Bridging The Gap
Achievement For All

The 5th Annual National Inclusive Schools week will be celebrated December 5–9, 2005. This article is part of a Celebration Kit (available at www.inclusiveschools.org), designed to help educators, families, and community members to better understand the cause of the achievement gap and what they can do to help narrow it.

Introduction
In 2003, only 29 percent of 4th grade students with disabilities scored at or above “basic” on the National Assessment of Educational Progress in reading, compared to 67 percent of their counterparts without disabilities. A similar disparity exists when looking at the performance of: students with limited English proficiency, students from different racial-ethnic groups, and students of different socioeconomic status. These gaps in academic achievement between different groups of students are not inevitable or unchangeable. Inclusive schools and communities across the country are bridging the gap.

The Achievement Gap: What Is It?
In this era of standards-based educational reform and accountability, much attention has been paid to the achievement gap in academic performance. Federal legislation demands not only that students achieve at high levels but also that all students achieve at those high levels. To monitor progress toward this goal, policy makers, researchers, educators, and parents look for differences in achievement between subgroups of students. For example, we compare the achievement of students with disabilities to the achievement of students without disabilities. Any difference in academic achievement between such groups is called an achievement gap.

Disparate educational opportunities and outcomes are not a new phenomenon; in fact, public education has moved great distances to close achievement gaps between groups of students. It was only a little more than 30 years ago that all students were afforded the right to attend public schools. Public schools once educated only boys. Before the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision, public schools were segregated by race. Not until the 1975 passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, in 1993), did students with disabilities have the right to a public education.

By law, all children now have the right to attend public schools, and the policy focus of the last several decades has shifted to educational achievement. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the reauthorization of IDEA in 2004 focus on establishing high educational standards for all students and on holding schools responsible for students attaining these standards. Although there are many different ways to gauge achievement, performance on stan

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Music can be a wonderful way to educate, motivate, and engage children in physical activities, as well as to provide mental stimulation. Basic movements done to music can promote body awareness, improve joint and muscle strength, and increase flexibility and balance, all essential to fitness. When done as a group activity, music and movement also promotes social interactions. These skills are important for all children. For children on the autism spectrum, developing these skills can be a struggle, and for some, music therapy can be the key that unlocks the door to acquiring these skills.

If your child has the emotional maturity to accept and follow directions, music therapy may be a social and recreational opportunity that you and your child want to explore.

Classes should be fun, playful, and offer a variety of activities, such as: finger and hand plays, naming and moving body parts, and more active gross motor movements. Other activities may include: call and response songs, calming songs and some songs that are just for fun. Each of these different activities provides variety and promotes body part awareness and sensory integration.

Questions to Consider Before Choosing a Class for Your Child
There are some important questions you may want to ask before enrolling your child in a music therapy program.
• What are the qualifications of the instructor and has s/he had previous experience with children on the autism spectrum?
• How often does the class meet, and for how long?
• Can the child try one class before committing to an entire series of classes?
• Is the class just for the children, or are parents invited and/or expected to stay?
• If the class is just for kids, can the parent stay if the child has trouble separating or requests that a parent be present?

How to Find a Program
If you are interested in pursuing music therapy for your child and need assistance locating a program in your community call Family TIES of Massachusetts. Family TIES is the statewide resource, referral and information network for parents of children with special needs, disabilities and/or chronic illnesses. Regional Coordinators, working out of regional Department of Public Health Offices throughout the state, collect information about music therapy programs, as well as other recreational opportunities. Additionally, they can share information about community supports and other services for which your child and family may be eligible.

Call Family TIES at 1-800-905-TIES or visit them on the web at www.massfamil-lyties.org.
Massachusetts holds two contradictory National distinctions. On the one hand, the Commonwealth has some of the highest scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in the country. More commonly known as the ‘Nation’s report card,’ NAEP tests are the only continuous assessment of what America’s students know in the subject areas of reading, math, science, history, geography and the arts. Massachusetts’s fourth and eighth grade students ranked first in reading and tied for first in mathematics. This is good news, but at the other end of the spectrum, Massachusetts’s dropout rates are increasing, particularly for Black, Hispanic and students with special needs.

Students with special needs have made tremendous academic progress over the past few years, and their MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Test) scores have improved. Yet, students with special needs are frequently cited as the cause for schools failing to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) scores.

All of this highlights the existence of the very real achievement gap that exists among our student population. In many ways, our schools and our students are performing better than anyone expected.

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In other ways, we still have a very long way to go.

Under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, the scores of all sub-groups of students must be clearly reported to the public. What this process reveals is that the average score of the general student population can easily mask the lack of progress of students in the sub-groups.

This edition of NewsLine looks at the issue of the Achievement Gap for students with special needs and the critical importance of addressing it within our schools. We at the Federation are deeply committed to improved outcomes for all students and the closing of the achievement gap while still maintaining high expectations. Please share your thoughts with us of how to close the Gap.

Best wishes,

Richard Robison

Tom Hehir To Receive Martha Ziegler Founder’s Award

by Jane Wolfson

Professor Hehir is a frequent contributor to public radio on the topic of education reform. He served as director of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs from 1993–1999. As director, he was responsible for federal leadership in implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Professor Hehir played a leading role in developing the Clinton administration’s proposal for the 1997 reauthorization of the IDEA, ninety percent of which was adopted by Congress.

Prior to this, Dr. Hehir was associate superintendent for the Chicago Public Schools, director of special education in the Boston Public Schools, and is currently a distinguished scholar at the Educational Development Center in Newton, MA, where he is working on a variety of projects involving school restructuring. The Federation is thrilled to be honoring Thomas Hehir, a true advocate for children with special needs.
standardized tests has become the most widely accepted measure of the achievement gap. Current strategies to close the gap emphasize ways to improve standardized test performance for particular subgroups of students, including those with disabilities.

What Causes It?
Ultimately, differences in achievement between groups reflect ways in which traditional schooling practices have not benefited some groups as much as others. The disparities are caused both by differences in students’ particular learning needs and by differences in their experiences in school. Factors contributing to the achievement gap include differences in learning styles, language, culture, exposure to early education and the quality of teachers and instruction.

To compound the disparities mentioned above, many educators, parents, and policymakers believe that achieving excellence means sacrificing equity, and vice versa. They think that focusing on “hard-to-teach” students limits a school’s ability to teach its high-achieving students. Schools can attain both equity and excellence by employing strategies that meet the needs of all students. And, in an attempt to provide equal access to high standards for all students, many educators work hard to provide the same opportunities to all their students. However, offering the “same” opportunities does not necessarily mean that access will be “equal.” The most effective inclusive schools employ multiple strategies, including instructional accommodations and curricular modifications, to ensure that all students benefit from their educational experience and can achieve to their maximum potential. Additionally, some schools, in order to make sure that students with disabilities get the specialized instruction they need, continue to educate a considerable percentage of their students with disabilities in separate classrooms and schools. However, research continues to show that students with disabilities who are educated in inclusive settings outperform their peers who are taught in separate settings.

What Broad Strategies Narrow the Gap?
Many effective inclusive schools embody the philosophy of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL grew out of the field of architecture, where “universal design” theory advocated that structures be designed, from their very conception, to accommodate people of all abilities, thus precluding the need...
for any special architectural adaptations for those with disabilities. Schools that incorporate UDL understand that diversity—racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and ability-related—is positive. These schools are built on the beliefs that all students can achieve high academic standards and that there is also room for individual differences. The most successful inclusive schools design curriculum and instruction to accommodate all students, including those with disabilities, those learning English, and those from a variety of cultures, races, ethnicities, and past educational experiences. Such schools base their structure and teaching on research about effective practices. In inclusive schools, teachers—both general and special educators—work collaboratively to meet the needs of all their students. When schools are designed to accommodate and address the needs of any group of nontraditional learners, all students benefit.

Inclusive schools commonly employ the following strategies:

- Students with high- and low-incidence disabilities are included in the general education classroom to the greatest extent possible.
- Special-education supports are integrated into the curriculum.
- Special education and general education staff collaborate to meet the needs of all the students in the school.
- Teachers help students to further develop their first languages as they learn to speak, read, and write English.
- Students' diverse cultures are valued and viewed as enriching the schools' learning environment.

What Do We Need To Do Next?

Despite the existence of new and emerging research, professional development, and evidence of the effectiveness of inclusive schools, we still have much to learn about how to narrow the achievement gap between different populations of students. Among the questions we need to answer are the following:

- What methods of differentiated instruction are most effective in teaching students to high levels?
- How can technology be used to better support student achievement?
- What instructional strategies are most effective in specific school settings?
- What types of professional development support special and general education teachers in helping all students access the curriculum?

Strategic Initiatives For Bridging The Gap

Teachers have the challenge of ensuring that all children in their classroom can access learning despite differences in their abilities, languages, and learning styles. Principals need to set a tone that promotes high expectations for all students among general and special education staff and families must be included in these plans. Also, students' potentials for learning and achievement extend beyond the classroom and school; community-based programs must include all children so they can have opportunities to participate and excel in sports, art, science, language study, theater, music, and other extracurricular activities. These combined experiences can increase students' self-esteem while providing a basis for learning essential knowledge and skills.

The full text of this article, which includes an annotated resource list, with in-depth reports and articles is available at: http://www.inclusiveschools.org/pdf/nisw05_achievement.pdf.
Raising kids with special health care needs to be healthy and fit is a challenge for families. Family Matters, a research project funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and conducted by Family Voices in collaboration with Tufts School of Medicine, is developing ideas and materials to make your job easier. Additionally, your ideas and involvement will help us learn crucial information about how families are facing and meeting these challenges.

**IF** you are the parent/caregiver of a child with disabilities, ages 6–18, and you are looking for ideas about:

1. How to get your child to eat his veggies,
2. How to promote physical activity for your child, and
3. How other families are able to encourage healthier behaviors for their children with disabilities,

**AND** you would like to receive:

1. Information,
2. Family-centered materials for children & youth with special health care needs, and
3. Mentor Peer Support—support, encouragement, and information from a parent who also has a child with special health care needs and is an experienced peer supporter,

**THEN** Family Voices and Tufts School of Medicine invite you to participate by contacting:

Beth Dworetzky at 1-800-331-0688, ext. 210 (messages only, your call will be returned) or 401-783-4058 or e-mail beth@fcsn.org.

For more information, and to download the recruitment flyer, visit www.fcsn.org and click on Family Matters under Health Care Updates at the bottom of the page.
Buyer Beware

by Andrea Watson

Brat Camp, a much-hyped reality TV show that aired this past summer, profiled 9 troubled teens and their experiences during a therapeutic wilderness program in Oregon. Their families were so desperate for help with a range of non-compliant, anti-social, and dangerous behaviors that they agreed to put their children on a reality TV show, hoping each would return healthier, more well-adjusted, and more willing to literally and figuratively ‘do their homework.’

When a parent is desperate (as I have been with my own child) and doesn’t know where to turn for help, and an opportunity like Brat Camp comes along and promises to “fix” your teen—buyer beware! The emphasis of these programs should be on helping teens and families. You can’t expect a child to do the work alone.

My advice to all parents is to do your homework before deciding on any out-of-home placement (this includes residential schools, therapeutic boarding schools, tough love programs for troubled/struggling teens, and wilderness programs). A good reputation, highly-trained instructors, and compliance with state licensing won’t help your child if the placement is not appropriate for your child’s and family’s needs.

Parents for Residential Reform (PFRR) specializes in helping families learn about out-of-home placements and your family’s rights. We can help you understand the different types of placements and programs, the issues to think about, and the people to consult, prior to making a decision.

As an example, below is the story of a mom who called PFRR for help prior to her daughter’s release from a psychiatric hospital where she was being treated for an eating disorder she developed as a result of abuse from an extended family member earlier in her life. This mom had hired a consultant prior to her child’s release and called me to discuss the options the consultant had recommended. I was taken aback to learn that the consultant’s recommendation was for the family to hire a ‘transporter’ to ‘kidnap’ the daughter (who was 14 years old) from her bed in the middle of the night, possibly handcuff her, take her to the airport and bring her to a residential/therapeutic boarding school in Provo, Utah. The policy at this program was to isolate children from their families for 30 days. Wisely, the mom chose to be honest with her child and the parents decided to bring her to Utah themselves.

At the time of this first call to me, they were preparing to pick up their daughter from the hospital, bring her home, and then go to Utah the next day.

I spoke at length with this woman and explained the potential risks involved with this type of placement. The parents did not know about the types of oversight and regulations that govern out-of-home placements in Utah. Additionally, I explained that it’s not uncommon for children in this type of situation to run away. I recommended service and support options in Massachusetts that they should investigate prior to sending their daughter to such an expensive placement so far away, and explained about Department of Mental Health (DMH) services, and how to work with the school get support services.

In a recent e-mail from this mom, she thanked me for taking the time to discuss other options for her daughter, and for encouraging her to trust her own instincts about what was best for her child and family. She had been searching for information, support and help for 5 years and it wasn’t until she connected with Parents for Residential Reform that she finally got the assistance she needed.

Will this family’s journey end happily? It seems likely that it will. Instead of going to Utah, the parents found a short-term therapeutic day school for their daughter, right here in Massachusetts. After three months, she transitioned, with supports, to her local high school. The family does activities together daily, and the daughter sees a nutritionist and therapist. She is committed to being healthy.

Buyer Beware? Absolutely. I am not promoting Massachusetts Residential Schools. I have always felt that residential placements should be the last resort for a child, as they are one of the most restrictive environments outside of the hospital. I am promoting the need for parents to do their homework! As a parent, I understand that, at times, we are desperate and it can be difficult to know what is in our child’s best interest. All teens struggle and are troubled—this is human nature. An adolescent’s non-compliance is not reason enough to send him or her away to a residential school. This is especially important when dealing with young people with disabilities. We need to look at and understand all the options.

If you, or someone you know is considering any type of residential placement for their child, urge them to call Parents for Residential Reform (PFRR) before making a final decision. PFRR is here to provide information and support, and to assist families in accessing services through the school system and through various state agencies. Contact PFRR at http://www.pfrr.org or by calling 800-672-7084

About the Author:
Andrea Watson is the founder of Parents for Residential Reform, a project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs. Andrea has three adult children, two of whom are living with disabilities; one is a former residential school student.
Medicaid is a national public benefits program that provides health insurance to low-income people. Medicaid also plays a crucial role in providing health services for adults and children with disabilities. In Massachusetts, the Medicaid program is called MassHealth.

Medicare is a federal health insurance program for seniors and people with disabilities. There were three parts to the Medicare program and as of January 1, 2006, a fourth part will be added. This new Part D component is the prescription drug benefit.

The MA Family-to-Family Health Care Information and Education Center wants to make families aware that the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit will only affect children that are dually eligible. Children that receive both Medicare and MassHealth (including Kaileigh Mulligan) benefits are known as dual eligibles. The only children that are dually eligible are children with end stage renal disease. There are some other special circumstances, but nothing categorical like the aforementioned group. MassHealth paid for prescription medications for dual eligibles. As of January 1, 2006, MassHealth will no longer provide prescription drug benefits for dual eligibles; Medicare Part D will now cover prescription drug benefits for these individuals.

Children who are dually eligible will receive “extra help.” This means they will receive Part D comprehensive drug coverage without having to pay premiums or a deductible. However, for the first time, children under the age of 18 will have to pay co-payments of $1 to $3 for generic drugs and $2 to $5 for brand name drugs.

Families of dual eligibles will also have to pick a drug plan that provides the medications their child needs. If you do not choose a plan, your child will be automatically assigned to a plan. You can change plans at any time and as many times as you want. There is a formulary finder at www.medicare.gov to help you find a plan in your area.

If you have questions and concerns about Medicare Part D, the Medicare Advocacy Project, housed at Greater Boston Legal Services provides free assistance. Visit them on the web at www.gbls.org/map or call 1-800-323-3205.

Freedom Flight I: A Poster and Poem by Jessica Vohs
Available for $12, includes shipping/handling. Discount on orders of 20 or more. The poster is a reproduction of a beautiful watercolor, and can be seen in color on www.jessicavohs.com. 18 x 24 inches, reprinted on a heavy poster stock paper with glossy coating.

Freedom Flight I by Jessica E. Vohs
Butterflies flying free together, each beautiful in its own way.
This is the spirit of human beings.
These spirits are not disabled.
We can do and achieve things beyond our wildest dreams.
All we need to be flying free is understanding and a supportive environment that helps our dreams come true.
Let’s open our minds and hearts and fly free together in a most beautiful dance of true life.
Partners for Youth with Disabilities
In Search of Adult Role Models and Youth with Disabilities Who Need Them

Partners for Youth with Disabilities is currently recruiting for adult role models with disabilities and youth with disabilities who would like to participate in individual or group mentoring programs throughout Massachusetts.

Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD) is a statewide organization that helps youth with disabilities reach their fullest potential. Youth can participate in mentoring, as well as other types of educational programs, to learn independent living skills, self-advocacy, and career development. These programs not only help youth build skills and discover and develop their unique talents and abilities, but also increase self-esteem, and provide opportunities for socialization, leadership, community service, and healthy living.

Mentors communicate with their mentees in person, through e-mail or instant messaging, and can also chat on-line in the Partners for Youth with Disabilities’ private, safe and secure on-line environment. Participating youth benefit from having this type of positive role model.

To find out more about this rare and important opportunity to either inspire a youth, or be inspired by an adult mentor, visit www.pyd.org. Applications are available at the website. Interested individuals can also speak with Larry Haile at 617-556-4075, ext. 18 or e-mail Larry at lhaile@pyd.org for more information and to receive an application by mail.

MATCHING GIFTS
Make Your Contributions Go Further!

1. Check with your company’s personnel department to see if they have a matching gifts program.
2. Ask for matching gifts forms for all the members of your team.
3. Review the requirements of your matching gifts program carefully—each program has its own policies.

Go to www.fcsn.org for more ways to give.

The Federation for Children with Special Needs, Inc.

Our Mission:
To provide information, support, and assistance to parents of children with disabilities, their professional partners, and their communities. We are committed to listening to and learning from families, and encouraging full participation in community life by all people, especially those with disabilities.

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The Federation Annual Appeal 2005

More than 40,000 families annually turn to the Federation for Children with Special Needs to navigate the maze of organizations, agencies and policies that affect their children with special needs. When we do our job, parents have the tools and resources they need at their fingertips.

The demand for our services has doubled during the past few years. Each day, we receive hundreds of phone calls and emails from more parents requesting information and help.

Many of the state and federal programs that once funded these programs have been eliminated or curtailed. Yet, the Federation continues providing information, workshops, support and referrals despite a gap in funding.

We need your financial support to continue this good work.

Parents tell us that we make a difference:

“It’s hard to express what the Federation means to me. It changed my life. I hope that in the future, people will look at my son and say WOW, he has accomplished so much!”

Parent of child with disabilities

Your gift ensures that every family gets served. Your support helps us attract donations from corporations and foundations who see your investment in us. And your gift enables children with special needs to receive the services they need.

Please take a moment to make your 2005–2006 Gift to the Federation. It counts!

Sincerely,

Richard J. Robison
Executive Director

Daniel Heffernan
President, Board of Directors

*** Please make a contribution to the Federation today ***

YES! I will help the Federation continue its Mission! I want to support the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

Enclosed is my gift.

☐ $30 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $250 ☐ $500 ☐ Other $ __________

Name:

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Home Telephone: Business Telephone: E-mail:

☐ I would like to make my gift by ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard

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Please include this form with your check made payable to: Federation for Children with Special Needs, 1135 Tremont Street, Suite 420, Boston, MA 02120. The Federation for Children with Special Needs, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization.

You can donate on line! Visit us on the web at www.fcsn.org.
The Federation for Children with Special Needs has established a stock account to accept transfers of stock and securities. These gifts can make an attractive contribution, particularly for those securities that have increased in value. Gifts can be deducted at full market value on the date of the transfer, and in most cases are not subject to tax on the appreciated value. Our account broker will work with your financial professionals to facilitate a gift that maximizes your tax savings.

Gifts to the Federation for Children with Special Needs are used to fund programmatic initiatives to help children with disabilities and their families. Gifts can be made several ways and can take several forms. The following descriptions illustrate some ways YOU can contribute to the Federation for Children with Special Needs while still providing for your family and avoiding large tax implications.

**Cash and Pledges**
Gifts of cash can be used immediately to meet the needs of the Federation and enables us to respond quickly to opportunities as they arise.

**Real Estate and Real Property**
Gifts of property, mineral rights, jewelry and art can be made to further the work of the Federation. These gifts can be given and sold immediately, or held and sold at a later date. Gifts of real estate can also be donated while you retain the right to live on the property during your lifetime.

**Bequests**
The Federation for Children with Special Needs can be included in your will, either by naming a specific bequest or by naming the Federation as a remainder beneficiary after specific amounts have been allocated to other beneficiaries. By adding the Federation to your will through a codicil, you eliminate the need to redraft the will in its entirety. Bequests are an essential method of building the Federation’s endowment in perpetuity.

If you’d like to discuss a gift of stock or securities, or any of the other options listed above, please contact the Development Office at 617-236-7210.

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**PLANNING A LIFE: Making the Most out of High School**

**A two-day transition planning conference**

High school is a time when all students need to be actively involved in planning for their future. At this critical juncture, students and families must be informed, proactive, involved and hopeful. The transition process can be overwhelming for families because resources and information on transition planning are often difficult to find.

We are pleased to offer
“Planning a Life: Making the Most out of High School”

February 3 & 4, 2006
at the Federation offices
1135 Tremont Street, Boston, 02120

"Planning a Life: Making the Most out of High School" is a two day conference packed with transition planning information and resources for and about students in special education, ages 15–22. Transition planning needs to be on schedule to ensure a systematic and purposeful educational experience.

Plan now to attend and find out “what you need to know about, when you need to ask about it and who you need to go to for answers.” Our goal is to establish a statewide network of proactive knowledgeable parents working in partnership with local schools to develop individualized Transition goals in the IEP (Individualized Educational Program).

If you have questions or would like additional information, call or e-mail Terri McLaughlin at 617-399-8336 or tmclaugh@fcsn.org. You can download the conference brochure at www.fcsn.org. To request a brochure by mail, call Wanda Morton at 617-236-7210. The registration deadline is January 23, 2006; the fee is $100. Space is limited to 35 participants.
Book Review
by Beth Dworetzky, Mass Family Voices

Woodbine House specializes in books about children with special needs. Their Special Needs Collection provides useful parent, child and professional-friendly books about disabilities.

Beth Binns, the Special Marketing Manager at Woodbine House recently commented, “I suppose it’s a good sign that there’s now an abundance of books for families and professionals about special needs. We both know that it wasn’t always that way.” For that reason, this issue of Newsline will offer a brief synopsis of several books instead of the usual in depth review of a single book.

The Best Worst Brother, by Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen, recommended for children 4-8 years old, the sequel to Well Paint the Octopus Red, continues the story of Emma’s relationship with her three-year-old brother Isaac who has Down syndrome. When he was younger, Emma enjoyed rocking Isaac, feeding him and making him laugh. Now that he’s older, Emma is having a difficult time with his toddler behaviors. Isaac doesn’t want to be held, spits his food out, and doesn’t want his sister to play with him. Their relationship is further challenged because Isaac, who is not yet talking, is easily frustrated. The family begins to introduce sign language, and while Emma continues to struggle with things her brother will and won’t be able to do, events occur that make Emma realize how much she loves her brother. This wonderfully written and illustrated book concludes with a question and answer section about sign language.

Bonnie J. Kruszka was diagnosed with celiac disease in 1995. When her son turned two, he began to show signs of the disease. Ms. Kruszka wrote Eating Gluten-Free with Emily: A Story for Children with Celiac Disease (recommended for children ages 3-7) to provide a clear explanation of the disease, especially for children who are first diagnosed. Emily, the five-year-old protagonist, tells us all the things that are special about her: she has freckles, tells good jokes, likes to jump rope and paint. From there she makes a gentle transition to the symptoms she had, the testing she needed, and ultimately, her diagnosis. All the illustrations are nice, but I especially enjoyed the one that shows Emily’s internal digestive system, as so many of these types of illustrations can be scary for young kids. The story continues with a discussion about the foods Emily can and can’t eat, suggestions for coping with birthday parties, school treats, and other social situations as well as an amusing page where Emily’s mom asks too many questions about food at a restaurant. The take away message is that having celiac disease is just a small part of who Emily is, and is just one of many things make her special.

Greg Palmer’s son Ned has Down syndrome. Mr. Palmer’s recent book, Adventures in the Mainstream: Coming of Age with Down Syndrome, chronicles two years of Ned’s life—the transition from high school to work. This engaging and emotional book, written in the style of a journal with pictures interspersed, is filled with stories about school, father-son adventures, Ned’s relationships with others, and how Ned learns to manage money, to manage other responsibilities, and even how to mourn a friend. I was particularly struck by Mr. Palmers insight into the difficulties of managing a child with a medical diagnosis, as compared to his family’s experience in managing Ned’s issues. Basically his wife and he ignored Ned’s diagnosis and did what they would have done if Ned did not have Down syndrome. Mr. Palmer acknowledges that this is not a good management strategy for a child that requires medical intervention yet realizes, medical or non-medical issues aside, both families live “outside the mainstream.”

AD/HD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) is different in girls and boys and who better to write about it than an author who has a daughter with AD/HD. Beth Walker’s The Girls Guide to AD/HD comes with an admonition—Don’t Lose This Book! The book is full of great factoids about AD/HD and wonderful strategies to help girls deal with and manage their high energy, impulsiveness and unique thought processes. There’s even an amusing girls versus boys comparison of symptoms and a list about what’s good about having AD/HD, followed by a not-so-good list; in other words, the “downside” of having AD/HD. There’s a chapter about medications, about accommodations and modifications in school, and the all important stories about making friends and other social issues. This is an invaluable resource for girls and their parents.

Woodbine House donates a copy of their Special Needs Collection books to the Federation. Call 1-800-331-0688 to see if the book you want is available and to make arrangements to borrow it. For more information about the Woodbine House Special Needs Collection, and to receive a catalog, call 1-800-843-7323 or visit www.woodbinehouse.com.
Staff Update
Please join us in welcoming Kathie Del'Arciprete, the Northeast Regional Coordinator of Family TIES as of November 1st. Kathie can provide information, referrals and support to families in the Northeast. Please take a moment to call Kathie and get acquainted or for assistance and support. She can be reached at 978-851-7261, ext. 4018.

Website Updates
If you haven’t visited the Family TIES website recently, please make a return trip to www.massfamilyties.org. You can provide answers to the Question of the Month, learn about our workshops and view the schedule.

Parent-To-Parent Program
The mission of the Parent-to-Parent Program is to connect parents whose children with special needs face similar challenges so they can share triumphs, and issues and concerns of raising their children. We believe that sharing experiences is an important way to provide strength and support to each other. This volunteer-based program provides opportunities for all parents to share, on both sides of the conversation. Parents contact us in search of a listening ear—another parent who has faced some of the same issues and concerns as they now face. This may be in response to a new diagnosis or a new challenge, a transition in the child’s life, or just to recharge their batteries. Parents seeking this kind of support can contact Family TIES through the Regional Coordinators or our toll-free number, at 1-800-905-TIES (8437).

Family TIES always welcomes experienced parents who are willing to assist us in meeting the needs of parents seeking support. We are especially in need of parents of children with complex medical conditions. Family TIES provides a two-hour training for parents who would like to participate as Support Parents. The training curriculum focuses on developing effective, compassionate listening skills. We offer guidance on sharing concerns, information, and support, with respect for confidentiality and cultural and individual differences. Trainings are offered in the six regions of the state on a quarterly basis. Contact your local Regional Coordinator or our toll-free number for more information.

News from Family TIES of Massachusetts
by Mary Castro Summers, Director, Family TIES

Family TIES of Massachusetts is a statewide information and support network for families of children with special needs. It is a project at the Federation for Children with Special Needs, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division for Perinatal Health, Early Childhood and Special Health Needs. Families of children with special needs can receive information, referrals, direct parent-to-parent support, and training from Family TIES.

FAMILY TIES REGIONAL COORDINATORS
Greater Boston:
Roxanne Hoke-Chandler
617-541-2875

Southeast:
Karen Douglass
781-774-6749

Metrowest:
Lisa Mayer
781-774-6602

Northeast:
Kathie Dell'Arciprete
978-851-7261, Ext. 4018

Central:
Barbara Donati
508-792-7880, Ext. 2337

Western:
Michele Wolf
413-586-7525, Ext. 1133 or 1-800-445-1255 (Western Region only)

Stephen Schneider, Esquire
Educational Advocacy
Arlington, Massachusetts
(781) 643-0897
ssch8@earthlink.net
Affordable Fees
Federation Board of Directors Updates

by Jackie McKeon

A GOOD-BYE

For the past three years, Hope Colen has been an invaluable and dedicated member of the Federation’s Board of Directors. In addition to attending board meetings, fundraisers and conferences to spread the word about the good work going on at the Federation, Hope is also a tireless and effective advocate for her three children: Ben who has Down syndrome, Nate, who has been diagnosed with Autism, and Julia. She successfully negotiated their access to health care and worked to set up effective school placements.

Hope believes the Federation is so successful due to the dedication of parents who came before her. As a member of the Federation’s Board of Directors, her goal was to promote the Federation’s work and model programs at a national level.

Hope has resigned from the Board because her family has relocated to North Carolina. Massachusetts’s loss will be North Carolina’s gain. The Federation is ever thankful and appreciative of the Colen’s family generosity to, support of, and participation in the work of the Federation.

A HELLO

Jane Wolfson arrived at the Federation last winter with one objective: to help. Jane is a Newton, MA native, who worked for thirteen years in advertising and marketing in New York, and more recently, as a Senior Vice President and Group Director of International Communications at Putnam Investments in Boston. Jane’s son Billy was born in 1997 and diagnosed with Fragile X Syndrome at eighteen months old. Jane’s commitment to ensure that her son received access to inclusive education first led her to the Federation several years ago when she attended workshops to learn about her rights in the IEP process. This served as her introduction to the Federation and helped establish a relationship that evolved into Jane’s recent appointment to the Board of the Directors.

Jane and her husband, Bill Mitchell, first noticed red flags in Billy’s development when he missed some key milestones; he was slow to walk and talk, and he showed little interest in other children. Cambridge/Somerville Early Intervention confirmed his developmental delays, and from there Jane and Bill took Billy to Children’s Hospital for neurological testing. Ultimately, Billy was diagnosed with Fragile X and Jane mobilized as a mother of a child with special needs. “News like this alters your outlook on what your child’s life will be like. The saving grace is that your child has no such expectations, so you simply create new expectations. I began by educating myself about Fragile X, and educating myself on how to best help my son,” reflected Jane.

Jane performed two full-time jobs for six years; running communications groups at Putnam, and concurrently establishing a relationship with Cambridge Public Schools which would enable Billy to access the general curriculum, and receive supplemental resources. Jane believes a key to their success with Cambridge is that they formed a true partnership with the school, believing that the responsibility for educating Billy belongs jointly to parents and teachers. Additionally, she looked at what the school could offer and provided supplemental private services as well. “It takes a village to educate a child with special needs, and we wanted to make sure that we were providing Billy with the strongest possible foundation of skills,” she said.

Part of the village that Jane was seeking included the Federation. The week before Billy’s kindergarten IEP meeting, Jane realized she wasn’t sure about her rights, she didn’t know what legal ground she stood on, she didn’t know about advocates, nor did she want to approach the school defensively. Jane’s desire to be an advocate for her son introduced her to the Federation’s Basic Rights Workshop. After attending, Jane breathed a sigh of relief, “I had an understanding of the law and what my rights were and were not. I had a lot more confidence.”

In November of 2004, Jane left Putnam Investments in pursuit of advocating for children, notably those less advantaged. “I thought: the skills I’ve developed over the last 20 years in marketing and communications should be, at least partially transferable into working for an organization that can help families with kids with special needs.” To further her own education and to gain experience in this field, Jane began to look into graduate school programs and volunteer opportunities.

Remembering her positive experience with the Federation, Jane wanted to know more about what the Federation did and how she could help. “The Federation has vast materials and seminars that give you a road map to help you and bring people in to help you.” Jane offered her services to Director Rich Robison and became immediately involved in planning for the 2005 Visions of Community Conference. She observed that the Federation had a need for her marketing continues on following page ☛
Federation Board of Directors Updates

and communications skills and within a month, by calling in many favors from former Putnam Investments colleagues and associates, had produced an informational video about the Federation. The video highlights the mission of the federation, the people who dedicate their work to the organization, and the children who are served by the organization. “The Federation does so much with so few resources: going into communities where resources are inherently less and providing vital information in native languages throughout the state. The Federation provides seminars, empowers parents to help themselves and each other. I wanted to help extend the voice of the Federation.”

Jane has proactively taken on her role as a Federation for Children with Special Needs Board Member, and began pursuing her Master’s degree in Education Policy and Management at Harvard University. Billy is currently eight years old and in second grade at the King Open School in Cambridge. As he gets older, his needs will change, and Jane knows her family will continue to look to the Federation for resources and access to information and professional networks. “At the end of the day, every parent wants to go to sleep at night knowing they have done everything they can for their child. The Federation helps us achieve that.”

AND CONGRATULATIONS

Each year, in honor of National Disability Awareness month, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) honors people and organizations that make a difference in the lives of persons with disabilities. Please join the Federation as we congratulate Federation Board member William Henderson, Jr., Ed.D, one of seven recipients of HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt’s Highest Recognition Awards.

Dr. Henderson is the Principal of the award-winning Patrick O’Hearn School in Dorchester, MA. He works tirelessly as an educator, and as a person with a disability in creating a model of inclusion and success for children with disabilities at O’Hearrn Elementary School. His programs emphasize the inherent value, contribution, and importance of persons with disabilities in school and in later life as adults engaged in their communities.

Supreme Court Decision

IDEA and Burden of Proof—No Relief for Families

Students with special needs and/or disabilities are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). This right is guaranteed under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, also known as IDEA. Many students with disabilities require unique services and supports in order to make academic progress. IDEA specifies that these services be identified and written in an IEP (Individualized Educational Program), a document that is developed in partnership by the student’s parents and the school. While these two aspects of IDEA are well spelled out, there are other areas of the law that are less well defined, specifically, when parents disagree with the appropriateness of their child’s IEP and take their case to a due process hearing, who bears the burden of proof? Does the school have to defend the appropriateness of the IEP in question, or do the parents have to prove that the IEP is inadequate?

On November 14, 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court, after hearing arguments in the case of Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools v. Brian Schaffer, a student, ruled that the burden of proof lies with the party seeking relief. In other words, Brian’s parents would have to meet the burden of proof and show that his IEP did not provide the services he needed in order to receive FAPE.

Schools are relieved at this ruling; it supports educators, acknowledges them as professionals and relieves them of the burden of defending every IEP. This ruling worries parent advocacy groups and parents because parents don’t always have the expertise to challenge schools about the services and supports their children are receiving.

Attorney Bob Crabtree, “doubts this will make a huge difference in Massachusetts where the BSEA (Bureau of Special Education Appeals) has effectively already taken this view.”

If parents have questions about state and federal special education laws, developing IEPs or other issues and concerns about their rights and their child’s educational rights, you are encouraged to attend the Federation’s PTI (Parent Training and Information Center) workshops. See the workshop descriptions and schedule at www.fcsn.org/pti or call the Federation at 1-800-331-0688. For more about the Weast v. Schaffer decision, visit www.wrightslaw.com.
MassCARE Cares
Family Support Initiatives for Individuals and Families Affected by HIV/AIDS

MassCARE (Massachusetts Community AIDS Resource Enhancement) is one of 58 programs throughout the country that is funded under Title IV of the Ryan White Care Act. The program ensures that children, adolescents, women and family members living with or affected by HIV/AIDS have access to coordinated, comprehensive, family-centered, culturally and linguistically competent counseling, testing, and care. MassCARE, a program of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, has a Family Support Initiatives component, which is coordinated through the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

MassCARE Family Support Initiatives are designed to support consumers and help them get needed resources. Consumers who need assistance with housing; locating medical care; medications; family-to-family support or support groups; childcare; or help with transportation to and from appointments, should call Delores Qualls, the Program Coordinator to get help locating needed services or to be referred to a community organization that will provide the resources you need. (See below for Delores’ contact information.)

Families are also encouraged to participate in the statewide Family Advisory Network, commonly referred to as the FAN. There are regional meetings and families may also attend the statewide meetings, which are held 5 times a year. This is a formal way to get involved with program planning at the local, state and national level.

Families that actively participate in the FAN find it a rewarding experience as well as a great opportunity to learn about funding regarding HIV/AIDS services. The meetings are also a time to network, receive support, and to get connected to what’s going on in the participant’s community. FAN meetings are an opportunity for families to voice their needs, to identify unmet needs and to let others know what needs to be done as far as growth and empowerment around HIV/AIDS. Interested families should contact Delores.

Other Family Support Initiatives include an annual Family Networking Day. This year, Family Networking day was held at Arrowhead Acres in Uxbridge, MA. It was hot, but the 110 attendees could cool off in the pool. They also enjoyed a full schedule of arts and crafts, games, hayrides, and a petting zoo. There was a catered barbecue lunch, followed by make your own sundaes, watermelon, and refreshing drinks. Everyone went home with more than great memories of a fun day. There was an educational component to this social event. Everyone received a bag of educational and resource materials, which included tips for teens.

The First Annual Teen Conference was also held last summer. This event was designed exclusively for teens, 13–19 years old, as without parents, teens are more apt to ask questions. It held at the Warren Conference Center in Ashland, MA on July 8, and was a hosted in collaboration with other community organizations in the Boston area. There were workshops on nutrition, adherence to medications, and relationships. There was also plenty of time for fun, as teens clamored for a turn during open mike time, to profile their comedic and singing abilities. A D.J. provided music for dancing, and everyone enjoyed the Buffalo wings, steak tips, Spanish rice, carrots, string beans and salads. Everyone had such an “awesome” time that they actually had to be ushered out the door at the end of the day.

To learn more about MassCARE and the Family Support Initiatives, contact Delores Qualls at 1-800-331-0688, ext. 311 or via e-mail at Dqualls@fcns.org.

Save the Date!
The Federation for Children with Special Needs presents:
Annual Gala Celebration
April 28, 2006
at the Seaport Hotel, Boston
Please join us!
Hurricane of Support
OSEP Keeps a Watchful ‘Eye’ on Special Education Services for Victims of Katrina and Rita

A message from Troy R. Justesen, Acting Director, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education

The impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita has been devastating to families in the Gulf Coast States. Throughout our Nation communities have reached out to welcome families and children from the Gulf into their homes, communities and schools. State directors of special education and the staffs of the OSEP-supported parent [training and information] centers [Editor’s note: The Federation is the OSEP-supported PTI in Massachusetts] are working hard to ensure that all children with disabilities receive appropriate services in a timely manner.

The Department is fully committed to supporting your efforts to work with schools and families to access appropriate services. I am providing the following information to you to share with families and schools regarding accessing materials for students with print disabilities who may need access to instructional materials in formats other than standard print.

Schools needing print materials in accessible format may order them from the American Printing House for the Blind. The web site for the "Accessible Textbook Initiative and Collaborative Project," in which large print and Braille textbooks can be ordered for the classrooms, is:


Textbooks can be produced in 3 different formats. The first format is Braille, in hard-copy, in electronic files for embossing and/or in downloadable files from the web site. The second format is large type books in standard textbook size and color, in hard-copy, in electronic files for customizing point size and font, and/or in downloadable files from the web site. The third format is audio, using either synthetic speech of digital files or the human voice.

Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D) is the nation’s educational library for students of all ages who cannot read standard print effectively because of a disability such as visual impairment, learning disability or another physical disability. RFB&D has set up a special mailbox for those individuals or institutions who have relocated or who may require replacement materials due to the hurricanes. Individuals or institutional RFB&D members who have questions or needs regarding RFB&D services, can e-mail katrinahelp@rbd.org.

They should include their full name, school name (if an institution), member ID# (if known) and a way of contacting them, whether temporary or permanent. An RFB&D Member Services representative will get back to them as soon as possible. If they do not have access to email, they can call Member Services at 1-800-221-4792 and let them know they have a need for replacement of books and equipment due to the hurricanes. RFB&D is also prepared to waive membership renewal fees due to hardship. If schools are not already an existing institutional member and need help providing displaced students with accessible educational materials, they can use the same email address or Member Services number as above to contact RFB&D. RFB&D has set up an internal process to expedite response to their needs and will work with them to provide books and equipment to their students.

We appreciate the work all of you are doing to support families and children disrupted by the hurricanes and will work with you in the days ahead as you strive to ensure that all young children and students with disabilities receive the services they need.

ICE — In Case of Emergency

Information from the MA Family-to-Family Health Care Information & Education Center

Cell phones are everywhere, and while it is annoying to hear people's ring tones and listen to their cell phone conversations during a meeting, movie or in a restaurant, cell phones also offer the peace of mind of being able to be reached in an emergency. Due to a nationwide campaign, the opposite is now also true. Cell phone users are being encouraged to ICE their phones – to add an emergency contact name and phone number under the heading ‘ICE’ to their cell phone contact list so the phone can be used to reach your next of kin or a other designated person in Case of [your own] Emergency.

The ICE (In Case of Emergency) concept was launched by Bob Brochtie, a paramedic with 13 years of experience with the East Anglian Ambulance Service. “I was reflecting on some of the calls I’ve attended at the roadside where I had to look through the mobile phone contacts, struggling for information on a shocked or injured person. Almost everyone carries a mobile phone now, and with ICE we’d know immediately who to contact and what number to ring. The [contact] person may even know [the injured person’s] medical history.”

By adding an ICE contact, or contacts (listed as ICE1, ICE2, etc) to your mobile phone, you can help rescue services quickly notify a relative or friend on your behalf. Parents should be sure to add ICE contacts to their children’s cell phones as well so they can be notified as quickly as possible if their child is in an accident or has a medical emergency.
What are Supplemental Educational Services?
Supplemental Educational Services (SES) are FREE academic help for students in English language arts (reading and writing) and/or math. This extra help must take place outside the school day. It could be before or after school, on weekends, or during the summer.

Are they really free?
Yes! They are free to eligible students. Families do not need to pay anything at all. The school pays the “provider” (the person who gives the tutoring) directly.

Who can get these services?
To be eligible for these free services, students must:

1. qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program,
2. attend a public Title I school that has been “identified for improvement” for two or more years in a row.

Eligible students can be in regular or special education, and can be students who are just learning to speak English as a second language. (These students are often called English Language Learners, or ELLs.)

Schools must make SES services available to eligible students, including those with special learning or language needs. ELL students must be able to receive the language assistance they need to benefit from SES. Students with disabilities must be able to receive the learning accommodations they need to benefit from SES.

How will I know if my child is eligible?
Your school district and school must let you know if your child is eligible. Sometimes notices from the school can get lost. To make sure, it is a good idea to call the school principal and ask if your child is eligible for SES.

Families may also call Parents’ PLACE toll free at 1-877-471-0980. We have a record of all schools in Massachusetts that must provide SES.

The important thing is to act fast! As soon as you hear about about SES, call the school or Parents’ PLACE to find out if your child might be eligible.
Action Steps

Parents, your child may qualify for FREE tutoring!

This extra help in reading and math is available through a program called Supplemental Educational Services, or SES, a part of the No Child Left Behind Act.

In general, follow these three simple steps:

STEP 1: Find out if your child qualifies.

Call the principal at your child’s school or call Parents’ PLACE at 1-877-471-0980 to find out if your child’s school has to offer free tutoring.

Step 2: Sign up.

Call your child’s school to get the sign-up form and information about who is providing SES in your area. It is important to act fast and to turn in the form before the deadline.

Step 3: Register.

After you find out you are eligible, fill in the registration form. Select a location and time for tutoring that works for your family. Clearly mark which provider you choose for your child. If you ask, the school must help you decide. Parents’ PLACE also has a list of SES providers and tips on selecting a provider. Turn in the form to your school or school district by their due date. Once the school has found your child eligible and you have registered, your child can attend the tutoring sessions. The school district will begin to pay the tutoring program.

Schools and schools districts have different timelines and steps. Make sure to ask for details specific to your child’s school.

Parents, it is up to you to request this service!

Even if your child is eligible, the school does not have to provide free tutoring unless you ask for it.

If you need help with any of these steps, please call Parents’ PLACE toll free at 1-877-471-0980.

Let’s work together to truly leave No Child Behind!

Parents...
Parents’ PLACE is here to support you and families like yours to be the power behind your children’s education!

Schools...
Parents’ PLACE can help you find ways to tap the power of parents for your school’s success!

Call us toll free at 1-877-471-0980 (ext. 371 for Spanish or 344 for Portuguese) for FREE workshops and other resources.

Check out www.pplace.org for more information and resources, including our Bulletin and Pointers series.

Parents Learning About Children’s Education

Parents’ PLACE is the Massachusetts Statewide Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC). It is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, Grant #U310A030443. The views and opinions expressed in Parents’ PLACE Pointers do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. Permission is granted to copy or reprint this newsletter, or any portion of it, with the exception of articles we have reprinted with permission. Please credit Parents’ PLACE Pointers, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, and original author if indicated.

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¿Qué son servicios educativos suplementarios?

“Los servicios educativos suplementarios (SES) son una ayuda académica GRATUITA para los estudiantes en Artes del Lenguaje Inglés (lectura y escritura) y/o Matemáticas. Esta ayuda adicional tiene que ser ofrecida fuera del horario escolar. Puede ser antes o después de la escuela, los fines de semana o en el verano.

¿Son los servicios realmente gratuitos?

¡Sí! Son gratuitos para los estudiantes que son elegibles. Las familias no tienen que pagar nada. La escuela paga al “proveedor” (la persona que da la tutoría) directamente.

¿Quién puede obtener estos servicios?

Para ser elegible para estos servicios gratuitos, los estudiantes tienen que:

1. calificar para el programa de almuerzo gratis o de precio reducido,
2. asistir a una escuela pública Titulo I, que haya sido “identificada como que necesita mejorar” por dos o más años consecutivos.

Los estudiantes elegibles pueden estar en educación regular o especial, y pueden ser estudiantes que apenas están aprendiendo a hablar inglés como segundo idioma. Estos estudiantes son frecuentemente llamados (English Language Learners o ELLs por sus siglas en inglés.)

Las escuelas tienen que hacer que los servicios educativos suplementarios (SES) estén disponibles para los estudiantes elegibles incluyendo a los de aprendizaje especial o con necesidades de aprender el idioma inglés.

Los estudiantes que están aprendiendo el idioma inglés tienen que recibir la ayuda que necesitan para beneficiarse de los servicios educativos suplementarios. Los estudiantes con discapacidades tienen que recibir las acomodaciones necesarias para aprender y beneficiarse de los servicios.

¿Cómo sé si mi niño es elegible?

Su distrito escolar y la escuela le tienen que informarle si su niño es elegible para recibir tutoría gratutia para los servicios educativos suplementarios. Es una buena idea que llame al Director de la escuela y le pregunte si su niño es elegible para recibir los servicios educativos suplementarios, ya que algunas veces los avisos de la escuela se pueden extraviar.

Las familias también pueden llamar gratuitamente al Club de los Padres al 1-877-471-0980. Tenemos información sobre todas las escuelas en Massachusetts que tienen que proveer los SES.

¡Lo importante es que actúe rápidamente! Tan pronto escuche sobre los servicios educativos suplementarios (SES), llame a la escuela o al Club de los Padres para saber si su niño es elegible.
Pasos a seguir
¡Padres, su niño puede ser elegible para recibir tutoría GRATIS!

La ayuda adicional en la lectura y las matemáticas está disponible a través de un programa llamado Servicios Educativos Suplementarios (SES), parte de la Ley Que Ningún Quede Atrás.

Solamente, siga estos tres pasos:

1ER PASO: Encuentre si su niño es elegible.

Llame al Director de la escuela de su niño o llame al Club de los Padres al 1-877-471-0980 para saber si la escuela de su niño tiene que ofrecer tutoría gratuita.

2DO PASO: Solicite la forma de inscripción.

Llame a la escuela de su niño para obtener la forma de inscripción e información acerca de quién está proveyendo los servicios educativos suplementarios (SES) en su área. Es importante que haga estos trámites rápido, y que llene y envíe la forma de inscripción antes de la fecha límite.

3ER PASO: Inscribase

Si su niño es elegible, llene la forma de inscripción. Escoja un lugar y una hora para la tutoría que sea conveniente para su familia. Escriba claramente cual proveedor usted escoge para su niño. Si usted no sabe, la escuela le ayudará a tomar una decisión sobre el proveedor. El Club de los Padres también tiene una lista de los proveedores de servicios educativos suplementarios (SES) y sugerencias de cómo escogerlos. Envíe la forma a su escuela o distrito escolar antes de la fecha indicada. Una vez la escuela haya determinado que su niño es elegible y usted lo haya inscrito, su niño puede asistir a las clases de tutoría. El distrito escolar pagará por el programa de tutoría.

Las escuelas y los distritos escolares tienen diferentes pasos y fechas límites. Asegúrese de encontrar los detalles sobre la escuela de su niño en particular.

¡PADRES, DEPENDE DE USTEDES EL PEDIR ESTE SERVICIO!

Aunque su niño sea elegible, la escuela no tiene que proveer tutoría gratuita a menos que usted la pida.

Si usted necesita ayuda con alguno de estos pasos, por favor llame al Club de los Padres gratuitamente al 1-877-471-0980.

¡Trabajemos juntos para que verdaderamente ningún niño quede atrás!

Padres...
¡El Club de los Padres está aquí para ayudarle a usted y a familias como las de usted, para que sean el apoyo en la educación de sus niños!

Escuelas...
El Club de los Padres puede ayudarle a encontrar maneras de orientar a los padres para que utilicen su poder para el éxito de su escuela.

Llámense gratuitamente al 1-877-471-0980 (ext. 371 para español ó ext. 344 para portugués), para recibir talleres GRATUITOS y otros recursos.

Para más información y recursos incluyendo nuestro Boletín y los ejemplares de Puntos, vaya a nuestra página de Internet: www.pplace.org.

El Club de los Padres es el Centro de Información y Recursos para Padres en Massachusetts. Es patrocinado por el Departamento de Educación de los EE.UU., Oficina de Innovación y Reformas, Subvención # U310A030443. Las visiones y opiniones expresadas en Puntos del Club de los Padres no reflejan necesariamente las visiones y las políticas del Departamento de Educación de los EE.UU. Se autoriza el copiar o imprimir este documento o cualquier porción de él, con la excepción de artículos imprimidos con permiso. Por favor déle el crédito a Puntos del Club de Los Padres, Federación para Niños con Necesidades Especiales y al autor original, cuando se indique.

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Mensagem URGENTE para as famílias: Aulas particulares gratuitas oferecidas pelo NCLB

Se a escola de seu filho lhe oferecesse US$1,500,00 dólares, você aceitaria?

É claro que sim! Bem, a Lei Nenhuma Criança Será Deixada para Trás, No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), afirma que as escolas DEVEM oferecer para as crianças de baixa-renda, em algumas escolas públicas, aulas particulares gratuitas ou outra ajuda acadêmica suplementar. Em Massachusetts, esta ajuda pode custar por volta de US$1,500,00 ou mais para cada criança. Estes serviços gratuitos são chamados de Serviços Educacionais Suplementares ou SES.

Durante o ano letivo de 2004-05, em todo o país, nem 2 dos cada 10 estudantes que estavam qualificados para receberem estas aulas particulares realmente pediram ou receberam esta ajuda.

Se seu filho pode se beneficiar desta ajuda suplementar com a matemática, leitura e redação, não perca esta oportunidade das aulas particulares gratuitas! Continue lendo para descobrir como seu filho poderá obter este benefício.

O que são os Serviços Educacionais Suplementares? Os Serviços Educacionais Suplementares (SES) são as ajudas acadêmicas GRATUITAS para os alunos da língua inglesa (ler e escrever) e/ou matemática. Esta ajuda suplementar deverá ser dada fora dos dias de aula. Poderá ser antes ou depois do horário escolar, nos finais de semana ou durante o verão.

São realmente gratuitos? Sim! São gratuitos para os alunos que forem qualificados. As famílias não precisam pagar absolutamente nada. A escola paga diretamente ao “provedor” (a pessoa que dá as aulas particulares).

Quem poderá obter estes serviços? Para que sejam qualificados para receber estes serviços, os alunos devem:

1. qualificar-se para o programa de almoço gratuito ou de preço reduzido,
2. frequentar uma escola pública Título I, que tenha sido “identificada para melhoramentos” por dois ou mais anos seguidos.

Os alunos qualificados podem estar recebendo educação regular ou especial e poderão ser alunos que acabam de começar a aprender a falar inglês como uma segunda língua. (Estes alunos são geralmente chamados de Estudantes da Língua Inglesa (ou ELL em inglês)).

As escolas precisam fazer com que os serviços do SES estejam disponíveis aos alunos qualificados, incluindo aqueles com necessidades especiais de aprendizado ou linguagem.

Os alunos que são ELL precisam poder receber assistência de idioma que precisarem para que se beneficiem do SES. Os alunos com deficiência deverão poder receber ajuda de aprendizado adequada que necessitarem para que possam se beneficiar do SES.

Como saberia se meu filho(a) está qualificado?

O seu distrito escolar ou escola deverá informá-lo(la) se seu filho está qualificado para o SES. Algumas vezes os avisos escolares podem se perder. Para se assegurar disto, seria uma boa idéia entrarem em contato com o diretor da escola e perguntar-lhe se seu filho está qualificado para o SES.

As famílias também podem entrar em contato com o Clube dos Pais no número gratuito 1-877-471-0980. Nós mantemos um registro de todas as escolas em Massachusetts que oferecem o SES.

O mais importante é agir rapidamente! Tão logo fique ciente sobre os serviços do SES, entre em contato com a escola ou o Clube dos Pais para verificar se seu filho poderá ser qualificado.
Medidas de Ação

Pais, seu filho poderá se qualificar para receber aulas particulares GRATUITAS!

Esta ajuda suplementar para leitura e matemática está disponível através de um programa chamado Serviços Educacionais Suplementares, “Supplemental Educational Services” ou SES, que faz parte da Lei Nenhuma Criança Será Deixada para Trás, “No Child Left Behind Act.”

Simplesmente siga estas três medidas fáceis:

MEDIDA 1: Verifique se seu filho está qualificado.

Telefone para o diretor da escola de seu filho ou para o Clube dos Pais no 1-877-471-0980 e veja se a escola de seu filho oferece aulas particulares gratuitas.

MEDIDA 2: Inscreva-se.

Entre em contato com a escola de seu filho para obter o formulário de inscrição e a informação sobre quem está oferecendo o SES na sua área. É importante agir rapidamente e devolver o formulário antes do prazo estipulado.

MEDIDA 3: Matricule-se.

Depois de verificar se você está qualificado, preencha o formulário de matrícula. Escolha um local e um horário para as aulas particulares que seja conveniente para sua família. Marque com clareza qual é provedor você está escolhendo para o seu filho. Se você pedir, a escola deve ajudá-lo(la) a tomar a decisão. O Clube dos Pais também tem uma lista de provedores do SES e dicas de como selecioná-lo(la). Devolva o formulário para a sua escola ou distrito escolar na data marcada. Assim que a escola decida se seu filho está qualificado e você tenha feito a matrícula, seu filho poderá participar das seções das aulas particulares. O distrito escolar começará a pagar pelo programa de aulas particulares.

As escolas e os distritos escolares têm datas e medidas diferentes. Tenha certeza de que obteve os detalhes específicos na escola de seu filho.

PAIS, DEPENDE DE VOCÊS A OBTEÇÃO DESTE SERVIÇO!

Mesmo que seu filho esteja qualificado, a escola terá que prover as aulas particulares somente se você solicitá-las.

Se necessitar ajuda com qualquer destas medidas, por favor, ligue para o Clube dos Pais no número gratuito: 1-877-471-0980.

Vamos trabalhar juntos para realmente não deixar Nenhuma Criança para Trás!

Pais...

O Clube dos Pais existe para apoiar vocês e famílias como as suas para que sejam a força que impulsiona a educação de seus filhos!

Escolas...

O clube dos Pais poderá ajudá-lo(la) a encontrar maneiras para explorar o poder dos pais para o sucesso da sua escola!

Telefone gratuitamente para nós no 1-877-471-0980 (ramal 344 para português) para treinamentos GRATUITOS e outros recursos.

Visite o site www.pplace.org para mais informações e recursos inclusive para o nosso Boletim e as séries de Dicas.

O Clube dos Pais é o Centro de Informações e Recursos Para os Pais (PIRC) do estado de Massachusetts. Recebe fundos do Departamento de Educação dos EUA, Office of Innovation and Improvement, Grant #U310A030443. As opiniões e ideias expressas no Índice, do Clube dos Pais, não refletem, necessariamente, as ideias e as políticas do Depto. de Educação dos EUA. Permitimos a reprodução ou cópia deste informativo, ou alguma parte do mesmo, com exceção dos artigos que reimprimimos com permissão. Por gentileza, dé os devidos créditos ao Pontos do Clube dos Pais, à Federação Para Crianças com Necessidades Especiais e ao autor original, quando indicado.

SAVE THE DATE!

VISIONS OF COMMUNITY

THE FEDERATION’S ANNUAL CONFERENCE

For Families of Children with Special Needs and for the Professionals Who Serve Them

Keynote by Susan Senator, author of Making Peace with Autism
Invited guest: Dr. Troy R. Justesen, Acting Director, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education

Saturday, March 4, 2006
7:30 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.

World Trade Center, Boston, MA
Seaport District/Northern Avenue