



PEAL News

Parent Education & Advocacy Leadership Center

Serving Western and Central Pennsylvania

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“All things are possible until they are proved impossible.....”
Pearl S. Buck

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Mission Statement

The mission of the PEAL Center is to ensure that children, youth, and adults with disabilities lead rich, active lives and participate as full members of their schools and communities by providing training, information, and technical assistance based on best practices to individuals, families and all people who support them.

Join us for the PEAL Center 's First Annual Conference

We are excited to be presenting *Inclusive Education: Making It Happen* on March 22 and 23, 2007 at the Four Points Sheraton in Cranberry Township, north of Pittsburgh. Registration Brochures are now available on our website. Session topics will include Differentiating Instruction, Inclusive EI* Friendship, NCLB/IDEA*, Accommodations and Modifications, Assistive Technology, Gaskins, LRE*, Regulations and Case Law, Peer Support, Behavior, Diversity, Progress Monitoring, Curriculum and the Arts. We welcome sponsors and exhibitors. Hotel reservations can be made at Four Points Sheraton, Cranberry Township, PA, at 888-627-8175 or at



www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/peal. Book now to get the conference rate of \$95/night. Limited number of parent scholarships available so register early. Visit pealcenter.org for details or to request a copy of the conference brochure by mail call PEAL Center at 412-281-4404, 866-950-1040 Toll Free, or e-mail lrose@pealcenter.org.

* EI—Early Intervention
NCLB—No Child Left Behind
IDEA—Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
LRE—Least Restrictive Environment

Primera Conferencia Anual Del Centro De PEAL

Nos excita presentar *Educación Inclusiva: Haciendo que Suceda* del 22 al 23 de Marzo del 2007, en el Four Points Sheraton en el municipio de Cranberry, al norte de Pittsburgh. Los Folletos para la Registración están disponibles en nuestra página electrónica. Los temas a tratar en la Sesión incluirán Instrucción Diferenciada, El Inclusivo, Amistad, NCLB/IDEA, Acomodaciones y Modificaciones, Tecnología Asistiva, LRE, Regulaciones y Caso de Ley, Soporte de Compañeros, Comportamientos, Diversidad, y las Artes. Damos la bienvenida a

los patrocinadores y expositores. Las reservaciones para el Hotel pueden hacerse en el Four Point Sheraton, en el municipio de Cranberry, PA al 888-627-8175 o www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/peal. Reserve ahora para que pueda obtener el precio de conferencia de \$95/noche. Hay un número limitado de becas para los padres si se registran temprano. Visite la página electrónica pealcenter.org para mayor detalle solicite una copia del folleto por correo al Centro PEAL al 412-281-4404, número gratuito 866-950-1040 o correo electrónico lrose@pealcenter.org.

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PA Abandons Premium for Loophole Kids



The PA Department of Public Welfare (DPW) has withdrawn its waiver request to the federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services for permission to charge premiums to families of children enrolled in the Medical Assistance (MA) for Children with Disabilities Program, commonly known as the "MA Loophole." For services like wrap around and home nursing MA may be the only way families have to get payment for needed services. For families this means that the threat of premiums for much needed Medical Assistance coverage for their children is gone. This is good news for families.

Attention: Mothers of Children with Autism—Would you like to participate in a

To participate in this dissertation research study, you must be:

- Anglo-American or 2nd generation Chinese, Korean or Japanese American (you were born in the U.S. with immigrant parents or you immigrated to the U.S. before the age of 14)
- Have a preschooler or kindergartener with autism

If you would like to participate in this survey study or would like more information please contact Jamie Cho at (510) 594-1065 or jamie118@berkeley.edu

Research project to study computer usage by children and young adults with Down syndrome

Dr. Libby Kumin, Loyola College (lkumin@loyola.edu), Dr. Heidi Feng, Towson University (jfeng@towson.edu), Dr. Jonathan Lazar, Towson University (jlazar@towson.edu), and Dr. Ant Ozok, University of Maryland Baltimore County (ozok@umbc.edu) are beginning to study computer usage by children and young adults with Down syndrome using an on-line survey. This survey is appropriate for parents of children with Down syndrome who are between the ages of 6 and 21. It can be filled out by parents or you and your child can fill it out together. You can participate from anywhere you live and the survey should not take more than 15 minutes to complete. With computers playing such a large role in our daily lives, improving your children's computer use can improve daily life. The first step is to study how people with Down syndrome are currently using computers. The survey will be on-line until January 31, but try to complete it as soon as possible. Thanks again for your participation. Together, we can make a difference! You can complete the survey on-line at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=750982588877>



Penn State Offers \$100,000 Scholarship to Students with Disabilities

When the Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation announced that it was looking for a donor to match a \$25,000 challenge grant to create a scholarship for students with disabilities at Penn State, the University found a match in alumnus Jerry Polis.

Polis, whose son David is hearing disabled, liked the foundation's offer but raised the stakes to \$50,000 if the Newcombe Foundation would contribute the same. The foundation accepted his challenge, bringing the total endowment to \$100,000 and thus establishing the Polis Charitable Foundation-Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation Scholarship for Students with Disabilities.

This is the second Newcombe Challenge Grant offered to Penn State donors. The first created the Howard C. and Betty B. Woodring-Newcombe Foundation Scholarship for Students with Disabilities at Penn State Altoona. The foundation also funds annual University-wide scholarships for students with disabilities. These scholarships provide support in the form of partial tuition or assistance with special expenses, internships, adapted equipment, and housing needs. Approximately \$800,000 has been granted to Penn State for these scholarships since 1982.

New State guideline for Educational Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

As a result of the Gaskin Settlement, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has issued a new policy guideline for Least Restrictive Environment. The state guidelines are called BECs—Basic Education Circulars. Following are direct quotes from sections of that BEC.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004 (also known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act), requires ... (1) *That to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are non-disabled; and (2) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.* [20 USC 1412 Section 612 (a) (5), and its implementing regulation found at 34 C.F.R. §300.114(a)].

IEP teams are required to adhere to the following when making educational placement decisions:

1. A Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) must be provided to every student with an IEP...
2. Students will not be removed from regular education classrooms merely because of the severity of their disabilities;
3. When students with disabilities, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, need specially designed instruction or other supplementary aids and services to benefit from participating in regular education classrooms, as required in their IEP, local education agencies are obliged to ensure that those services are provided;
4. IEP teams must determine whether the goals in the student's IEP can be implemented in regular education classrooms with supplementary aids and services before considering removal from the regular education classroom;
5. School districts will consider the full range of supplementary aids and services in regular education classrooms...

To determine whether a child with disabilities can be educated satisfactorily in a regular education classroom.....the following factors must be considered and addressed in the IEP:



1. What efforts have been made to accommodate the child in the regular classroom and with what outcome(s);
2. What additional efforts (i.e. supplementary aids and services) in the regular classroom are possible;
3. What are the educational benefits available to the child in the regular classroom, with the use of appropriate supplementary aids and services; and
4. Are there possible significant and negative effects of the child's inclusion on the other students in the class?¹

... An IEP team may choose a more specialized setting if:

1. The student will receive greater benefit from education in a specialized setting than in a regular class.
2. He or she is so disruptive as to significantly impair the education of other students in the class; or
3. The cost of implementing a given student's IEP in the regular classroom will significantly affect other children in the LEA.

...Experience proves that contact with non-disabled peers can have positive social effects both on children with disabilities and their non-disabled classmates. Additionally, education with non-disabled peers can increase learning for students with IEPs. For many, the result is that children with disabilities learn more in inclusive environments than in segregated or more specialized settings.

...inclusion implies more than physical proximity to non-disabled peers; it encompasses full participation and equality within a group, leading to a sense of belonging within the community at large.

¹"A handicapped child who merely requires more teacher attention than most other children is not likely to be so disruptive as to significantly impair the education of other children,"[Greer].

To view the entire BEC, visit http://www.pde.state.pa.us/k12/cwp/view.asp?A=11&QUESTION_ID=67483

See also the Fact Sheet on Supplementary Aids and Service available at: <http://www.pattan.net/files/LRE/SupAidsSvcssbFS110206.pdf>

Children with Disabilities have a Friend in the State House of Representatives

Dennis O'Brien has been elected as Pennsylvania's new Speaker of the House. He is a long time supporter on issues relating to kids with disabilities. Speaker O'Brien, who has a nephew with autism, has said that "Children with disabilities are now going to have a place at the table and a place in the budget."

A FEW RESOURCES THAT MAY HELP



In each issue of our newsletter, we will try to list a few of the different resources that are available. If you would like to have your agency listed, please write or email the PEAL Center with a brief description to be included.



ABOARD Advisory Board on Autism & Related Disorders—ABOARD's mission is to achieve the maximum social, educational, and vocational potential of Pennsylvania children, adolescents, and adults with autism. Its core objectives are to provide families with: personal and tailored information, training and assistance to quickly navigate the systems towards receiving the required services, and increasing the capability and availability of diagnostic care. ABOARD receives and responds to thousands of requests, from families and professionals alike, for information and guidance relating to diagnosis, treatment, educational and vocational needs, medical assistance and family support. ABOARD's Family Support Services include providing administrative and financial support to 66 family support groups in 36 Pennsylvania counties, many segmented by age and diagnosis. This service also comprises a "parent-to-parent" network linking experienced families with those whose family members have been recently diagnosed. ABOARD's Educational Services consist of numerous annual conferences and seminars addressing a wide range of medical, behavioral, and educational topics. ABOARD also developed "Training Educators About Autism & More" (TEAAM), a curriculum to assist educators in teaching children with autism. ABOARD's Information Services disseminates free, comprehensive information packets to families of newly diagnosed children with autism, staffs a toll-free guidance and information hotline, and maintains a website and informational e-mail system. With a lending library of over 700 titles and a quarterly newsletter, families can keep abreast of the latest news and treatments of the day. 412.781.4116 - 800.827.9385 — support@aboard.org - www.aboard.org

Association for Positive Behavior Support (APBS) is an international organization dedicated to the advancement of positive behavior support. APBS strives to expand application of this approach with children, adolescents, and adults with problem behavior. The Association is made up of professionals, family members, trainers, consumers, researchers, and administrators who are involved and interested in PBS. APBS, as a unifying home for these individuals from various communities and backgrounds, is a multidisciplinary association seeking members from all fields with interests in behavior support. The Association for Positive Behavior Support is currently being shaped through the activities of 10 working committees and is directed by a 12 member board. Nominations for board membership are solicited from members. If you are interested in participating in a committee or exploring leadership opportunities, please email Tim Knoster (Executive Director of APBS) tknoster@bloomu.edu or call (570) 389-4081. Anyone who is interested in finding out more about positive approaches to managing behavior is encouraged to check out the Association for Positive Behavior Support. www.apbs.org

The Alliance to Prevent Restraint, APRAIS is an organization that believes that "*Positive strategies can flourish only when negative interventions are rejected.*" They believe that a child can best be helped by finding the underlying cause of the behavior which is masked by aversive interventions. Find out more about APRAIS and view their publication [In the Name of Treatment A Parent's Guide to Protecting Your Child From the Use of Restraint, Aversive Interventions, and Seclusion](#). Visit: www.aprais.org.

AutismLink has opened Autism Center of Pittsburgh, located on Cumberland Road, off of McKnight Rd, in Pittsburgh's North Hills. The center offers speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, psychological evaluations, and critical parent support and information -- all at the same place!! Autism Link provides support and information to parents at our North Hills and New Kensington facilities. A child-friendly atmosphere will comfort both parent and child while they receive the therapeutic interventions and help that they need. Find out more about the Autism Center at www.autismcenterofpittsburgh.com.

Beginning in early 2007, **the Autism Center of Pittsburgh (by AutismLink) will offer several respite nights throughout the year.** Staffed with TSS's from local agencies and parent volunteers, parents can drop off their children with autism, and typical children, at the center for a few hours of fun. For a nominal fee of only \$10 per child, you can enjoy up to 3 hours of down time with your spouse, friends, or whatever you want. Your children will be in safe hands with occupational therapists, therapeutic staff support, tons of games, videos, activities, and more. **Autism Link -- Information and Support for Autism Spectrum Disorder**
(412) 377-8778 — support@autismlink.com — Fax: (724) 934-2040 — Visit: www.autismlink.com

NICHCY (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities) has launched a new **Research Center**, that connects visitors to **research evidence** on a wide range of **education practices**. Visitors can try out the Research-to-Practice database, where studies are placed in context and practical examples of the research in action are given. The summaries and analyses will continue to grow and visitors can register to be notified when new analyses are added. <http://research.nichcy.org>

Heart 2 Heart "Affecting Children Through Empowering Parents" "A Network of support and empowerment. Helping families of children experiencing severe behavior and mental health disabilities"— Heart 2 Heart is an alliance of parents and professionals in Western Pennsylvania intent on affecting their communities for the benefit of families and children experiencing the effects of behavioral and mental health disabilities. They work to bring healing through education, advocacy, support, resources and training with a specialization in the adoptive and foster family dynamic. <http://www.heart2heartpa.org/> 1-814-758-1681

Positive Results - Inclusion at work

Following are excerpts from letters written by parents of children in special education who have advocated for inclusive opportunities for their child. One is in kindergarten, one is in ninth grade and one is in college. We hope to continue to share the positive experiences of advocating more inclusive environments for children and we truly hope that more and more of you will be able to relate to these proud parents.

Kai—Kindergarten—[Initially, the school wanted to put Kai in Life Skills for the whole day. The parents wanted him in the regular Kindergarten and Learning Support for part of his day. The parents prevailed and both Kai and mom are happy as is obvious from the following words from mom.] *"His Kindergarten teacher said he is the best kid she has ever had. The principal loves him, and they all agreed he has exceeded everyone's expectation. So because he is doing so well, they are pulling him to the learning support classroom for only 20 minutes a day, instead of the up to one hour they were doing before. ST [speech therapy] 3 times a week for 30 to 45 minutes and OT [occupational therapy] will work in the classroom with him. Cannot remember PT [physical therapy] now but I think is something like half an hour, and Adaptive PE in gym, of course. Kai has chores and one of them is to make copies and he has to go into the office to do this and he ALWAYS has to stop in the principal's office to say "Hi." The Principal told my husband she looks forward to that everyday. The Learning Support Teacher even wanted to do an Academic Goal, ... right now he is communicating more and more each day, he is expressing his needs and wants and is learning so much everyday... There are two girls who act like Mothers, always sitting on each side of Kai and helping him. And the kids always want to play with Kai and make him laugh. Ms. B...says all they have been talking about this week is Kai's party (although I am worried as I have only gotten one RSVP and 3 Regrets and his birthday is next weekend YIKES, but [his teacher] says all the kids are talking and they said they are all going, ..My husband got teary eyed listening to [his teacher and principal] about how much the kids like Kai and how well he is doing and how truly HAPPY he is all the time. You should see the Big! Smile he has when I drop him at school. Kai's BSC [behavior support consultant] always tell me how his classmates, especially the two girls, get really sad when Kai has to go to Speech or Learning Support. TOO CUTE!!! See Inclusion does WORK!!!!"*

Kaci—9th Grade —[This is from a letter to Paula Kluth, inclusion expert, after the parent attended a PEAL sponsored workshop on inclusion and decided on inclusion for her daughter.] *"Our Special Education director said things like "She'll be so bored", "She can have hot chocolate in the life skills classroom!", "French class???? During our scheduling meeting [the Special Ed Director] read me a couple-page list of the things Kacie would be missing in life skills and said she wanted to be sure I knew what I was doing and that they would not want to be responsible for Kacie missing out on things she would need for her future. As she read and spoke, I just kept repeating to myself your words, 'Kacie will always have someone who can help her open a can, but this will be her last opportunity to sit in an inclusive classroom with her peers'. Truth be told, I didn't pay much attention to what she was saying, my mind was made up. I insisted on a French class. I argued that I did not expect Kacie to be fluent in French; I would be happy if she learned ten to twelve words in the semester. Our principal, struggling with scheduling, suggested French II since we didn't have expectations of her being fluent. I agreed, glad to just have finally won the French placement. I also agreed to "ease" her into inclusion and allow her to have living skills, job skills, etc. for the remainder of the day. So, 8 days into school I received a call from our Special Education director telling me that the French teacher is extremely distressed. Here is Kacie (a freshman) in a class with only juniors and seniors, where only French is spoken. "This student is receiving NO socialization. The teacher cannot take the time to work with her one on one, etc." So I agreed to move Kacie from French II to the only other option they could find for her...Honors Science...with the understanding that she will take French I next semester. Kacie likes Science okay, but she really misses her French class and keeps asking me when she can go back." So the parent went back to the principal and asked "why Kacie can't be in French I this semester " ... "if she can't, I want her back in French II" They have agreed to allow her to take half a block of French I, though expressing their concerns about the life skills she'll be missing. So we're up to a block and a half of inclusion, and I'm not worried about the life skills she'll be missing. "Kacie attended 8 French II classes. She brought home 70 flash cards. We have not studied them since she switched to Science class 9 school days ago. Half an hour ago I sat down with her and showed her the flash cards. She could read, interpret and pronounce 36 words, she knew what 8 of them meant and attempted pronunciation, and could attempt pronunciation but did not know the translation for 26 of the words. These last 26 were cards she was given in the last day or two that she had class." "At this point, socialization would not be our goal in that class. Kacie is learning French, and loving every minute of it. In spite of her concerns, [the French teacher] must be doing a great job. Kacie has already achieved more than triple my expectations."*

Stephanie—University —*Stephanie has good social skills, speaks well because she had good role models in regular classes and her self-esteem is high. She has achieved higher expectations than people predicted: she reads and writes, has learned to navigate the campus independently and manages some financial matters. With staff facilitation, Stephanie is connected with others in her classes who show an interest in getting to know her. She is included in clubs, recreation activities, volunteering, coffee, study groups, pub life, etc. and is presently leading a women's yoga class. We hope that in her fourth year she will be living independently in the community. A number of university professors have said how stimulating, important, enlightening, attitude-changing, etc. it is to have a student with such a disability in their class. My daughter, in her dance class last semester, had to teach a dance. She chose belly-dancing and gave out her jingly belts and hip scarves to all the fellows, then proceeded to teach. The professor was amazed – he had no idea that she had that sort of talent. The future teachers in her class have seen that a person with learning challenges has gifts given the opportunity to show them – a very important lesson. My daughter can't wait each morning to get to university, connect with other students and show how skilled she is in being independent. She is flying high."*

We love to hear about how inclusion gives students the opportunity to exceed limited expectations and accomplish great things. Please share your success story. Send to info@pealcenter.org or mail to the PEAL Center.



Some Upcoming Events in PA

Let us know what's going on in your area
so we can keep our newsletter and website current.



Special Education Advocacy Under New IDEIA 2004: Opportunities and Obstacles with nationally renowned attorney Matthew D. Cohen — Saturday, January 13, 2007— 1:00 -5:00 pm, Katz Auditorium - Jewish Community Center - 5738 Darlington Rd - Pgh. This presentation will highlight changes to IDEA and the regulations that govern the law. This workshop is free, however, registration is necessary. Childcare available. Act 48 credits available for \$10 fee. Make checks payable to Temple University. Call 412-995-5000 x509 to register and for information on childcare. Sponsored by Achieva, Education Law Center and PEAL Center.

Building Blocks for Communication and Collaboration— January 17, 2007— 8:30 -11:30 a.m. DePaul School for Hearing and Speech, 8:30 Social gathering & refreshments, 9:15: "Helping Your Child Develop Auditory Skills," 10:15: Parent Support Group. Siblings welcome—RSVP by 1/15/07. Call Mary Beth Karnan at 412-024-1025 or email mk@depaulinst.com.

Therapy - Think Outside the Box — January 24, 2007— 5:00 to 9:00 pm, Levy Hall - Rodef Shalom - 4905 Fifth Ave. - Pgh . This workshop will address how families and professionals can best work with insurance companies and, when necessary, tap into other sources of funding to cover medical / therapeutic support. Contact Becky Karns at 412.697.7434 ext. 113 or bkarns@ucppittsburgh.org Sponsored by UCP of Pittsburgh

Public Roundtable Meeting, Chapters 14, 16 & 711—January 29, 2007— Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit, 4750 Orchard Road, Schnecksville, PA 18078—610-769-4111 - The State Board of Education has scheduled one additional public roundtable. This is an opportunity for families of children with disabilities to be heard. Registration, first come first serve, by telephone only for either a participant or observer begins on January 22 at 10:00 a.m. **Call the State Board office (717) 787-3787 to register.** Space limited. Roundtable divided into three segments. 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon Chapter 14, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. Chapter 16. 3:00- 4:00 p.m. Chapter 711 (Dept. of Ed.)

6th Annual Native American Training & Information Network (NATIN)— January 29-30, 2007 — Department of the Interior - 1849 C Street NW - Washington, DC NATIN has been established to promote Civic Participation as a strategy to address issues that affect native children with disabilities Registration is limited. NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILIES TOGETHER PARENT CENTER 1-877-205-7501 E-mail: naft@moscow.com.

Leadership for Equity and Excellence: Transforming Education— Feb.7, 8 & 9, 2007— Crystal Gateway Marriott - Washington, DC The National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCREST) Conference - Educators, policy makers, advocacy groups, parents, and community members from across the U.S. will gather to explore how educational systems can assure equity in educational outcomes for all students through school improvement, leadership, family and community partnerships, policy, and teaching. The focus will be to share current research, best practices, and tools for transforming educational systems. Visit www.nccrest.org to register.

All Abilities Camp Fair— Saturday, February 10, 2007— 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.—The Mall at Robinson— Camps for kids of all abilities - inclusion friendly camps, school and pre-school age camps. Exhibitors include Camps for typical children and those with disabilities, Inclusion friendly camps, Full and half day camps, School and pre-school age camps, Information regarding Extended School Year (ESY) camps Contact ABOARD at 412-781-4116.

Learning Disabilities Association of America: International Conference— February 14-17, 2007— David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, PA . To register, visit www.lidaamerica.org. For more information, call the LDAA at 1-888-300-6710.

Transition to Adulthood —February 16, 2007—6:30 to 8:30 p.m.— ARC of Beaver - Stone Point Landing - 500 Market Street, Suite 200A - West Bridgewater, PA Presented in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Training Partnership for People with Disabilities and Families. Call 412-995-5000 x509 to register. Please register at least one week in advance. Sponsored by Achieva.

"Curricular Adaptations and Behavior Solutions for Autism Spectrum Disorder" —February 21-22, 2007— Holiday Inn & Suites Allegheny Valley 180 Gamma Drive , Pittsburgh, PA, (412) 963-0600 **Feb. 21** -- Curricular Adaptations - *Dr. Patrick Schwarz* author of "From Disability to Possibility: The Power of Inclusive Classrooms. **Feb. 22** - Behavior Solutions—*Maria Wheeler*, author of "A Treasure Chest of Behavioral Strategies for Individuals with Autism," and "Toilet Training for Individuals with Autism and Related Disorders." To register contact Spectrum Training Systems, Inc. (920) 749-0332 Email: spectrumtrainingsystems@yahoo.com - Website: www.spectrumtrainingsystemsinc.com

ABC's of Behavior & Reinforcement — March 15, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.—ARC of Beaver - Stone Point Landing - 500 Market Street, Suite 200A - West Bridgewater, PA- Participants will discuss how their children's behaviors are influenced by what happens before and after a behavior occur and how to use reinforcement to increase or decrease those behaviors. Call Achieva. 412-995-5000 x509 to register.

Advocacy 101 — March 8, 2007— 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.—Achieva - 711 Bingham Street - Pittsburgh, PA—A panel of local experts will discuss the meaning of advocacy, present different approaches to advocacy and identify resources that can help children with special needs achieve full participation in community life. Presented in collaboration with the Local Interagency Coordinating Council. Call 412-995-5000 x509 to register.

EI (Early Intervention) Families Workshops— March 24, 2007— 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Parenting a Child with Special Needs & Planning for the Future — April 10, 2007, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Finding Community Resources—April 24, 2007—6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

All three sessions will take place at The Center for Creative Play - 1400 Braddock Avenue - Pittsburgh, PA

Do you have a child, age birth through five years old, who receives Early Intervention services in Allegheny County? For information call Stephanie Scanlon at 412-323-3220 x1 or Julie Hladio at 412-885-6000 x136. Sponsored by the Local Interagency Coordinating Council, the Allegheny County Dept of Human Services, the Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, the Pittsburgh Schools and the Allegheny IU Project Dart; with special thanks to Achieva, Easter Seals, and the Allegheny County Health Department.

Helping People with ASD Learn from Life's Day-to-Day and Severe Losses. March 26, 2007 - Seven Springs Mountain Resort - Somerset County - Champion, PA—Presenter—Carol Gray, Director of The Gray Center for Social Learning and Understanding in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Sponsored by ABOARD. Visit www.aboard.org or call 412-781 4116 or 800-827-0385

Transition to Adulthood - March 28, 2007— 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.—Achieva - 711 Bingham Street - Pittsburgh, PA Presented in collaboration with the PA Training Partnership for People with Disabilities and Families. Presented by Partnership Trainers for Achieva. Call 412-995-5000 x509 to register.

North Allegheny Third Annual Transition Fair for Students with Disabilities — April 9, 2007, 7:00—9:00 p.m. —North Allegheny Senior High School, 10375 Perry Highway, Wexford, PA. Information will be available about post secondary education, employment opportunities and training, as well as recreation and leisure.

Relationship (Social / Sexual) Education... Whose Responsibility? —April 12, 2007-- 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. - Achieva - 711 Bingham Street - Pittsburgh, PA Parents are the primary Relationship Educators of their sons and daughters, BUT their sons and daughters aren't with them all of the time. How do schools figure into this? Call 412-995-5000 x509 to register. Please register at least one week in advance.

3rd Bi-Annual Conference - The Arts in Education - April 18, 2007, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - Jamison Hospital South Campus Conference Center - New Castle, PA Keynote speaker Cindy Schneider of Acting Antics will also be doing an all day workshop on teaching acting skills to individuals with autism to enhance social skills. Rebecca Moyer will be presenting the art of understanding behaviors in the classroom and there will be a session on the art of using medication with individuals with autism. Registration is \$75 for professionals and \$10 for Parents. Vendors are welcome. For more information contact Lisa Kray at 724-658-4230. Register early; space is limited. Sponsored by the Mid-Western PA Chapter of the Autism Society (the Lawrence County Autism Society)

Relationship (Social / Sexual) Education.. Whose Responsibility?-- April 19, 2007, 6:30 -8:30 pm - ARC of Beaver, Stone Point Landing - 500 Market Street, West Bridgewater, PA - Call 412-995-5000 x509 to register at least one week in advance. Sponsored by Achieva.

**PENNSYLVANIA YOUTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK (PYLN) GOVERNING BOARD
INVITES YOUNG ADULTS TO JOIN NETWORK...**

The PYLN, a group of young adults with disabilities, want to make a difference in the lives of youth in Pennsylvania. Their mission is to develop the self-determination, empowerment, and leadership of youth that promotes successful post school outcomes in the areas of education, employment, independent living, and health and wellness among youth and young adults throughout Pennsylvania. The PYLN

- provides a youth voice at the table on important boards and committees that impact the lives of youth with disabilities.
- recruits and matches mentors who are young adults with high school youth to help them prepare for their future success.
- develops and shares transition, self-determination, self-advocacy, and empowerment resources geared toward youth in high school.
- ensures unbiased policies, practices and attitudes that affect individuals with disabilities.

The PYLN Governing Board is now recruiting young adults to apply as candidates for a variety of positions within the Network. The deadline for submission of applications is January 22, 2007. You can call Linda Rose at 412-281-4404 for an electronic copy of application. Questions can be directed to the PYLN Governing Board at pyln.gb@gmail.com.



PEAL wants you to know...

- Beginning February 10th, the PEAL office will be open on a trial basis for one Saturday a month from 10 a.m.—2 p.m. This will provide an opportunity for families to get information at hours that may be more convenient to them.
- PEAL is planning to convene a meeting of parent and disability related agencies and groups. Our goal is to develop a perspective on issues facing families and individuals and to develop shared priorities for our work. We plan to host the first annual meeting in April 2007. Anyone who is interested in participating in this gathering, please contact Linda Rose at lrose@pealcenter.org or (412)281-4404 ext. 11.
- The PEAL Center is scheduling trainings on a variety of topics including "Your Rights and Special Education and How it Works." For more information about having us present in your area, call the PEAL Center at (412) 281-4404 or 866-950-1040.
- Your child's IEP meeting to consider ESY must occur no later than February 28 of each school year. The NOREP (Notice of Recommended Educational Placement) must be issued by March 31 of the school year. Visit elc-pa.org/pubs for the fact sheet on *WHEN IS YOUR CHILD WITH A DISABILITY ENTITLED TO EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR (ESY) SERVICES?*
- We would like to include at least one article in both English and Spanish in each issue of our newsletter. If anyone is willing to volunteer to translate an article for the PEAL News, please contact Linda Rose.
- This newsletter available in alternate formats by request.
- Photos on cover (Left to Right) - *Casey Ireson and Amelia Rothrock*, Ben Allison, Justin Crenshaw and Matthew Krauza.

Let us know what you think about this issue. Tell us what kind of information you would like to see included in our newsletter. Reply to Linda Rose, Editor, at lrose@pealcenter.org or 412-281-4404 ext. 11.



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