

**PLUK eNews for the week of August 18-22, 2003  
Volume 2 Issue 7**

Welcome to the weekly PLUK eNews!

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



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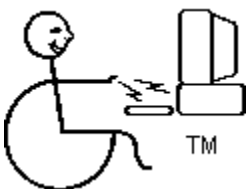
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##



### **RJ Cooper is coming to Billings Aug 28th!**

RJ Cooper, a specialist in assistive technology for adults and children with disabilities, will be coming to **MSU-Billings on August 28<sup>th</sup>** for an **all-day workshop** sponsored by Parents, Let's Unite for Kids and Region III CSPD. During the workshop, Mr. Cooper will evaluate "learners" for a half-hour while demonstrating hardware/software developed by his company. Mr. Cooper has 18 years of experience in problem solving with individuals with various disabilities and ages. Caregivers, parents, professionals and students are all welcome to attend. There is no charge for the workshop. For more information on R.J. Cooper and his products, see his website at <http://rjcooper.com>. (Demo CDs are available at PLUK and the Region III CSPD at the Montana Center on Disabilities).

For more information or to sign up for one of the 8 available half-hour evaluation sessions, contact Roger Holt at Parents, Lets Unite for Kids at 255-0540 or e-mail [rholt@pluk.org](mailto:rholt@pluk.org).

##

### **Join PLUK at the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Founders Day Celebration, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, Billings**

This is PLUK's 19th year of serving Montana families and everyone is invited to the third annual event celebrating the founding of PLUK! Founder's Day is scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6pm at the Mansfield Center in Billings, Gail Gray will be the keynote speaker. She is the current director of Montana's Department of Public Health and Human Services. Attendance is free, but seating is limited.

Anyone interested in attending should call Sheryl at the PLUK office at 255-0540 for reservations, as seating is limited.



##



## **Reserve your space for *Dinosaur Day* with Jack Horner, October 11, Billings**

A special day of activities, featuring paleontologist Jack Horner of the Museum of the Rockies, is planned for October 11.

The event, titled Dinosaur Day, will include a Workshop for Kids, where Horner will meet with the participants and give a presentation on the field of paleontology and dinosaurs in Montana. The workshop will be held on the Montana State University-Billings campus.

That night, Horner will speak at a dinner for all ages at the Billings Sheraton Hotel. He will talk about how Montana is a dream state for paleontologists and about his work in recent years at Montana sites.

Horner is recognized as one of the most prolific paleontologists in the world. He was the model for Alan Grant in the "Jurassic Park" movies and served as a consultant on the sets.

For information on Dinosaur Day, ticket prices or to reserve tickets for either the Kids Workshop or the dinner, call PLUK's Office at 255-0540 or 1-800-222-7585. Space is limited for both activities.

##



## **"Make Me a Millionaire" Coupons**

**The Billings Gazette** has started the 2003 version of "Make Me a Millionaire". These coupons will be printed in **The Billings Gazette** daily through September 27. To "buy" items the coupons need to be clipped from the paper and collected and traded for items to be auctioned. **The Billings Gazette** will be holding weekly auctions as well as the final auction on September 27.

PLUK is collecting these coupons in order to bid on some of the items scheduled for the auction. We will use any items we acquire to help raise money at upcoming fundraisers.

Please collect these coupons and drop them off or mail them to PLUK at 516 North 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, Billings, MT 59101. You don't even have to clip the coupons! Just bring the newspapers to us and we will have volunteers clip them.

**SO, START SAVING "MILLIONAIRE" COUPONS NOW!**

##

## **Government/Legal:**

### **JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT WITH MONTANA RETIREMENT COMMUNITY REGARDING VIOLATIONS OF FAIR HOUSING ACT**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Justice Department today announced a settlement with the owners and managers of Riverview Villa, a retirement community in Forsyth, Montana, regarding violations of the federal Fair Housing Act.

The proposed consent decree, filed today in the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana, alleges that the defendants violated the federal Fair Housing Act by discriminating on the basis of disability.

Specifically, the consent decree alleges that the defendants - Tamarack Property Management Co.; Forsyth Development Foundation, Inc.; the city of Forsyth; as well as individuals involved in the management of the property - refused to allow a disabled

resident, now deceased, to make reasonable modifications to his unit. The defendants also refused to grant the resident reasonable accommodations, even though such reasonable modifications and accommodations were necessary to comply with the Fair Housing Act.

"Enforcement of the Fair Housing Act is critical to ensuring that persons with disabilities have adequate access to housing throughout the United States," said J. Michael Wiggins, Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. "We commend the owners and managers of Riverview Villa for cooperating with the Justice Department in resolving this matter."

*Read the complete release at:*

[http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2003/August/03\\_crt\\_454.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2003/August/03_crt_454.htm)

##

### **Court sides with school in appeal**

*By JOE GYAN JR, [jgyan@theadvocate.com](mailto:jgyan@theadvocate.com), New Orleans bureau*

NEW ORLEANS -- A federal appeals court has sided with the Ascension Parish school system in a dispute over where a hearing-impaired student should attend classes.

Dylan White is assigned to Gonzales Primary, one of three "centralized" school sites in Ascension where certain services are provided. A cued speech transliterator, provided by the school system, assists him in class.

Dylan's parents, Doug and Gail White, want him and his transliterator moved to Dutchtown Primary, his neighborhood school. Gonzales Primary is 5 miles farther from Dylan's home than Dutchtown Primary.

His parents say that transferring him to his neighborhood school would enhance his social development by letting him go to school with neighborhood children.

The school system rejected the transfer request -- made in May 2000 when Dylan was in the second grade -- based on its policy of centralizing the cued speech program and because it said Dylan was being provided an appropriate education at Gonzales Primary.

U.S. District Judge James Brady ruled in favor of the Whites in March 2002 and ordered the Ascension school system to assign Dylan and his transliterator to his neighborhood school.

A three-judge panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed Brady on Wednesday, saying the school system did not violate the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

"While the IDEA requires the school to provide services to allow the child the requisite basic floor of opportunity, it does not require the school to make special accommodations at the parent's request (no matter how well-intentioned), particularly where the request is not related to helping the child achieve academic potential," Circuit Judge Rhesa Barksdale wrote for the panel.

"It is undisputed that Dylan was succeeding academically at the centralized school. It is also undisputed that the parents' request that Dylan attend his neighborhood school was primarily social -- they wanted him to be able to attend school with other neighborhood children," Barksdale said. "This concern is beyond the scope of the 'educational benefit' inquiry courts make under the IDEA."

*Read the complete article at:*

[http://www.theadvocate.com/stories/081603/new\\_school001.shtml](http://www.theadvocate.com/stories/081603/new_school001.shtml)

##

## **News:**

### **20% of Montana schools don't meet act's rules**

*By ALLISON FARRELL, Gazette State Bureau, and SUSAN OLP, Of The Gazette Staff*

HELENA -- One of every five public schools in **Montana** fails to meet the new standards set by the federal No Child Left Behind Act, state education officials announced Thursday.

Of the state's 862 public schools, 179 failed to satisfy the federal government's definition of "adequate yearly progress."

In Yellowstone County, nine School District 2 schools did not make adequate yearly progress. Neither did three Laurel schools, three Shepherd schools, two Lockwood schools and one school in Huntley Project. School District 2 schools include Bench Elementary, Poly Drive Elementary, Ponderosa Elementary, Lewis and Clark Middle School, Riverside Middle School, Senior High, Skyview High and West High.

*Read the complete article at:*

<http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?tl=1&display=rednews/2003/08/15/build/local/36-act.inc>

##

### **Guest opinion: Invest in Montana with CHIP expansion**

*By JOHN MORRISON, Montana State Auditor*

More than 33,000 children in this state do not have basic health insurance, therefore their health-care costs often go unpaid. In 2001, the hospitals that serve 12 counties in south-central Montana lost \$37.4 million in unpaid bills and charity care. Typically, those unpaid costs are shifted to others through higher hospital bills and higher health insurance premiums.

*Caring for kids*

Montana has the opportunity to provide health insurance to 10,000 children through the Children's Health Insurance Program. Simultaneously, it could bring significant dollars into the state's economy, and reduce the amount of bad debt and charity care that hospitals sustain.

If the state invests \$3 million in CHIP, the federal government would provide \$12 million in matching funds for the program. That would double enrollment in this popular program that provides health insurance, dental care and eyeglasses for children. I have proposed to Gov. Martz that we use a small portion of Montana's savings through the Congressional Relief Act to acquire this federal match.

*Read the complete article at:*

<http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?id=1&display=rednews/2003/08/12/build/opinion/guest.inc>

##

## **Health/Medical News:**

### **FDA approves wheelchair that climbs stairs**



IBF PHOTO

Thursday, August 14 -- WASHINGTON (AP) -- Stairs are about to become less of an obstacle for some of the nation's 2 million wheelchair users.

The Food and Drug Administration on Wednesday approved a wheelchair that literally can go up and down steps -- as well as shift into four-wheel drive for grassy hills and elevate its occupant to standing height.

Called the iBOT Mobility System, the wheelchair uses sensors and gyroscopes to navigate stairs while balancing on two wheels. Doctors have said the technology is potentially revolutionary. But it is so complex that the FDA decided the wheelchair will require a doctor's prescription and special training to drive.

*Read the complete article at:*

<http://www.cnn.com/2003/HEALTH/08/14/stair.climbing.wheelchair.ap/index.html>

##

### **Child leukemia survivors may have new problems later**

*Wednesday, August 13, 2003 Posted: 5:06 PM EDT (2106 GMT)*

BOSTON, Massachusetts (Reuters) -- Children who beat leukemia may face lifelong problems caused by the radiation that saved their lives, while children who survive brain cancer have higher rates of mental illness no matter what treatment they receive, according to separate studies released on Wednesday.

Overall, children who do not receive radiation treatment for the most common childhood cancer, acute lymphoblastic leukemia, or ALL, and who go ten years or more without a recurrence have a normal life and life expectancy, researchers concluded in a New England Journal of Medicine study.

*Read the complete article at:*

<http://www.cnn.com/2003/HEALTH/conditions/08/13/childhood.cancers.reut/>

##

### **Art classes, piano lessons fight child obesity**

*Julie Smyth, National Post, Thursday, August 14, 2003*

Children involved in even low levels of physical activity -- including such things as Boy Scouts, music classes or art lessons -- have a reduced chance of becoming overweight or obese, according to a new Canadian study.

The research, based on more than 7,000 children aged seven to 11, shows young people who participated in any form of sport or activity reduced their risk of becoming obese by as much as 43%.

*Read complete article at:* <http://www.canada.com/health/story.html?id=CE506365-D94D-43BA-861F-255F22625B22>

##

## **Predicting Autism: An important new study offers clues into how this disabling disease progresses**

*By Geoffrey Cowley, NEWSWEEK*

July 28 issue — Of all the misfortunes a child can suffer, few provoke as much dread as autism. The condition—a neurological disorder that impedes language and derails social and emotional development—has become ever more common in recent decades, thanks partly to better diagnosis.

EXPERTS NOW SUSPECT that one person in 160 lives with some degree of autism. That's three to four times the rate in the 1970s.

But while the outward manifestations are well known, science is just beginning to illuminate the underlying biology. What goes wrong in the autistic brain? What defect or injury leaves it largely incapable of empathy? A growing body of evidence, capped last week by new findings from the University of California, San Diego, raises a tantalizing possibility. The new study, published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, links the condition to abnormally rapid brain growth during infancy—and it raises new hopes for diagnosis and treatment.

The key to last week's finding was not a million-dollar imaging device but a tape measure. Past studies have shown that autistic toddlers have abnormally large brains for their age. But because autism is rarely detected in kids younger than 2 or 3 years old, researchers have never known quite how that situation arises. Two years ago the San Diego team realized that children's old medical records might hold important clues. Led by neuroscientist Eric Courchesne, the researchers tracked down early-childhood head measurements for 48 autistic preschoolers, and compared them with national norms. As it turned out, the kids' heads had been smaller than average at birth but had grown explosively during infancy, shooting from the 25th percentile to the 84th in roughly a year's time. And faster growth predicted greater impairment. Mildly autistic subjects reached only the 59th percentile, but the severely afflicted kids reached the 95th percentile.

The implications are hard to miss. Autism, the new findings suggest, is not a sudden calamity that strikes children at the age of 2 or 3 but a developmental problem that can be traced back to infancy. That alone should help allay the suspicion that autism is caused by vaccines or pollutants that kids encounter later in childhood. But the new findings say less about the causes of autism than about its dynamics. The current study focuses on the first year of life, but the trouble isn't confined to that period. Other recent studies suggest that the early growth spurt is followed by several years of slower expansion, giving the autistic child an adult-size brain by the age of 4 or 5. During adolescence and adulthood, autistic brains are generally no larger than normal ones. Unfortunately, they exhibit a range of other anomalies, including dense clusters of underdeveloped cells in the hippocampus and amygdala—structures that are critical for integrating emotional and sensory information. *Read the complete article at: <http://www.msnbc.com/news/941426.asp>*

##

## **TheDesk Launches in 11 States**

AIMMM, a program of HalfthePlanet Foundation, is a partner with The ARC of the United States on the [www.TheDesk.info](http://www.TheDesk.info). It is the nation's first web site created by the Medicaid Reference Desk. The site provides an online "road map" to critical consumer information about government-funded health services. Henry Claypool, co-director of AIMMM, along with others, assisted in the development of content and training for The Medicaid Reference Desk. The web site currently explains Medicaid in California, Colorado, Iowa, Maryland, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina and Wisconsin. Consumers can go to <http://www.TheDesk.info> to find out about the different services and the eligibility for services in each state.

##

## **ADA/Access:**

### **It takes more than a Sloped Curb...**

*Improving accessibility for People with Disabilities is core of new video.*

The Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities has created a video "Access Maze" to demonstrate the challenges – and solutions – for creating user-friendly accessible offices, homes and other living, working and business spaces. While design may meet ADA requirements, some features, such as the wideness of doors, floor surfaces, table heights and work surfaces and the ability to maneuver and turn, still may make it challenging for many people with disabilities.

<http://www.accessmaze.org/>

##

### **Disabled hunter wants West Virginia to follow Colorado**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) - A disabled hunter is challenging West Virginia's crossbow hunting ban, claiming it violates the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Peter Cuffaro of Wheeling sent a complaint to the U.S. Department of Justice in June. The complaint names the state's Division of Natural Resources, which regulates hunting.

Cuffaro, paralyzed from the chest down after a diving accident in 1983 that injured his spinal cord, can move his hands and arms but must use a wheelchair. He said weakness in his left hand and shoulder problems will keep him from bowhunting this season.

Cuffaro's complaint follows efforts by Tom LaQuey of Mosca, Colo., who successfully challenged that state's ban on crossbow hunting and who helped form the Coalition for Disabled Hunter Rights.

Read complete article at: [http://www.trib.com/AP/wire\\_detail.php?wire\\_num=124902](http://www.trib.com/AP/wire_detail.php?wire_num=124902)

##

## **Request for Input**

### **What Works Clearinghouse Database Forms and Customer Survey**

August 11 - Department of Education, Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests, What Works Clearinghouse Database Forms and Customer Survey, The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) public submission databases will allow members of the public to submit nominations for studies, interventions, and topics that they would like the WWC to review. The evaluation database will enable the WWC to provide the public with a directory of available outcome evaluations. Data from the customer survey will be used to create indicators of how successfully the WWC is meeting the needs of various groups of its users.

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2003/03-20437.htm>

##

### **NIDRR is collecting information for long-range plan**

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) is collecting information in order to update its long-range plan via a form on its website

<http://www.cessi.net/nidrrlrp/questionnaire.htm>. The agency is seeking input "from people with disabilities, interested family or friends, service providers [and] disability and rehabilitation researchers."

The web-based form gives visitors an opportunity to write in what they'd like to see done in terms of research, and asks them to note whether the research would concern independent community living, disability demographics, health and function, technology or employment. If the comment concerns another area, the visitor can explain the area in detail. The questionnaire also asks the visitor to tell them whether the comment addresses gaps in research, future directions and initiatives or current NIDRR research efforts and accomplishments

Those who cannot access the web-based form can send an email to [NIDRR.Plan@ed.gov](mailto:NIDRR.Plan@ed.gov) or mail comments to: CESSI, Attn. Long-Range Plan, 6858 Old Dominion Drive Suite 250, McLean, VA 22101, or call (toll-free) 1-866-448-8380.

##

### **Have you taken the Spina Bifida Survey yet?**

Spina Bifida Association of America (SBAA) is conducting a national survey of adults and families living with spina bifida and the caregivers and health care providers who touch their lives. We invite all members of the spina bifida community to participate in this online survey.

Please go to <http://www.sbaa.org>, scroll down to the "What's New" section and click on SPINA BIFIDA COMMUNITY SURVEY.

##

## ***Technology/Web/Resources:***

### **Registrations being accepted for 2003-04 MCEP**

Registrations are now being accepted for participation in the Montana Collaborative Empowerment Project (MCEP)

Participation is limited to 50 people and fills quickly, so don't hesitate....register NOW!

Visit <http://www.pluk.org/mcep> for more information  
OPI Renewal Units and Graduate Credit are available  
*Who should participate?*

- IEP teams who have wondered how to best approach the consideration of Assistive Technology for a student
- IEP teams who struggle with reaching consensus on solutions
- Administrators looking for examples of policy and procedures related to Assistive Technology
- Parents of students currently using or who have a potential need for Assistive Technology
- Service providers who are involved in helping consumers make decisions with regard to Assistive Technology Purchases



*What have previous MCEP participants learned?*

- Administrators now see the need to have policies and procedures in place for IEP teams to use as a guide for making Assistive Technology decisions.
- By April 2003, 87% of the participants said they felt much more confident making decisions regarding instructional and/or Assistive Technology than they did in September when the project began.
- All teams are using the process learned during MCEP in their district with great success.

- Parents feel more involved in the IEP process and that their opinions are of equal value to all other team members.
- General educators see new ways to include students with disabilities in the classroom using a combination of strategies and low-tech tools.

Participant Quote: *The outcomes exceeded my expectations. I had high hopes and knew it would be successful, but not to the extent it was. I am humbled by the amount of commitment from these people to the education of their students/children.*

##

### **Who are the Children in Special Education?**

Find out more about the characteristics and experiences of the children with disabilities who are receiving special education in the U.S. The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) has just published a new research brief, *Who are the Children in Special Education?*.

This Research Brief introduces SEELS, a study following students as they move through six years of schooling. The study looks at their academic performance, school experiences, family life, social adjustment, and personal growth.

*Who are the Children in Special Education?* is available online at <http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/research/rb2txt.htm> (text version) or <http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/research/rb2.pdf> (Adobe pdf version) or from NICHCY.

##

### **Adaptive Clothing for Children**

Caring for children with special needs requires much patience, love and energy. Finding clothing that fits a child with special needs can be difficult, expensive and time consuming. As a professional who deals with special needs children, I know it is important for them to feel as independent as possible as they mature but not have their clothing make them feel out of place with other children. Stitches from the heart can help! Please visit the Web site below and find quality, affordable, specialty clothing and pass along the information to others that it might help. (Ostomy products are available too.) I look forward to serving members of your community! It is through dedicated health professionals and caregivers like you that individuals with special needs can benefit from the resources available today – thank you!

Cynthia Robbins  
Specialty Sewing  
stitches from the heart  
704-552-1483  
<http://stitchesfromtheheart.com>

##

### **Infinitec's Web Site Shares Resources Through Personal Stories**

The Infinitec web site features a new story about Wayne Willeby, who has lived with A.L.S. since 1987. It illustrates how one can reconnect with his/her environment and be totally proficient on a computer using only eyebrow or other single-switch enabling movement. The Internet and email also provide endless opportunities for interaction, diminishing isolation and loneliness. These stories explain how to find free speech software and other resources for individuals affected by mobility and speech limitations, blindness, and hearing loss. To read Wayne's complete story, please go to <http://www.infinitec.org/learn/mystory/waynewilleby.htm>

##

## **Training/Workshops/Conferences:**

### **CSPD Region I August workshops:**

#### **"Bully Proofing Your Program and Teaching Students How to Stop Bullies", Glasgow & August 18-19, Miles City**

This workshop is very important for teachers, childcare providers and parents to be aware of the characteristics of a bully and the warning signs of a victim. It will provide research on the prevalence of bullying in our country. Bullies that are not stopped and taught new ways to deal with differences will grow up to use these same behaviors in relationships and workplace settings. Every student has a right to an environment that is free from harassment and physical harm.

The objectives of this workshop are: 1) Identify the characteristics and warning signals of a bully. 2) Identify the characteristics of a victim. 3) Identify the emotional trauma caused from bullying. 4) List techniques to teach children to use to stop bullying. 5) Identify strategies to bully-proof the building.

Presenter: Terry Becker-Fritz

8:00-4:00

August 18,19 – Miles City Community College (rooms 106 & 107)

For more information or to register, please contact:

Helen Murphy at 406-485-2143 (H) or [dmurphy@midrivers.com](mailto:dmurphy@midrivers.com)

##

## **REGION V CSPD ROUNDUP**

*Administrators, general educators, special educators, paraeducators, parents, agency personnel, and others interested in meeting the needs of all kids are invited to participate in all the following workshops.*

*For information and online registration, go to <http://www.cspd.net>.*

### **Paraeducator academy – August 21-22, Libby**

This 15 hour academy focuses on the effective supervision of students on playgrounds, in lunchrooms, on school buses and in other instructional settings. Modules include 1) General Principals of Student Supervision, 2) Lunchroom Supervision, 3) Playground and Instructional Environment Supervision and 4) School Bus Supervision. This workshop was developed by the Para Center at the University of Colorado in Denver.

### **Administering the new WISC-IV, August 26, Billings**

### **Administering the new WISC-IV, August 27, Missoula**

### **Administering the new WISC-IV, August 28, Great Falls**

Dr. Roger Frame from the Psychological Corporation will be presenting a workshop for Montana psychologists on the new WISC-IV including new features, psychometrics, and administration. Attendees are encouraged to bring testing kits if they have them.

### **Understanding Social Cognitive Deficits across the school and home day,**

#### **November 4, Polson**

Designed for parents and professionals to understand the inner mind of persons with social deficits including those high on the Autism Spectrum (Aspergers Syndrome) or with a Non-Verbal Learning Disability.

**The Nuts and Bolts of running social thinking programs, November 5, Polson**

Designed for professionals teaching small group lessons; parents are welcomed to attend. Small group activities will occur across the day and emphasize how to educators can bring together socially awkward students. A follow-up session will be scheduled for participants to connect back together and review progress, problem-solve, share ideas and consult with Michelle via a conference call.

**Improving the decoding & fluency of struggling readers, November 17, Kalispell**  
**Improving the decoding & fluency of struggling readers, November 18, Missoula**

Part 1 of a three-part series designed to provide increased knowledge and strategies for working with students in grades 4-12 who struggle with reading. Sessions can be taken individually, but it is recommended they be taken as a series.

**Differentiated Instruction, January 21-22, 2004, Polson**

This workshop will address the diverse learning needs of students in our schools. Participants will explore the concepts and principles of differentiated learning. They will investigate instructional and management strategies that can be used in academically diverse classrooms

**Closing the Vocabulary gap: robust vocabulary instruction, February 2, 2004, Kalispell**

**Closing the Vocabulary gap: robust vocabulary instruction, February 3, 2004, Missoula**

Part 2 of a three-part series designed to provide increased knowledge and strategies for working with students in grades 4-12 who struggle with reading. Sessions can be taken individually, but it is recommended they be taken as a series.

**Click of Reading Comprehension, April 19, 2004, Missoula**

**Click of Reading Comprehension, April 20, 2004, Kalispell**

Part 3 of a three-part series designed to provide increased knowledge and strategies for working with students in grades 4-12 who struggle with reading. Sessions can be taken individually, but it is recommended they be taken as a series.

*Interested in any of the above workshops? Register at the Region V CSPD Online Registration Web site: <http://www.cspd.net> or contact Nancy Marks at [nmarks@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:nmarks@mcps.k12.mt.us) or 728-2400 ext 5036 for more information.*

##

**Integrating SETT into the Assistive Technology Plan, August 18, Helena**

Terry Lankutis, Education and Technology Consultant, and Leslie Mullette, MonTech Technology Coordinator will present the basics of the SETT process (student, environment, tasks and tools) as a team-based approach to make assistive technology decisions. The session will be from 9am-4pm at the Front Street Learning Center. For information, contact Cheri Larson at 447-8585 or 431-9246.

##

**West 47<sup>th</sup> Street documentary showing Aug 19, Billings**

This film is about Fountain House, a 50 year old rehabilitation center. Screening will be at the Deaconess Health Conference Center Room A, August 19 at 6:30pm. NAMI of Billings is the sponsor. Call 256-2001 for more information.

##

## **Positive Approaches to Solving Severe Behavior Challenges, Billings, Aug 19-22**

The IABA and Bitterroot Valley Education Co-op, MSU-Billings and OPI are sponsoring four seminars to promote positive practices in the field of challenging behavior. Visit [http://www.iaba.com/brochures/billings\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.iaba.com/brochures/billings_flyer.pdf) for more information.

##

## **National Down Syndrome Congress, August 22-24, Philadelphia PA**

<http://www.ndsccenter.org/newsAndEvents/convention03/convention.html>

As you think about your summer plans, I hope that high on your list is participating in the National Down Syndrome Congress' 31st annual convention in Philadelphia. When I look back over the past thirty years at the life of my son, Todd, I see that my dreams and hopes for him were often conceived or shaped by individuals I met and heard at national events. In addition, those occasions were key in helping me figure out concrete next steps and strategies to make the dreams become reality.

This year's NDSC convention features outstanding speakers including self-advocates, parents with professional expertise, and committed professionals. Their presentations will cover the life span. Whether your child is an infant, toddler, school age, young adult, or mature adult, there will be many choices for you.

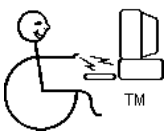
Participants tell us they are especially inspired by the involvement and example of the self-advocates whom you will see as leaders in all parts of the convention.

The NDSC is committed to making the convention as affordable as possible for families. By carefully managing our costs and through the generosity of our speakers who donate their time, we are able to keep the cost of registration low for a national convention of this scope and quality.

Whatever the age of your family member or student with Down syndrome, you are sure to find both information and inspiration at our convention August 22-24. I hope to see you there!

Sincerely,  
Judy Mart, President

##



### **RJ Cooper is coming to Billings Aug 28th!**

RJ Cooper, a specialist in assistive technology for adults and children with disabilities, will be coming to **MSU-Billings on August 28<sup>th</sup>** for an **all-day workshop** sponsored by Parents, Let's Unite for Kids and Region III CSPD.

During the workshop, Mr. Cooper will evaluate "learners" for a half-hour while demonstrating hardware/software developed by his company. Mr. Cooper has 18 years of experience in problem solving with individuals with various disabilities and ages. Caregivers, parents, professionals and students are all welcome to attend. There is no charge for the workshop. For more information on R.J. Cooper and his products, see his website at <http://rjcooper.com>. (Demo CDs are available at PLUK and the Region III CSPD at the Montana Center on Disabilities).

For more information or to sign up for one of the 8 available half-hour evaluation sessions, contact Roger Holt at Parents, Lets Unite for Kids at 255-0540 or e-mail [rholt@pluk.org](mailto:rholt@pluk.org).

##

### **"Choices": Montana's Senior and Long-Term Care Conference, Sep 3-5, West Yellowstone**

The Community Services Bureau (part of the Senior and Long Term Care Division of the Department of Public Health and Human Services) is having its fifth annual conference in West Yellowstone on September 3, 4 and 5, 2003. The theme of the conference is "Choices", emphasizing that Montanan's have the right to choose how to live in their communities. On a professional, or a personal level, the sessions are designed to encourage and excite you with their content and presentation!

Some of the session topics include: a multi-disciplinary panel discussion on ethical dilemmas; the benefits of laughter and music to improve mood and reduce pain; cultural competence; the New Freedom Initiative; burnout and compassion fatigue; Children's Special Health Services; Sexuality and Aging; Medicaid eligibility; the long term care ombudsman program; and challenges of caregiving and Alzheimer's.

The keynote speaker is Fred Cowie, whose theme will be "Caregiving, Collapsing, and Continuing On." Fred has a varied background in disaster and emergency services, and is currently a consultant with Montana Department of Justice regarding meth lab conferences. He is an entertaining and highly sought after speaker, having spoken at many conferences and training sessions on topics such as stress management, emergency preparedness, and personal development. Fred is also an artist, and the father of a young man with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. In recent years he has gone from his role as parent, to caregiver, to paid caregiver, and now has once again reverted to his role as "Dad."

For more information, or to register for the conference, call Karen Antonick at 406-444-6995.

##

### **Addiction, Recovery and the Family, September 11-13, Whitefish**

The 8th Annual Rocky Mountain Mental Health Symposium, sponsored by Pathways Treatment Center & Kalispell Regional Medical Center, is scheduled for September 11-13, in Whitefish, MT.

This symposium will provide a forum for exploring the most up-to-date information on addiction issues facing families, as well as the treatment applications facilitating recovery.

For information & registration, call 866-755-4658, or visit <http://www.mtreservations.com> or <http://www.krmc.org>.

##

### **Autism and Sleep Disorders, Billings, Sep 26**



The Sleep Summit scheduled for September 26 in Billings will include a session on Autism and Sleep Disorders, Friday, September 26 from 2:00-3:00pm.

Dr. David Harrell will share information on his research on the sleep of autistic children. He also has experience with autism on the practical side (autism appears within his family).

There will be sessions all day on sleep issues. The summit will take place at the Burns East Auditorium in the Mansfield Education Center (located on 12<sup>th</sup> Ave across from Saint Vincent Hospital in Billings). There is no charge for attending.

For more information, contact Karen Allen at the Sleep Center, 238-6815.

[http://stvincenthealthcare.org/our\\_health\\_services/neurology\\_sleep\\_disorders.asp](http://stvincenthealthcare.org/our_health_services/neurology_sleep_disorders.asp)

##

**Conference on Social, Emotional and Academic Interventions for Students with High-Functioning Autism and Asperger Syndrome with a Special Session on Bullying Preventions, October 3-4, Boise, ID**

<http://www.asperger.net/conferences.htm>

Speakers: Brenda Smith Myles, Ph.D. & Rebekah Heinrichs, MSN, M.S.Ed.

**CONFERENCE OUTCOMES**

As a result of attending this conference, participants will be able to:

- Understand the characteristics of Asperger Syndrome
- Understand and implement sensory interventions Implement academic, social and behavioral interventions that facilitate school success
- Teach hidden curriculum items to their students
- Understand how to prevent bullying from occurring in schools

##

**Augmentative Communication Workshops in the Rockies, October 2, Billings**

This CAMA sponsored session will present a number of the leading manufacturers of AAC hardware and software at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center on October 2, 2003. For complete information, go to <http://www.aacproducts.org>

##

**Fourth Annual Conference on Autism and Asperger's: Mapping the Journey, October 17 & 18, Edmonton, Alberta**

<http://www.keystotreasures.com/>

Take advantage of our early registration special by September 15, 2003.

Oct. 17, 2003, Carol Gray

Carol is the editor of the Jenison Autism Journal, and is a consultant to students with ASD through the Jenison Public Schools (Jenison, Michigan). She is also the president of the Gray center, a facility dedicated to individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and those who work alongside them to improve mutual understanding.

Oct. 18, 2003, Dr. Tony Attwood

Dr. Attwood is a world-renowned expert on Asperger's Syndrome and author of the best-selling book of that name.

"The most significant issue that parents face is a lack of understanding and inappropriate attitudes towards those with Asperger's Syndrome." -*Dr. Attwood*

##

**Echoes of Abuse: Traumatic Brain Injury, October 30-31, Billings**

The Brain Injury Association of Montana and Billings Area Family Violence Task Force are sponsoring the 14<sup>th</sup> annual McGuire Memorial Conference on Family Violence to be held in Billings October 30-31.

##

**Workshops on Communication Strategies for Children with Severe and Multiple Disabilities: August 4 - October 6, 2003**

Presented by Oregon Health & Science University, and in association with the Oregon Institute on Disability & Development (UCEDD) these two-day workshops are designed for professionals and parents and address Pre-symbolic Communication and Tangible Symbol Systems. A special half-day seminar for parents is also offered, free of charge. Strategies are especially appropriate for children with low-incidence disabilities including severe

cognitive limitations, deaf blindness, autism spectrum disorders and multiple disabilities. Academic, continuing education credit, and ASHA credit will be available. Presented at three locations this summer and fall.

For more information contact: Alexandra Dorinson, 1-800-410-7069 ext. 102, [dorinson@ohsu.edu](mailto:dorinson@ohsu.edu). Visit the website at <http://www.designtolearn.com>.

##

**Technology Conferences, August - October**

"Making Information Technology Work for Rural Communities: High Speed Telecommunications Services are the Future Building Blocks of Rural America." Washington, DC, September 28-October 1. See <http://ruraltelecon.org/RTC03/rtc03.htm>

Closing The Gap: Computer Technology in Special Education and Rehabilitation, Minneapolis, MN, October 14-18. See <http://www.closingthegap.com/>

##

**Announcing: A Series of Conference Calls on the Social-Emotional Development of Young Children**

The Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, with support from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, is launching a series of 10 conference calls focusing on the social-emotional development of young children (birth through five years old). The target audience for these calls includes early care and education providers, agency administrators, technical assistance providers and others working with young children and their families.

**THESE CALLS WILL TAKE PLACE FROM 1:00-2:30 pm (EST) ON THE LAST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH.**

TOPICS WILL INCLUDE:

Date	Topic
9/24/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring Cultural Competence in Practices with Young Children and Families</li> </ul>
10/29/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brain Research</li> <li>Attachment</li> </ul>
*11/19/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curricula for Promoting Healthy Social-Emotional Development</li> </ul>
*12/17/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screening &amp; Assessment for Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers</li> </ul>
1/28/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Impact of Maternal Depression and/or Substance Abuse on Young Children</li> </ul>
2/25/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Young Children Involved with Child Welfare</li> </ul>
3/31/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ECMH Consultation Models</li> </ul>
4/28/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationship-based Interventions</li> </ul>
5/26/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children &amp; Trauma</li> </ul>

National experts will serve as presenters, as will practitioners who are involved in promising practices. Presentations will highlight effective strategies for delivering family-driven, culturally appropriate services in community-based settings. Up to 200 individuals per call will be able to participate on a first-come-first serve basis. Handouts, including PowerPoint presentations, will be provided to people who register for the calls.

\*\*\*\*Please send an email to [mk73@georgetown.edu](mailto:mk73@georgetown.edu) (MelKisha Knight) if you want to be added to the list for the first call.

Materials will be emailed to you. More information to come!

##

### **1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Family-centered Care, Sep 4-6, Boston MA**

WHEN: September 4, 2003 - September 6, 2003

WHERE: Boston, Massachusetts

HOSTED BY: Institute for Family-Centered Care

DESCRIPTION: Family-centered care is an approach to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of health care that is grounded in mutually beneficial partnerships among patients, families, and health care providers. It is founded on the understanding that the family plays a vital role in ensuring the health and well being of family members of all ages.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <http://www.earlyonmichigan.org/Conferences.htm#5>

##

### **FROM PRACTICE TO POLICY AND BACK AGAIN: 19th Annual Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families, Oct 12-14, Washington, DC**

WHEN: October 12, 2003 - October 14, 2003

WHERE: Washington, DC

HOSTED BY: Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <http://www.earlyonmichigan.org/Conferences.htm#6>

##

## ***Fun Events***



### **Tae Kwon Do for Kids, August 25, Billings**

PLUK, in conjunction with the Shining Mountain Tae Kwon Do School, is offering a Tae Kwon Do workshop for children. The workshop will be at Shining Mountain Tae Kwon Do School, 1615 Alderson Avenue on Monday, August 25 from 2 - 3PM. The workshop will be conducted by Kyle Baluka and his assistants. Please register for this workshop by calling PLUK at 255-0540.

##



### **PLUK Founders Day Celebration, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, Billings**

This is PLUK's 19th year of serving Montana families and everyone is invited to the third annual event celebrating the founding of PLUK! Founder's Day is scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6pm at the Mansfield Center in Billings, Gail Gray will be the keynote speaker. She is the current director of Montana's Department of Public Health and Human Services. Attendance is free, but seating is limited.

##

### **Blue Jack Band Benefit, September 20, Bozeman**

The Bozeman area Associate Board is planning a benefit concert on September 20 featuring *The Blue Jack Band*. *The Blue Jack Band* plays a wonderful mix of jazz and blues and has broad national recognition. In recent years they opened for legendary blues performer B.B. King and others. Further details on locations, times and other announcements will come soon. Call PLUK's office if you are interested in being involved, 255-0540.



##



### **Missoula Children's Theatre Tour, October 5-11, Kalispell**

The Flathead Valley Associate Board is working on a fall event. They have been meeting regularly and finalizing details at this time. It will involve a weeklong project for children to perform a play in the Kalispell area. The dates are October 5 through the 11<sup>th</sup>. This event will link up with the Missoula Children's Theatre. The Theatre will send staff to Kalispell to handle the auditions, training and direction for the entire week. For more information or to be involved with the event, call Stephanie Luehr, PLUK's representative in Kalispell at 881-4421. Details and plans on the event will be provided and there are presently positions to be filled on the planning committee. Volunteers are needed.

##

### **Dinosaur Day with Jack Horner, October 11, Billings**



A special day of activities, featuring paleontologist Jack Horner of the Museum of the Rockies, is planned for October 11.

The event, titled Dinosaur Day, will include a Workshop for Kids, where Horner will meet with the participants and give a presentation on the field of paleontology and dinosaurs in Montana. The workshop will be held on the Montana State University-Billings campus.

That night, Horner will speak at a dinner for all ages at the Billings Sheraton Hotel. He will talk about how Montana is a dream state for paleontologists and about his work in recent years at Montana sites.

Horner is recognized as one of the most prolific paleontologists in the world. He was the model for Alan Grant in the "Jurassic Park" movies and served as a consultant on the sets.

For information on Dinosaur Day, ticket prices or to reserve tickets for either the Kids Workshop or the dinner, call PLUK's Office at 255-0540 or 1-800-222-7585. Space is limited for both activities.

##

### **Magical Tymes Party, November 11, Missoula**

The Missoula Associate Board third annual "Magical Tymes Party," has been scheduled for November 11, 2003. Deborah Hayes Hyde is the Chair of the event and Ramona Holt is chairing the Sponsorship Sub-Committee. For the last two years, this event has been held in conjunction with a play at the Missoula Children's Theatre. In addition to the play, participants may attend a "wine and cheese party" and a silent auction.

This year the play is *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Companies and groups are now lining up to sponsor the event and the committee assures us that it will be

the best to date, by far! For more information on how to become involved, call PLUK's office at 800-222-7585 and we can put you in touch with the planning committee.

# #

**Be sure to mark your calendar with these future events:**

- Kids at Heart Banquet, February 7, 2004, Billings
- Sports Festival, March 2004, Billings

# #

***Selected Sources:***

1. *Monday Morning in Washington, DC*, <http://www.inclusionresearch.org>
2. *Rocky Mountain DBTAC*, <http://www.adainformation.org>
3. *Transition Newsflash*, Montana Center On Disabilities, <http://www.msubillings.edu/transition>
4. *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, <http://www.publiceducation.org>
5. *Reference Points: Transition updates from the TATRA Project*, <http://www.pacer.org/tatra/tatra.htm>
6. *Lisa Simmons, The Ideal Lives Express*: <http://www.ideallives.com>
7. *The American Indian Disability Technical Assistance Center Training Calendar* <http://aidtac.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/TrainingCalendar.htm>

# #

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<http://www.pluk.org>

*Mission Statement:* Parent's Let's Unite for Kids unites parents, professionals, families and friends of children with special needs to support one another, and share information for the benefit of their children.

*Vision Statement:* Given information and support, individuals with disabilities and their families will feel empowered to advocate for themselves and participate fully in educational and community opportunities.

*Statement on accessibility:* Today, we endeavor to be conscious of the need for making all electronic information accessible as we are aware of physical accessibility issues in our community. For design guidelines visit: <http://ncam.wgbh.org/cdrom/guideline/>.