

*United as Parents,
All Our Children Succeed*

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 2 What is PLUK?
 - 3 PLUK Interactive TV Learning Series
 - 4 Thoughts from Nancy
 - 6–8 @ Your Library: New Videos
 - 9 Readers Express
 - 10–11 Ask PLUK
 - 12–14 Feature Article: State of the Angus, The Berkeley Years
 - 14 Montana Training Events
 - 15 Honorary Board Members
 - 15 Change of the Guard
 - 16–17 Development News
 - 18 Volunteer News
 - 19 PLUK Family Support Staff
 - 19 PLUK Main Office Directory
 - 19 Part C Representatives
- Special Supplement:
Summer Camps, An 8-Page
Added Section**

Upcoming Events!

Don't Miss the Fun!

Kids at Heart Banquet

February 8

Sports Fans, An Event for You!

Sports Festival

March 22

— See page 17 for details

Parents, Let's Unite for Kids
516 N 32nd Street
Billings MT 59101-6003

406.255.0540 (voice/TT)
800.222.7585 (toll free in Montana)

plukinfo@pluk.org
http://www.pluk.org

PLUK NEWS

Our 18th Year



Letter from our Executive Director

American as Apple Pie

Volunteerism has always been an American concept, one that has helped make our country strong. From the United States' infancy when a volunteer army helped mold what we are today, to the millions of volunteers who helped over the years with meeting the needs of the less fortunate, volunteers have been our backbone. Steven Ambrose often used the term "Citizen Soldier" describing volunteers who stepped forward during World War II. My own father signed up as a "Citizen Soldier" and served as a volunteer with the 101st Airborne, jumping into a Nazi-occupied France on D-Day. He stayed with his company through Market Garden, Bastogne, and to the end of the war. Volunteerism is truly a concept that has made our world great.

There are always people stepping forward to make a difference! Sometimes it's predictable who will help, but oftentimes it's someone you would never expect. At PLUK, volunteers do so much to help so many. Volunteers pitch in and help with PLUK's kids, working as tutors, reading instructors, leaders of workshops or chaperones for events. Volunteers help with designing and packaging the newsletters and publications.

The number of volunteers signing up for the "Parent-To-Parent" project continues to grow. They provide priceless help by talking with other parents about their experiences and lessons. Volunteers work uncounted hours in the office and the computer lab to facilitate the program's operation.

Volunteers serve on PLUK's ten Associate Boards across the state, sending a voice from their region to the program. Volunteers help by serving on committees

and planning events and activities, urging PLUK to grow.

At PLUK the need for volunteer involvement is at the very core of what we are and what we do. We need your help to recruit volunteers and build public awareness for PLUK. Please encourage others to join our efforts. Suggest to friends that they become involved. Refer contacts to Bernice, our Volunteer Coordinator. Write letters to your newspaper and encourage people to become involved. Volunteerism is a way people can speak out and make a difference.

Join us in honoring PLUK's volunteers this spring. Please, keep us in your thoughts and prayers and help PLUK continue to help kids.

— Dennis Moore,
Executive Director



What is PLUK?

Parents, Let's Unite for Kids is a statewide parent organization that provides support, resources, and training to families and professionals affected by disabilities and chronic illness. Covering topics ranging from infancy to adulthood, PLUK offers various statewide resources and individual support in homes, schools and medical facilities.

GET YOUR "NEWS" ONLINE
Prefer to do your reading online? Log on to our Web site, <http://www.pluk.org>
Once on the site, you'll find newsletters for the past several years, as well as our other publications, information about special education services, and access to late-breaking news.

Who Should Call?

- ♥ Parents of children with special needs, chronic illnesses, or disabilities.
- ♥ Parents of children with emotional or behavioral problems.
- ♥ Parents needing encouragement & 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.

When is PLUK Open?

The PLUK central office in downtown Billings is open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. After hours or when we all are in the field, our voice mail records incoming calls and we respond on the next business day or sooner.

Is There a Cost for PLUK Services?

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

PLUK News
Media Director: Roger Holt
Contributors: Bernice Hash, Brenda Jackson, Elisabeth Mills, Dennis Moore, Janice Sand, Nancy Staigmilller
Design & Layout: Rosanna Buehl
 QBMM Publishing, Billings Montana
 406.259.3110 • www.qbmm.com
Circulation: 4,500

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.

PLUK Main Office
516 N 32nd St
Billings MT 59101-6003

What Services Does PLUK Offer?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <h3>Information</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ State-of-the-art special needs library (materials mailed to anywhere in Montana at no charge) ♥ Training in parenting, communication, advocacy skills, and more ♥ An information-filled newsletter ♥ Computer lab with adaptations for people with special needs ♥ Referral to medical, educational or human services ♥ Assistance in seeking financial resources | <h3>Support</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Individual assistance and emotional support ♥ Trained advocates ♥ Mediation and conflict resolution ♥ Referrals to parent support groups ♥ Parent-to-parent contacts |
|---|---|

How Can I Get in Touch?
 Stop in at the main office in downtown Billings.
 ♦
 Call us at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.PLUK [7585] (toll free)
 ♦
 Send us a fax at 406.255.0523
 ♦
 Check in with us on the Internet
 E-mail: plukinfo@pluk.org
 Web site: <http://www.pluk.org>

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 North 32nd Street in Billings. Satellite offices are located around the state.

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.

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.

Training News • Training News • Training

Join us for our popular free monthly interactive training. There are five ways you may participate:

- 1 Attend one of the 80 possible VisionNet ITV studios in the state. We will try to book any site with three or more registrants.
- 2 View the session "live" on the Internet using RealPlayer (See Web site).
- 3 Participate "live" (audio only) over the telephone by calling 415.455.4580 during a session. If you cannot afford the long distance charges, contact us for a toll-free alternative.
- 4 View videotapes of this and all previous sessions that are available at the TRIC/PLUK Library. Call the PLUK office to check them out.
- 5 View the archived sessions on the Internet using RealPlayer.

Web address

<http://www.pluk.org/visionnet.htm>

Please Register Early!

Call the PLUK office at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.PLUK [7585] or sign up online at www.pluk.org/visionnet.htm

PLUK Interactive TV Learning Series

And the Show Goes On

Using the VisionNet Interactive TV System



Paul Kelker (on the left) informing participants on "Attention Disorders" on December 10. In the background is Roger Holt.



Rosanna Buehl & Mark Taylor (right) inaugurating the new year with "Reading and Writing: Evaluation & Intervention" on January 14.

Archived Sessions

Available on the Web and on video

- Reading and Writing: Evaluation and Intervention* by Rosanna Buehl & Mark Taylor, January 14, 2003
- Attention Disorders* by Dr. Paul Kelker, December 10, 2002
- Curriculum Differentiation* by Cass Rocco, November 12, 2002
- Transition* by Susan Bailey-Anderson, October 8, 2002
- Balanced Eating for Kids with Food Sensitivities* by Christina Sanchez & Cindy Martin, September 10, 2002
- Helping Kids Give Up Their Misbe-*

- havior* by Doug Cochran-Roberts, May 14, 2002
- Standards and Testing, I & II* by Gail McGregor, April 9, 2002
- Issues in Special Education* by Bob Runkel, March 12, 2002
- Assessment of Children for Special Education, I & II* by Kathy Kelker and Mark Taylor, February 12, 2002

Additional titles available

For more information, call PLUK at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.PLUK [7585] or see the Internet at www.pluk.org/visionnet.htm

Spring Series

- February 11, 2003** • Roger Shelley of the Rural Institute on Disabilities, *Employment, Education, Planning for the Future and Resources for Individuals with Disabilities*
- March 11, 2003** • Panel Discussion, *Financial Considerations and Resources for Parents of Children with Disabilities*
- April 8, 2003** • Bob Runkel, *Update on Changes in Special Education*
- May 13, 2003** • Doug Cochran-Roberts, *Kids at IEP Meetings*

Please register early!!!

You may sign up in advance for as many sessions as you would like.

Thoughts from Nancy

By Nancy Staigmiller

Some things in life remain concrete and basic, and some evolve. This has been observed over many years as parents of special needs children express similar concerns and needs, yet the communication and sharing of information becomes more sophisticated due to increased technology and a general widening of the knowledge and information base.

The parents of special needs children still have the basic need to be heard and understood as they progress through the maze of special education and medical interventions for their children. As parents we need to understand and accept the ramifications and needs surrounding our chronically ill or disabled children. I am always impressed by the large number of parents who use their devotion and natural advocacy skills with a great passion for their children. Parents go to extreme lengths to seek what is right concerning the care and education for their 'kiddos.'

As a PLUK employee, I do not hear as many basic questions or pleas for help any more. The questions seem to be deeper and more complex, reflecting change. The basic need focuses on families continuing to develop effective communication skills as they advance through the process of successful planning with service providers, medical professionals, and school professionals.

The large numbers of families I am in touch with leave a big impression upon my heart and spirit, and their stories are not forgotten. My wish for the New Year is that nothing wears us down as we deal with the basic needs that stay the same and the changes that are ever before us. With those thoughts in mind I would like to share a few ideas for helping families to access more training and information as all of you work through that "maze," in whatever unique way it presents itself.

The Internet offers access to a plethora of information for families. Take advantage of a helpful and informative web site from Pam and Pete Wright at www.wrightslaw.com. They present all kinds of training and information, and list their free newsletter and hardback resources as well. *From Emotions to Advocacy, The Special Education Survival Guide,*



by Pam and Pete Wright, offers a priceless list (see sidebar on next page).

Many parents and professionals access PLUK'S extensive library materials. Each newsletter also highlights materials. Some parents may not have Internet access and some of us still prefer to read from real paper. At PLUK we aspire to offer a variety of written materials that we can mail out upon request. Just ask.

I would like to highlight an interesting two-page document that came to us over the Internet that we, in turn, will make available to parents or professionals. It is the type of short article to offer to your child's teacher if your child is affected by Juvenile Bipolar Disorder.

In the article "The Shrink in the Classroom, An Explosive Debate: The Bipolar Child." (Shlozman, S.C. (2002) *Educational Leadership*, vol. 60, no. 3), Dr. Shlozman talks about bipolar depression and the associated controversy within the mental health profession. Controversy arose only in the past few years, as clinicians struggle to accept this disorder as a diagnosis in children and youth.

Now it is held that symptoms experienced by children and adolescents are only partly like the symptoms of adults affected with bipolar illness (manic depression). Shlozman states that children, and some adolescents, show a much greater percentage of mixed symptoms. Since not all children with Bipolar Disorder have violent outbursts, the expectation that the children will be physically explosive may be causing a stigmatization of these children. He is also quick to note that these children should not be assumed to be psychotic because the explosive behavior and mixture of explosive behavior with mixed depression and agitated moods are much more common



with only rare cases of psychotic behavior.

The explosive moods occurring in bipolar illnesses make the frustrations accompanying the process of growing up extremely difficult. In addition to this challenge there is frequently an accompaniment of learning problems such as ADHD, nonverbal learning disorders, and auditory process difficulty. Thus it is easy to see why children and youth with Bipolar Disorder often feel demoralized and misunderstood — perhaps almost losing hope. The good news is that the mental health community now realizes that depression in children can be diagnosed and treated. Children suffering from depressive types of illness, including Juvenile Bipolar Disorder, can benefit enormously from a vast increase in options and treatments.

Juvenile Bipolar disorder can be extremely disruptive. "It derails development, strains friendships, and stifles learning. As clinicians and educators come to understand the diagnosis of Juvenile Bipolar Disorder, however, the children who suffer from this problem have a much greater chance of success than was possible even a few years ago." (Shlozman, p. 89)

There are other handouts available for a variety of disabilities like Attention Deficit Disorder, autism, and so forth. Consider the following recommended reading suggestions for parents and professionals from the PLUK library:

SOS! Help for Parents (2nd Ed.) by L. Clark (Bowling Green, KY: Parents Press, 1996)

The Explosive Child by R.W. Green (New York: Harper Collins, 1998)

Web address mentioned

www.wrightslaw.com

Raising a special needs child can be overwhelming. If you are not careful, special education can consume your life. Many parents drive themselves until they are exhausted and burned out. Pace yourself. Listen to tapes about time management. Use a schedule to gain control of your life. Spend time with friends or family to recharge your batteries and regain a healthy perspective. Here are some tips for taking care of yourself and your family.

Tips for taking Care of Yourself

- Set aside time with your partner. Use E-mail or voice mail to stay in touch.
- Schedule one-on-one time with each child. Write the child's name by a date on the calendar. Let the child pick the place and activity.
- Master the art of the short escape. Visit a local attraction for an afternoon or a local resort for a weekend. Short escapes will help you unwind.
- Nurture friendships. Make time to go to the movies, have meals, exercise, or take walks with friends.
- Ask friends for help. Tell friends or family when you need help with child-care and errands.
- Find another parent whom you can contact when you are worried and need encouragement.
- Share child-care with another family. Pick times each week when you can help the family and when they can help you. You will each have someone to contact when you need a break.
- Help others. If you spend one hour a month helping others, this will help you keep your problems in perspective. You will know that you are not alone.
- Set aside a block of time to do special education tasks (i.e., making phone calls and filing documents). If you stick to a schedule, special education will not consume your life.
- Simplify. Get rid of clutter. Your home will be more relaxing and peaceful.
- Take the phone off the hook. When you need quiet time, turn your phone off for a few hours.
- Take care of your health and keep appointments with doctors. If you feel anxious or depressed, see a mental health professional.

New Videos!!!

We have so many exciting videos at the TRIC/PLUK Library, that we thought we would focus only on our new video acquisitions in this issue.

ADHD in Adults

Three adults with ADHD are interviewed in this tape. The program also explains the causes of ADHD and presents scientific and psychological evidence for the disorder in adults. V-ADD70

Asperger Syndrome: Transition to College and Work

This video details what people with Asperger Syndrome need to do to prepare for college or to find and hold a job. There is a college preparation checklist at the end of the tape. V-TRA52

Autism Spectrum Disorders

An educational psychologist gives an overview of autism spectrum disorders discussing such issues as cognitive style, diagnostic characteristics, communication, social behaviors, and strategies.

Closed Captioned V-AUT83

Barton Reading and Spelling System, LLC: Overview and Screening Susan Barton gives an overview of and demonstrates the Barton Reading and Spelling System for working with children, teens and adults with dyslexia. V-LD59

Bullies and How to Help Them

Simple techniques are taught to deal with bullies, to reason with, or to avoid them. It is intended for use primarily for grades 3 through 5. V-SOC29

Careers: K-12 and Postsecondary

This video and accompanying publications are for those involved in career preparation activities including secondary and postsecondary students with disabilities. Participating in work-based learning experiences and internships are discussed. V-TRA54

Could It Be Dyslexia

The narrator discusses the symptoms of dyslexia in preschoolers, elementary age children, teenagers, and adults. She also discusses the cause of it based on the latest brain research. V-LD54

CPR for Infants and Children

This video covers managing febrile seizures, infant and child CPR, and relief of airway obstruction and will aid emergency professionals, teachers and others in maintaining a basic level of proficiency in emergency care for infants and children. V-SAF42

Daily Living Skills Series

This series will help train staff to teach others how to care for their personal needs at home or in a care center. Depending on the level of understanding, these tapes may also be used with people who have developmental disabilities, helping them learn from example as well.

Bathing and Showering V-STA135

Bathroom Assistance V-STA139

Documentation V-STA142

Feminine Hygiene V-STA141

Handwashing V-STA134

Nail Care V-STA137

Oral Hygiene V-STA140

Personal Appearance

Assessment V-STA143

Shampooing V-STA136

Shaving V-STA138

Dan! Doctors Panel I: Autism Society of America

This is a panel discussion of physicians who have successfully treated

their own autistic children. Cochairs are Bernard Rimland, Ph.D. and Paul M. Hardy, M.D. Panel speakers are Jerry Kartzinel, M.D., Bryan Jepson, M.D., Carolyn Lewis, R.N. and Allen Lewis, M.D. V-AUT86

Dark Glasses and Kaleidoscopes: Living with Manic Depression

The video explains the symptoms and treatment of manic depression through the testimony of individuals and families who live with this illness. V-EMO41

Day for Night: Recognizing Teenage Depression

This video looks into teenage depression, its symptoms and its treatment as it presents true stories of several teenagers and their battles with clinical depression or bipolar disorders. V-EMO36

(Dis)Ability Awareness

This is an excellent orientation to the human side of the ADA and would be appropriate for training or personal use. *Closed Captioned* V-DIS10

Dyslexia: Testing and Teaching A One-Hour Video for Parents, Relatives, Teachers and Other Professionals

On this informative video the narrator discusses what tests should be used to detect dyslexia, who should do the testing and who should not, which reading programs to use and which ones to avoid. V-LD55

Elizabeth and Larry: Read with Me Stories for Your Deaf Child

This is a story about two best friends Elizabeth, an old lady, and Larry, an alligator. V-HI94

Every Child Deserves a Chance

This video explains the IEP process and how parents and school personnel should work together as a team. Would be useful for parents new to the special education system. V-ADV84

Everybody Has a Song

Henry Winkler talks to children about

library™ @your library™ @your library™

- their learning disabilities and how to overcome them. He gives an inspiring pep talk to encourage kids to persevere and never give up. V-LD56
- Explosive and Noncompliant Child: A Special Workshop for Parents*
In this video Dr. Ross Greene explains his approach to reduce hostility and antagonism between a child and adults in order to reduce explosive episodes and become more adept at handling frustrations. V-PAR66 or V-BEH83
- Families Coping with Mental Illness*
In this video, 10 parents and siblings share their experiences of having a family member with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder with lengths of illness ranging from three to forty years. V-EMO45
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: The Early Years*
This video focuses on the challenges of caring for the FAS/FAE child. An expert explains why children behave in certain ways and offers advice on the best way to handle typical situations. V-INF69
- Home Safe Home*
This video will help direct care providers to identify potential safety problems, fix them and to teach the people who live there to avoid these problems in the future. V-STAI44
- I Want My Little Boy Back: One Family's Journey Through the Son-Rise Program*
This is a BBC documentary on one families journey through autism learning to implement the Son-Rise program from the Option Institute in Sheffield, Massachusetts. V-AUT84
- I Want to Learn Sign Language: Everyday Sign Language Lessons for Children Ages 5-12*
In Volume 1, Andy is coming to visit and his cousins and a friend are worried about how they are going to communicate with him and how they should act around them. His visit provides an opportunity for the children to learn about each other's worlds while having fun learning and using sign language. V-HI96
- In Volume 2, the children learn the signs for family members, animals, fruits, colors, sports, and holidays. V-HI97
- If I Ran The Zoo: Read with Me Stories for Your Deaf Child*
This video of Dr. Sues's *If I Ran the Zoo* is done in ASL as well as narrated in English. V-HI93
- If You Give a Mouse a Cookie: Read with Me Stories for Your Deaf Child*
This ASL signed story is about a mischievous mouse who wants a cookie which leads to more things he wants to go with the cookie. V-HI95
- Kid Ability II: Assistive Technology*
This is an introduction to assistive technology which shows different types of technologies, how they work and how to use them. Recommended for grades 5-12 but also informative for adults. V-DIS9
- Closed Captioned*
V-DIS9
- Learning to Live with Bipolar Disorder*
This video features the testimony of five persons who face bipolar illness openly and share their experiences. They discuss how to recognize it, the benefits of medication and support, and give encouragement to others and their families. V-EMO39
- Living Well with Bipolar Disorder: A New Look*
In this video, six individuals describe the impact bipolar disorder has had on their lives and the strategies they have learned for dealing with it. V-EMO38
- Maximize Learning Potential*
Dr. Braden presents real life examples of classroom instruction and teaching strategies one can use when teaching children with Fragile X Syndrome. V-MD32
- Mental Illness in the Family: The Bonnie Tapes*
This video presents conversations about one woman's struggle with paranoid schizophrenia and its impact on her family. V-EMO42
- Misunderstood Minds: Understanding Kids who Struggle to Learn*
This video features Dr. Mel Levine as he helps five families deal with their children's learning problems. V-LD60
- More 1 2 3 Magic: Encouraging Good Behavior, Independence and Self-Esteem*
In this video Dr. Phelan discusses how to get children to do good things using practical, down-to-earth strategies for encouraging independence and promoting healthy self-esteem. V-PAR65
- My Claire's Story: A Child's Perspective on Childhood Depression 2nd Edition*
Claire, who was diagnosed at 11, now at 13 years old, narrates her own experience of depression. She and an adult narrator address the facts, fears, and fiction of depression. It is an excellent teaching tool on childhood depression for teachers, parents, counselors, and children. V-EMO40
- My Sister Is Mentally Ill: The Bonnie Tapes*
In this video a women whose sister has schizophrenia speaks from the heart about the issues and difficulties she has faced having a sister with mental illness. V-EMO43
- OC Me: A Play About OCD*
This is a video production of a one-act play that Jessica Honor Carlton wrote about OCD. She knows the subject well as she has OCD. The play won the VSA Arts 1001 Playwright Discovery Award. V-TOU16
- Out-of-Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping with Sensory Integration Dysfunction*
This video presents comprehensive and easily understood information on sensory integration dysfunction in pre-schoolers and a drug-free treatment for

New Videos, continued from page 7

children who need help. V-PAR68

Panel Presentation at Autism Society of America: The Dan Doctors Panel

This tape is of the annual conference of the Autism Society of America held in San Diego, CA on July 19, 2001, in which a panel of doctors are discussing treating their own autistic children. The panel discussion runs 1 hour 45 min. and the question and answer period runs 51 minutes. V-AUT85

Positioning for Infants and Young Children with Motor Problems

This video features parents and their children demonstrating recommended ways to handle and position the child for daily activities such as feeding, playing, dressing, diapering, carrying, and traveling by car. V-INF68

Rebuilding the Broken Bond

This two-video series presents a fully developed parenting plan for emotionally disturbed children with tools and techniques explained in a workable plan. V-EMO34 and V-EMO35

Recovering From Mental Illness: The Bonnie Tapes

In this video Bonnie, who suffers from schizophrenia, talks about learning to cope with her illness and she and her family discuss her progress with a social worker. V-EMO44

Silent Angels: The Rett Syndrome Story

This video reports on Rett syndrome, a neurological disorder occurring almost always in girls. It discusses the four stages of regression which includes eventual loss of speech and motor skills. The program traces the quest to isolate the gene, an accomplishment of scientists and families working together. V-MD36

Straight Talk about Autism with Parents and Kids: Adolescent Issues

This video discusses hypersensitivities, teasing, friendships, social skills, school-to-work transition and independent living with parents and adolescents with autism. *Closed Captioned* V-AUT82

Straight Talk about Bipolar Disorder

This video features an interview with Christopher Heather, R.N., Ph.D. It is designed for the lay person and is an easy-to-understand, comprehensive discussion giving an overview of and insight into manic depression. V-EMO37

Students Like Me: Teaching Children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

This video gives elementary and special educators an understanding of what FAS is, how it affects children's learning and behavior and presents classroom intervention strategies that allow children with FAS to learn. V-DRU12

Supporting Self-Determination: Strategies for Direct Support Staff

This video provides direct support staff with positive strategies for supporting self-determination for people with developmental disabilities. V-STA133

Teach Me Different: Successful Strategies for Teaching Children who Learn Differently

In Part 1, Sally Smith, founder of the Lab School of Washington, D.C., demonstrates simple, effective techniques that can be used to help guide children to academic excellence. V-LD57

Part 2 demonstrates simple, effective techniques that can be used to guide children to academic excellence. V-LD58

Teaching Children with Tourette Syndrome: A Resource for Educators

This video features teachers, parents, and students discussing issues relevant to the school environment. V-TOU17

Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities: Disability Awareness Training

This training video uses humorous vignettes to deliver a disability aware-

ness message. V-STA132

Ten Performance Standards for Staff Who Work in the Field of Developmental Disabilities

This is a training video for new staff or a refresher for experienced staff. It describes and demonstrates ten performance standards for staff which are necessary for success when working with people who have developmental disabilities. The tape can be viewed by individual staff or it can be used for group instruction. V-STA131

This Is Your Right

This two-volume set presents a thoughtful and hard hitting look at where people with disabilities have been and where they want to be. Videos also present humorous vignettes that are intended to lampoon situations that people with disabilities encounter. Would be good for staff orientation & training or disability awareness. V-ADV85 and V-ADV86

Transitions to High School for Students with Learning Disabilities and/or Attention Deficit Disorder

The focus of this video is on transition to high school but the message serves as a blueprint for success well beyond the high school years. It is divided into four sections: (1) About AD/HD and LD; (2) The differences among elementary, middle, and high school; (3) Transition planning; and, (4) Being a self-advocate V-TRA53

Understanding and Managing Behavior of Young Children

This two-part video demonstrates providing structure, minimizing the effect of upsetting situations and intervening in positive ways for management of children's challenging behavior. Part I: Understanding Challenging Behavior in School and Child Care Settings. Part II: Managing Challenging Behavior in School and Child Care Settings V-INF70

Readers Express • Readers Express • Readers

Readers Express

Readers may use this section to share views, experiences, resources, events, give recognition, or ask questions. Send a letter to Reader's Express, 516 N 32nd St, Billings MT 59101-6003 or send E-mail with "Reader's Express" as the subject to plukinfo@pluk.org.

The Merivale
Language
Development Programme



Intervention that comes to you and follows wherever you go

The Merivale Language Development Programme (MLDP) is a learning development programme for children whose communicative, cognitive and behavioural development is delayed as a result of autism and/or other syndromes or developmental delays and disruptions. It is based on the principles of behavioural intervention, a process which teaches children how to learn, and is tailored to each individual child's needs by way of a checklist of over 750 (and growing) communication and learning functions which can be expected to be present from birth, up to about 12 years of age.

The Programme is home-based. It has been designed to be run by you and any helpers you might choose to involve, and supervised and maintained by me via E-mail, so that it is available to you, no matter where you live, or where you might subsequently move to.

In the first instance, I come to you, assess your child, train you and your helpers to run the Programme at home, and then I come back to Christchurch where I stay in close touch, by E-mail, phone or fax and feed you through the appropriate units and support items, as indicated by the feedback sheets you send me at the end of each week. The Programme runs in six-month blocks. At the end of each block, you choose whether you will continue or not. If you decide to continue, I return, re-evaluate the programme with regard to your needs, conduct further training sessions and/or do some hands on work with your child. Then the process continues for another six months.

One of the major advantages of this system, is that it is highly portable. It can be taught by you at home, by the kindergarten and school teachers, and respite care helpers (who will be involved in the training process), This has the effect of increasing the Programme's effectiveness, as it reduces the risk of the child's responses being restricted only to certain assistants at home.

Many parents of children with serious developmental disabilities feel that if they can just stay afloat, they will be doing okay. My personal philosophy, and the underlying premise of this programme is that **merely staying afloat is not enough: the aim is to run on the water!!**



About Prue Wignall

B. Ed. N.Z.T.T.C. and. S.L.T.
M.N.Z.S.T.A.

I trained 20 years ago in Christchurch, New Zealand, as both a teacher and a speech-language therapist and worked for 3 years as a new-entrant teacher in regular primary schools and as an itinerant speech therapist

before taking up the position of senior speech - language therapist at the Templeton Centre (a major residential psychopædic establishment) in Christchurch. I have worked with people with a wide number of syndromes, genetic and chromosomal conditions, and developmental differences, including autism, living at the Centre and in the community.

I have been working with the Merivale Language Development Programme since the end of 1997.

If you are interested in learning more about the Programme, please visit my web site or send me an E-mail.

Web addresses

<http://www.language-development.com>

<mailto:pruewignall@language-development.com>

Ask PLUK • Ask PLUK • Ask PLUK • Ask PLUK

Answers to the questions that are being asked by families in Montana on special education issues appear below.

You can send your questions to "Ask PLUK" by mailing a note to Ask PLUK, 516 N 32nd St., Billings, MT 59101-6003 or sending E-mail to plukinfo@pluk.org. Please make your questions suitable for public review by keeping the topics general rather than pertaining to a specific person or school.

Q Now that the school has finally held a CST meeting for our son, the team found what we already knew in our hearts: that he qualifies for special education. The process leading up to the CST took forever, or so it seemed to us. Now, how much longer must we wait for the IEP team to meet and write up a plan for his education? Who exactly makes up the IEP team?

A It is true that the CST process can seem drawn out. Sometimes, parents even believe that the school is purposefully dragging its feet. Most often, the school is following procedures and practices that are in place to protect your child. The evaluation involves several professionals who seek to find good information to guide decisions about placement and programs. To do this well takes some time.

Now that the evaluation is complete, things should move more swiftly for your son. Once a child has been identified as eligible for special education, an Individual Education Program (IEP) meeting must be held and the individualized education plan must be written within 30 days of the date the team determined that your son is eligible. The IEP tells what your son will be doing in his individualized special education program for a specific period, usually for one year.

As with the CST, several people make up the IEP team. You, the parents of a student with a disability, and (whenever appropriate) your son must be included on the IEP team. At least one special education teacher or provider of special education services also must be on the team. One regular education teacher

must be part of the team if your son is, or even just may be, participating in the regular education environment. The school needs to include a representative knowledgeable about special education services, the general curriculum, and the availability of resources as part of the team and this usually is an administrator. In the rare case that the special education teacher, regular education teacher, or administrator is not able to interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results (such as standardized assessments), then an individual with this ability must be added to the IEP team. Finally, either you or the school may add other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child (such as individuals who provide related services) to the IEP Team.

As parents, you can invite an advocate or support person to be with you at the IEP meeting. The person may be a relative, a friend, a parent who has been through the process, or a professional. The choice of advocate or support person is entirely up to you. As a courtesy, please tell your son's special education teacher that you plan to bring someone to the meeting. ❖

Q My child has an active IEP. Since we wrote the IEP, he has developed some significant special health care needs. Can we address those needs with his IEP?

A Students in special education who have special health care needs may have an Individualized Health Care Plan attached to their IEP. This health care plan outlines specific health care that must occur during the school day

and should include information about medications the student may be taking and procedures to follow in case there is a medical emergency during the school day or at a school event. ❖

Ask PLUK • Ask PLUK • Ask PLUK • Ask PLUK

Q I received a call from my daughter's special education teacher today asking me to attend an IEP meeting after school next week. She told me that the meeting could not be scheduled at any other time. Since I am a working mother, it is unreasonable to expect me to show up for a meeting at the drop of a hat. If there was an emergency, I would, of course, be there right away, but this is my daughter's annual review. Please advise me.

A Call your daughter's teacher and explain that you cannot attend the meeting on such short notice. Offer several times when you can be available so that she can reschedule the meeting for a time that works for everyone involved. Please understand that scheduling school meetings is a nightmare for special education teachers. Trying to accommodate the various schedules of all the people who must attend can take quite a chunk of time.

According to the law, the IEP meet-

ing must be held at a time and place that is convenient for both you and the school staff. You should receive written notice of the meeting in a reasonable time beforehand so that you have time to arrange your schedule and to prepare. During the meeting, your suggestions for your daughter's IEP will be very important. Bring your ideas for what you think should be in her goals and objectives and be prepared to talk about your thoughts about her school performance and progress through the general curriculum. ❖

Q My son's IEP is up for review soon. I am pretty new to this whole process. Can you tell me about the contents of the IEP?

A Every IEP, according to the law, must include the following:

Present level of performance How is your son doing academically and behaviorally?

Strengths and needs What does your son do well, in what areas, and in what does your son need additional instruction?

Annual goals What can your son accomplish in a specific area during the next school year?

Measurable objectives What are the steps that will lead to accomplishment of the goals and how will progress be measured?

Related services What support services, if any, does your son need to benefit from special education?

Delivery of services When will services

begin, how long will they last, and how frequently will they occur?

Placement Where will your child receive services and is the placement in the least restrictive environment?

Transition What plans are you, your son, and the school district considering for graduation and beyond?

Keep in mind that the goals and objectives on your child's IEP must be related (if at all possible) to helping him make progress in the general curriculum. The general curriculum is the subjects and skills that all of the children are learning at a particular grade level. The IEP must also address your son's educational needs that result from his disability. ❖

Q My daughter's special education teacher keeps mentioning "related services." Can you tell me what she is talking about?

A Related services help children learn. For some children, educational instruction is not enough to help them learn. These children also need support services called "related services." They are "related" because they are not part of a regular school curriculum. These services may be:

- ❖ Audiology
- ❖ Speech therapy
- ❖ Psychological services (assessment)

- ❖ Physical therapy
- ❖ Occupational therapy
- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ Counseling (including rehabilitation counseling)
- ❖ Social work services
- ❖ Orientation and mobility
- ❖ School nursing
- ❖ Other services, as needed

Your child has a right to these related services if they are necessary to help her learn. ❖

State of the Angus

Part II – the Berkeley Years

By Angus Macdonald

Note: In Part I, Angus related his experiences as a young child who was the “most afflicted, handicapped person to be mainstreamed in the state of Montana” in 1973. He went on to be accepted to attend the University of California at Berkeley in the fall of 1980. And now Angus continues with his story...

My first academic year at Berkeley, I lived in a coed dorm. Due to the amount of medical equipment I required, I had a dorm room all to myself. The Physically Disabled Residents Program was directly involved in day-to-day operation of the dorms. They had special assistants on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The special assistants were responsible for assisting us at lunchtime and dinner time and when a resident’s own aid did not show up, or called in sick at the last minute, the special assistants would put us to bed or get us up. To assist me in my day-to-day academic work I hired secretaries who would take class notes for me, assist in administration of tests, and record my answers to my homework assignments.

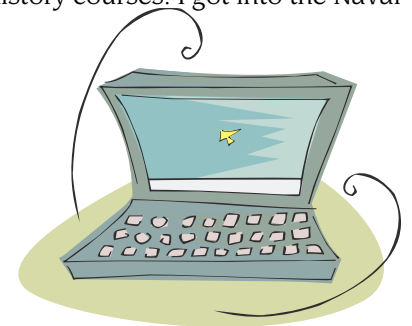
The Disabled Students Program (a branch of the Physically Disabled Residents Program) also had departments for blind students, deaf students, and students with learning disabilities. They also had a section that would take care of registering you for classes. This meant that I, for the most part, didn’t have to stand in lines for an excessive amount of time waiting to get my class schedule approved. The program wanted to foster the independence of the disabled residents as much as possible, encouraging us to interview and hire our own attendants as soon as practicable. An Attendant Referral Service provided the residents with names of possible attendants. We would tell the attendant referral person the hours we wanted to get up or be put to bed. Then they would give us phone numbers of possible attendants who were able to work those hours. It was up to us to call the prospective employees and set up interviews. I found the interviewing process, and the hiring of new, untrained, attendants one of the most nerve-racking activities I managed during my years at Berkeley. Even statistics was more fun! Along with the aforementioned Physically Disabled Residents Program and the Attendant Referral Service, the campus had a complete wheelchair repair and maintenance shop that I needed quite frequently.

The University of California-Berkeley has been known for its

passionate political and social activism. During the lunch hours between about 11:30 and 1:30 Monday through Friday there was usually a demonstration of some type on Sproul Plaza. These demonstrations dealt with everything from United States policy towards Central America to the human rights of the indigenous peoples of the world. It was fun sometimes to watch and listen to the speakers and the reaction of the crowds. As a part of the Berkeley scene, the social and political discussions of the time made me more socially aware of my responsibilities to my fellow man.

I started out my career at Berkeley wanting to be a computer scientist; however, due to technical problems beyond my control, Computer Science was not an option. So when it was time to declare a major, my college advisor and I decided that Economics would be the best choice for me. The Economics Department was helpful and very understanding of my strengths and weaknesses. They provided me tutors and, on occasions, additional secretaries for my work.

By the third year at Berkeley I had finished all the prerequisites for my major and degree. I was casting about for elective classes to take to fill up my schedule. I liked history. I went to my advisor and asked her what Berkeley might have in terms of military history courses. I got into the Naval R.O.T.C. detachment at Berkeley. When my advisor informed them that she had a handicapped person in a wheelchair wanting to take an R.O.T.C. course, they immediately said that they would love to have me in the program. At the time of this naval adventure, I was the first and only handicapped person, to the best of my knowledge, to ever take an R.O.T.C. course at Berkeley. Within a year and a half I became an honorary member of the Battalion of Midshipmen. As far as I know I still am the only physically handicapped person to ever be a part of R.O.T.C. at Berkeley. Getting into the R.O.T.C. building was a tour de force because, it was nine double-wide trailers



grouped together (post-fire replacements). Apparently, no one had ever thought that a person in a wheelchair might be taking an R.O.T.C. course; consequently, there was no ramp for me to use to get into the building.

The first semester I was carried in the back door by a group of cadets, whomever happened to be there at the time. The group usually consisted of at least four to six strong people who would literally carry me up the steps and out of the building. By the end of the second semester the University had built a ramp to one of the back doors, and put in a doorbell for me to ring. When I pushed this doorbell, it rang in the R.O.T.C. library. Then someone would come open the door for me, usually, the Chief Petty Officer in charge of the library. But he was not the only one. I had everybody from the Chief to other naval officers open the door for me. Because I usually showed up early, or tried to at least, I was allowed to use the Officer's Lounge to study my assignments, not only those in naval and military history, but in whatever courses I needed to work on. The time I spent studying military history with the R.O.T.C. at Berkeley was definitely one of the most pleasant times in my academic career.

In the spring of 1982, after three quarters living in the dorms, I was lucky enough to get an apartment approximately three blocks from the campus at 2050 Delaware Street, on the corner of Shaddock Avenue and Delaware. I lived in apartment 201. It was a very quiet reasonably residential neighborhood with a fun extra: a pair of wild peacocks. In the spring and summer the peacocks would come visit the apartment building. They would sit on the front stoop or walk brazenly into the building. They were quite efficient roosters in the morning; as soon as the sun would come up they would start making very loud noises.

To give you a feeling for a standard day of my life in Berkeley: First, my attendant would arrive at 7 o'clock in the morning. He or she would assist me with getting ready for the day. I shall skip the gory details on how to get an Angus Macdonald up. It suffices to say that about 8:30 in the morning after one coffee and breakfast, I would leave my apartment with my attendant. My attendant would leave for his next job, whatever that might have been. Then I would proceed on to campus, go to class, go to the Disabled Students Program Office, deliver any paperwork or time sheets or whatever I needed to do, or sometimes just visit my old cronies. I usually got done with classes between 1 and 3 o'clock. I would return home, and



Angus Macdonald in his home in Bozeman

since I could not open the apartment building door myself, I would have to wait until one of the residents arrived before I could be let in. When one of the residents arrived, he or she would punch the second floor button on the elevator for me. Once I got on the second floor, I had an automatic door opener for my apartment. I would buzz it and push the door open with my feet and then drive in. During the day, after I got home from school or on days that

I did not have classes, I would do homework and read a lot, both in my textbooks and other books. It was during this time that I started to enhance my library. Approximately 4:30 in the afternoon to 6:00 at night, my dinner person would arrive. About 9 o'clock or so my night attendant would arrive to put me to bed.

This routine continued on a regular basis until December of 1986, when an automobile-versus-wheelchair accident broke my legs below the kneecaps. This forced me to take a five-month leave of absence from Berkeley. After the accident my parents brought me back to Bozeman where I stayed, waiting for my legs to heal. In April of 1987, I returned to Berkeley to finish my course of study. I moved back into my apartment and in 1988 I graduated from Berkeley with a B.A. in Economics.

Because of earthquakes and other factors I decided to return to Bozeman where my parents had retired and where my brother and his family had settled. I was tired of large crowds and I didn't want the earth moving under my feet so violently any more.

When I first arrived back in Bozeman for good, I spent a short time at my parents' house awaiting the modifications for my current home on South Wilson.

I live independently with my two cats William and Angel. I live in my own house with my aides coming in three times a day. I have a Volkswagen van in which I travel around Bozeman. My van is equipped with a wheelchair lift. I have several chauffeurs, one of whom is Michael. Michael and I use the van to go to movies and grocery shopping and other social activities. I enjoy the outdoors when winter isn't here. There are lots of ducks living near to my house. During the spring, summer and early fall my aides and I go out to feed these ducks, two or three times a week. These ducks see my wheelchair tooling down the trail and start rushing toward us, quacking away noisily. They quickly gobble up the popcorn (un-popped) that we bring to them. We carry it in a big gallon jug

Continued on bottom of page 18

Montana Training Events

NAMI-Billings educational meeting schedule

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder • February 18 • Dr. Bruce Whitworth
 Kids and Mental Illness • March 18 • Kee Dunning, therapist
 Vacationing at Hotel NIMH • April 15 • Jon Angel
 Aspergers and Autism • May 20 • Dr. Melinda Payne

All meetings are scheduled on the third Tuesday of the month and meet at Deaconess Health Conference Center in Room A from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. For information contact Dee Holley at 406.256.2001 or namibillings@earthlink.net

Region I CSPD-Sponsored Trainings

- IEP to IPE: Smoothing out the Bumps in the Transition Highway, Presenter: Rhonda Shumway
 Visual Phonics, Presenter: Meg Cech
 February 8 • Wolf Point: Sherman Motor Inn • 8:00-4:30
 Phonemic Awareness, Presenter: Randall Klein
 February 3 • Glasgow: Cottonwood Inn
 February 4 • Glendive Medical Center (Carney)
 February 5 • Miles City Community Col.
 Reading Summit • March 8 • Glendive: Dawson Community College,
 Counseling Students with Anxiety or Depressive Disorders, Presenter: Maureen Neihart • April 4 & 5 • Miles City Community College
 Discipline with Love and Logic, Presenter: Richard Gunther • April 4, 5 • Glendive
 S'Cool Moves, Presenter: Debi Heiberger • June 9-11 • Glendive: Dawson Community College • Contact: Helen Murphy, dmurphy@middrivers.com, 406.485.2140



Region II CSPD-Sponsored Trainings

- <http://www.havre.k12.mt.us/cspdregion2>
 Helping Kids Give Up Their Misbehavior, Presenter: Doug Cochran Roberts
 • February 24 & 25 • Great Falls
 Middle School Reading Fluency, Presenter: Joe Dimino • March 28 & 29 • Havre • Contact: Tana Parman, Program Assistant, 406.265.4356, ext. 322, <http://www.havre.k12.mt.us/cspdregion2>

REGION V CSPD-Sponsored Trainings

- <http://www.cspd.net>
 Building Individual Positive Behavior Plans • February 25
 Autism-Asperger Spectrum Disorders: What Works? * February 6 & 13
 Encouraging Safe and Civil Behavior by Defusing Anger and Aggression, Presenter: Geoff Colvin • Polson • February 10
 Helping Kids Give Up Their Misbehavior • February 22, 23 & March 8
 Improving the Social Equation, Presenter: Carol Gray • April 15
 Gray's Guide to Bullying, Presenter: Carol Gray • April 16 • Missoula

State of the Angus
 continued from the previous page

tied onto the back of my chair. During the good weather, I and my aide go for long walks on the linear park (hiking/jogging trail) looking at the flowers, the birds, the trees, sometimes seeing a muskrat in the pond and, in general, just getting a good breath of fresh air. During little league baseball season I attend ball games in which my nephew, Ian, participates. And when little league football is in season I watch Ian play football. He is good at both sports and I enjoy watching them.

My parents live here in Bozeman, as does my brother Bob and his family. Bob is a salesman at a local appliance store. My sister in law, Joan, works for the University. My sister, Jocelyn, and her family live in Anchorage, Alaska. Jocelyn is a registrar at one of the local Anchorage high schools. My brother in law is an environmental engineer for one of the large oil companies. I've three nieces and one nephew. Their names are: Abbie, and Callie — my sister's two girls, and Kate and Ian — my brother's children.

When I moved into my house in early 1990, I was able to get a job with Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK) as a data entry clerk. I also tested computer programs to see whether a handicapped person could actually run them with success and wrote a column for PLUK's newsletter for several years. I enjoyed all of it. Now I work for Pretty Good Information Services (PGIS).

I must say that I have had, and still do have, a very good and interesting life. Boredom is definitely not a problem for me. I feel that I have been fortunate, blessed with the tremendous help and support from my family and friends, my home state and my country. I am mobility impaired (in a wheelchair). But this fact has definitely not stopped me from having a full and flourishing life. Stay tuned, the rest may be the best! ❖

Honorary Board

★
Howard Boggess
Billings

★
Dr. Larry Campodonico
Billings

★
Al Donohue
Seeley Lake

★
Roweena Foos
Billings

★
Reid Hagen
Billings

★
John R. "Jack" Horner
Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman

★
Dr. Kathy Kelker
Billings

★
Nancy Keenan
Alexandria, Virginia
(formerly Anaconda)

★
John Kinna
Fairfield

★
Lloyd Shelhamer
Billings

★
Joyce Silverthorne
Pablo

★
Jack Tuholske
Missoula

★
Pat Williams
Missoula

★

Change of the Guard

Bill O'Connor, Billings attorney and long-time supporter of PLUK, has served on our Board of Directors for nine years, for most of that time as Chair. In January of this year, compelled by the end of his term, Bill stepped off the Board.

The Directors were unanimous in expressing their appreciation for his dedication and hard work in helping PLUK grow and develop as it has in recent years. Bill has been instrumental in seeing the program move in a proactive direction with diversification of funding sources. He oversaw our expansion, not only in the level of services, but also the provision of services to the entire state of Montana. He'll be dearly missed on the Board, but we look forward to continuing our warm relationship.

PLUK's Board of Directors elected new officers to serve in 2003. Mark Taylor, a school psychologist living in Billings and working with the Special Education Co-op based in Laurel, was elected to serve as Chair. Mark grew up in Billings and serves on several community Boards and Councils.

Liz Miller was elected Vice-Chair of PLUK's Board. Liz is a realtor with Prudential-Floberg Realty. Liz served as the Chair of the "Kids At Heart 2003 Banquet," and is the former president of the Autism Society of Montana.

The Board Secretary now is Victoria Cech. Victoria works with St. Vincent Healthcare as the Director of the Mansfield Center. She has served as a Grants Coordinator for both MSU-Billings and Rocky Mountain College.

Rounding out the Executive Council is Karen Kenney as our Treasurer. Karen, a CPA in Billings, begins her second term as a Board Member with PLUK. She has worked as a volunteer and currently serves as the Chair for both the Investment and the Finance Committees.

Making up the rest of the Board are Marian Kummer, Jacque Lee, Linda Loff, Julie Lovel, Nancy Wiggins, and Kathy Wise.

PLUK is fortunate to have such a talented and dedicated group of Board Members. These are the people who oversee the program's operation and direct, not only plans for growth and expansion, but current services for families. From across the state, PLUK's Associate Boards assist with providing a voice from the regions to the Board of Directors. ❖



Officers of the PLUK Board of Directors for 2003 are Chair, Mark Taylor; Vice Chair, Liz Miller; Secretary, Victoria Cech; and Treasurer, Karen Kenney
Pictured above: Mark Taylor (left) and Liz Miller (right)

Development News • Development News

Innovative Ways to Contribute

For several years, PLUK has participated in two programs that focus on creative ways to receive contributions. Both are listed at the top of PLUK's web site and are easy to use. The first is "helping.org" or "Network for Good." The button is on the top of the first page of PLUK's web site, to the left. Then click on and designate an amount you would like to have sent to PLUK. You fill in the amount and then click to submit.



This secure, safe site sends your contribution to PLUK via credit card. This is a safe, quick, and easy way to make a charitable gift.

The second way to help is through "iGive.com." This button is also on the first page of PLUK's web site, located at the top in the center. "iGive.com" is an innovative company that offers sales to individuals at some of the country's best stores. Up to 39% of the sales that you make will come to PLUK.

The "iGive.com" site is an excellent way to do your shopping! You often receive sale prices or free shipping. You get what you want, without having to go out, and you send PLUK a gift at the same time. This is a safe site and marks the increasing wave of online shopping options.

If you have questions about either site, or would like to discuss helping with either, please do not hesitate to call PLUK's office at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.PLUK [7585]. ❖



Endowment Fund

In 2001, PLUK started an Endowment Fund for the purpose of receiving contributions to help the program grow. In 2002, the program actually started a Fund to hold the contributions and draw interest, with the goal of the interest one day being used to assist the program. In order for that goal to be reached, the principle in the account must be large enough to enable PLUK's Investment Committee to begin to use the funds. Substantial tax credits are available to the donors to the Endowment Fund. This is an option allowing a donor to reduce his or her own tax burden and at the same time help PLUK grow. For more information, discuss this possibility with your personal accountant or tax attorney, or call PLUK's office at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.7585. ❖

Beginnings of a Coalition

Dennis Moore, our Executive Director, along with directors from the Billings area Special Olympics and Eagle Mount, was instrumental in starting a partnership between area nonprofits and organizations that work with clients who have disabilities. The group has met half a dozen times, helping to "bridge gaps, discuss concerns and issues in common, and work together to both address these concerns and to build a consistent public awareness campaign in the area." The group, named The Billings Area Disabilities Services Coalition, meets monthly at a different agency. PLUK hosted the meeting in October. For more information, contact Sheryl at the PLUK Office at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.7585. ❖

Billings Area Disabilities Services Coalition

The Billings Disabilities Services Coalition includes the American Diabetes Association, COR Enterprises, Eagle Mount, Easter Seals, Goodwill, Growth Thru Art, Job Connection, Living Independently for Today and Tomorrow (LIFTT), Montana Center on Disabilities, People First, Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK), Residential Support Services (RSS), Special Olympics Montana, Support and Techniques for Empowering People (STEP), Yellowstone Association of Retarded Citizens (YARC), and YWVA Supported Living. At the last meeting there were over 20 people from 16 different organizations and agencies represented.

The Coalition's three-tiered purpose is

- ❖ Advocacy;
- ❖ Resource sharing (information, training opportunities, volunteers, etc.); and
- ❖ Collaborative grant writing.

"We believe in standing together for what is best for our children and adults with disabilities and their families. The mission of the Billings Disabilities Services Coalition is to ensure access for those with disabilities and/or their parents, guardians or support personnel, and to offer the fullest range of support and services available through collaborative community partnerships."

Currently, the Coalition is working to promote Developmental Disabilities Month in March, 2003. A committee is developing a public-awareness campaign. ❖

Development News • Development News

PLUK Associate Boards Plan

YPR, ABT and PLUK

Statewide Spring Events Judy Carmichael Concert

Several of PLUK's Associate Boards in the state are planning events.

The Missoula Associate Board is already working on the third annual "Magical Tymes Party" for this fall. Held in conjunction with a play at the Missoula Children's Theatre, participants go to the play, attend a "wine and cheese party" and participate in a silent auction.

The Flathead Valley Associate Board is working on both a spring activity and a fall event. They've been meeting since this past fall and are finalizing details at this time. The spring activity involves Flathead Valley "celebrities."

The Bozeman area Associate Board is working on events for the spring and fall as well. Details on a benefit concert are being worked out now and announcements will soon be forthcoming.

Other Associate Boards are considering events and activities. Call the PLUK office at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.7585 for details or to volunteer to help with the events or activities in your area. ❖

Yellowstone Public Radio and the Alberta Bair Theatre are hosting a concert in Billings featuring Judy Carmichael, the benefits of which will come to PLUK. The concert will take place on May 2 at 8 o'clock at the Alberta Bair Theater.

Carmichael has been described by the New Yorker as "a forceful, energetic fireball, a pianist who has no problem winning over an audience." Her billing includes the description, "a versatile, exhilarating mainstream jazz pianist, Carmichael has become one of the finest interpreters of Harlem's World War I era two-handed, vamping piano playing commonly known as 'stride.'" Her music features pieces from some of the greatest musical artists of the last century, including Duke Ellington, "Fats" Waller and Count Basie.

PLUK is excited to be involved and we are looking forward to the event. For more information, call Dennis at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.7585. Tickets will be \$18 and \$14 per person.

You can purchase your tickets from the ABT Ticket Office in person, by mail, or online. Contact the Alberta Bair Theater at 877.321.2074 or 406.256.6052 or www.albertabairtheater.org. ❖

Billings Associate Board Presents Second Annual

Sports Festival

Set for March 22 at MetraPark

Yellowstone County sports-minded groups, fans and athletes will soon come together for an interesting fun-filled and information-packed day at MetraPark. The event is set to begin at 9 o'clock on the morning of March 22.

One of the "headliners," the Billings Bulls, will be on the ice for an open practice before their game that night. Team members also will be signing autographs, meeting the fans, doing demonstrations, and hosting a special "shoot on the Bulls goalie" activity for the kids.

The Billings Outlaws will also be on hand to meet the public and sign autographs. Last year they offered a throwing

seminar and an activity to test the skills of area athletes.

Many other groups will be represented with fun activities and will be giving out information on their programs. The MSU-Billings Athletic Department, Billings YMCA, Billings Mustangs Baseball Team, Rocky Mountain College Athletic Department, and Little Guy Football will all be there.

Several NFL professional football teams have agreed to consider sending players to the event, depending on their availability. We can't say which players will be at the Sports Festival to meet the public and sign autographs, but it will be exciting.

Youth groups or clubs can take part in a "Sports Scavenger Hunt." Any groups interested should call immediately to register, as space is limited. In addition to all of the above, there are several other

fun, surprise activities planned.

More fun activities include a large "Sports Memorabilia Live Auction," "Meet the Pro's Autograph Sessions," league sign-up opportunities, drawings, and more. The Billings Associate Board is working hard to make the event a success.

Individuals or groups interested in participating or helping should call PLUK for details. Sponsorships are available and there are many ways to add your talent to the project.

HOT 101.9 FM radio is one of our sponsors, along with the Billings Gazette. The Billings Kiwanis Club plans to add volunteer and financial support.

The Sports Festival will help raise both public awareness and funds for PLUK. Call PLUK's office at 406.255.0540 or 800.222.7585 for details and schedules or to volunteer your help for the event. ❖

News • Volunteer News • Volunteer News

Volunteer Showcase

Parents, Let's Unite for Kids is able to do many of the things that we do because of our wonderful volunteers. Beginning in this issue and continuing in future issues of this newsletter, we will be introducing you to many of the people that volunteer for PLUK throughout Montana.

Meet Elisabeth Mills

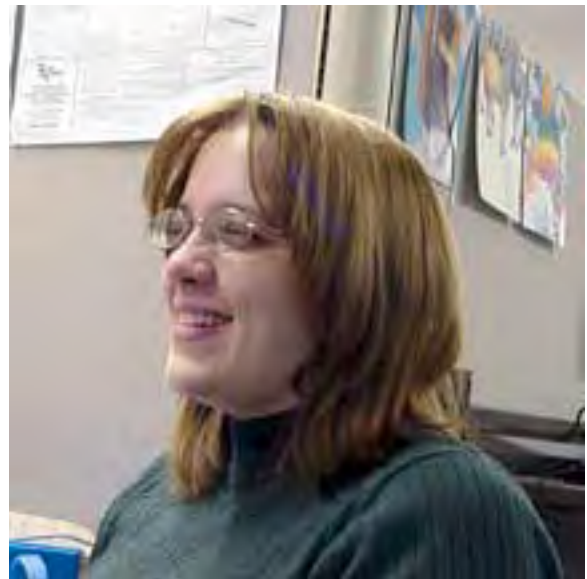
Beth Mills graduated from MSU-Billings with a BA in English and Writing, no mean feat when you consider what she has endured in her young life.

Born 12 weeks premature and with cerebral palsy and lung disease, Beth's childhood was marked with multiple hospitalizations, surgeries, and illnesses. Because Beth's special education label was OHI (Other Health Impaired), educators did not understand her education program. That's when her family turned to PLUK for assistance.

Working with PLUK and the Montana Center for Handicapped Children (now the Montana Center on Disabilities), Beth underwent testing that determined that even though she had obvious physical disabilities, she was very intelligent. In fact, ability testing showed that she was gifted. Knowing this helped her realize that she was equal to other students and that she could help others just as she had been helped. Some of the assistance she received from PLUK included adaptive technology assistance as well as being encouraged to participate in public speaking forums. Capitalizing on these public speaking experiences, Beth and a friend put together an empathy training program that they presented to local middle and high schools.

Beth was a PLUK client for about twelve years and was a volunteer during some of those years. After graduating from college she felt the desire to give back to the program that had helped her so much. According to Beth, all persons with disabilities have some "less than wonderful" experiences and PLUK provides assistance to help gain access to the resources needed during these times.

Currently, Beth volunteers by providing tutor services at PLUK's Billings office. Because of her experiences, Beth feels



that she is better able to recognize what each student needs and can help provide the best type of specialized support services to that student. She enjoys working one-on-one or with small groups. She also volunteers her English and writing skills in editing PLUK's newsletter. She is a tutor for the Student Opportunity Services at MSU-Billings and is a substitute teacher for Yellowstone County schools.

Beth opened Emerald Scribe Proofreading in May of 2002. Her business caters to freelance writers, business professionals, academics, emerging authors and poets. Emerald Scribe Proofreading was inspired by Elisabeth's college transcripts, her successful B.A. (English Writing), and her desire to shape her own professional image by maintaining her status as a published writer and proven mentor for people exploring the nuances of written language.

Web address

<http://www.emeraldscribe.com>

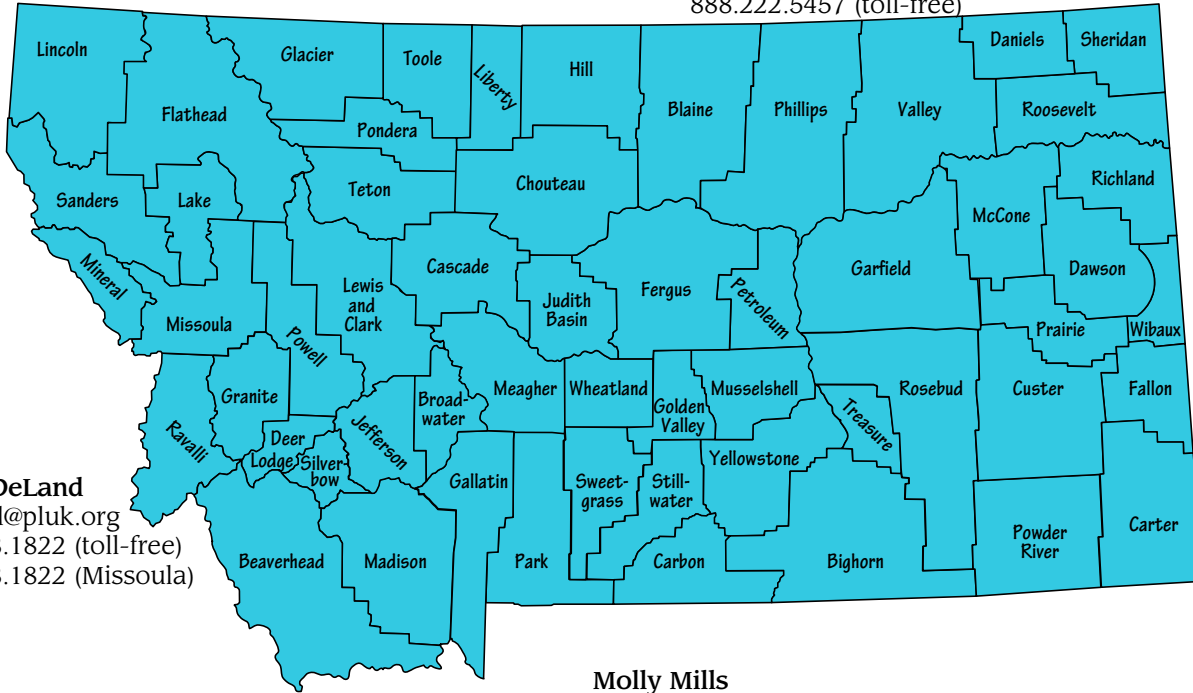
PLUK Family Support Staff
 To find someone in your area, please call
800.222.7585

Stephanie Luehr
 sluehr@pluk.org
 Toll-free voice mail:
 877.881.4421
 406.881.4421 (Kalispell)

Mary Beth Palmerton
 Toll-free voice mail:
 877.850.5061

Cheri Turner
 cturmer@pluk.org
 406.337.4553
 888.222.5457 (toll-free)

Donna Smith
 dsmith@pluk.org
 Toll-free voice mail and fax:
 877.835.4661



Virginia DeLand
 vdeland@pluk.org
 888.888.1822 (toll-free)
 406.728.1822 (Missoula)

Nancy Staigmiller
 nstaigmiller@pluk.org
 888.227.0383 (toll-free)
 406.328.7150 (Absarokee)

Molly Mills
 mmills@pluk.org
Sandy Taylor
 staylor@pluk.org
Bobbie Sullivan
 bsullivan@pluk.org

Theresa Baldry
 tbaldry@pluk.org
 Toll-free voice mail and fax:
 877.897.9056
 406.951.1357 (local)

800.222.7585 (toll-free)
 406.255.0540 (Billings)
 406.255.0523 (fax)

Parent Representatives for Part C Services

The parent representatives on the Family Support Services Advisory Council are available to hear comments from other parents about Part C services for infants and toddlers. Please feel free to contact the parent representative closest to you.

Kelly Johnson, Chair
 PO Box 635
 Frenchtown MT
 59834 406.626.5493
 (H) 406.749.6413 (W)
 kjohnson@wmcde.org

Gwen Beyer
 1950 Mullan Trl • Missoula
 MT 59802 • 406.728.9402
 beyer@montana.com

Millie Kindle
 HC 65 Box 6100 • Malta MT
 59538 • 406.654.2097 (H)
 mkindle@juno.com

Jay & Shelley Korth
 340 N Ewing • Helena MT
 59601 • 406.444.4211 (H)

Brian & Rene Lenhardt
 PO Box 842 • Havre MT
 59501 • 406.265.4005
 lenhardt@imine.net

Gerald & Maria Pease
 Box T • Lodge Grass MT
 59050 • 406.639.2561 (H)

PLUK Main Office Staff

Dennis Moore
 Executive Director
 dmoore@pluk.org
 Ken Luraas
 Communications
 Ken@bestcasesolutions.com
 Lance Hawk
 Development
 lhawk@pluk.org
 Janice Sand, Librarian
 jsand@pluk.org
 Sheryl Shockley
 Office Manager
 sshockley@pluk.org
 Brenda Jackson
 Tech. Development Coord.
 and Tutor Coordinator
 bjackson@pluk.org
 Tracy Rector
 Tech. Lab Assistant
 trector@pluk.org

Roger Holt
 Technology Director
 rholt@pluk.org
 Bernice Hash
 Volunteer Coordinator
 bhash@pluk.org

PLUK Board of Directors

Bill O'Connor, *President*
 Nancy Wiggins, *Vice President*
 Marian Kummer, *Secretary*
 Victoria Cech
 Karen Kenney
 Jacque Lee
 Linda Loff
 Julie Lovell
 Liz Miller
 Mark Taylor
 Kathy Wise

Founder

Katharin A. Kelker, Ed.D.
 kkelker@pluk.org

Third Annual Benefit Dinner and Auction

Kids at Heart Banquet Tickets Going, Going, Gone!

Over the last two years, the Kids At Heart Banquet was so successful that the volunteer planning committee decided to establish lofty goals for this year's event. The Kids At Heart Banquet 2003 is set for February 8, 2003 at The Depot in Billings.

Julie Lovell, PLUK Board Member and anchor at KTVQ 2 TV news coined the name "Kids At Heart" two years ago, saying it was a "perfect match for what PLUK does and for the event." Julie continues to serve on the planning committee and also serves as the emcee for the banquet.

Liz Miller serves as the Chair of this year's event, and other committee members include Kathy Wise, Jacques Lee, Kevin Morrow, Bob Trent and Linda Loff.

The banquet will include a dinner, a silent auction and a live auction, along with many surprises and fun activities. The event is designed as a celebration of PLUK and

our efforts to assist families, and at the same time to raise funds to help the program grow.

For information on how to become a sponsor of the banquet, or to donate an item (s) for one of the auctions, call the PLUK office at 406.255.0540 or 800.222-PLUK [7585]. KTVQ 2 TV is sponsoring the event along with HOT 101.9 FM Radio.

This grand event which promises to be even grander this year, is one that you should not miss. A few tickets are still available, but they are going fast. Call our office at 406.255.0540 or 800.222-PLUK [7585] to check ticket availability. ❖



March is Developmental Disabilities Month

PLUK Office
516 N 32nd St.
Billings MT 59101-6003