

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

This month's newsletter topic: Assistive Technology

Next month's topic: Transition

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

Small Things Make a Big Difference

By Matthew Zellmer

Concussions are seemingly all over the news these days, and we are all learning more about the serious impact head injuries have on life. In some cases, a person can go from having no difficulty in school to feeling like their world has turned completely upside down. For one family we served, that prospect became very real.

The problems started after a third concussion in less than one year for the high school sophomore, who will not be named. Headaches, nausea and vision problems, among other

symptoms, threatened to derail a promising educational future. Her family knew their daughter's problems were temporary, but they didn't make them less serious. Moreover, no one really knew when the Post-Concussion Syndrome she was experiencing might diminish. Something needed to be done.

The school was trying to accommodate her needs with a temporary homebound instruction plan for the majority of the school day, which Mom and Dad felt strongly was not working. The family was advised to pursue a section 504 accommodation plan. This course of action was not initially well-received by the school. They insisted

that their procedure for 504 plans was the same as the IEP process and that she was not up to the testing that would be needed for it.

Being a teacher herself, mom knew she had to continue to fight. After enduring a few long meetings, the family finally got good results once more school administrators got involved. The team agreed to a 504 plan, and mom assisted the school in finding the right tutor to help execute it. The last meeting happened on a very good health day for the student, so she was able to demonstrate her star potential and be her own best

advocate. She no doubt made her parents very proud.

Mom has reported that the 504 plan is working well and her daughter is back on track in school. Her health is improving every day and she has a very bright future. Her present is proof of the axiom that small things can make a big difference.



RESEARCH TO READ

Supporting Families of Young Children with Disabilities Using Technology

Howard P. Parette, Hedda Meadan, and Sharon Doubet
Illinois State University
Jackie Hess
Family Center on Technology and Disability
 Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, 2010, 45(4), 552-565
<http://daddcec.org/Portals/0/>

[CEC/Autism_Disabilities/Research/Publications/Education_Training_Development_Disabilities/2010v45_Journals/ETDD_201012v45n4p552-565_Supporting_Families_Young_Children_Disabilities_Using_Technology.pdf](#)

Abstract: Research has frequently focused on needs, preferences, and practices of families of young children with

disabilities. Surprisingly, relatively little seems to be known about how families use technology to gain information about and support their needs, even though Web-based and other information and communication technology applications have become ubiquitous tools in contemporary society. This article describes a pilot study

designed to collect information about a cadre of both family-used and preferred technology applications and their features. Implications for practice and future development of technology supports created by practitioners who work with families are noted.

RESOURCE TO READ

Young Children With Physical Disabilities: Caregiver Perspectives About Assistive Technology

Adria Kling, OTR/L; Philippa H. Campbell, PhD; Jeanne Wilcox, PhD
 Infants & Young Children
 Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 169-183
http://depts.washington.edu/isei/iyc/23.3_Kling.pdf

Abstract:

Caregiver reports of problematic activities/routines with their young children with physical disabilities and types of assistive technology used as solutions were investigated in this study. In addition, caregiver

competence with assistive technology use and ways in which caregivers received information and training were also examined. A subset of 164 caregivers who identified their children as having physical disabilities was retrieved from an archived database and used for analysis. Results indicated that children experienced various problems when participating in daily activities/routines. An average of 60.4% of their caregivers found solutions to these problems and 64.5% of these solutions



http://www.123rf.com/photo_12593897_big-sister-with-disabled-brother-in-wheelchair-by-school-bus.html

involved the use of assistive technology. Only

a small percent (13.4%) of caregivers reported feeling very competent at using assistive technology and 68.2% of those had received information from an early intervention provider. This research exemplifies the importance of both using assistive technology interventions for children with physical disabilities and ensuring that early intervention providers are sufficiently knowledgeable to train caregivers so that their children gain maximal opportunities to participate and learn.

STATEWIDE PARENT AGENCY:

For people with disabilities, there are no greater goals than independence and inclusion in the community. The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (WI BPDD) is here to help make those dreams come true.

The Board is dedicated to improving the independence, productivity and integration of people with developmental disabilities. Independence is defined as having choices available and exercising control over one's own life, while productivity often



WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE
 WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

means getting a job and earning a living. Doing these things allows the person with a disability to participate meaningfully in the community and be seen for the person they are.

WI BPDD's major task is to oversee the state's responses to the needs of people with developmental disabilities. Thus,

legislative advocacy is a priority. The fight for self-determination means the Board often must lead the charge to ensure appropriate services in the areas of employment, education, health care, housing and transportation. The Board also trains youth and families through its [Partners in Policymaking](#) program, designed to empower individuals to be their own best advocate.

Additionally, WI BPDD supports the objectives of individuals and other organizations through SPARKS grants. These grants help fund projects in the areas of Get Out the Vote, state legislative issues and local advocacy activities. Proposals are being accepted now through Friday, August 2nd. More information and application materials can be found [here](#).

To connect with WI BPDD, please call toll-free (888) 332-1677, email bpddhelp@wi-bpdd.org or "like" BPDD on Facebook.

FEATURED ONLINE RESOURCES

TOPIC: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Family Center on Technology and Disability (FCTD)

The US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs created the FCTD to provide information about assistive technology to organizations that work with families of children with disabilities. The FCTD includes a family information guide to assistive technology which is a comprehensive resource for parents/guardians on funding for AT; AT in the IEP; as well as many links to other resources on AT.

<http://www.fctd.info/>

National Assistive Technology Research Institute (NATRI)

NATRI is an organization supported by the University of Kentucky and the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. NATRI conducts research that produces data and products that will help improve the delivery of AT services to students. In addition to a host of general information, their website includes specific information for families in their AT Planner: From IEP Consideration to Classroom Implementation.

<http://natri.uky.edu/resources/reports/repmenu.html>

TotsNTech

TotsNTech is the website for a national research program about AT includes information about adaptations and devices for infants, toddlers and children. Includes resource information, and links to many useful sites.

<http://tnt.asu.edu>

Simon Technology Center at PACER

The Simon Technology Center (STC) is dedicated to making the benefits of technology more accessible to children and adults with disabilities. Their website connects you to their blog about assistive technology, videos of different assistive technology devices, and a great list of AT website links for further exploring.

<http://www.pacer.org/stc/>

Assistive Technology - Wrightslaw

For families who need a very thorough resource regarding all aspects of technology, this is the site for you. Information provided in this article from Wrightslaw will take you to additional resources that go into detail about specific topics such as evaluation, universal design for learning, and accessibility to materials to name a few.

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/atech.index.htm>

Upcoming Statewide Events

Autism Society Wisconsin 2013 Summer Lights! Camera! Autism! Using Video Technology to Enhance Lives

Date: August 15, 2013

Location: The Salvation Army
Kroc Center, Green Bay, WI

Presenters: Sharon Hammer,
Lisa Ladson & Kate McGinnity

Registration: June 15th- August
5th, 2013

Trauma Informed Care: What Parents and Professionals Need to Know

Trauma affects brain development, learning, relationships, and many other aspects of life. Experts from around the state will address many of these issues at this informative regional Conference.

Date: August 24, 2013; 8:30
a.m.-3:15 p.m.

Location: West Salem High
School

Cost: free

Registration: Contact Sandra
McFarland at 877-374-0511,
smcfarland@wifacets.org or on
line at www.wifacets.org

2013-2014 Parents and Partnership (PIP), and Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YIPPE) Training Schedule.

Locations: PIP: Rhinelander, Lac
du Flambeau, & St. Croix Falls

YIPPE: Green Bay, Milwaukee

Cost: free

Registration:

deyoungm@cesa5.org

www.wspei.org or DPI web site
at <http://sped.dpi.gov/sped>

Closing the Gap: The most
practical, practitioner-driven AT
conference in North America!

Date: October 9-11, 2013; Pre

Conference – October 7-8, 2013

Location: Double Tree by Hilton
Hotel in Bloomington, MN

Cost: Parent registration \$275
and scholarships are available

Registration: [http://
www.closingthegap.com/
conference/](http://www.closingthegap.com/conference/)



WI FACETS Phone Workshops

Registration: Contact Sandra McFarland at 877-374-0511, smcfarland@wifacets.org or online at www.wifacets.org

Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy

When: 7-23-13, 12-1pm
Presenter: Joe Kluber

Educacion Especial: Que necesito saber?

When: 7-25-13, 12-1pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga

La Seccion 504 y las Leyes que Protegen a los Estudiantes con Discapacidades

When: 7-31-13, 12-1pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga

Bullying & Harassment

When: 8-6-13, 12-1pm
Presenter: Charlotte Price

Bullying & Harassment

When: 8-6-13, 7-8pm
Presenter: Matthew Zellmer

Communication Strategies

When: 8-8-13, 12-1pm
Presenter: Veronica Nolden

Introduction to Special Education

When: 8-13-13, 12-1pm
Presenter: Joe Kluber

Using Verbal De-escalation to Reduce the Need for Seclusion and Restraint in Public Schools

When: 8-15-13, 12-1pm
Presenter: Nissan Bar-Lev, Special Education Director, CESA #7

Working for Change- Using the Power of a Personal Story

When: 8-20-13, 12-1pm
Presenter: Matthew Zellmer

Working for Change- Using the Power of a Personal Story

When: 8-20-13, 7-8pm
Presenter: Don Rosin

CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Next month's newsletter topic: Transition

There are two ways to submit contributions. Use either the online form at <http://bit.ly/WO9a39> or use the attached fillable PDF form for contributing articles, events, and resources.

Send the fillable PDF form submissions to mzellmer@wifacets.org or ebraunel@wifacets.org

Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the 20th of each month at noon. For time sensitive training advertisements, the information should be sent a minimum of two weeks prior to the event date; ideally a month ahead of time.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles. Family engagement success or impact stories can be written at an individual or family level, classroom level, school building level, district level, county level, CESA level, etc.

Your submittal may not be in the final copy of the upcoming month's newsletter if it was in a previous month's email, the event date has passed, the web link doesn't work, or there is already an article in place. Articles and resources will be saved to be used for later newsletters. We reserve the right to edit contributions as needed.

This month's update is provided by WI FACETS to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement.

* **WIFACETS website:** <http://www.wifacets.org> 

Please visit the following links to the Parent Leadership Hub web page of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) website:

* **Just in Time Information (JITI):** http://wispdg.org/pl/res_jit.html

* **Resources:** <http://www.wispdg.org/pl/resources.html>

* **Multi-Media Workshops, Video and Webcasts:** <http://wispdg.org/pl-multi.html>

DISCLAIMER

Inclusion of information in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Wisconsin FACETS, the Department of Public Instruction, the U.S. Department of Education, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

NOTE: If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please contact:

Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS SPDG Coordinator at 715-561-2559 or ebraunel@wifacets.org

Matthew Zellmer, WI FACETS SPDG Research Coordinator at 414-374-4645 x203 or

mzellmer@wifacets.org.

