member of Parent's Let's Unite for Kids.

## What is PLUK?

PLUK is a statewide, self-help organization of parents reaching out to other parents.

The philosophy of PLUK is that there is no one right way to be a good parent — but through self-help services that increase knowledge, parent-to-parent contacts that model and share skills, and mutual problem solving, parents can discover, use, and appreciate their own personal coping skills.

### Who Should Call?

- ♥ Parents of children with special needs, chronic illnesses, or disabilities.
- ♥ Parents of children with emotional or behavioral problems.
- ♥ Parents needing encouragement and moral support from other parents.
- ♥ Family members and friends of persons with special needs.
- ♥ Individuals with disabilities or chronic illnesses.
- ♥ Professionals in medical, educational or human service fields.

### What Services Does PLUK Offer?

#### Information

- ♥ State-of-the-art special needs library (Materials mailed to anywhere in Montana at no charge.)
- ♥ A bimonthly newsletter
- ♥ Referral to medical, educational or human services
- ♥ Training in parenting, communication and advocacy skills
- ♥ Computer lab with adaptations for people with special needs
- ♥ Assistance in seeking financial resources

#### Support

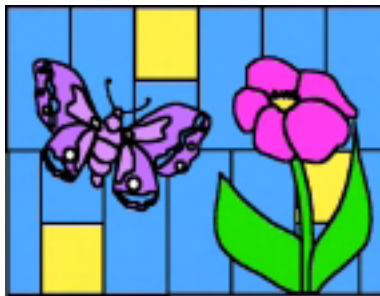
- ♥ Individual assistance and emotional support
- ♥ Trained advocates
- ♥ Mediation and conflict resolution
- ♥ Referrals to parent support groups
- ♥ Parent-to-parent contacts

### Where is PLUK?

PLUK's services are available to individuals and families throughout Montana. The main office, library and computer lab are located at 516 N 32nd St in Billings and satellite offices are located around the state.

### When is PLUK Open?

The PLUK central office is open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. After hours, incoming calls are recorded on voice mail and we respond on the next business day.



### Is There a Cost for PLUK Services?

All PLUK's services are free to individuals with disabilities and their families.

### How Can I Get in Touch?

- ♥ Stop in at the main office in downtown Billings.
- ♥ Call us at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.7585 (tollfree).
- ♥ Send us a fax at 406.255.0523.
- ♥ E-mail at [plukinfo@pluk.org](mailto:plukinfo@pluk.org).
- ♥ Or, visit our web site at <http://www.pluk.org>

## Ten Ways to Help PLUK

1. Volunteer for the Parent Support Network, experienced parents who assist PLUK's regional representatives in providing information and support to other parents.
2. Volunteer in the main office in Billings (Receptionist, Library, Disability Awareness, Fund-raising, Technology Lab).
3. Designate tax-deductible charitable contributions to PLUK (United Way and other qualifying planned gifts such as: charitable remainder unitrust; charitable remainder annuity trust; charitable lead trust; charitable gift annuity; charitable life estate; & life insurance policies).
4. Name PLUK as a beneficiary in your will.
5. Donate used computer equipment (Mac or PC). PLUK staff and volunteers refurbish used computers and give them away to children and adults with disabilities who need them. You can claim a charitable donation for the value of your gift and feel good about helping someone who otherwise could not afford to have a computer.
6. Donate any item of value and claim a charitable donation for the market value.
7. Shop online and register at PLUK's online shopping village: <http://www.pluk.greatergood.com>. 5-15% of the purchase price goes directly to PLUK at no cost to the purchaser.
8. Become an annual/monthly donor to support PLUK activities.
9. Purchase PLUK publications and videos.
10. Coordinate a fund-raising activity in your community.

# Conferences & Support Groups • Conferences & Support

## Neuropsychology of Reading Disorders: Diagnosis and Intervention

October 19 & 20, 2000

**Location:** Cavanaugh's Colonial Inn in Helena, Montana (Reservations: 1-800-422-1002)

**Target Audience:** School psychologists, educators, parents, & others

**Sponsor:** Montana Association of School Psychologists

### Highlights

Dr. Philip DeFina, Ph.D., ABPdN., a leading clinical neuropsychologist and school psychologist will present "Reading Disorders and the Brain."

Steven Feifer, Ed.S., NCSP, a school psychologist with advanced post-graduate certification in clinical neuropsychology will speak on the topic, "Interventions and Remediation Strategies."

### For More Information

Rhonda Remsen  
Fall Conference Committee Chair  
3210 6th Ave. S.  
Great Falls, MT 59405-3315  
Office/voicemail 406.268.3370  
Home 406.771.1871  
rhonda.remsen@gfps.k12.mt.us



## Autism: Diagnosis, Strategies, & Advocacy

November 17 & 18, 2000

**Location:** Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Billings, Montana

**Target Audience:** Educators, Parents, Administrators, & other Professionals

**Sponsor:** CSPD Region III

This workshop will focus on current methods of Diagnosis, Treatment, Teaching Strategies of Autism. The workshop will also address Parent Advocacy and Perspective and Building Collaborative Team Approaches.

### Objectives

1. Learn strategies based on best practices
2. Learn strategies to enhance functional communication, positive behavioral supports, & social skills
3. Understanding latest in diagnosis & medical treatment of autism
4. Develop strategies to address advocacy & collaboration to promote team work.

### Workshop Agenda

November 17, 2000

9-9:30 Registration

9:30-11:30 Dr. Melinda Payne  
"Diagnosis of Autism & Medical Intervention"

1-4:00 Pat Gum "Responsiveness Benchmark Curriculum"

November 18, 2000

9-10:30 Kathy Kelker "Advocating for School Services"

10:30-11:30 Parent Panel Discussion

1-4:00 Connie Beecher "Strategies for Success for Children with Autism"

**Cost:** \$15.00 (includes materials)

Step Up and CEU credits have been requested for 10.5 contact hours from PT, OT, SLP and SW licensure boards

Please make checks payable to:

The Montana Center on Disabilities Region III CSPD



### For More Information

Debra Miller  
Montana Center on Disabilities  
— MSU-B  
1500 North 30th Street  
Billings, MT 59101  
Phone: 406.657.2312  
Fax: 406.657.2313  
Email: dmiller@msubillings.edu

# Groups • Conferences & Support Groups • Conferences &

## What a Great IDEA: Effective Practices for Children with Disabilities

Thousands of educators across the country are being invited to attend a one-day professional development conference aimed at improving their knowledge of strategies to ensure that students with disabilities receive an appropriate education. The fee for the events is being waived; however, registration is limited.

The conferences will take place in 10 cities around the nation during the fall and early winter. The focus will be on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which was reauthorized in 1997. Practical ideas to implement special education requirements will form the backdrop for these events.

The conferences will target general and special education teachers and administrators, related services professionals, and others. All attendees will receive an IDEA CD ROM, guide books and more to be used in their schools and districts to assist in the effective implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (IDEA '97).

The conferences are offered by the ASPIIRE and ILIAD IDEA Partnerships, leadership initiatives of The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). The ASPIIRE and ILIAD IDEA Partnership Projects involve professional organizations working together to provide needed information and technical assistance to implement IDEA '97. The partnership projects build upon the strengths of many educational organizations, committed to a five-year effort to work with the U.S. Department of Education toward effective practices and improved outcomes for students with disabilities.

### Conference speakers include

- Dr. Frances Stetson, president of Stetson & Associates, Inc., an educational consulting firm in Houston with a 12-year history. Dr. Stetson is noted for her practical, user-friendly materials and enthusiastic delivery.
- Bob Jewett, a former principal from an urban district who now serves as an educational consultant with Stetson & Associates, Inc., has more than 20 years experience in both general and special education.
- Dr. Bob Mitchell, special education director, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Virginia, a practitioner with more than 30 years of experience.

### More information

For registration information, call Stetson & Associates, Inc., at 1-(877) 839-0102 (toll free). For more information about related projects, contact The ASPIIRE and ILIAD IDEA Partnerships at 1-(877) CEC-IDEA (toll free), (703)264-9480 (TDD), or look for information on the web at [www.ideapractices.org](http://www.ideapractices.org).

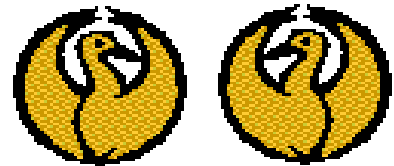
## Special Needs Family Support Group

Meets on the first Monday of each month from 6:30-8:30 PM

Chief Joseph Elementary Gym  
5305 3rd Ave S  
Great Falls

### For information, call

Bobbie ..... 452.9531



### Conference Locations

NOTE: Details on the dates and locations follow. Also see CEC's web site at [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org), or the IDEA Practices web site at [www.ideapractices.org](http://www.ideapractices.org).

- ➔ Phoenix, AZ September 29, 2000
- ➔ Houston, TX October 10, 2000
- ➔ Philadelphia, PA October 12, 2000
- ➔ Bismarck, ND October 16, 2000
- ➔ Orlando, FL October 23, 2000
- ➔ Columbus, OH November 2, 2000
- ➔ Concord, NH November 10, 2000
- ➔ Nashville, TN November 13, 2000
- ➔ Honolulu, HI November 21, 2000
- ➔ Sacramento, CA Dec. 4, 2000

## Alert: Delaware Supreme Court Issues Decision In Arons Case

The Delaware Supreme Court upheld a finding that lay advocates who represent parents in Delaware special education due process hearings are engaged in the unauthorized practice of law (UPL).

According to the July 6 decision by the Court:

"On August 8, 1996, the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC,) filed a petition with the Board requesting that Arons, Watson and the Parent Information Center be declared to have engaged in activities constituting the unauthorized practice of law by representing families of children with disabilities in due process hearings. While admitting the representation of at least five such families in Delaware due process hearings, Appellants denied that their activities, even if amounting to the practice of law, constitute the unauthorized practice of law. They argued that section 1415(h)(1) of the IDEA permits the representations in which they have engaged and preempts any state-law proscription against the unauthorized practice of law that might otherwise apply. That section provides that any party to a due process hearing shall be accorded... the right to be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training with re-

spect to the problems of children with disabilities. They also claimed that Delaware is alone among the fifty states in precluding non-lawyer representation in these circumstances."

Although this case applies only to advocacy representation in Delaware, it's impossible to predict if its impact will be limited to Delaware.

We expect the Arons case to have no impact in Virginia because the Code of Virginia, Section 22.1-214(C) states: "The parents and the school division shall have the right to be represented by legal counsel or other representative before such hearing officer without being in violation of the provisions of § 54.1-3904 (the unauthorized practice of law section of the Virginia Code)."

Other states may have similar language in their statutes, regulations, or in opinions issued by their Attorneys General.

If you know your state's position and have specific legal authority, statute, regulation, legal opinion, or other authority, please send the information by email to: [UPL@wrightslaw.com](mailto:UPL@wrightslaw.com).

The Delaware justices seemed to believe that Delaware parents can easily find attorneys to represent children with disabilities:

"If it could be demonstrated that an unmet need exists and that the local bar could not adequately respond, this Court would consider the adoption of a rule allowing lay representation in a certain limited class of cases.... At present, however,

such a need has not been demonstrated."

### What next?

Check your state statutes, regulations, and AG opinions. If your state laws or regs need to change to permit representation by lay advocates, you need to educate your legislators about these issues.

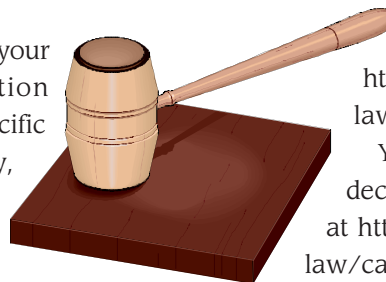
We are indebted to the Council of Parents Attorneys and Advocates listserv for staying on top of this case. David C. Vladeck, counsel for Arons, spoke at the last COPAA conference in Houston, and gave the inside story of this case as it was unfolding.

If you are an advocate or attorney who assists or represents children with disabilities, you need to join COPAA! For membership information, go to <http://www.copaa.net>

You can download the Arons decision in html from the Wrightslaw Law Library -

[http://www.wrightslaw.com/law/caselaw/DE\\_aron.htm](http://www.wrightslaw.com/law/caselaw/DE_aron.htm)

You can download the Arons decision in pdf from Wrightslaw at [http://www.wrightslaw.com/law/caselaw/DE\\_aron.pdf](http://www.wrightslaw.com/law/caselaw/DE_aron.pdf)



### Contact Information

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EXECUTIVE ORDER

## Increasing the Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities to be Employed in the Federal Government

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to promote an increase in the opportunities for individuals with disabilities to be employed at all levels and occupations of the Federal Government, and to support the goals articulated in section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of

1973 (29 U.S.C. 791), it is hereby ordered as follows:

Sec. 1. Increasing the Federal Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities.

(A) ... Qualified persons with disabilities have been refused employment despite their availability and qualifications, and many qualified persons with disabilities are never

made aware of available employment opportunities. ...Increased efforts at outreach, and increased understanding of the reasonable accommodations available ... will permit persons with disabilities to compete for employment on a more level playing field.

(B) Based on current hiring patterns and anticipated increases from expanded outreach efforts and appropriate accommodations, the Federal Government, over the next 5 years, will be able to hire 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities. ... Federal agencies shall:

- (1) Use available hiring authorities, consistent with statutes, [etc.];
- (2) Expand their outreach efforts, using both traditional and nontraditional methods; and
- (3) Increase their efforts to accommodate individuals with disabilities.

(C) As a model employer, the Federal Government will take the lead in educating the public about employment opportunities available for individuals with disabilities.

(D) This order does not require agencies to create new positions or change qualification standards...

Sec. 2. Implementation. Each Federal agency shall prepare a plan to increase the opportunities for individuals with disabilities ... within 60 days from the date of this order.

[Sections 3 and 4 address authority to develop guidance and judicial review.]

WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
THE WHITE HOUSE,  
July 26, 2000

### What is helping.org?

Helping.org is a completely non-profit Web site that makes it easier and more convenient than ever for people to learn more about the causes they care about and to take action to help: whether by signing up to volunteer or by making a donation directly online. Helping.org charges no fees or commissions and contains no advertising. The information and services provided are a product of a collaboration of partners from across the nonprofit community.



for anyone with Internet access to make donations to the charity of their choice. Guidestar, a helping.org partner, offers a database of information about every public charity

recognized by the IRS, and provides easy access to all public information about

each charity so that donors can make informed and economical giving decisions.

### What does it cost to donate to charities through helping.org?

Helping.org does not charge any fees for its online giving service — to either you the donor, or the charity receiving your donation. All administrative costs of offering this service are being paid by the AOL Foundation. Only the fees charged by your credit card company, typically less than 2% of your donation, will be deducted from your gift.

### How do I make a donation online?

Go to the PLUK web site at [www.pluk.org](http://www.pluk.org) and click on "Donate Now".

### What is online giving?

Online giving allows donors to make charitable contributions over the Internet from the convenience of their home or office. All donations are completed through a secure server and the donor's information is used only to complete the transaction.

### Why are you offering online giving?

The AOL Foundation and its non-profit partners hope to make it easier

## Disability Mall

The Disability Mall is an easy-to-use directory designed and omitted to featuring information on disability and medical products, resources and services with over 2,500 links including over 400 companies for your one-stop shopping convenience.

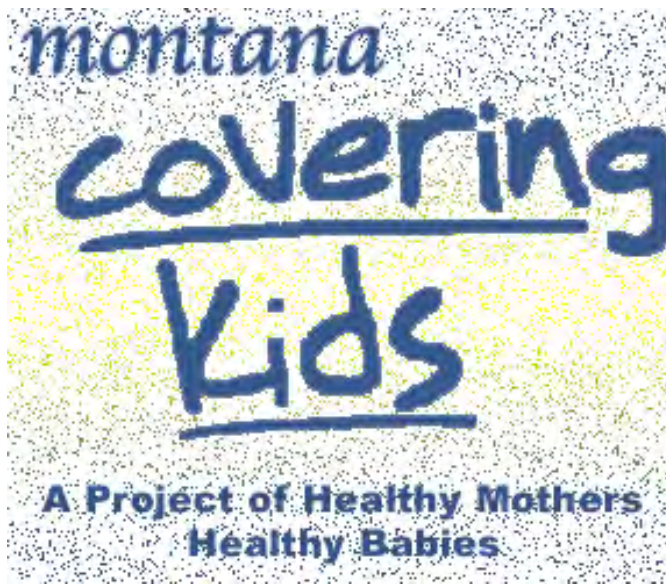
### Contents

- Index of Companies USA & Canada
- Augmentative Communication
- Assistance Animals Products and Services
- Autos & Vans (Conversion & Rental)
- Blind & Vision Impaired
- Books, Magazines & Accessories
- Brochures & Catalogs
- Canes, Crutches, Standers and Walkers
- Children & Parenting Products and Services
- Clothing & Accessories
- Cognitive Assistive Technology
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- Furniture & Accessories Hodgepodge Specialty Shop
- Household Products & Accessories
- Medical & P.T. Equipt. & Supplies
- Medicines, Vitamins & Supplements
- Professional Services & Consultants
- Reading and Writing aids
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- Wheelchairs

[Find out more](#)

<http://www.medmarket.com/disability.cfm/appliedlearning/>

**MedMarket.com**



*Don't Let Your Child Miss Out*

## Free or Low-Cost Health Coverage

Thousands of Montana children have no health coverage even though they are eligible for free or low-cost health coverage programs.

You can be working and your children can qualify

Even if your family is no longer on public assistance, your children may qualify for free or low-cost health coverage.

### Children May Get

- hospital care • regular checkups • shots • visits to the doctor & dentist
- vision and hearing care • needed medical treatment
- mental health services

For more information call: 1-800-421-6667

## Montana Covering Kids Advocates

The Covering Kids Advocates help families make sure their children are enrolled in a health coverage program. To help make sure your child is not "missing out" on health coverage, Call one of the advocates listed below or call Montana Covering Kids at 1-800-421-6667.

Your Covering Kids Advocate also may be able to help you find additional private coverage programs, if needed.

Carbon County .....	962-3800	Lincoln County .....	293-2976
Cascade County .....	268-6763	Missoula County .....	523-4750
Crow Agency .....	638-3536	Ravalli County .....	642-6498
Fergus County .....	538-7433	Richland County .....	482-2207
Flathead County .....	758-5741	Butte-Silver Bow Co. ....	723-6507
Gallatin County .....	582-3100	Yellowstone County .....	247-3360
Lewis & Clark Co. ....	443-2584		

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## PLUK News Subscription Form



### PLUK News Subscription Form

I would like to subscribe to *PLUK News*.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

- I am the parent of a child with a disability residing in Montana and I would welcome a free subscription. (Please tell us a little about your child — name, disability, birthdate, etc.)
- \$20 donation for a one-year subscription
- \$35 donation for two years
- I would like to request a waiver for one year. I have included a letter explaining why I am requesting a waiver of the fee.
- I would like to contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ to support PLUK programs.



# PLUK Open House

Thursday, October 19  
3:00 to 6:00 PM

Come say "Howdy" to our new Executive Director, Dennis Moore, and give him your tips for surviving Montana winters.

Tour the office and see all that's new and improved. Grab a snack and visit for a spell.

Hope to see you there!



## Parents, Let's Unite for Kids

Call Toll Free in Montana

1-800-222-7585

### Free Information and Support

We are people with disabilities, parents, professionals, relatives, and friends who want to assure that persons with disabilities participate in the community and have access to high quality educational, medical and rehabilitation services.

We become as well informed as possible about best practices/resources and willingly share information and emotional support with each other so that together we are stronger in our efforts to meet the challenges of disabilities and illnesses.

**PLUK News** September & October 2000  
**Media Director:** Roger Holt  
**Layout:** Rosanna Buehl, QBMM Publishing, Billings Montana  
**Circulation:** 2,000

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<http://www.pluk.org>

*PLUK News* is published by *Parents, Let's Unite for Kids*, a private nonprofit organization founded in 1984 by a group of parents of children with disabilities and chronic health problems. Subscriptions are **FREE** to parents in Montana and other interested individuals. *PLUK News* is available in alternative formats by request.

The contents of this newsletter were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Products and services described herein are not endorsed by PLUK, the U.S. Department of Education, or by the Federal Government.

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