



THE

Navigator

SUMMER/FALL

Pilot Parents of Southern Arizona

Volume 18 Issue 3

Providing Information and Resources to Families and Professionals in Southern Arizona

How to make the Holidays... well, Happier.

We all know the holidays can be stressful. Add to that family members coming for a visit with the best of intentions but not realizing how different and difficult it can be to raise a child with special needs, and you could have a recipe for disaster.

Whether you are traveling home for the holidays or they (the family) are coming to you, here are some tips for maintaining your cool this holiday season.....



And, less stressful.....

1. **Draw names for gift-giving**—instead of buying for everyone, you'll be buying only for the person whose name you drew, saving time, money and stress.
2. **Finalize travel plans early.** Avoid stress and high prices by booking hotels and airline travel early.
3. **Stay at a hotel.** If you are visiting out of town family get a hotel. It will give you a way to get a break, some peace and a hotel may have features, such as grab bars and elevators, that can make your life easier and safer.
4. **Ship don't carry gifts.** If you will be traveling, buy gifts online and have them shipped. That way, you don't need to worry about carrying them with you while you travel.
5. **Stifle your inner Grinch with gratitude.** Feeling grumpy? Stop what you are doing and write down five things you're grateful for. It will help lower your stress and boost your oxytocin

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NEWS FOR DADS!

UCPSA (United Cerebral Palsy of Southern Arizona) is happy to host a new **Tucson Chapter of Dads 4 Special Kids (D4SK)**. D4SK is a support group, and meetings will be held the last Saturday of every month. The goal is to help fathers of children with special needs have a place where they can talk about their struggles, joys, disappointments, as well as family and internal issues, in an environment with others who understand what they are going through. Please take a look at the Horizons video on <http://dads4specialkids.org/>, to get a better understanding what we want to bring to Tucson.

The next meeting of the Tucson Chapter will be held on Saturday, November 29th from 9am -11am. The meeting will be held at the UCP building located at 601 N. Craycroft Road. You can find us at the northwest corner of Craycroft and 5th Street, and our building and parking lot face 5th Street.

Dennis Cole is the contact person for the Tucson Chapter of Dads 4 Special Kids.

520-344-8245

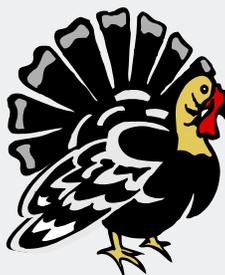
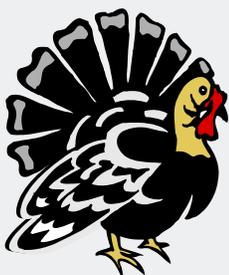
dcole@ucpsa.org



Joint guidance on effective communication for students with disabilities in public schools issued by Justice Department and Department of Education

Today the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division together with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services [issued joint guidance](#) about the rights of public elementary and secondary students with hearing, vision or speech disabilities to effective communication. The [guidance](#) includes a letter to educators, a Frequently Asked Questions document, and a summary Fact Sheet, and is intended to help schools, parents, and others understand schools' obligations under Federal law to meet the communications needs of students with disabilities. The [guidance documents](#) are available in HTML and PDF versions on ADA.gov. The Dear Colleague Letter and Fact Sheet are also available in Spanish in PDF versions.

To find out more about the guidance documents or the ADA, call the Justice Department's toll-free [ADA Information Line](#) at 800-514-0301 or 800-514-0383 (TDD), or access its ADA.gov website.



WorkAbility

WorkAbility is an employment services program that is offered by UCP of Southern AZ. The mission of WorkAbility is to provide employment preparedness and training, and competitive and sustainable employment opportunities to people with disabilities.

WorkAbility works with transition age youth who may or may not be in high school or have never worked before but desire employment. We consider ourselves a bridge program from high school to adulthood. This part of the program offers a semester (Fall and Spring) classes called the Starting Line for Employment. It is an 18 – 20 week course that focuses on employment readiness skills. There are field trips to businesses and volunteer sites, guest speakers from the community of businesses, training stations, and activities using art and technology as a medium to teach skills. **Students need to be ALTCS eligible, understand mostly what employment means and desires to work. It is not a day program, but a person could potentially take the class more than once. The end goal is employment. Other eligibility requirements are: Students must be able to transport themselves to and from classes and they must not be a danger to themselves or others. We do not have contracts with employers and we do not guarantee employment. It is a process!**

In addition to the transition age group, WorkAbility supports people who have been employed or not employed for an extended period of time. We offer an adult workshop course that is a 10 week rotating class that assists people back into the workforce and/or brush up on employment skills. The goal is to get the person employed. **Must be ALTCS eligible to apply for workshop and able to transport themselves to and from workshop.**

WorkAbility also offers job coaching and development. The goal is to provide seamless transition from job searching to getting the job and sustaining it. We negotiate with employers to customize and assist in the hiring process as well as training. **Eligibility criteria for job coaching and development is: Members must receive services through either DDD, VR, or families/members must have the ability to private pay. They must be ready to work and are self motivated. They must be able to transport themselves to and from sessions.**

We have contracts and receive referrals from the Division of Developmental Disabilities and from Vocational Rehabilitation Services. We enjoy giving tours and having students sit in on classes to see if the program is for them. We currently collaborate with a program called Project FOCUS which occurs at the U of A. We are looking to collaborate with various high schools as well and other groups. We received a grant from Long Reality Cares Foundation and are always looking for alternative funding sources.

Vanessa Zuber
Director of Employment Services and the WorkAbility program
520-344-8217
UCP of Southern AZ
635 N Craycroft Rd
Tucson, AZ 85711

PILOT PARENTS OF SOUTHERN
AZ WISHES YOU AND YOURS A ...



A LITTLE BIT OF THIS AND THAT.....



SUPPORTS INTENSITY SCALE (SIS)

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) developed the SIS. This team included self-advocates, family members, and others in the field of developmental disabilities. SIS measures the support a person with developmental disabilities needs to fully participate in the community. The SIS was written to enhance the person centered planning process.

“Support” means the help a person needs to do something successfully. Support could be paid or unpaid.

The SIS measures the help a person needs in many areas of home and community living through an interview process. Arizona is conducting a Pilot Study to determine whether the SIS would be helpful in improving identification of the supports needed by its members. www.azdes.gov/ddd

NATIONAL AWARENESS MONTHS

November:

National Diabetes Month
GERD Awareness week (Thanksgiving week)

December:

Safe Toys and Gifts Month
National Influenza Vaccination Week (1st
week of December)
World AIDS Day

January:

National Birth Defects Prevention
National Glaucoma Awareness Month

EMPLOYMENT FIRST ARIZONA

EXCERPTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although employment is one of the primary building blocks leading to inclusion, better income, good health and freedom, it remains an elusive goal for many people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who wish to work. Equal access to employment for people with disabilities has not improved since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) almost 25 years ago.

Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council sponsored a series of six [Employment First](#) Community forums to develop a comprehensive strategic plan designed to promote employment for individuals with [developmental and intellectual disabilities](#). A broad coalition of self-advocates, family members, service providers, educators, state agencies, advocates and employers shared ideas and strategies to raise public awareness, promote an attitudinal shift, build capacity aimed at bringing about systems change. It's all about integrated and competitive employment, or real jobs earning minimum wage, for all working age Arizona residents with disabilities. These meetings were held throughout the state through September.

The need to establish Employment First policies is a priority. Only 21 percent of individuals with disabilities are employed. Too many individuals with disabilities are not working or not considering work, and are unsure of what the future holds for them.

Help support Employment First in Arizona and stay involved. It is time for an attitudinal change and paradigm shift that promotes integrated employment in the community for individuals with disabilities.

TOP 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT IEP'S

As a parent, you play a key role at all points in the IEP process, and your knowledge and advocacy can make a big difference in ensuring your child's success.

1. Getting an IEP is one step in the special education process.

In order to get an IEP, a child must be evaluated and found [eligible for special education services](#). An IEP does not automatically follow a LD diagnosis, and not all students with LD will be eligible for an IEP. (If your child is [not eligible for an IEP](#), a 504 plan may be available for in-school support.)

2. The IEP should contain individualized information about your child and lay out the educational program designed to meet

his or her needs. By law, the IEP must include certain information about the child and the [services and supports the school will provide](#). This information covers topics such as current performance, annual goals, special education and related services, accommodations, participation in state and district-wide tests, needed transition services and measured progress. Remember that there is no “standard IEP”—every student has different needs and should receive a different plan.

3. IEPs are backed by the law.

The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#), the key federal education law that serves students with LD, requires that every child eligible for special education services has an IEP and sets requirements for the development, review and revision of the plan. IDEA grants [specific rights](#) to parents and students that you should become familiar with.

4. Parents play a crucial role at all points in the IEP process.

As a parent, you are an important member of [your child's IEP team](#). You have the right to participate in all [IEP meetings](#) and have input in all educational decisions made for your child. You also have the right to bring anyone with you to the IEP meeting that you may find helpful in the discussion. From the initial evaluation to when your child graduates, your active participation will help ensure that your child's IEP is crafted and implemented in a way that will lead to his or her success. Make sure you [fully read and understand your child's IEP](#).

5. IEPs should be results-oriented and time-sensitive.

Your child's IEP should state measurable annual goals. Reports should include objective measures—like results gathered by [curriculum-based measurement](#) and standardized tests. (Teacher-given grades and reports are important to consider, but should not be the only measure of progress.) If you're concerned that your child is not making progress, don't hesitate to reach out.

6. Follow-up is key in ensuring proper implementation of the IEP.

Parents often assume that their child's teachers will know what's in their child's IEP—unfortunately, this is **not always the case. It's important to make an effort to [meet with your child's teachers](#)** (including those who teach special classes like music, art and physical education) and other service providers. There's always a chance that something in the IEP will be overlooked or forgotten, so be sure to monitor your child's schoolwork, performance on tests and attitude toward school. Check in with your child and his or her teachers to make sure that all services and accommodations are being carried out as stated in the IEP.

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7. IEPs must be updated and reviewed at least annually.

IDEA requires that the school team (including parents) meet at least yearly to review the IEP and make changes for the upcoming year. As your child's challenges, achievements and needs evolve, his or her IEP should change to reflect this. While [the IEP](#) must be approved by the parents and school, parents can request the team meet at any time (be sure to make this request in writing). In other words, if you're concerned about [your child's progress](#) and think his or her IEP might need to change, you don't need to wait until your annual review to discuss the situation.

8. The IEP should include plans for life after high school—long before it's time to graduate.

IDEA requires that [transition services](#) (plans and measurable goals related to post-secondary training, education, employment, and independent living) be included in a student's IEP starting at the age of 16. But it's often wise to start thinking about transition earlier and many states start this process at age 14. Students with LD need to start transition planning in middle school because they may need to take specific classes or courses of study to keep them on a path to achieve their postsecondary goals.

9. Remember that IEPs do not extend to college, post-secondary programs, or the workplace.

The IEP ends at the conclusion of high school, or if the student is going to continue to receive special education services or supports, at the age of 22 (in most states). IDEA services do not continue into a two or four-year college or the workplace, and needed accommodations will not be granted automatically. Use NCLD's [Checklist for Transitioning from High School to College](#) to understand how to prepare for the transition out of high school.

10. If there is a dispute over an IEP, you have options.

First, learn more about [your child's rights under IDEA](#) and check out NCLD's [IEP Meeting Conversation Stoppers](#) to learn ways to respectfully but forcefully advocate for your child's rights in some common situations. If you continue to disagree with the school district's assessment or educational program for your child or believe that the school has violated any IDEA requirements, IDEA provides [dispute resolution options](#) that may be an option for your family. You can always contact Pilot Parents of Southern Arizona for assistance or to help answer your questions.

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Benefits 2 Work

Do you have questions about how working and earning wages may impact your Social Security benefits?

We have the answers for you. The Disability Benefits 101 (DB101) web site helps you understand your work incentive options and how to take control of your benefits.

Please visit www.azdb101.org to learn more about how you can work with a disability in Arizona.

DIRECT
1023 N. Tyndall Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85719-4446

Benefits 2 Work provides work incentive consulting services to Social Security beneficiaries throughout Arizona



Surviving Toddler Mealtimes

Toddlerhood is exciting and challenging for parents. Have you found mealtimes challenging with your toddler? Perhaps your toddler has recently become a picky eater or is showing caution with the introduction of new foods. Come learn from the experts and help reduce mealtime stress and set yourself up for success.

When:

Friday, December 5th

Time:

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Cost:

\$25

Location:

1601 N Tucson Blvd, Suite 6

RSVP:

Space is limited, please register at meatimeconnections.com to reserve your spot. Class registration can be found by selecting the calendar tab.

LEAP

Leadership Education Advocacy Partnership

The fourth year of the LEAP program is well under way. Pilot Parents has allocated close to \$28,000 for LEAP scholarships. Since the program year began on July 1, 2014 we have received 52 applications and extended 38 awards. Eligible events include conferences, seminars, trainings and/or workshops which enhance knowledge about disability related issues, or promote individual participation in the decisions which affect the life of individuals with disabilities. More information can be found by visiting www.pilotparents.org

ACDL Board of Directors Announces New Executive Director

The Arizona Center for Disability Law (ACDL) Board of Directors is proud to announce the appointment of Jose de Jesus "J.J." V. Rico as its new executive director.

J.J. has worked at ACDL since 2001, initially as a Staff Attorney and subsequently as Litigation Director. Since June 2014 he served as the Center's Interim Executive Director.

J.J. has dedicated his legal career to advancing the rights of people with disabilities through litigating for systemic changes and collaborating to train and educate others about disability-related laws and policies and fulfill ACDL's mission.

As the lead attorney in the landmark *Goddard v. Harkins* lawsuit, J.J. was principally responsible in ensuring that appropriate accessible accommodations are available for individuals with sensory disabilities to attend and enjoy movies at Harkins Theatres.

Among his other accomplishments, J.J.:

- served as the Chair of the University of Arizona's Hispanic Advisory Council
- worked as a Fellow for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund in San Francisco, CA
- served as an intern for Senator Edward M. Kennedy in Washington D.C.

Please welcome J.J. Rico as he works with ACDL staff to advance the disability rights movement in Arizona.

Tony DiRienzi, Board Chair



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324-3151

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AZ Partners in Leadership

(an enhancement of the Partners in Policymaking program)

Pilot Parents is pleased to announce that the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council has awarded funding for our 18th program year which will begin on January 9, 2015. We look forward to an exciting year with dedicated participants from around the state.

Partners graduates, Jennifer Schowengerdt and Sara Kroll-Franks (class of 2014), will be presenting at the National TASH Conference on December 4th. Jennifer and Sara will be representing the "Building Buddies" action group. TASH received over 600 break out session proposals. The "Building Buddies" action group proposal was one of the 100 chosen for the national conference that will be held in Washington DC. Look for a conference report in the next issue of the Navigator