

# PICs -n- Pieces

Parent Information Center & Parent Education Network Wyoming State PIRC  
Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Inc.



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## Kindergarteners With Attention Problems May Be At-Risk For Long-Term Academic Difficulties

Many children, especially young children, may have difficulty sustaining attention. However, a new study conducted by researchers at the University of California suggests that children who exhibit particular difficulties with following instructions, completing simple tasks, and controlling impulses in kindergarten are more likely to experience academic difficulties into high school.

Examiners used a sample of 693 students from the Detroit area who were followed as part of an earlier study conducted across the 1980s and '90s. Using teacher ratings, they examined the effects of three variables on students' long-term performance: (1) internalizing problems, such as anxiety and depression; (2) externalizing problems, such as "acting out" and noncompliance, and (3) attention problems, such as restlessness and difficulty focusing on tasks. Out of these, only attention problems were found to have a significant impact on a child's educational performance. Students who displayed notable attention difficulties in kindergarten showed significantly lower scores on achievement tests more than 10 years later, regardless of their IQ.

In their article, published in the June issue of *Pediatrics*, the researchers reported, "Ultimately, students who do poorly may lose motivation to invest in academic work, become more open to competing interests, including substance abuse, and more likely to drop out of school." The authors of the study suggest that more resources need to be devoted to young children who display problems with attention.

Julie Schweitzer, one of the authors of the study, stated that parents who are concerned about their child's attention problems "should not wait to see if the problems go away, but should seek evaluation from a trained professional." She continued, "Parents should start by talking with their child's pediatrician." The researchers also state that schools and teachers should not ignore early attention problems.

For more information about attention disorders, [visit www.wpic.org](http://www.wpic.org) for a downloadable brochure, or contact a Outreach Parent Liaison in your area for more resources.

*University of California - Davis - Health System (2009, May 28). Poor Attention In Kindergarten Predicts Lower High School Test Scores. Science Daily. Retrieved November 2, 2009, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/05/090526093928.htm> and <http://www.wpic.org/2009/05/26/attention-problems-in-kindergarten-could-spell.html>*

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# Saying Goodbye to Champions-

**a note from the Director, Terri Dawson**

*Champion: a defender, supporter or promoter of somebody or something.* ~Encarta Dictionary

During this month of giving thanks and in the spirit of the holidays, I have taken the time to reflect on the gifts in my life. I have recognized that over the span of our lives, there are people who have had a powerful, meaningful impact on each of us. In the past few months and years, the world has lost a few champions—two in a national, very public way and two, for me, in a very personal way. These champions are Eunice Kennedy, Ted Kennedy, my dad Joe Mangan and a dear friend, Morris Jacobson.



Many children look up to their parents when they are young. As I was growing up, I developed a strong relationship with my dad. As the youngest of three, I was always “Daddy’s little girl,” and I loved to go to the sporting goods store with him or help him work in the yard. We went fishing and hunting and traveled across the country together. In high school, he was often the one I took my problems to, crying about the injustices of the world and the silly pettiness of teen girls. My dad was not a warm, fuzzy kind of guy. He would listen and come straight to the point with his advice. Usually, he would turn it around and put the problem back on me, asking me what I was going to do about it. My dad made me feel that I could do anything and that there were no limits. He often would say, “Go for it—what do you have to lose?” He made me see things more clearly, and I always felt like he had my back and that he was rooting for me.

Joe Mangan, Sept 2006

With the birth of my son Ted, who has Down Syndrome, my Dad displayed that same attitude of “so what are you going to do about it?” - even though he never said it in so many words. He did not jump into research about Down Syndrome, or offer up strategies of what to do next. Yet, he listened and patted me, brushing away my tears, and once again, I knew he had our backs. He was my champion. He passed away October 7, 2009 at the age of 76.

It was as Ted was growing up that I realized there were other champions in the world. Eunice Kennedy Shriver, born 65 years before I even began to think about issues concerning those with disabilities, devoted her life to improving the welfare of and providing social and recreational options and opportunities for people with developmental and cognitive disabilities. As the founder of Special Olympics, the world's largest year-round sports program, she championed millions of people over the years—2.5 million athletes in 180 countries annually, to be precise. Her quote at the address for the 1987 Special Olympics World Games speaks to the depth of her passion and dedication to our children: *“You are the stars and everyone is watching you. By your presence you send a message to every village, every city, every nation. A message of hope. A message of victory. The right to play on any playing field? You have earned it. The right to study at any school? You have earned it. The right to hold a job? You have earned it. The right to be anyone’s neighbor? You have earned it.”* Mrs. Shriver passed away on August 11, 2009 at the age of 88.



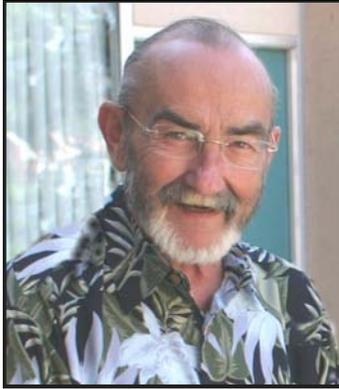
Terri Dawson, Director of PHP (L) and Eunice Shriver at the White House in 1997

Another champion the nation has recognized over his long political career was Eunice Shriver’s brother, Senator Ted Kennedy. As a Senator working tenaciously over the years, he was able to compromise with both sides of the Senate to pass bills to protect people with disabilities and extend educational benefits. He worked to guarantee civil rights and secure health care for all, and his passion for equality is evident in this quote: *“Programs may sometimes become obsolete, but the ideal of fairness always endures. Circumstances may change, but the work of compassion must continue.”* Senator Kennedy was a champion for those who did not have a strong voice themselves and championed legislation to improve access and affirm the rights of Americans with disabilities. He passed away on August 25, 2009 at the age of 77.

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TOGETHER We Make a Difference!

## Saying Goodbye continued...



Morris Jacobson

A fourth person that affected my life and who was a champion for families and children with disabilities in Wyoming was Morris Jacobson. Morris worked as an independent case manager for the children’s developmental disabilities Medicaid waiver and for the WY Department of Health as a Qualified Mental Retardation Professional. He advocated for families as a member on the Governors Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities and on the Wyoming Brain Injury Association Board of Directors. Morris was also a member of the Board of Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Inc. for six years, three of those as Board Chairperson. He passed away September 15, 2009 at the age of 63. To honor his life and to celebrate his unselfish and caring spirit, PIC will recognize other champions with an annual award to a family member, service provider, teacher, or other individual in Wyoming who supports, defends, or promotes students

with disabilities. Called the “**Morris Jacobson Champion for Kids**” award, the first recipient will be announced in the next issue of the PIC’s n Pieces newsletter.

Marian Wright Edelman said, “We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot see.” As we all work together, our simple acts can lead to great things for Wyoming’s kids. Thank you to all of you champions who make a difference each and every day!

## Special Olympics Wyoming Announces Launch of Young Athlete Program

*New program provides opportunities for involvement in a sports skills development program*

The Special Olympics Young Athletes program was created in consultation with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey to meet the physical and development needs of children, ages 2 1/2 to 7, in the areas of physical activity and play, with an emphasis on sports skill development. The activities presented in the program are designed to develop the fundamental prerequisite skills to prepare athletes for future participation in sports.

This program includes user-friendly instructions and provides flexibility for the parent/sibling, paraprofessional, teacher, and volunteer to conduct activities. The Young Athlete Program can be used in a school environment, playgroup, or one-on-one situation. After 8 weeks of training, Special Olympics Wyoming will offer a participation event where our Future Stars can shine with their peers and families to display their new skills.

The Young Athletes Program kit includes several resources to guide family members, educators and other professionals as

they conduct activities with their children, other siblings, peers, and parents, including a Young Athletes Activities Guide, training DVD, Young Athletes Equipment kit, a balance beam, cones, hoops, floor markers, bean bags, large plastic blocks, paddles, scarves, and foam balls.



**Special Olympics**  
**youngathletes™**

To register and order your kit, contact Dede McDonald at (307) 413-4880 or [dedmcdon@wyoming.com](mailto:dedmcdon@wyoming.com)



# Wyoming Early Intervention Council

"WORKING TOGETHER TO EXTEND THEIR REACH"

*The Early Intervention Council's mission is to provide statewide direction and support to insure exemplary coordination of community based early intervention services for children with developmental needs and their families.*

## Parents Sought for State Council

The Developmental Disabilities' Early Intervention and Education Program, a division of the State of Wyoming Department of Health, is again recruiting parents who have a child with a developmental disability to sit on the program's Early Intervention Council (EIC).

The Council is appointed for a three year term by the Governor who ensures that the Council membership reasonably represents the population of the state. Twenty (20%) of the Council consists of parents. The remaining council members consist of members of different agencies or providers of services to children, birth through five, with developmental disabilities.

The main qualifications to become a parent council member are:

- Have a child or children with developmental disabilities age 12 or younger;
- Have knowledge of or experience with programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities;

- Have a strong desire to guide decisions for children with disabilities in Wyoming;
- Minority parents are encouraged to apply.

The purpose of the EIC is to assist and advise state agencies in implementing a statewide service delivery

system for children aged birth through five who are identified as having developmental disabilities and their families.

The EIC's mission is to provide direction and support to insure exemplary coordinated community based early intervention services for children with developmental needs and their families.

*Contact Christine DeMers*

*Department of Health, Developmental Disabilities Division, 6101 Yellowstone Road, Suite 186E, Cheyenne, WY 82002, 307-777-5246.*

*We look forward to hearing from you!*

## Resources on Social Emotional Interventions

The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) recently developed a document titled, *Evidence Based Social Emotional Curricula and Intervention Packages for Children 0-5 Years and Their Families*.

Written by Diane Powell and Glen Dunlap, this resource provides information that programs can use in selecting curricula or intervention packages that are most appropriate for the needs of the children and families they serve. The document can be found at:

[http://www.challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/documents/roadmap\\_2.pdf](http://www.challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/documents/roadmap_2.pdf)

# PHP of WY, Inc welcomes a new addition:



Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Inc announces an exciting new addition to our organization: Wyoming Family to Family Health Information Center (WY F2F HIC) for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN). This three year project is funded through a federal grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Working in collaboration with the WY Department of Health, Maternal and Family Health, we will utilize part-time Outreach Family Health Liaison’s in three different areas across the state: Cheyenne, the Big Horn Basin, and Casper. The purpose of the WY F2F HIC is to:

1. Assist families of CYSHCN make informed choices about health care;
2. Provide information regarding the health care needs of and resources available;
3. Develop with representatives of health care providers, a model for collaboration between families of CYSHCN and health professionals;
4. Provide training and guidance regarding the care of CYSHCN; and
5. Conduct outreach activities to families, health professionals, schools and other appropriate entities.

The WY F2F HIC will assist the Wyoming Maternal and Family Health by:

- ⇒ Developing and disseminating family satisfaction surveys for families of CYSHCN;
- ⇒ Holding meetings for parent advisory groups to provide input on services for CYSHCN;
- ⇒ Providing follow-up support for families of CYSHCN with Medicaid and SCHIP insurance to ensure that they are following through with visits, especially with well-child visits, etc.;
- ⇒ Building the capacity of families and professionals to partner to improve services and outcomes;
- ⇒ Expanding efforts to inform families and professionals of available services for CYSHCN;
- ⇒ Strengthening the design of the transition planning tool and promoting its use among families and professionals;
- ⇒ Disseminating transition resources and advocacy documents to families of transitioning youth.

For more information about the WY F2F HIC, call (307) 684-2277 or toll-free 1-800-660-9742.

You may also contact the Casper F2F Outreach Family Health Liaison ,Michelle Pena, at 307-247-0075 in Casper or our Cheyenne office at 307-635-3536.

# Making Good Activities Better---

*Five easy to use ideas to take your family night activities from good to great!*  
 by Krista Sweckard, PEN Outreach Parent Coordinator

The Parent Education Network has been funding family night activities for a long time. PEN strives to make the practice better, more fulfilling for families and schools alike. This year is no different. We made some considerable changes to our contract, asking schools and families to conduct a training up front to plan and begin a conversation based in relationship building. The training gives all participants the opportunity to sit, converse, and more importantly, to listen to each other. Through the course of our initial planning sessions, we see many of our schools wanting to continue with previous versions of family nights from years gone by—and when we see that, we ask them—how can you make this activity better? How can families leave that activity knowing something more about the school, and how to help their child at home? Because, at the root of all of this, we want our families to leave the family-night activity with a better understanding of how they can support their child at home. So we present to you a list of ideas to make your activities more meaningful—hopefully your families will grow!

1. Explain what skills students are learning in class.
2. Demonstrate a learning activity for parents and explain how the activity will develop those skills. Ask parents to act out the parts.
3. Give materials to each family, offering advice as they use them.
4. Help parents assess children’s progress on the activity and steer children to the next steps.
5. Lend materials to use at home.

Adapted from: [Beyond the Bake Sale. The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships](#), Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, Davies

Make every opportunity you have with families a chance to help them see how they can support their child’s learning. Who knows? You may all learn something new!

**Programs at your school should help families:**

- ◆ **Get a clear idea of what their children are learning and doing in class**
- ◆ **Promote high standards for student work**
- ◆ **Gain skills to help their children at home**
- ◆ **Understand what good teaching looks like**
- ◆ **Discuss how to improve student progress**

[Beyond the Bake Sale. The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships](#),  
 Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, Davies



## Good Apple Spotlight

**Evansville Elementary** in Evansville recently hosted a Family Math–Art night. Principal Donna Mathern, teachers and parents worked together to provide an evening for families and children to learn from each other. Pictured at left is a Dad enjoying learning with his children.

*Linking Family Engagement  
to learning can be FUN!*

# Parent Partners, Leading the Change in Teacher Education

by Elizabeth Simpson, University of Wyoming

The spirit of the laws which insure parent involvement for students with disabilities does so in recognition of the parent as the child's first teacher. The law acknowledges and honors the parent as the expert on their child's learning strengths and needs and places them at the table with educators to create an appropriate education for each child with special needs. Parents understand that the human experience is not standardized and have insight into the differential needs of their child. Arguably, parents and teachers should be sitting at the table together meeting the needs of all children, labeled or not.

As a teacher educator, and one who believes strongly in the rights of the child to a free and appropriate, individualized education in the least restrictive environment, I have always felt something needed to be done to put parents together with pre-service teachers. My theory was that if we could have parents be part of the education process for the teachers who will have their children in class, that perhaps the teachers would begin their careers seeking out parents as partners in the educational process. Perhaps the teachers would be able to see the students through the parent's eyes, as viable and critical contributors to the human experience.

Last spring, I contacted the Parent Information Center (PIC) and shared my plight. Through PIC, twenty willing parents stepped forward to volunteer for this experience. I organized the parent/pre-service teacher (my student) relationship so as to be as effective as possible without being overly stressful or time consuming for the parents. The parents and the students were paired at the beginning of the semester. The students were asked to interview the parents to gain an understanding of their child, the child's strengths, learning styles, relationships, goals and challenges. The students were also to ask about the parent and child's experiences in school thus far so as to learn from exemplary practice as well as past mistakes. The students were then expected to work from that information as they considered the state standards, built lesson plans, evaluated the learning environment of their future classrooms and developed and executed a mock IEP.

I was blessed with fantastic parent volunteers who showed great compassion toward the young pre-service teachers. My goals for the partnership were simple. I wanted my pre-service teachers to:

- ⇒ demonstrate an understanding that all children have limitless potential to reach their goals.
- ⇒ understand that each child was an individual and not their disability.

- ⇒ Finally, I wanted them to experience the growth that happens for teachers when they are guided by the child's ability rather than their disability.

With the exception of a few, the outcomes for the students went beyond my expectations. I interviewed the students periodically to insure they were on the right track. The first notice of the impact of the parent partnership came in our first feedback session. The students were so impressed with the abilities of the students! The parents had shared how the disability impacts their child's lives, but they had *emphasized* how the disability had NOT impacted the child's potential to set and meet goals and be at least a productive member of the community and so much more if they get the right education and supports. That first contact with the parents got them excited about helping the student reach their full potential. The conversations moved from the disability to the child! Here is what some of the students said they learned:

***"I realize the critical role that parents have in these children's lives and how they can serve as an invaluable resource for how to teach their children."***

—Erica

"The thing I will take away from this class the most is, "Thank your student with a disability for making you a better teacher." This really has stuck with me and is very profound. Having a student with a disability in your classroom is often looked at as a challenge that will make everything more difficult for you as a teacher. However, it will be beneficial for not only you but the rest of the students in your class. This student forces you to look at your teaching and your curriculum in a different way and push yourself to be better for your students."—Katie

"Through this class I realize that many other types of disabilities exist, but within every disability there are many more abilities that make each student the person they are. I now realize that I don't need to focus on how I can address a student's disability, but rather how I can emphasize their abilities to help accommodate for their disability." —Cody

"I realize the critical role that parents have in these children's lives and how they can serve as an invaluable resource for how to teach their children. I realized that by reaching out to these experts, I can be a better teacher to students with disabilities and my classroom as a whole." —Erica

I can't thank the parents enough for sharing their experiences with "our" future teachers. I believe in the power of parents to make positive changes in our educational system. In fact, I believe that parents are the only ones who can make those changes! Thank you for being part of helping me make changes to our teacher preparation program! All children will benefit from your efforts!

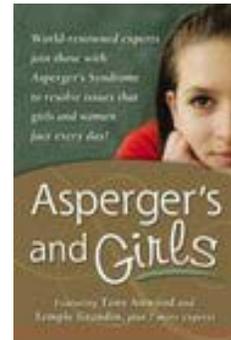
# What's Happening in Wyoming

**Important Notice!** The WY Dept of Education began permanent rule promulgation of the Chapter 7, Services for Children with Disabilities Rules and Regulations on November 13, 2009. The public comment period began Nov, 13, 2009 and will end at 5:00 p.m. on Dec. 28, 2009.

All comments are to be submitted to Teresa Canjar, Executive Assistant, via email at [tcanja@educ.state.wy.us](mailto:tcanja@educ.state.wy.us) or in hard copy to 2300 Capitol Avenue Hathaway Bldg, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Cheyenne, WY 82002. In addition, the Dept has scheduled public hearings via the WEN to accept comment on the noted rules: Dec 1, Dec 3 and Dec 7 from 5:00– 6:30 pm. Locations of the WEN video sites and a copy of the proposed rules can be found at:

<http://www.k12.wy.us/SE/PermanentCh7.asp>

## Books for loan in PIC's lending library:



Asperger's and Girls by Tony Attwood, Temple Grandin, Teresa Bolick and Catherine Faherty.

Women with autism spectrum

disorders discuss their experiences, good and bad. Leading professionals in the autism field punctuate this masterpiece with fascinating articles, offering helpful advice based on many years of experience.

*A Project of Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Inc*



**WYOMING**  
PARENT EDUCATION NETWORK  
PARENT INFORMATION CENTER  
**E-NEWSLETTER**

TOGETHER We Make a Difference

*We are excited to offer an additional electronic newsletter to enhance our quarterly issue of our current newsletter PICS-n- Pieces. If you would like to receive this newsletter every other month by e-mail, please go to [www.wpic.org](http://www.wpic.org) or [www.wpen.net](http://www.wpen.net) to sign up with your e-mail address or call :*

**1-800-660-9742.**



Ten Things Every Child With Autism Wishes You Knew by Ellen Notbohm

Some days it seems the only thing about it is the unpredictability.

The only consistent attribute -- the inconsistency There is little argument on any level but that autism is baffling, even to those who spend their lives around it. The child who lives with autism may look "normal" but his behavior can be perplexing and downright difficult. This book addresses some of the perplexing behaviors of children with autism and how families can learn from their children.

## Literacy, Literacy, Literacy!

The Wyoming Early Hearing and Detection Intervention (EHDI) Program will be holding it's annual conference February 18 & 19, 2010 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Casper, featuring Mary Ellen Nevins, National Director of the PPCI at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Center for Childhood Communication. She will address the role of hearing in building a language base, emphasizing degree of hearing acuity and the listening devices available to meet a child's auditory access needs. A model for listening and spoken language acquisition will serve as the foundations for understanding how this sets the stage for early literacy development. Specific strategies that coach parents in helping their children learn to listen and produce spoken language will be offered. Discussions of how families can participate in early literacy activities will round out the program. Case studies and practical application conversations will ensure active participation by conference attendees. For more information, call EHDI at (307) 721-6212

# Classroom Make-Over: Integrating Universal Design for Education

By Sara DiRienzo

The contemporary classroom looks quite bit different than what many may remember from school. In addition to traditional black boards and stern rows of desks, students now find Smartboards, beanbag seating, floor mats, read-aloud software and much more. Teachers adopt these changes because of a concept called Universal Design in Learning.

Universal Design in Learning (UDL) focuses on creating a learning environment where all students can be successful every day. UDL benefits all students.

“The number ONE reason is that by providing a wide variety of options to students and by making them AVAILABLE, then students don’t have to look ‘different’ if they choose to use them! An equally important benefit is that if lessons are automatically offered in a multi-sensory/faceted approach, then it will automatically reach a broader range of learning styles that are always present in any single classroom at any single moment. UDL really utilizes 21st century learning skills and utilizes all the teaching tools available to education providers AND allows students to respond to lessons in a MUCH wider range of methods-beyond the pen and paper of yesterday,” said Barbara Locke, Project Coordinator for WIND Assistive Technology.

Future teachers at the University of Wyoming must comply to UDL principles as well, ensuring that many classrooms will be constantly integrating technology and alternative learning into lessons.

Tessa Burt, who works for the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) is also an elementary education major. She said, “I have heard about UD in nearly every education class...Every lesson plan I have written this semester alone has to include specific write-ups on how our lesson applies to all learners and students with special needs. I am also a firm believer that we should offer our NIMAS services to all students. Anyone who is an audio learner or visual learner could benefit. The program that I use highlights and reads the text out loud and I think all students could benefit from this reading tool.”

WATR provides training on UDL and applies the principles in consultations and reports.

“We label products as UDL rather than Special Ed as appropriate. [Also], our loan library has lots and lots of UDL products in it for the citizens of WY to try!” said Locke.

Alyssa Newcomb, office assistant at WATR, recommends several devices that could be used in UDL. “The first that comes to mind is the Classmate Reader by Humanware. You can load books onto it and it will read out loud as well as highlight the words it reads. The Fly Fusion is another one. It is a pen that takes notes and then you can load them onto the computer. It is supposed to help with fatigue.”

Other devices Newcomb recommends include Solo Software for lesson design; Dragon Naturally Speaking and MacSpeech for dictation; EZ Keys for word predictions; and Kurzweil for scanning, reading and learning software.

While making a complete conversion in a classroom can be challenging for both students and teachers alike, simple changes can be easy to achieve. Locke offers some advice:

“Begin moving toward digital text for all lessons; use free resources for producing UDL lesson plans that are available on the web (CAST website and others); utilize video/photographs; text readers within as many lessons as possible and customize the tools based on the small group population that will be using them; let students use a variety of tools to access and respond to materials, including use of digital cameras, digital microscopes, digital video, digital sound recordings; include digital portfolio samples for student work samples.”

Locke also believes that digitalizing assignments in a class wiki would not only benefit UDL, but also offer a greener solution for education.

“The [UDL] principles could really impact the number of students being referred for special education interventions if students have the right tools available to them in their classes,” stated Locke.

For more information about Universal Design Education or other WATR programs visit the new WATR website at <http://uwyo.edu/wind/WATR/>, call toll-free at 1-888-989-9463, or e-mail [watr@uwyo.edu](mailto:watr@uwyo.edu).

# Seclusion and Restraints

The use of seclusions and restraints in schools with children in special education has been a “hot topic” in special education. Nationally, stories of children suffering abuse and even death have aroused national conversations on the issue. In May of this year, the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc. (COPAA) published a report documenting 185 cases of aversive interventions (defined as use of seclusion, restraints, and painful consequences) and urged congress to take action on the issue. According to the report, 71% of students did not have a behavioral plan in place that included research-based positive behavioral interventions when the abusive interventions were applied. Additionally, 71% of parents reported that they did not consent to the use of the seclusion or restraints.

A majority of the children were between 6-10 years of age and were taught in self-contained classrooms. 68% had classifications of Autism or Asperger’s Disorder.

While the use of seclusion and restraints is carefully monitored in hospitals and other organizations, there are currently no national statutes regulating such practices in schools. The COPAA has urged congress to consider the recommendations listed below.

Currently, the state of Wyoming is seeking to form a committee in order to develop their own guidelines for the use of seclusion and restraints in schools. Those interested in giving recommendations are encouraged to contact the Wyoming Department of Education, Special Programs Unit in Riverton at (307) 777-2552. Following are the COPAA Recommendations:

1. Prohibit the following in schools under all conditions:
  - ⇒ Prone (face-down) restraints;
  - ⇒ any restraints that interfere with breathing;
  - ⇒ mechanical restraints (such as wrist and ankle straps) and chemical restraints (forced medication);
  - ⇒ any other form of restraint, *except in situations in which the student poses a clear and imminent physical danger to himself or others;*
  - ⇒ locked seclusion rooms or other rooms from which a child cannot exit, *unless there is an imminent threat of immediate bodily harm*, in which case a child can be placed in a locked room while awaiting the arrival of law enforcement or crisis intervention team;
  - ⇒ use of restraint or seclusion when they are medically
  - ⇒ psychologically contraindicated (against medical advise) for a child, and;
  - ⇒ any behavior management or discipline technique that is intended to inflict injury, cause pain, demean, or deprive the student of basic human necessities or rights.

2. Make clear that other physical restraints can be used in school settings *only to control acute or episodic aggressive behaviors that pose a clear and imminent physical danger to the student or others.*

3. Prohibit the use of locked seclusion rooms and spaces from which children cannot exit, as noted above. If, in order to allow a child to de-escalate, timeout or cooling-off spaces are used, children must be able to exit them, and they must be supervised at all times. The rooms must not be used for other purposes (e.g., punishment) or in place of providing appropriate related services and behavioral supports in the classroom. A child’s legal right to learn with her peers in the least-restrictive environment must be respected and enforced.

4. Hold school districts and their employees accountable when abusive interventions are used.

5. Prohibit retaliation against any school personnel, parents, children, or other school community members who report the inappropriate or wrongful use of restraint, seclusion, or aversive.

6. Ensure that children receive effective positive behavior supports developed within a comprehensive, professionally-developed individualized plan of behavioral accommodations, related services, and interventions.

7. Adhere to IDEA requirements that parents and school staff should work together collaboratively—as equals—to ensure that children receive appropriate interventions.

8. Reinforce that school districts must always allow parents to make reasonable visits to their children’s classroom and schools.

9. Require extensive training of all personnel in educational settings who have contact with children. Training must include the proper use of research-validated positive behavioral supports, crisis reduction and de-escalation techniques, along with other best practices.

10. Require schools and educational facilities to gather and report data, regarding each incident in which an aversive intervention was used, the circumstances surrounding its use, whether a positive behavioral intervention plan had been implemented and a summary of it, and whether the child has suffered physical or psychological injury.

*Source: The Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc. (2009, May 27). .Unsafe in the Schoolhouse: Abuse of Children with Disabilities. Retrieved November 2, 2009, from [www.copaa.org/pdf/UnsafeSchoolhouseCOPAAwithAppendixMay09.pdf](http://www.copaa.org/pdf/UnsafeSchoolhouseCOPAAwithAppendixMay09.pdf)*

# Meet the New Staff of Parents Helping Parents of WY

## Parent Education Network



**Kellie Johnson, Cheyenne**  
Kellie relocated to Wyoming from South Dakota in 2006. She's worked with children and families for many years through Head Start, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Youth Alternatives and Bethany Christian Services. Most recently she worked with the Partnership Diploma

Program, an alternative high school provided by Laramie County School District # 1 and LCCC. She is married to an elementary teacher and together they have one school-aged daughter.



**Terri Nations, Rock Springs**

Terri comes to the PEN with a variety of work experiences; ranging from a position as Wyoming Quit Tobacco Coordinator Manager, parent liaison for Desert View Elementary Title 1, various chair and co-chair positions with community partners, to working as a respiratory therapist at Memorial

Hospital of Sweetwater. She has a BA in Psychology and Human Resources.

## Parent Information Center



**Megan Mitchell, Riverton**

Megan Mitchell is the proud parent of a seven year old son and is excited to announce a new baby on the way. With a BA in Psychology from UW, she has had years of work experience with people who have acquired traumatic brain injuries.



**Stephanie Harris, Cheyenne**

Stephanie, a native Texan, recently moved to Wyoming after working for several years as a school psychologist in Utah. Stephanie is thrilled to be a part of the Parent Information Center and believes that parents are always the experts on their children.

## PEN Celebrates Family & School Engagement Month



PHP staff from left: Erin Swilling, Kellie Johnson, Governor Dave Freudenthal, Jan Jones, and Stephanie Harris

October 2, 2009, Governor Freudenthal once again declared October Family and School Engagement month.

***“WHEREAS, it is appropriate that we recognize the outstanding contributions made by families in fostering a love of learning and schools which acknowledge the importance of family engagement and take action to make it an integral part of the school community”***

# University of WYO Offers Convenient and Accessible Programs in Special Education

Are you interested in getting Special Education Certification, a Master’s Degree in Education with a Specialization in Special Education, or a Ph.D. in Special Education? Even in the current economic situation, there continues to be a shortage of Special Education professionals, throughout Wyoming and nationally.

The Special Education Department at the University of Wyoming offers convenient and accessible programs to help you achieve your career goals, further your education, and empower you as a teacher by informing you of current and proven research-based tools, techniques, and methodologies. All courses are delivered via distance education technology throughout the state of Wyoming in partnership with the Division of Outreach Credit Programs. Courses are also available on-campus.

The Master’s, Alternative Master’s, and Certification-Only Programs are offered through the Division of Outreach Credit Programs to students across the state via online and video conferencing. Students can complete the Master’s and Special Education Endorsement program in 1 year as a full-time student (Track I), 2 years on a part-time basis (Track II), or up to 6 years (Track III).

The Dept of Special Education offers four degree programs:

- A Master’s degree in Education with a specialization in Special Education. Students will receive a Master’s degree and a teaching endorsement in K-12 Special Education.
- An Alternative Master’s degree in Education with a specialization in Special Education. This program involves courses in Special Education and elective courses outside of Special Education, but does not involve teaching certification.
- A K-12 endorsement program in Special Education. This program allows students to earn teaching certification in K-12 Special Education without having to earn a Master’s degree.
- A Ph.D. program in Education with an option in Special Education. This program involves advanced graduate study to prepare students to become researchers and leaders in special education.

For more information call Maureena Walker at 307-766-6325, or send an email to [mwalke22@uwyo.edu](mailto:mwalke22@uwyo.edu)

## Wyoming Switchboard Network

The Wyoming Switchboard Network was created in 2008. The Switchboard is a centralized collection of distance education resources designed to enhance the student’s learning environment and increase the school districts’ ability to offer a full range of course options to their students. The Wyoming Department of Education acts as the operator for the WSN, ensuring Wyoming’s K-12 students receive the finest distance education opportunities regardless of place or time.

The WSN offers information about distance education programs of various sizes and delivery methods. The Switchboard hosts programs ranging from full virtual schools with a large number of course offerings to smaller programs that allow individual teachers the opportunity to share their courses with students across the state. Courses are offered using WEN Video, audio, on-line, through correspondence or through a hybrid approach of these delivery methods. All Wyoming School Districts, Community Colleges, and the University of Wyoming are eligible to provide distance

education courses on the WSN. Currently, seven school districts are participating members of the Switchboard, each expanding educational opportunities for K-12 Wyoming students. Six of these seven programs are offered to students state-wide.

Students may enroll full time into a program or take individual supplemental courses depending on their individual academic needs. There are currently 524 courses available. Of the 524 courses offered 36% of them are Hathaway Success Curriculum courses. Students who are interested in enrolling into these courses can initiate the process by contacting their local school district. For a listing of distance education courses and programs offered go to [www.k12.wy.us/TCD/WSN](http://www.k12.wy.us/TCD/WSN).

Contact the WY Dept Ed, Scott Bullock at 307-777-7418 or via e-mail at [sbullo@educ.state.wy.us](mailto:sbullo@educ.state.wy.us) or Lachelle Brant at (307)777-3679 or [lbrant@educ.state.wy.us](mailto:lbrant@educ.state.wy.us), for further information concerning K-12 distance education opportunities.



# 2010 District Teacher of the Year Winners Announced

Congratulations to the following Teachers of the Year winners! Chosen by panels from their respective districts, each teacher will receive a \$1,000 prize. Additional congratulations go to Christina Mills of Goshen School District #1, who was selected from this group of winners as the Teacher of the Year for the state of Wyoming! Thank you for all your hard work!

<b>Name</b>	<b>School District</b>	<b>School</b>
Christeen Townsend	Big Horn 1	Rocky Mountain Elementary School
Darlene Moncur	Big Horn 2	Lovell Middle and High Schools
Vicky Reznicek	Campbell 1	Westwood High School
James Kline	Carbon 1	Rawlins Middle School
Richard Martin, Jr.	Carbon 2	Encampment K-12 School
Jeffrey Barnett	Converse 1	Douglas High School
Dennis Cone	Fremont 1	Lander Valley High School/Starrett Junior High School
Kristina Melin	Fremont 2	Dubois High School
Christina Mills	Goshen 1	Lingle-Ft. Laramie High School
James Lash	Hot Springs 1	Thermopolis Middle School
Cheryl Gerard	Johnson 1	Buffalo High School
Kathryn Schwandner	Laramie 2	Carpenter Elementary School
John Miller	Park 1	Powell Middle and High Schools
Melanie Neely	Park 6	Glenn Livingston Elementary
Michael Reinker	Park 16	Meeteetse Schools
Fran Blatnick	Platte 1	Glendo Attendance Center
Dora Reins	Platte 2	Platte County School District 2
Rachel Schroder	Sheridan 1	Tongue River High School
Doug Raney	Sheridan 2	Sheridan High School
Aretta Hudlow	Sublette 1	Pinedale Middle School
Lorna Bath	Sweetwater 1	Northpark Elementary
Darren Heslep	Sweetwater 2	Lincoln Middle School
Michele Farrier	Teton 1	Alta Elementary/Summit High School
LeAnn Springer	Uinta 1	Clark Elementary
Kerry Koch	Uinta 6	Lyman High School
Mary Ann Sapp	Washakie 1	West Side Elementary
Brian Titus	Washakie 2	Ten Sleep Schools
Joyce Haptonstall	Weston 7	Weston County School District 7

## About us:



Information & Referral for Parents of Children with Disabilities

### Parent Information Center, PIC:

**Outreach Parent Liaisons (OPL)** provide local information and support to families of children with disabilities, on their rights under special education law, IDEA. PIC also provides workshops and trainings on IDEA, IEPs, and specific disabilities such as attention disorders, autism and down syndrome. If you are interested in a workshop in your community or making contact with an OPL, call PIC at 1-800-660-9742 or (307) 684-2277, or call:

**Betty Carmon**, Powell, 754-3430, [bcarmon@wpic.org](mailto:bcarmon@wpic.org)  
Serves Cody, Powell, Greybull, Worland, Lovell & Thermopolis area

**Janet Kinstetter**, Moorcroft, 756-9605, [jkinstetter@wpic.org](mailto:jkinstetter@wpic.org)  
Serves Moorcroft, Gillette, Sundance & Newcastle area

**Stephanie Harris**, [sharris@wpic.org](mailto:sharris@wpic.org) or **Jan Jones** [jjones@wpic.org](mailto:jjones@wpic.org)  
Cheyenne, 635-3536 Serves Cheyenne, Laramie, Wheatland & Torrington area

**Michele Pena**, [mpena@wpic.org](mailto:mpena@wpic.org), 247-0075 or 265-6884 or toll free 1-877-265-6884 Serves Casper, Douglas, Glenrock & Lusk area

**Jennifer Petri**, [jpetri@wpic.org](mailto:jpetri@wpic.org) or **Tammy Wilson**, [twilson@wpic.org](mailto:twilson@wpic.org)  
Serves Green River, Rock Springs Kemmerer and Evanston area

### Parent Education Network, PEN:

As the Wyoming State PIRC, PEN provides technical assistance to schools about family friendly practices in education. PEN works with schools to help families understand the provisions of No Child Left Behind, and how to be more actively engaged in their children's learning and education.



For more information call **Krista Sweckard**, Outreach Coordinator at (307) 684-7441 or e-mail [ksweckard@wpen.net](mailto:ksweckard@wpen.net) or contact the Outreach Parent Liaison closest to you:

**Kelly Rogers**, Casper, 265-6884, [krogers@wpen.net](mailto:krogers@wpen.net)  
Serves Casper, Douglas, Glenrock, and Lusk

**Terri Nations**, Rock Springs, 389-1718, [tnations@wpen.net](mailto:tnations@wpen.net)  
Serves Rock Springs, Green River, and Evanston

**Megan Mitchell**, Riverton, 857-1337, [mmitchell@wpen.net](mailto:mmitchell@wpen.net)  
Serves Lander, Riverton, Dubois, Shoshoni and Wind River Reservation

**Kellie Johnson**, Cheyenne, 635-3536, [kjohnson@wpen.net](mailto:kjohnson@wpen.net)  
Serves Cheyenne, Laramie, Wheatland and Torrington

PEN also provides home-based services for children, prenatal through age five, and their families with the *Parents as Teachers (PAT)* program. Certified PAT parent educators are:

**Erin Swilling** (307) 635-3536 Cheyenne [eswilling@wpen.net](mailto:eswilling@wpen.net)  
**Samantha Crawford** (307) 742-6528 Laramie [scrawford@wpen.net](mailto:scrawford@wpen.net)  
**Blanca Moye** (307) 690-8149 Jackson [bmoye@wpen.net](mailto:bmoye@wpen.net)  
**LiEnisa Martinez** (307) 754-3430 Powell [lmartinez@wpen.net](mailto:lmartinez@wpen.net)  
**Tammy Dexter** (307) 857-1337 Riverton [tdexter@wpen.net](mailto:tdexter@wpen.net)

For more information about *PAT*, call **Dara Johnston**, *PAT* Coordinator at 1-877-900-9736 or (307) 684-7441 or e-mail [PATinfo@wpen.net](mailto:PATinfo@wpen.net).

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**Parents Helping Parents of WY, Inc.**

#### Parent Information Center

[www.wpic.org](http://www.wpic.org)

(307) 684-2277

Toll free 1-800-660-9742 (WY)

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#### Parent Education Network

Wyoming State PIRC

[www.wpen.net](http://www.wpen.net)

(307) 684-7441

Toll free 1-877-900-9736 (WY)

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**TOGETHER** We Make a Difference

**"We know the future will outlast all of us,  
but I believe that all of us will live on  
in the future we make."**

Senator Edward Kennedy

**Parents Helping Parents of WY, Inc. (PHP)**, because of rising mailing and production costs, and our increased distribution number to more than 5,200 parents and professionals, must charge a \$20/year subscription fee to professionals and other interested individuals.

**The newsletter remains free to parents, however any donation is appreciated.**

Please complete and return the form below so that we may update our mailing list:

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a parent of a child with a disability and a Wyoming resident. Please keep me on/add me to the list.

\_\_\_\_\_ If your child has a disability, please list disability: \_\_\_\_\_ Child's age \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a parent leader in my child's school \_\_\_\_\_ (name of school).

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a professional, teacher or other interested person. Enclosed is \$20 for a one year subscription.

My organization/school name is \_\_\_\_\_ My role/ position is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am the parent of a child with disabilities, but do not live in Wyoming. Enclosed is \$20 for a one year subscription.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State

This is my: \_\_\_ Home address \_\_\_ Work address (Please check one) E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to subscribe to PHP's new electronic newsletter to be distributed 4-6 times/year.

**Additional Donation amount \_\_\_\_\_ . Thank you!**

**Please Send PHP A Change of Address If You Move. The Post Office Does Not Forward or Return Bulk Mail.**

Mail to: Parents Helping Parents of WY, Inc.  
 500 W. Lott St, Suite A  
 Buffalo, WY 82834

For more information  
 Contact PIC at 1-800-660-9742  
 (307) 684-2277  
[tdawson@wpic.org](mailto:tdawson@wpic.org)

## Upcoming Events

Wyoming Early Hearing and Detection Intervention  
(EHDI) Program Annual Conference  
February 18 & 19, 2010 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Casper  
Call EHDI at (307) 721-6212

WY Dept of Education Public Hearings on  
Chapter 7 Rules Governing Services for Students with Disabilities  
Dec 1, Dec 3 and Dec 7 on WEN video.  
For more details or for WEN sites go to [www.k12.wy.us](http://www.k12.wy.us)



## Parent Information Center

Information & Referral for  
Parents of Children  
with Disabilities

500 W. Lott St. Suite A Buffalo, WY 82834  
1- 800-660-9742 or (307) 684-2277

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