

We are proud to present news of interest for Montana families of children with disabilities and special health care needs, and for the professionals and educators who serve them; however, it does not constitute an endorsement.

"A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes." – Hugh Downs

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Kids at Heart Gala, May 13



The event will be held again at Sheraton Hotel in Billings and is set for Friday May 13th. The 2005 Kids at Heart Gala features the band *The Midlife Chryslers* (Billings' area doctors who participate in 4 or 5 performances a year for local nonprofits). The Committee is excited about this notable band's involvement and everyone is looking forward to the Gala. In addition to the Chrysler's performance, the event will include heavy hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction, a live auction (featuring auctioneer Bill Holt), and much more. For information on sponsorships or tickets, call PLUK's office at 406 255-0540 or 800 222-7585. Visit the PLUK web site to see a list of auction items, <http://www.pluk.org>.

Benefit Concert for PLUK—May 20, Kalispell



**Celebrate the Power and the Legend
of America's First Journey West with
ROB QUIST
and
JACK GLADSTONE
In Their Highly-Acclaimed New Multi-Media Production**



ODYSSEY WEST

**An Original Musical and Visual Narrative
Commemorating the Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition**

Flathead Valley PLUK presents:

Rob Quist and the Great Northern Band with Jack Gladstone in concert, present their newest collaboration May 20th at 7pm at the Kalispell Christian Center. Quist and Gladstone, two of the West's most celebrated entertainers and songwriters, have united in an unforgettable new show, *Odyssey West*, commemorating Lewis and Clark's epic journey into the western frontier.

Jack Gladstone and Rob Quist bring the West to life with the rich historical content of their original songs and narratives, presented with dramatic live footage, as well as haunting photographic and artistic images of the Old and New West.

Celebrate Our Heritage while supporting local children and adults with disabilities. Proceeds also benefit Special Friends Advocacy. Ticket purchases call 406 756-6159.

<http://www.robquist.com/promopage.htm>

The 299 Club—Support for Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Billings

The number 299 comes from the first portion of the diagnostic code used to identify Autism Spectrum Disorders. The 299 Club is a parent-to-parent support group designed to offer information sharing, education, and support "to build our community, one piece at a time."

- Explore Innovative Approaches to Autism

- Browse the Resource Library
- Become a Parent Mentor
- Join the "Sunshine Group"
- Check Conference Listings
- Learn from Guest Speakers
- Help Fundraising Activities
- Relax with Moms' Morning Coffee Chat
- Visit the Kids' Gathering
- Enjoy a Christmas Party



WHEN: 3RD Friday, every month

WHERE: Scottish Rite Language Clinic (514 14TH ST W)

CONTACT: Jaime Moran, 406-256-8007 or Jennifer Closson, 406-655-3234

PUBLIC NOTICE: Annual State Application for Part C IDEA, Available for Review

This is Public Notice that the State of Montana has its Annual State Application under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for the Federal Fiscal Year of 2005 available for Public Notice and Comments. The document will be available for a 30-day review and another 30-days for comments. There have been no changes from the application that was submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year of 2004. The application is available at the Regional Offices located at the following addresses:

Region 1 Developmental Disabilities Services
226 6th St S
Glasgow, MT 59230

Region 2 Developmental Disabilities Services
201 First St S Ste3
Great Falls, MT 59405

Region 3 Developmental Disabilities Services
2121 Rosebud Dr Ste C-1
Billings, MT 59102

Region 4 Developmental Disabilities Services
3075 N Montana Ave Rm 108
Helena, MT 59620

Region 5 Developmental Disabilities Services
1610 South 3rd West No 202
Missoula, MT 59801

A copy of the application can also be obtained from:
Disability Services Division
Central Office
111 Sanders P.O Box 4210
Helena, MT 59604

Or by calling (406) 444-2591

Legislative Postscript—Bill Status Updates, C. Briggs

I just wanted to follow up on a few bills I reported last week. I wasn't sure of their status and now I have an update.

- **SB 415** (Tester) – A significant bill that drew lots of attention, mandates that utility companies in Montana access a certain percentage of alternative energy sources, such as wind. While seen as progressive energy policy, questions were raised whether it could potentially raise costs to consumers (residential and business). The bill was finally approved and has now been transmitted to the Governor for his signature.

- **SB 428** (Stapleton) – Establishes the 211 emergency human services system statewide. The House concurred in Governor's amendments and was returned to the Senate. The bill was finally concurred in and has been sent to the Governor.
- **SB 526** (Cobb) – Would have exempted bed taxes (such as hospitals and nursing homes), as well as voter approved tax initiatives (such as I-149) from consideration of the spending cap. While the bill passed the Senate, it was sent to the House but no action was taken. The bill is now confirmed as dead. It was no longer necessary, since HB-5, as amended, moved the \$75 million in long-range construction of Highway 93 out of HB-2, reducing the total appropriations against the cap.

Please remember this caveat, that all legislation passed by the regular Montana Legislature, now adjourned, is subject to the Governor's veto.

Postscript--April 27, 2005

FYI: the Governor vetoed one of the legislative pieces we followed.

SB 153 (Cobb) – would require DPHHS to track certain performance indicators across the entire department. Also, since adjournment the Governor vetoed a similar bill that required all state agencies to develop strategic plans, including performance measures to track their progress toward their identified goals. He offered an explanation that such demands would distract state employees from their duty in serving the public.

I will follow up if additional notices become available regarding legislation we had been tracking.

Charlie Briggs, CEO
 CWB Consultation
 511 Fifth Avenue
 Helena, MT 59601
 PH: 406/449-4075/406.431.9732 (mobile)

Legislative Assembly Adjourns—Action Steps Pending, S. Yeakel

MEMORANDUM

TO: Advocates & Interested Persons
 FROM: Steve Yeakel
 Executive Director
 Montana Council for Maternal & Child Health
 DATE: Friday, April 22, 2005
 RE: End of Session Legislative Update -- Memo #16

Greetings! The 59th Legislative Assembly adjourned its 2005 regular session Thursday, April 21, in 10 o'clock a.m. closing ceremonies.

In the near term, we cannot rest completely until the Governor acts on the bills sent to him from the final days of the session. The Governor has ten calendar days from the date a bill is delivered to him to decide whether to sign it, veto it, or let it take effect without his signature. Should any veto be issued, including a line item veto, that veto would stand without review, unless the bill was approved by at least two-thirds of the legislature. In that instance, legislators would be polled by mail and given the chance to override the veto.

For the longer term, we know that a special session is coming, likely in December, to address K-12 education funding issues more completely. There will be significant pressure to identify additional source of revenue/funding, which may or may not affect health and human services budgets.

The State Budget—House Bill 2

HB 2 was the final bill of the session, as is appropriate and customary. It was adopted in the Senate on Wednesday and, finally, in the House on Thursday morning. On Wednesday, House Republicans held out for \$40 million in reductions to be applied to property tax relief and another \$20 million to be held for K-12 education in the December special session. House Democratic Leader David Wanzenried spoke to the balance in HB 2 and the reflection of priorities for health, education and human services. After Senate President Jon Tester announced he would not appoint another HB 2 free conference committee, it was time "to fold 'em," as House Republican Leader Roy Brown said, when he voted to break the 50-50 deadlock

Funding for health and human service programs are in good shape. Great thanks are in order for many legislators who, throughout the process from January through April, understood or came to understand particular needs and

steadfastly supported them. "Our" programs also benefited from the diligent efforts of leaders at DPHHS and in the Governor's office, as well as key staffers in the legislature and budget office. Stay tuned for our suggested "action steps".

HB 745, sponsored by Representative Gary Matthews (D-Miles City), has been sent to the Governor. It contains the supplemental appropriations for the current FY 2005 budgets, including for the DPHHS:

- Child and Family Services Division \$1,669,184 general fund
- Medicaid \$2,000,000 general fund
- Child Support Enforcement Division \$857,058 general fund.

Other Important Legislation

Improving Children's Access to Quality Care

Strengthening CHIP

Bills Signed by the Governor:

- **HB 88**, sponsored by Representative Mary Caferro (D-Helena), will allow DPHHS to create a simpler application form for CHIP. Signed by the Governor April 8

Bills on the way to or in the Governor's Office:

- **SB 154**, sponsored by Senator John Cobb (R-Augusta), would limit the CHIP administrative and reserve costs. A late free conference committee established the maximum rate at 12% and the bill was sent to enrolling April 20.

Bills that Failed:

- **HB 663**, sponsored by Representative Mary Caferro (D-Helena), would have created a health care reserve fund. Tabled by the House Human Services committee
- **SB 156**, presented by Senator Mike Cooney (D-Helena), would have allowed the DPHHS to raise the CHIP eligibility up to 200% of the federal poverty level, as funding allows. The bill stalled in the House Human Services committee on a series of 9-9 party line votes.

Medicaid – Redesign & other issues

Bills Signed by the Governor or filed with the Secretary of State:

- **HB 183**, sponsored by Representative Eve Franklin (D- Great Falls), is a major piece of the redesign package that allows the DPHHS to seek a waiver to serve more "severely emotionally disturbed" (SED) children, at no increased cost per the fiscal note. Signed by the Governor March 24
- **HB 452**, sponsored by Representative Jonathan Windy Boy (D-Box Elder), implements the Medicaid redesign in the Indian tribes, tribal health care facilities and Indian Health Services care facilities. Signed by the Governor March 30
- **HB 556**, sponsored by Representative Art Noonan (D-Butte), revises Medicaid fraud provisions. Signed by the Governor April 7
- **SB 316**, sponsored by Senator Greg Lind (D-Missoula), revises the reporting mechanism for medical malpractice insurers to the commissioner of insurance. Signed by the Governor April 8
- **SB 322**, sponsored by Senator Kim Gillan (D-Billings), limits the duty of a physician performing a third party medical exam. Signed by the Governor April 15
- **SJ 30**, sponsored by Senator Dan Weinberg (D-Whitefish), by request of the House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, urges no federal cuts in the Medicaid program. The resolution passed and was filed with the Secretary of State April 15.

Bills on the way to or in the Governor's Office:

- **HB 552**, sponsored by Representative Mary Caferro (D-Helena), would prohibit financial criteria (an "assets test") below \$15,000 for Medicaid children effective July 1, 2007. The bill appropriates \$1,876,316 from the I-149 Medicaid initiatives account in FY 2007 and will open more slots in CHIP. The bill was sent to the Governor April 20.
- **HB 738**, sponsored by Representative Christine Kaufmann (D-Helena), would establish an advisory commission on provider rates and services in DPHHS, with the bill defining commission membership and factors to be considered in reviewing rates. The bill was sent to the Governor April 19.
- **SB 41**, sponsored by Senator Bob Keenan (R-Bigfork), puts into law the guiding principles adopted by the interim redesign committee for the funding priorities that should be applied to any changes in Medicaid

funding, up or down, with the principles applying to increase or to reduce services and to the elimination or restoration of an entire Medicaid program. The bill was sent to the Governor April 21.

- **SB 93**, sponsored by Senator John Cobb (R-Augusta), requires the DPHHS to provide monthly and fiscal yearend Medicaid reports to the Legislative Finance Committee on cost estimates and budget status for all programs. The bill was sent to the Governor April 16.
- **SB 127**, sponsored by Senator Bob Keenan (R-Bigfork), addresses the home- and community-based services component of the redesign including persons 18 years of age or older with chronic mental illness who need supportive services. The bill was sent to the Governor April 12.
- **SB 433**, sponsored by Senator Greg Lind (D-Missoula), would provide a Medicaid pilot program to allow up to 50 individuals with developmental disabilities receiving community-based DPHHS waiver services to have savings accounts with up to one-half of the money not needed for their basic health and safety services. The fiscal note indicates existing spending authority will be used for the pilot program. The bill was sent to the Governor April 16.
- **SB 110**, sponsored by Senator John Cobb (R-Augusta), is perhaps the most important new initiative to come out of the redesign effort. This bill allows the DPHHS to seek a Health Insurance Flexibility & Accountability (HIFA) and an 1115(B) waiver, as amended to include only a managed care or access program. The bill was sent to the Governor April 14.

Three other amendments

- (1) Clarify that cost sharing amounts for enrollees can not exceed similar charges for categorically or medically needy under the State Medicaid Plan;
- (2) Require that the DPHHS present the proposal to the House Appropriations Committee or, during the interim, to the Legislative Finance Committee prior to submission to the feds for final approval; and
- (3) Require the department to notice and receive public comment for 60 days before submitting the final proposal to the feds. The bill has a contingency plan if there is a spending cap as a condition of the waiver.

Bills that Failed:

- **HB 117**, sponsored by Representative Tom McGillvray (R-Billings), perhaps the most controversial of the redesign bills, was to address the "asset transfer lookback" period for Medicaid eligibility, and was proposed by the redesign committee as a potential solution for the conflict between the government expense of long-term care, the out-of-pocket cost of that care to those who need it, and the appropriate way to plan for and fund those costs. The House Human Services committee tabled this bill and a floor motion to bring it out failed 50 to 49.
- **HB 336**, sponsored by Representative Michael Lange (R-Billings), would have revised services for the developmentally disabled to serve 40 individuals in the DDP each year who will graduate from high school, lose their supportive services without this bill, and who will not be 19 years old the following school year by Sept. 10. The general fund appropriation contained in the bill was \$143,560 each year of the 2007 biennium to be used by DPHHS as federal match to pay school districts and to purchase community-based services. The bill was heard in the Senate Public Health, Welfare & Safety committee, passed second reading, and was reheard in the Senate Finance and Claims committee where it languished.
- **SB 150**, sponsored by Senator Bob Keenan (R-Bigfork), was an important component of the redesign package that would have addressed cost sharing for community-based Medicaid services. The executive budget included an additional \$100,000 per year of state special revenue for this bill. The House Human Services committee tabled the bill.

Public Health Infrastructure & Health Care "System Issues"

Bills on the way to or in the Governor's Office:

- **HB 438**, sponsored by Representative Rosie Buzzas (D-Missoula), will expand Braille literacy services for blind or visually impaired children, with the Board of Public Education establishing standards for the cooperative services that will be provided by the School for the Deaf and Blind, OPI and local school districts. General fund appropriations in the bill are \$244,273 in FY 2006 and \$195,731 in FY 2007. The bill was sent to enrolling April 18.
- **HB 704**, sponsored by Representative Jonathan Windy Boy (D-Box Elder), would provide timeframes for decisions by the DPHHS on surveys and dispute resolution for long-term care facilities. Although the cost was projected to be about \$29K general fund each year, plus 87.5% federal match, the legislature amended the bill to state its intent that existing funding be used. The bill was sent to the Governor April 20.
- **HB 737**, sponsored by Representative Walter McNutt (R-Sidney), would revise provisions governing licensing and practice of physician assistants. The bill was sent to the Governor April 19.

- **HB 749**, sponsored by Representative Rick Ripley (R-Wolf Creek), will revise the nursing home bed tax in order to fund the 2007 biennium budgets. The bill was sent to the Governor April 19.
- **SB 82**, sponsored by Senator John Cobb (R-Augusta), would revise the definition of an intermediate care facility to include the mentally retarded in compliance with federal standards for Medicaid participation and increase the utilization fee to 6% of quarterly revenue divided by resident bed days. The bill was sent to the Governor April 16.
- **SB 120**, sponsored by Senator Bob Keenan (R-Bigfork), would extend for two more years the utilization fee on hospital facilities for inpatient bed days, adding a critical access hospital to the provisions. The bill provides that after January 1, 2007, the utilization fee will be based on a new administrative rule to be developed by the Department of Revenue, up to \$50. Section 15-16-102(3)(b), MCA, states, "A hospital may not place a fee created by this chapter on a patient's bill." The fiscal note says this provision is already included in the Executive Budget and is worth about \$43 million per year. After the bill was heard in the House Appropriations committee March 30, the Governor announced his opposition to the bill as a "large tax increase." A governor's amendment to the bill was proposed that (1) removed the requirement that funds collected from the fee must be deposited in a DPHHS special revenue account, and (2) halted the collection and distribution of the funds if a final order were issued by a state court declaring that state spending exceeds the statutory cap on state spending. After considerable work by all parties, a free conference committee adopted language pertaining to the second issue, with Senator Keenan not signing the report. The bill was approved by both houses with the amendment and was sent to enrolling later on April 20.
- **SB 275**, sponsored by Senator Trudi Schmidt (D-Great Falls), would expand and enhance the voluntary genetics program in the DPHHS by raising the fee on health insurance from \$0.70 to \$1.00, generating almost \$287,000 more per year for the program, at a general fund cost of about \$37,000 per year. The bill was sent to the Governor April 16.
- **SB 428**, sponsored by Senator Corey Stapleton (R-Billings), would provide 211 - disaster, emergency, safety, health, and human service, referral phone service. The bill was developed over the interim by a public-private consortium appointed by the Governor and, as amended, has a general fund cost of about \$30,000 each year of the 2007 biennium. *The bill was passed and sent to the Governor, who returned it April 19 with amendments. On April 20, The Senate rejected those amendments. Later that day, the House failed to pass a do not concur motion. In this peculiar situation, my reading of the rules is that the bill is returned to the Governor for review, without his amendments.*

Bills that Failed:

- **SB 101**, sponsored by Senator Trudi Schmidt (D-Great Falls) would have required registration of youth residential therapeutic programs. A fiscal note on the bill shows zero impact. The House Education committee heard and tabled the bill.
- **SB 203**, sponsored by Senator Greg Lind (D-Missoula), would have required insurance policies to cover contraception, with no fiscal impact to the state. The bill was heard and tabled in the House Business and Labor committee. An April 4 effort to blast the bill out of committee was attempted and failed.
- **SB 273**, sponsored by Senator Corey Stapleton (R-Billings), would have authorized plans for a school of rural medicine at MSU-Billings with a biennial \$250,000 general fund appropriation and matching money of \$750,000 to be raised. The bill was heard and tabled by the Senate Finance and Claims committee.
- **SJ 15**, sponsored by Senator Carol Williams (D-Missoula), urged support for the use of alternatives to PBDEs in manufactured products. The bill was heard by the House Human Services committee and languished there.

Children's Mental Health

Bills Signed by the Governor:

- **SB 42**, sponsored by Senator Bob Keenan (R-Bigfork), clarifies the new system of care and service area authority for children's mental health. The Governor signed the bill April 8.

Bills on the way to or in the Governor's Office:

- **SB 385**, sponsored by Senator John Esp (R-Big Timber), would revise the duties of the mental health ombudsman to include families in the child protective services system and to make the ombudsman a health oversight agency with access to confidential records. The general fund cost will begin at \$31K per year. The bill was sent to the Governor April 16.
- **SB 499**, sponsored by Senator Bob Keenan (R-Bigfork), would revise laws pertaining to the mental health system and correct the service-area authority statutes, with opposition from MACo to the SAAs and to local crisis response planning. The bill was sent to the Governor April 21.

Bills that Failed:

- **HB 294**, sponsored by Representative Tom Facey (D-Missoula), was to require a community mental health center that receives 33% of its funding or \$2 million in state or federal funds to have legislative representation on its board of directors. The House Human Services committee tabled the bill.
- **HB 773**, sponsored by Representative Penny Morgan (R-Billings), would have appropriated \$500,000 general fund to the DPHHS for mental health drop-in facilities in each of the four mental health regions. It was heard by the House Appropriations committee and languished there.

Low-Income Family Stability

Bills Signed by the Governor:

- **HB 555**, sponsored by Representative Mary Caferro (D-Helena), creates a parents scholars program in the DPHHS using TANF funds effective July 1, 2006. The Governor signed it April 8.
- **SB 29**, sponsored by Senator Trudi Schmidt (D-Great Falls), will exempt drug offenders if they are in treatment or compliance and make them eligible for Food Stamps or TANF, consistent with other offenders. The Governor signed the bill April 15.
- **SB 365**, sponsored by Senator Jon Ellingson (D-Missoula), extends the Universal System Benefit charge rate consumers pay at 2.4% through Dec. 31, 2009. The USB is used primarily to aid Montanans through weatherization and energy bill assistance and this is the only surviving bill. The Governor signed the bill April 15.

Bills on the way to or in the Governor's Office:

- **HB 332**, sponsored by Representative Rosie Buzzas (D-Missoula), would authorize a general fund supplemental appropriation of \$903,255 for FY 2005 to fund low-income energy assistance. The bill was sent to the Governor April 18.
- **HB 550**, sponsored by Representative Jonathan Windy Boy (D-Box Elder), would appropriate \$100K to the DPHHS for a youth leadership forum for students with disabilities. It was sent to the Governor April 20.
- **HB 476**, sponsored by Representative Dave McAlpin (D-Missoula), would increase marriage license fees by \$13 to fund domestic and sexual violence victims' services. An amendment coordinates the bill with SB 67 (signed by the Governor March 24 and also raised marriage fees), so the maximum fee increase cannot exceed \$23 if both bills are approved. The bill was sent to the Governor April 20.
- **HB 529**, sponsored by Representative Christine Kaufmann (D-Helena), provides for a child support pass-through payment and income disregard for those on TANF, using block grant funds effective July 1, 2005. The bill was sent to enrolling April 19.

Bills that Failed:

- **HB 387**, sponsored by Representative Carol Juneau (D-Browning), would have restored TANF cuts and restricted future cuts. The bill failed second reading and a motion to reconsider failed.
- **HB 611**, sponsored by Representative Jonathan Windy Boy (D-Box Elder), would have increased penalties for partner or family member assault. The bill failed in the Senate Judiciary committee.
- **HB 695**, sponsored by Representative Joey Jayne (D-Arlee), would have funded representation for indigent victims of domestic violence. The bill passed Senate Judiciary committee and second reading 47 to 3, and was referred to the Senate Finance and Claims committee, where it languished and a motion to take it from the committee failed to get the 3/5 vote required.
- **SB 34**, sponsored by Senator John Cobb (R-Augusta), to extend and revise the Universal System Benefit charge on utility bills passed second reading and then failed third reading.
- **SB 267**, sponsored by Senator Trudi Schmidt (D-Great Falls), would have established a TANF low-income housing support and shelter allowance via grants to prevent homelessness. The DPHHS supported the policy but opposed the increased benefits because Montana benefits are about average, with six western states higher and six other states lower. The Senate Finance and Claims committee tabled the bill.
- **SB 307**, sponsored by Senator Ken Toole (D-Helena), would extend and revise the Universal System Benefit charge on utility bills. The Senate Energy & Telecommunications committee tabled the measure.
- **SB 371**, sponsored by Senator Dan Harrington (D-Butte), to extend and revise the Universal System Benefit charge on utility bills, failed second reading and then was indefinitely postponed by the Senate.

Early Childhood

Bills Signed by the Governor:

- **HB 68**, sponsored by Representative Joan Andersen (R-Fromberg), would prohibit daycare personnel from providing medicine without parental consent. The Governor signed the bill April 19.

- **SB 6**, sponsored by Senator John Esp (R-Big Timber), revises the Safe Haven for New Born Protection Act by request of the Children, Families, Health and Human Services Interim Committee. The Governor signed the bill March 24.

Bills that Failed:

- **HB 449**, sponsored by Representative Gail Gutsche (D-Missoula), appropriated \$500,000 general fund for the 2007 biennium to fund at home infant care as provided in 52-2-710, MCA. The bill was heard in House Human Services committee and languished there.
- **HB 462**, sponsored by Representative Rosie Buzzas (D-Missoula), appropriated \$350,000 general fund each year of the 2007 biennium for early childhood school readiness initiative. The DPHHS would have instituted and managed a school readiness program of coordination, training and grants for the purpose of training child care providers, family members and caregivers, and early childhood educators in the preparation of 3- and 4-year-old children and their families for the children's attendance at kindergarten. The bill was heard and tabled in the House Human Services committee.
- **HB 578**, sponsored by Representative Veronica Small-Eastman (D-Lodge Grass), would have restricted food and beverage machines in schools. This bill was heard and tabled in the House Education committee.
- **HB 696**, sponsored by Representative Joey Jayne (D-Arlee), would clarify in the Montana Youth Court Act the ethnic, cultural, and religious maintenance in child removal from the home. The bill was sent to the Governor April 19.
- **SB 426**, sponsored by Senator Corey Stapleton (R-Billings), would revise the laws regarding confidentiality and information sharing of youth court records. The bill was sent to the Governor April 16.

May 1: Sunday's Extreme Makeover Home Edition features accessible home for blind resident

(St. Petersburg, Florida, April 26, 2005) – Be sure to tune in for a special two-hour broadcast of Extreme Makeover Home Edition this Sunday, May 1, from 7 PM to 9 PM EDT, featuring an accessible home for a blind Florida resident.

The highly-rated ABC TV series focuses on the construction of the house for Jamie Dolan, a St. Petersburg resident who was blinded in a November 24 shooting. Several companies, including Freedom Scientific, contributed products, time, and labor to the community-wide effort. Freedom Scientific contributed JAWS®, the SARA™ Scanning and Reading Appliance, a PAC Mate™ QX440, the StreetTalk™ accessible GPS, and the FSReader DAISY player for both PAC Mate and Desktop.

Because of public interest and the broad content of this show, ABC has extended the usual one-hour broadcast to two hours. The national broadcast will be preceded at 6 PM EDT by a one-hour pre-show, aired only in the Tampa Bay area by the local ABC affiliate. The pre-show will spotlight the local volunteers and companies that contributed to the home.

After the May 1 air date, clips from the series and product information can be viewed on the Extreme Makeover Home Edition Web site. Freedom Scientific's participation is highlighted in an article on the ABC Action News Tampa Bay Web site.

On Monday, May 2 at 8 PM EDT, the Dolan home again will be featured on the one-hour ABC series, How'd They Do That? The broadcast will go behind the scenes to show more about building the home's accessible features.

Blind/Low Vision Group
800-444-4443 or 727-803-8000
www.FreedomScientific.com

Graduate Scholarships Available for Women With Disabilities Deadline: June 1, 2005



(From Monday Morning in Washington, D.C.)

The mission of the Ethel Louise Armstrong Foundation (<http://www.ela.org/>) is to "Change the Face of Disability on the Planet." As part of this mission, the foundation offers scholarships to women graduate students with physical disabilities who are enrolled in a college or university in the United States. Scholarships range between \$500 and \$2,000.

To be eligible, an applicant must be a woman with a physical disability who is currently accepted into a graduate program working toward a Masters degree or above at an accredited college or university in the United States. In addition, the applicant must be active in a local, state, or national disability organization—either in person or electronically—which is providing services and/or advocacy for people with disabilities.

Visit the ELA Foundation Web site for complete program details and application materials. RFP Link: <http://fconline.fdncenter.org/pnd/1632/ela>

O'Neill and Zeshan Tabani Enrichment Fund offers Scholarship Opportunity for students with Down Syndrome

(Courtesy of Monday Morning in Washington, D.C.)

<http://www.ndss.org/content.cfm?fuseaction=NwsEvt.Article&article=1160>

The National Down Syndrome Society is excited to announce a new postsecondary scholarship program, The Joshua O'Neill and Zeshan Tabani Enrichment Fund. This fund was established by Zeshan Tabani to honor his friend, Joshua O'Neill. Joshua was fortunate to participate in a postsecondary education experience and he benefited greatly from this opportunity. Financial aid for postsecondary education is rarely available to individuals with Down syndrome, and while many young adults want to continue to enrich their lives through further education after high school, they frequently do not have the financial means to do so. The Joshua O'Neill and Zeshan Tabani Enrichment Fund will offer financial assistance to young adults with Down syndrome who wish to continue to enrich their lives by taking postsecondary enrichment courses to obtain employment and other important life skills.

The fund will award five (5) grants of up to \$1,000 to individuals with Down syndrome who wish to take a postsecondary enrichment course at their local community college or other educational institution. We encourage all individuals who meet the eligibility criteria to apply for this grant. The applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria: the individual has Down syndrome; is 18 years old or older; demonstrates a desire to continue their education; and should intend to enroll in a postsecondary class that will enrich their life, through employment, independent living skills, life skills or another way. Completed application packages must be returned to NDSS by June 10, 2005. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Erin Geller at egeller@ndss.org.

Download the Scholarship Application in Microsoft Word Format (.doc) at <http://www.ndss.org/media/pdf/ScholarshipApplication.doc>.

"So, You Need A Ride!", for Native American communities

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has proudly published a new series of publications. "So, You Need A Ride!" encourages Native American communities to work together, moms, dads, and children of all ages, to improve mobility within rural and Federal Land areas.

By using available equipment and resources, communities can work together to provide a ride for those who need a ride. This motivational and educational literature provides a realistic rural definition of 'Transit' and gives examples of alternative transportation resources that can be pooled together to improve mobility. Schools are encouraged to use the colorful literature to teach youngsters about transit, alternative transportation, and sharing and caring for others.

For copies, contact: Federal Lands Highway, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Room 6311, Washington, D.C. 20590, telephone (202) 493-0426, or E-mail: Cynthia.Hatley@fhwa.dot.gov.

NEW YORK TIMES: Amid Affluence, a Struggle Over Special Education

(From The New York Times)

Amid Affluence, a Struggle Over Special Education

By ALISON LEIGH COWAN

Published: April 24, 2005



Douglas Healey for The New York Times

[LEFT] Richard Ellenbogen and Dr. Debra Weissman, at their home in Westport, have paid \$50,000 in legal fees seeking to force the district to pay for private school for their son, who has a bipolar disorder and other problems that affect his ability to learn.

WESTPORT, Conn., April 20 - "Legal Issues in School Health Services," all 662 pages of it, is a popular read among school administrators in this wealthy town on the Long Island Sound. Parents, however, are more likely to be poring over Gary Mayerson's "How to Compromise With Your School District Without Compromising Your Child," or "Wrightslaw: Special Education Law," by Peter W. D. Wright and Pamela Darr Wright.

Special education is a hot topic here, with school board meetings exploding into shouting matches over what services children are entitled to under federal law and parents spending thousands of dollars on appeals to force the school district to provide those services for their children.

The parents say they have no choice: the district, one of the state's most affluent, is fighting just as hard to hold the line on skyrocketing special education costs.

"The sign outside Westport should say: 'Don't Move Here. We Don't Take Care of Special Ed,'" said Stanley Alintoff, a parent who said he has spent more than \$100,000 challenging Westport's decision to revoke special accommodations his daughter was receiving because of a digestive disorder.

With an estimated 5.7 million children in the United States qualifying for special education, similar struggles are playing out around the country. Federal laws aimed at protecting the disabled entitle those who qualify to a free and "appropriate" education tailored to their needs. But the definition of "appropriate" differs from town to town, leaving much to quarrel about.

The battle is particularly intense in the suburbs, where wealthy, educated parents no longer see special education as a stigma or trap. They are pressing hard for services and accommodations to address their children's learning needs, from extra time on tests to tuition for private schools. But many suburban school districts are aggressively challenging some of the requests as indulgent interpretations of the law.

Read Alison Leigh Cowan's entire article (RSS Feed) for the New York Times at

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/24/education/24westport.html?ex=1271995200&en=934ba25460c28b6e&ei=5088&pa rtner=rssnyt&emc=rss>.

Circle of Security Project: Early Intervention for Parents

(Courtesy of Circle of Security)

The **Circle of Security Project** is an innovative, first-of-its-kind early intervention program designed to alter the developmental pathway of parents and their young children. Glen Cooper, Kent Hoffman, and Bert Powell from Marycliff Institute in Spokane, Washington and Robert Marvin from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia are currently designing this unique, cost-effective program.

The COS is a user-friendly, visually based (utilizing extensive use of both graphics and video clips) approach to helping parents better understand the needs of their children. It is based extensively upon attachment theory (from the work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth) and current affective neuroscience.

COS is also a basic protocol that can be used in a variety of settings from group sessions (20 weeks) to family therapy to home visitation. The common denominator is that all of the learning is informed around the following themes:

- Teaching the basics of attachment theory via the Circle of Security
- Increasing parent skills in observing parent/child interactions
- Increasing capacity of the caregiver to recognize and sensitively respond to children's needs
- Supporting a process of reflective dialogue between clinician and parent to explore both strengths and under developed capacities (i.e. being Bigger Stronger Wiser and Kind, supporting exploration, and supporting attachment)
- Introducing parent to a user-friendly way to explore defensive process and how best to work with it

The Circle of Security Project integrates over fifty years of attachment research into a video-based intervention to strengthen parents' capacity to observe and improve their parenting. The use of videotaped interaction allows each parent to focus on specific personal strengths and limitations, rather than relying on the traditional "one-size-fits-all" approach to parenting education. Attachment theory, taught in this user-friendly way, gives each parent an individualized parenting "road map," a clear pathway to providing a secure relationship for her/his child.

Learn more about COS, explore resources, and read FAQs to discover the difference between COS Attachment Theory and "Holding Therapies" at <http://www.circleofsecurity.org/index.html>.

2004 N.O.D./Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities

(Courtesy of Monday Morning in Washington, D.C.)

The National Organization on Disability and Harris Interactive issue its 2004 N.O.D./Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities©. This quadrennial survey measures the status of people with disabilities in America, and finds that they are at a critical disadvantage compared to other Americans in ten key areas of life. The N.O.D., in cooperation with the Harris Poll, provides timely survey research data on the participation of people with disabilities in American life. The latest survey covers the participation gaps between Americans with and without disabilities in ten major life activities. In addition, www.nod.org offers the disability community, policy-makers, media and others easy access to an assortment of other disability-related surveys and studies.

Visit <http://www.nod.org/> (scroll down to the link to "Order the 2004 N.O.D./Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities") to order the survey, and to review some documented trends and statistics.

Micro-Sized Gadgets Creating Barriers—One Size DOESN'T Fit All

(From of Wired News)

Associated Press, 08:29 AM Apr. 24, 2005 PT

As technology has evolved, it has become lighter, smaller and more portable. For most people, that makes it more convenient. For millions of blind and vision-impaired people, it's anything but.

Jay Leventhal, who is blind, still fumbles with the tiny controls on his iPod but has given up on the kiosk in his New York office building that lists all the tenants. For Leventhal, even laundry has become a task requiring the help of a sighted person. The washers he uses now take smart cards instead of quarters, issuing instructions on a digital screen that he can't read.

"The biggest barrier for blind people is access to information, and more and more information is being made available through different machines that aren't designed for people who can't see," says Leventhal, editor in chief of AccessWorld: Technology and People with Visual Impairments.

Blind people need a way to communicate with the machines that surround them, he says, from automated tellers to ticketing machines at train stations and airports.

Leventhal and other experts on assistive technology say there's no reason that can't happen. The technology exists in voice chips, image processors, cell phones, cameras and personal digital assistants.

Someone just needs to put it all together.

Read the entire AP article at <http://www.wired.com/news/technology/0,1282,67322,00.html?tw=rss.TOP>.

Disabled Program Changes Decried: Former RSA Chief Faults Consolidation

(From the Washington Post), By Brian Faler, Special to The Washington Post, Monday, April 25, 2005; Page A17



(By Andrea Bruce Woodall -- The Washington Post)

President Bush greeted Joanne Wilson, then commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, at a White House event in 2002. Wilson opposes administration plans to combine job programs for the disabled with those that serve the able-bodied.

The woman who, until recently, led the federal government effort to get the nation's disabled into the workforce is lashing out at the Bush administration, saying it is quietly attempting to "dismantle" programs critical to helping the blind, deaf and otherwise disabled find jobs.

Joanne Wilson, who left her job as commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration on March 1, now says she quit in protest of what she said were

the administration's largely unnoticed efforts to gut the office's funding and staffing.

"Programs for people with disabilities are being dismantled, and nobody is crying out and saying, 'Look what's happening,'" said Wilson, who, as RSA commissioner, was one of the government's highest-ranking disabled officials.

Wilson said the Department of Education, which has jurisdiction over the office, is pushing to allow governors to combine RSA programs with a number of other job placement programs that serve both the disabled and the able-bodied. The net result of such a move, she said, would be less money and fewer services dedicated to helping those with disabilities. Wilson said the agency is also cutting RSA staffing by about half while pushing to downgrade the authority of the commissioner who runs it.

Read more of Faler's Washington Post article at

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/04/24/AR2005042401066.html>.

NEW POLICY ANNOUNCED FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER NCLB

(Courtesy of Monday Morning in Washington, D.C.)

On Thursday, April 7, 2005, Secretary of Education Spellings announced a new policy affecting accountability for students with disabilities under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This policy would offer states additional flexibility with respect to how many scores of students taking non-grade level assessments could be counted towards Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is the measure, using test scores and other factors, that determines whether schools, school districts and states are doing an acceptable job educating their students or whether they "need improvement." A variety of escalating steps must be taken when a "needs improvement" designation has occurred.

Currently, regulations under NCLB provide that the only students who can have their proficient and advanced scores from non-grade level assessments (alternate assessments on an alternate achievement standard) counted toward AYP are students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. These are students who, even with the best instruction, are unlikely to reach grade-level achievement. The number of these scores that can be used toward AYP is capped at 1% of the total tested population. This adds up to approximately 10% of students with disabilities who are tested. A waiver can be obtained by the school districts and states to increase the cap if they can justify their request. The cap does not apply at the school level.

The new policy announced by Secretary Spellings would permit the creation of a new category of students whose advanced and proficient scores on non-grade level assessments could be used towards AYP. The number of scores from this category would be capped at 2% of the total tested population or approximately 20% of students with disabilities.

This would bring the total percentage of students with disabilities who would not have to attain grade level for AYP purposes to approximately 30%. This is a very large percentage when you consider how many students with disabilities are on diploma track and should be on grade level. In fact, depending on the assessment, the level set for proficiency and the standards for a diploma, students in many states who will not earn a diploma can still demonstrate proficiency on grade level assessments for NCLB. This is currently true for some students with Down syndrome and their numbers would increase if they received appropriate instruction in the general education curriculum and were given assessments that were developed to accommodate the widest range of accommodations (universally designed assessments) and that these were available in various formats (alternate assessments on grade level standards).

For more information on the general rules of NCLB see the NDSS policy brief at <http://capwiz.com/ndss/issues/alert/?alertid=5771676>.

Youthhood, An Online Research-Based Transition Curriculum

(Courtesy of Monday Morning in Washington, D.C.)

Between childhood and adulthood, there's Youthhood, a new online research-based transition curriculum for use by students, parents, teachers, and others who work with transition-aged youth. Check it out at www.youthhood.org it's well worth the visit!

Statehealthfacts.org: health data on all 50 states

Statehealthfacts.org is a project of the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and is designed to provide free, up-to-date, and easy-to-use health data on all 50 states. Statehealthfacts.org provides data on more than 450 health topics and is linked to both the Kaiser Family Foundation website (www.kff.org) and KaiserNetwork.org (www.kaisernetwork.org).

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation is a non-profit, private operating foundation focusing on the major health care issues facing the nation. The Foundation is an independent voice and source of facts and analysis for policymakers, the media, the health care community, and the general public. The Foundation is not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries.

Data Collection

Data presented on statehealthfacts.org are a selection of key health and health policy issues collected from a variety of public and private sources, including: original Kaiser Family Foundation reports, data from public websites, and information purchased from private organizations. <http://statehealthfacts.org/>

Events/Conferences in Montana::

BraveHearts Grief Support Group, May 3, Billings

BraveHearts is a grief support group for children, teens, and families. The group meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at the Mayflower Congregational Church. Every meeting includes refreshments, fun activities, and story time. Registration is required for this free program. Please call Amy at 247-3300 for more information and to register.

Meeting Schedule:

May 3	Planting Seeds & Making a Memory Garden
May 17	Tree of Life (Family Trees)
June 7	Memories (A Year to Remember)
June 21	Memory Box (Be sure to bring keepsakes . . . photos, cards, music, etc. to put in the box.)

Session 3: Getting Students Past the "Gatekeeper," May 5, Missoula

Effective instruction, especially at the middle school level, is a critical component for laying the foundation for higher-level mathematics. This one-day workshop focuses on the "big picture" concepts and those topics necessary for algebra success. By tackling the important topics and modeling the "big picture" concepts for students, teachers and students can "tear down" these roadblocks to algebra success.

To register, or for further information, please go to <http://www.cspd.net>.

Region 1 CSPD –All Kidding Aside: Preventing Harassment, May 5, Miles City

Sponsored by Region 1 CSPD

May 5—"All Kidding Aside: Preventing Harassment," Miles City MCC, 1:00-4:30 pm

For more information, contact Helen Murphy at dmurphy@midrivers.com or (406) 485-3600.

Region 1 CSPD—Managing Multiple Priorities, May 10. Helena

Sponsored by Region 1 CSPD

May 10—“Managing Multiple Priorities,” Helena, 8:30 am to 12:00 noon

For more information, contact Helen Murphy at dmurphy@midrivers.com or (406) 485-3600.

Input Sought from healthcare providers and client advocates at PASSPORT Summits, May 10, Havre



As the PASSPORT to Health program enters its twelfth year of successfully managing the delivery of health care to Montana's Medicaid clients, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) is planning summits to determine if the current operation of the PASSPORT to Health program is the most effective way to meet its objectives.

The Department stresses that attendees should look at the program in a truly comprehensive way; therefore, no idea is off the table for consideration. "Change to the PASSPORT program, whether slight or radical, may be in order," said Mary Angela Collins, Managed Care Bureau Chief. "These summits will provide a forum for providers to identify parts of the program they feel are ineffective or outdated. All we ask is that ideas fit within our goals for managed care."

PASSPORT to Health's objectives include fostering a medical home between providers and clients, which promotes appropriate care and reduces costs, as well as assuring adequate access to primary care.

One-day facilitated summits are planned for locations across the state:

- o **Havre** on May 10,
- o **Billings** on May 18,
- o **Kalispell** on June 8, and
- o **Missoula** on June 15.

A cross-section of PASSPORT stakeholders are invited, including: PASSPORT providers, specialists, and other non-PCPs, representatives from billing companies, hospitals, FQHCs, RHCs, the tribal health community, and client advocates.

Implemented in 1993, the PASSPORT program has been successful in saving over \$20,000,000 annually. These savings allow the program to provide services to people who may not have otherwise received them, and help maintain provider reimbursement rates.

In addition to meeting its financial objectives, the PASSPORT program has been well received by 80% of its PCPs and clients.

If you have ideas to offer, and would like to participate in one of the summits, contact PASSPORT Program Officer Niki Scoffield at (406) 444-4148 or niscoffield@mt.gov. For a copy of the agenda and more details, visit Montana Medicaid's website at www.mtmedicaid.org.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Teleconference, May 17, Great Falls, Billings, Lame Deer

Date: May 17, 2005, 9:00 AM - noon

Where: Great Falls, VisionNet classroom, 1309 NW Bypass

Teleconference sites: Lame Deer, Billings

Presenters: Jill Plumage, Fort Belknap Reservation FAS Coordinator

Information/registration: <http://www.pluk.org/training/FAS.htm>

Financial Planning for Families Teleconference, May 19, Billings

Date: May 19, 2005, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Where: Billings, Mansfield Center

Teleconference sites: (none at this time)

Presenters: Bruce Larson, Jason Harkins, & parent panel

Information/registration: <http://www.pluk.org/training/Financial.htm>

The 299 Club—Support for Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, May 20, Billings

The number 299 comes from the first portion of the diagnostic code used to identify Autism Spectrum Disorders. The 299 Club is a parent-to-parent support group designed to offer information sharing, education, and support "to build our community, one piece at a time."

- Explore Innovative Approaches to Autism
- Browse the Resource Library
- Become a Parent Mentor
- Join the "Sunshine Group"
- Check Conference Listings



- Learn from Guest Speakers
- Help Fundraising Activities
- Relax with Moms' Morning Coffee Chat
- Visit the Kids' Gathering
- Enjoy a Christmas Party

WHEN: 3RD Friday, every month

WHERE: Scottish Rite Language Clinic (514 14TH ST W)

CONTACT: Jaime Moran, 406-256-8007 or Jennifer Closson, 406-655-3234

Financial Planning for Families Teleconference, June 2, Missoula, Butte

Date: June 2, 2005, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Where: Missoula, Ruby's Convention Center

Teleconference site: Butte

Presenters: Nancy Gibson, Chris Siegler, & parent panel

Information/Registration: <http://www.pluk.org/training/Financial.htm>

Two-Day Picture Exchange Communication System Training Workshop, June 6 & 7, Great Falls

Presented by Christine Cavarretta, BCBA & Michela Figini-Myers, BCABA, Holiday Inn- Great Falls, 1.3 ASHA CEUs

For registration information, visit us online at <http://www.pecs.com> or call toll free 888-732-7462. For general information, contact Judy Barrett at jbarrett@pecs.com or call 302-368-2515. If you are interested in sending 5 or more people, please contact us regarding group discounts.

Impacts of Childhood Disability on Families, June 10-11, Billings



In a long-awaited conference opportunity, parents and caregivers are invited to join national presenter and author, psychologist Ken Moses, PhD, for a two-day conference exploring childhood disability and its impact on families and caregivers. The conference—sponsored by St. Vincent's Healthcare (and in cooperation with Billings Public Schools,

STEP, and ECI)—will be held at the Mansfield Health Education Center. CEUs are available and free childcare will be offered during the Saturday session. Space is limited please register early.

Cost: \$50-\$100. A limited number of scholarships, courtesy of the Children's Clinic, are available to parents of children with special needs. For more information, please call Health Access, St. Vincent Healthcare, at 406-657-8792.

Family Learning Weekend for the Visually Impaired, Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind June 10-12, MDSB, Great Falls

A FREE three-day weekend in Great Falls at MSDB is designed specifically for families with children who are visually impaired. This weekend is packed with ideas. A nationally renowned keynote speaker, Judith Lesner from the National Association of Parents of the Visually Impaired (NAPVI), will be speaking to families about the importance of parent advocacy. She will present with her son, Jacob Lesner-Buxton, who will be addressing the current issues in the education of the blind. Both Judith and Jacob are experienced will be working with our parents to design a Montana chapter of NAPVI. For more information, please contact MSDB at 1-800-882-6732 or Barb Rolf, Outreach Vision Consultant at (406) 251-5674.

MASP Summer Institute, June 12-14, Billings

Jack M. Fletcher, PhD (professor, Dept. of Pediatrics at University of Texas Health Sciences Center-Houston, Assoc. Director Center for Academic and Reading Skills (CARS)), will present "Neuropsychology of Developmental Disorders." Explore the origins of brain dysfunction, review the behavior systems model, discover the current concepts behind the behavior-brain relationship, and investigate learning disabilities identification, intervention, and research.

The Institute will be held from Sunday June 12 through Tuesday June 14, 2005, at the Mansfield Health Education Center in Billings. CEUs are available. Fees vary (\$110-\$145)

Download the MASP SI Brochure at http://www.pluk.org/MASP_SumInst_2005.pdf.

Walk F.A.R. for NAAR Autism Walk—June 12, Great Falls

To date, NAAR has committed \$21.1 million to fund 211 autism research projects and fellowships worldwide - more than any other non-governmental organization. NAAR has been able to make these investments, in large part, through the success of Walk F.A.R. for NAAR, the signature fundraising and autism awareness event of NAAR. Each year, walks throughout the USA, Canada and England attract thousands of walkers and raise millions for research.

Great Falls Walk (<http://www.autismwalk.org/greatfalls>)

Help spread the word about the Montana Walk F.A.R. for NAAR event. Download the event flyer at http://www.autismwalk.org/site/DocServer/Great_Falls_Walk_Flyer_FINAL.pdf?docID=705. Want to build a Walk F.A.R. team, check out http://www.autismwalk.org/site/PageServer?pagename=fundraising_tips.

Find out more about the Walk F.A.R. for NAAR Events at <http://www.autismwalk.org/site/PageServer?pagename=homepage>.

Interested? Want to Learn More?

Penny Martin--Local Volunteer Leadership--406.771.3998 or j.martin@bresnan.net

Scott R. Moore--Pacific Northwest Regional Director

National Alliance for Autism Research - 1370 Stewart Street - Seattle WA 98109

206.464.5182 smoore@naar.org <http://www.autismwalk.org> or <http://www.naar.org>

Power Mobility Camp, June 13-17, Billings

Located at MSU-Billings campus, the purpose of the camp is to allow any individual an opportunity to try power mobility. Several sessions are encouraged for evaluation. For more information, please call Mary O'Connell, PT, ATP at 1-800-732-0323 or 406-243-5688. People of all ages, with any disability, are welcome.

Special Education in Montana Teleconference, June 16, Missoula

Date: June 16, 2005, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Where: Billings, Mansfield Center

Teleconference sites: (none at this time)

Presenter: Kathy Manley Coburn

Information/registration: <http://www.pluk.org/training/SPEDlaw.htm>

Online Training/Workshops/Events::

Watch "Riding the Bus with my sister" support a great cause on May 1st

On Sunday, May 1, Hallmark Hall of Fame will broadcast Riding the Bus with My Sister on CBS. Directed by Angelica Houston, and starring Andie MacDowell and Rosie O'Donnell, this is the movie adaptation of our friend Rachel Simon's wonderful book of the same name.

It is Rachel's wish that the premiere of this movie be used as an opportunity to support the Sibling Support Project! Here's what she told us:

As I wrote Riding the Bus with My Sister, I learned of The Sibling Support Project's important work. Whether it's helping local communities start Sibshops, connecting young and adult sibs with their peers on SibKids and SibNet, conducting wonderful workshops for parents and providers, or creating engaging books for sibs and families, The Sibling Support Project is the go-to group for all things sibling. I hope you'll join me and support the work of The Arc's Sibling Support Project!

--Rachel Simon, author, Riding the Bus with My Sister.

In honor of this special network presentation, we're celebrating the many important roles brothers and sisters play in the lives of their sibs who have disabilities. I hope you'll help us celebrate by making a secure online donation to the Sibling Support Project.

When making your online donation, be sure to check the "in support of" box and select either "Stay at Home Premiere" or "Sibling Support Project." (By selecting "Stay at Home Premiere," 50% of your contribution will go to ANCOR, another worthy cause.) You can also send a contribution to The Arc's Sibling Support Project, 1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 650, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

To learn more about what we do and why brothers and sisters are so important, please visit us at our website at <http://www.thearc.org/siblingsupport/>

Disability Law Resource Project (DLRP) Webcast May 18

(From DLRP)

IDEA 2004: May 18, 1:00-2:30pm.

PRESENTER:

Troy R. Justesen, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) in the U.S. Department of Education will present this Web cast on Wednesday, May 18, 2005, from 3:00-4:30pm Eastern; 2:00 Central; 1:00 Mountain; 12:00 Pacific; 11:00 Alaska; 9:00 Hawaii.

As the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) in the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), Troy Justesen serves as the principal adviser to the Assistant Secretary of OSERS

on all departmental matters related to special education and rehabilitative services. Please submit questions for the presenter ahead of time to webcast@ilru.org.

SUMMARY:

IDEA 2004 becomes effective July 1, 2005. In this webcast, Dr. Justesen will provide an update on the development of the implementing regulations for IDEA 2004. He will outline the next steps in the process as well as opportunities for the public to provide comment. Additionally, he will address some key issues raised during the comment period to help us understand some key changes introduced in this latest version of IDEA as well as what those changes may mean for students, parents, and schools.

To link to these webcasts, and download accompanying materials, visit <http://www.ilru.org/html/training/webcasts/calendar.html>.

For instructions on how to access a webcast, visit <http://www.ilru.org/html/training/webcasts/instructions.html>. Please check this site ahead of time to test and ensure your computer is configured and updated to participate in the webcast.

For technical assistance, please check out our FAQs (frequently asked questions) at: <http://www.ilru.org/html/training/webcasts/FAQ.html> or contact a Webcast team member at webcast@ilru.org or 713/520-0232 (v/tty).

Events/Workshops/Conferences outside Montana::

YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities Network 26th Annual International Conference "Building Brighter Futures for People with Developmental and Learning Disabilities," May 9-13, NYC

Dive into one of the largest conferences of its kind at the 26th annual YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities Network international conference. This event features more than 120 sessions and 2 full-day post conference workshops.

Cost: Varies \$195-\$545

Visit www.yai.org for conference details, including a full agenda, and to register.


National ADA Symposium, May 17-19, Overland Park, KS

(From Monday Morning in Washington, DC)

The National ADA Symposium is the most comprehensive and effective event available on the Americans with Disabilities Act and disability related issues. It is designed to meet the specific needs and interests of professionals who are involved in interpreting and implementing the American with Disabilities Act's guidelines and regulations. Experts directly involved in interpreting, regulating and implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act provide the training. The Symposium brings together presenters from the key agencies involved with the ADA including the U.S. Dept. of Justice, the EEOC, Dept. of Education, Dept. of Labor and the U.S. Access Board. These presenters provide dynamic training that participants can put to use in their professions.

For more information, including online registration, go to <http://www.adaupdate.org/Symposium.html>

Autism One Conference, May 26-29, Chicago IL



As always, Autism One 2005 features four major tracks to help parents and professionals make the most informed choices and decisions, they are: Biomedical Treatments; Behavior / Communication / Education Therapies; Complementary/Alternative Treatments; Government/Legal/Personal Issues. Each track offers three days of presentations focusing on particular treatments, research, and/or issues of that field. All presentations are open on a walk-in basis—conference registration covers them all.

Learn about the most effective treatments and therapies, how to obtain services and how to deal effectively with schools. Learn what to expect in future for the fields of medicine, education, government, and law.

Registration rates: \$99-\$295. Register online at <https://www.exporeg.com/autismone/>. Questions or registration concerns, email Registration@AutismOne.org. For more information, visit <http://autismone.org/homepage.cfm>.

IDEA Public Meetings, June 6, San Antonio

John H. Hager, assistant secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), U.S. Department of Education, is pleased to share with you the schedule of a series of public meetings to be held during calendar year 2005 to receive comments on the proposed rules to implement programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

Schedule:

- Monday, June 6, 2005
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

- San Antonio, TX
- Friday, June 17, 2005
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Nashville, TN
- Wednesday, June 22, 2005
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Sacramento, CA
- Friday, June 24, 2005
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Las Vegas, NV
- Monday, June 27, 2005
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
New York, NY
- Wednesday, June 29, 2005
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Chicago, IL
- Tuesday, July 12, 2005
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Washington, DC

People on the Move Sessions, June 8-9, Salt Lake City, UT

The People On The Move program consists of two days of instruction for travel trainers, teachers, job coaches, bus operators, transportation coordinators, independent living specialists and others who assist people with disabilities in their use of public and private transportation so that they can go to school, jobs and other community destinations.

If you missed the March 2 deadline for Ann Arbor, there are other dates and cities; each is followed by the application deadline:

- June 8-9, 2005: Salt Lake City, Utah (May 27)
- September 7-8, 2005: Boston, Mass. (Aug. 3)
- November 14-15, 2005: New Orleans, La. (Oct. 3)

The Collaborative Assistive Technology Conference of the Rockies, June 9-11, Westminster, CO

Attendees will learn about local and national perspectives on state-of-the-art assistive technology devices and services. Don't miss the largest assistive technology conference in the Rocky Mountain Region, with attendance estimated at over 600. With over 70 sessions geared toward every age and disability, there is something for everybody! Presenters are among the most respected in their fields. The goal of the conference is to enhance the quality of life for individuals with disabilities through the appropriate selection and use of assistive technology. Anyone with an interest in assistive technology devices and services is welcome. Breakout sessions will focus on funding issues and legislation, education, employment, hands-on assistive technology training and the design and development of low-tech adaptive devices.

This conference is designed for people with disabilities and their families, special educators, teachers, government agency representatives, occupational & physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, public health administrators, legislators, rehabilitation counselors, employers, insurers, and people who need up-to-the-minute information about technology devices and services.

If you use or recommend assistive technology now - or you're planning to take advantage of all that technology can offer—this conference will give you the "inside track." With 70+ sessions covering all aspects of assistive technology, you'll have the opportunity to take a walk along today's technology landscape and 'surf' what tomorrow's technology will offer. With local and national presenters, this conference is your hands-on route to new insights and information, including:

Today's Assistive Technology Devices and Services

- Future Trends
- Changes in Legislation
- Case Studies
- Innovative Technology Applications
- Funding Strategies and Procedures
- Technology Assessment

Access a registration form at <http://www.uchsc.edu/atp/conf2005/conf2005reg.htm>.

National Leadership Summit on Improving Results: Policy and Practice Implications for Secondary and Postsecondary Education and Employment for Youth with Disabilities, June 14-15, Washington, DC

(From Monday Morning in Washington, D.C.)



In response to the need to improve high school experiences and post school outcomes for youth with disabilities, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) hosted its first National Leadership Summit on Improving Results for Youth in September 2003. More than 250 participants attended, including state agency leaders; policymakers; professionals representing general education, special education, career and technical education, workforce development, vocational rehabilitation, and other agencies; parents; and youth with disabilities.

In order to continue the national conversation which occurred at the 2003 Summit, NCSET in partnership with federal agencies and national organizations will co-host a second National Leadership Summit on Improving Results for Youth in Washington, DC in June 14-15, 2005.

The goal of this event is to convene state-level teams of policymakers to examine the progress made in the implementation of the strategic action plans developed at the 2003 Summit, and to further build state/territory capacity to improve high school experiences that lead to successful post school outcomes for all youth.

Access <http://www.ncset.org/summit05/> for more information and registration.

From Roots to Wings: Guiding Youth With Disabilities to Employment, RSA's First National Transition Conference, June 16-17, Washington, DC

(From Monday Morning in Washington, D.C.)

[Note, this conference follows the 2005 National Leadership Summit on Improving Results for Youth.]

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), State VR agencies, State educational agencies, youth leadership organizations, consumer organizations, and other stakeholder groups are planning a national conference that will offer learning experiences and networking opportunities for State VR agency and State education agency staff at both the state and local levels. This conference will bring together VR and education policymakers and practitioners, as well as personnel from collaborating agencies that work with transitioning youth with disabilities.

Access <http://www.dtiassociates.com/rsatransitions/> for more information, including an agenda and registration.

"Making Connections, Strengthening Communities" 14th Annual Community Technology Conference June 17-19, Cleveland, OH

(Courtesy of CTCNet)

The Community Technology Center Network's major event is "the largest national gathering of community technology organizations, programs, and experts." The goal for the 2005 conference is to "to chart the progression of the community technology movement from a small grassroots effort, focused on technology access, to a growing national and international field of practice harnessing technology to meet human and social needs." According to CTCNet, the Annual Conference "is a gathering of our member organizations, leaders in the field, and others in related fields interested in creating equitable participation in information technology. CTCNet members receive a discounted registration rate and repeatedly cite this conference as one of the most important services CTCNet offers."

For registration rates and more information, visit the CTCNet website at <http://www.ctcnet.org/conf/2005/attending/registration.asp05>.

National Down Syndrome Conference—Imagine, July 7-10, Chicago

(From NDSS)



The NDSS National Conference is the country's premier conference on Down Syndrome. The 2005 conference, "Imagine," will bring together parents, family members, professionals, teens and adults with Down syndrome, and siblings from across the country for education, networking, celebration and much more. This year's conference invites attendees to imagine the possibilities for the Down syndrome community – and how together we can make that potential a reality. The 2005 NDSS National Conference is presented in collaboration with the National Association for Down Syndrome, which serves the Chicago metropolitan area.

Why Should You Attend "Imagine"?

- Actively participate in helping to shape the vision of the future for people with Down syndrome.
- Learn best practices in education, health care, employment, community living and inclusion.
- Attend the Festival of the Arts 2005, featuring the many talents of people with Down syndrome.
- Learn from and meet top experts from around the country.

- Find out about the newest products, programs and services in the exhibit hall.
- Acquire the most up-to-date information on education, research and advocacy.
- Network with more than 900 conference participants.
- Learn about resources for babies, children, adolescents and adults with Down syndrome.
- Meet and network with hundreds of affiliate leaders from across the U.S.

Who Should Attend?

- Parents and family members
- Individuals with Down syndrome
- Siblings of individuals with Down syndrome
- Parent group leaders and advocates
- Educators and early intervention specialists
- Physicians, nurses and genetic counselors
- Psychologists, social workers and counselors
- Speech-language, physical and occupational therapists
-

Register online at <https://programs.regweb.com/resourceone/ndss05/register/>. Registration costs vary: \$125-\$275. For more information, visit <http://www.ndss.org/content.cfm?fuseaction=NwsEvt.EvtConfNC>.

2005 National Association for Rural Mental Health (NARMH) Annual Conference, August 4-6, Honolulu (Courtesy of NARMH)

The presentation tracts for this year's conference stretch beyond the customary and traditional mental health program areas, extending explicitly into the areas of dual diagnosis and forensic mental health services, with an emphasis on culturally based deliveries of care. The conference is fostering this effort to create greater dialogue among participants from the many sectors that touch people in need of mental health and substance abuse care and treatment, and to aide in dissolving some of the barriers to collaboration and integrated service development and delivery.

NARMH 2005 Conference Tracts:

- Systems Design and Management
- Child / Adolescent Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Adult Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program/Services
- State of the Art, New Bio-Medical Advances and Ethics
- Junior Rural Researchers Review

Register online <http://www.narmh.org/pages/05cofra.html> before June 15, 2005 for the best rates.

Registration costs vary from \$185 to \$460 dollars. Conference details are available at www.narmh.org or by calling (320) 202-1820.

Selected Sources::

1. *Monday Morning in Washington, DC*, <http://www.inclusionresearch.org>
2. *Rocky Mountain DBTAC*, <http://www.adainformation.org>
3. *PEN Weekly NewsBlast* <http://www.publiceducation.org>
4. *Health and Disability Training Calendar* <http://mtdh.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/training.htm>
5. *The American Indian Disability Technical Assistance Center Training Calendar*
<http://aidtac.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/TrainingCalendar.htm>
6. *Technology for Nonprofits*: <http://www.techsoup.org>

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