

PICs –n– Pieces

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



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In This Issue:

Retention Research	1
Parent Leadership Training	3
Family 2 Family	3
Early Focus on Literacy	5
Play Now, Eat Later	6
Shedding Shyness	7
National Guard Soldiers	8
Good Apple Spotlight	10
What's Happening in WY	11
WY Schools go Green	12
Academic Bowl	13
Subscription Information	15

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS ABOUT RETENTION

Retaining students who are struggling is a common practice throughout the U.S., but does it work? For years, many have questioned the effectiveness of retention, so what does the research say?

In 2003, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) combined the research from numerous studies to examine the effects of retention. Here is what they found:

Elementary:

- Initial gains may be made the first year that students are retained; however, the gains decline until students are performing no better, or worse, than their grade-level peers.
- The most obvious academic struggle for students who have been retained is in reading.
- Students who have the most severe academic, emotional, and behavioral problems are the most likely to suffer negative consequences from retention.
- Retention has not been proven to have any positive effects on self-esteem or school adjustment; however, the research shows that it does lead to significant increases in behavior problems.
- In a 2001 study, 6th graders ranked retention as the #1 most stressful event on a list that included the loss of a parent and going blind.

Secondary:

- Regardless of achievement levels, students who have been held back in school are significantly more likely to drop out. The risk of dropping out increases with each year a child is held back.
- Students who had been retained were more likely to have health risks such as emotional problems, cigarette and alcohol use, drug abuse, drinking during driving and sexual activity, early sexual activity, suicidal behavior, and violent behavior.

Early Adulthood:

- Poorer educational and employment opportunities.
- Decreased likelihood of receiving a diploma by age 20.
- Lower pay and competency ratings, regardless of school achievement level
- Higher likelihood of receiving public assistance, unemployment, and imprisonment.

Continued on Page 2

Retention...Continued from Page 1

Even though the research is grim, every child is different:

- Students who have more positive self-concepts; good peer relationships; social, emotional, and behavioral strengths; and fewer achievement problems are less likely to suffer negative consequences from retention.
- Students who struggle as the result of missing opportunities for instruction, such as attendance, health, or mobility problems, may benefit from retention, as long as these problems have been resolved and as long as the student is no more than one year older than his or her classmates.
- Students are less likely to have negative consequences when they are not just retained, but when they receive specific interventions that address their areas of need and promote achievement and social skills. However, using these types of strategies is also likely to benefit students who are not retained.

Alternatives to Retention:

If the research doesn't support retention, what other options are available to schools? NASP makes the following recommendations:

- Encourage parent participation through regular contact with teachers and involvement with homework.
- Adopt age-appropriate and culturally sensitive instructional strategies that accelerate progress in all classrooms.
- Emphasize the importance of early developmental programs and preschool programs to enhance language and social skills.
- Use continuous assessment strategies, such as progress monitoring, to guide instruction.
- Provide effective early reading programs.
- Implement effective school-based mental health programs.
- Use student support teams to assess and identify specific learning or behavior problems, design interventions to address those problems, and evaluate whether or not the interventions are working.



- Use effective behavior management strategies to reduce classroom behavior problems.
- Provide appropriate education services for children with disabilities.
- Offer extended year, extended day, and summer school programs that emphasize academic skill development.
- Implement tutoring and mentoring programs with student or adult tutors.
- Incorporate comprehensive school-wide programs to promote the psychosocial and academic skills of all students.
 - Establish full-service schools that serve as a community center for educational, social, and health services to meet the diverse needs of at-risk students.

How can parents help their children succeed the first time?

- Discuss concerns as they arise with the teacher. It is important to know what assignments your child is expected to do and what type of work is difficult for your child to understand and complete.
- Ask your child's teacher what help is being provided to your child and what you can do at home to help him or her succeed.
- Help your child with homework by asking to see his or her assignments and creating a quiet time and place to study.
- Make sure your child is rested and ready for school each day. It is important that your child gets plenty of sleep, eats a nutritious breakfast, comes to school on time, and receives appropriate medical care.

Every child is different. Parents and schools can consider the research, along with the unique needs and circumstances of each child, to choose sound strategies that will address students' individual educational needs.

PARENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING INSTITUTE KICKS OFF



The Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI), a 20-week course designed to provide parents, youth, and communities with the knowledge, skills, and tools for leadership, kicked off its inaugural session on February 20th in Cheyenne. After a day-long retreat, participants began weekly sessions that will help them

develop the skills to be effective change agents on behalf of children, youth, and families. The first set of sessions will focus on leadership, understanding personal history, and its impact on perception. The second set of sessions will involve a study of politics, policy, and media. As part of the PLTI, each participant will also be completing their own individual Community Project, creating and implementing a plan to improve or change something in their communities.

The goals of PLTI are to promote positive parent leadership development by:

- Helping parents become leaders in their communities through civic involvement;
- Assisting parents to be change agents on a neighborhood, regional and state level;
- Developing supportive communities of families within the state;

- Promoting parent involvement in state and local policy decision-making processes; and
- Increasing parent-child interaction through family involvement.

The PLTI first began in Connecticut, after a group of parents participating on the Commission on Children voiced valuable ideas but lacked a feeling of empowerment. The PLTI was designed to help members of the community understand that “just a parent” can be a powerful change agent.

In Cheyenne, the Parent Leadership Training Institute is being offered through a partnership between the Department of Health and other community agencies, including PHP. The goal for PLTI is to expand to other communities throughout the state of Wyoming.

Kellie Johnson, a Parent Education Network Outreach Parent Liaison and a current participant of PLTI, stated, “This has been a tremendous opportunity for growth, both personally and professionally. Every session has opened my eyes to ways to further my leadership goals. The personal connections I am building with other members have enriched my life and challenged me to reach new heights in advocacy and mentoring.”

If you are interested in learning more about PLTI, contact Stephanie Harris, PHP Cheyenne Coordinator, at sharris@wpic.org or (307) 635-3536.

Wyoming FAMILY Health Information Center A Project of Parents Helping Parents of WY, Inc.

F2F & PIC OFFER FREE DISABILITY AWARENESS POSTCARDS



Sticks and stones can break my bones and words CAN really hurt me!

Using the word “retard” is not cool, funny, or hip—it’s just thoughtless. No matter how the word is used, it is hurtful to people with disabilities.

Think about your words. Don’t use words that hurt.

To increase public awareness of March as Disability month, the Parent Information Center has partnered with Family to Family (F2F) Health Information Center, the Casper Autism Society, and school districts across the state to distribute disability awareness postcards. The purpose of these postcards is to increase the understanding of how hurtful and offensive using words like “retard” can be to others. Some of the schools across the state that have purchased and distributed these postcards include Converse County School District #1, Sheridan County School District #2, and Johnson County School District #1, among others.

The Parent Information Center, Wyoming Family to Family Health Information Center and the Casper Autism Society are offering bundles of 50 postcards to families and providers at no cost. Simply call PIC at 307-684-2277 to receive additional copies to express your support of people with disabilities. Supplies are limited, so call today!



Child Care Finder, Wyoming's only Child Care Resource and Referral organization,

is going on a "Listening Tour" in April to hear what parents are thinking about child care.

CCF provides free referrals to licensed child care and information about how to choose a quality child care program. CCF would like to know what information is most useful to you when choosing child care and how CCF can best help you find the care you want at a price you can afford.

From April 12 – 29, 2010 CCF will be in nine different communities meeting with parents and child care providers. A complete list is available at www.cnswyoming.org.

CHILD CARE FINDER WANTS YOUR INPUT

If you would like to participate but can't attend a meeting, a questionnaire will be available on-line throughout the month of April. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Linda Crowder at 1-800-578-4017 ext 302.

CCF is a program of Children & Nutrition Services and is made possible by the support of the Wyoming Department of Family Services.

NEW FACT SHEETS AT THE PARENT EDUCATION NETWORK



The Parent Education Network has developed more PEN Notes fact sheets for families in Wyoming: Shyness in Children and Progress Monitoring.

PEN Note # 31 provides information on Shyness in Children. All children are shy sometimes, but some children display more shyness than others. There are likely many different factors that contribute to shyness in a child. The PEN Note # 31, Shyness in Children, provides information on causes and ways to overcome Shyness while discussing differences in children's temperaments.

Another of PEN's new fact sheets is # 32 on Progress Monitoring, which is a way to monitor a child's academic progress. Progress monitoring tools allow for direct, frequent and continuous assessment to see the effectiveness of instruction. These tools can be used with a whole group of students or with one student at a time.

This PEN Note describes the benefits of using progress monitoring and how it works.

Download the PEN Notes as pdf's in English and Spanish from our website, www.wpen.net/publications.html.

Parent Education Network

Presents

Literacy Building Blocks for a Bright Future

Birth to 6

*Both English and Spanish Version
With Julie Yager and Carolyn Lampman Brubaker*

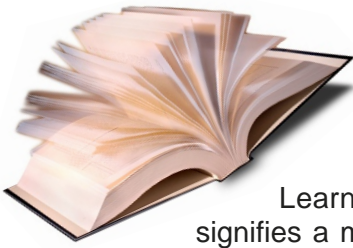


PEN LITERACY DVD AVAILABLE

The Parent Education Network has Literacy videos available for families of toddlers and preschools ages birth to six on how to build literacy skills. Developed in Riverton by Julie Yager and Carolyn Lampman Baker as KickStarts for Kids, this 30 minute DVD offers strategies and simple steps for families to help their children develop language skills and learn to read while having fun!

Offered at no cost to families, these DVDs have been dubbed in Spanish for families who use English as a Second Language.

In Casper, the Natrona County Public Library Foundation with Wyoming Medical Center has copies available at the library. For other parts of Wyoming, call the Parent Education Network at 307-684-7441 for your free copy!



CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM EARLY FOCUS ON LITERACY

By Sara DiRienzo /WIND

Learning to read and write signifies a milestone for children in their educational life. But, imagine if your child was among many Wyoming students who struggle with hallmark literacy skills.

In 2008-2009, the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students, better known as the PAWS test, reported that 46% of third-graders tested at “basic or below” in reading, and 44% tested at “basic or below” in writing. With such large gaps in numbers for young children, aiding students in literacy is key to building a strong foundation for learning.

To discover a child’s individual learning style and needs, the WIND Assistive Technology Resource Center (WATR) offers assistive technology devices and services that to support student learning. In addition, WIND’s Wyoming Clearinghouse for Accessible Instructional Materials program coordinates the acquisition of digital and accessible files of instructional materials. Together, these programs can enhance student performance capabilities, facilitate participation in instructional activities, and improve scholastic achievement.

“Students may have the same goals of meeting state standards of achievement, but providing the instructional materials necessary to meet those standards often require the materials be rendered in a different format that better meets the learning style of students with print impairments,” said Kathy McWhorter, WATR Project Manager.

“Through the use of individualized tools and approaches for using flexible, value-added digital resources, students can participate in the learning environments of their peers, and can use the same curriculum that has been prepared in a more accessible format. There is a large contingency of students who have traditionally been unable to access the materials typically used in classrooms. Providing more accessible materials opens the instructional setting and offers skill advancement to these students,” she further stated.

Assistive technology exists as a tool for learning; schools and parents must also actively participate in boosting a child’s literacy levels.

The 2004 Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires schools to provide curriculum materials in accessible formats to eligible students. Eligible students include those with a print or reading disability, and eligibility is verified by the Wyoming Department of Education. The Wyoming Clearinghouse can respond to individual needs by coordinating the conversion or rendering of core curriculum materials into formats that these students need to meet their instructional objectives. School districts are also able to participate in regional trainings about the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS).

Parents fill one of the most significant roles in a child’s education. Taking note of your child’s learning-needs benefits all future education.

“Schools can provide the most appropriate education in the world, but if there isn’t follow through at home, a child’s learning will suffer. When children see that their education is important to their parents, it becomes important to them,” said Barbara Locke, WATR Education/Outreach Coordinator.

Locke goes on to say, “Parents are the best advocates for their child. They have every right to ask questions about what is being tried, what has been tried, and help teams brainstorm some additional steps that can be explored on behalf of their child.”

For more information on NIMAS, WATR or enhancing your child’s literacy contact WATR at:

Wyoming Institute for Disabilities
Wyoming Accessibility Center– UW
Dept 4298, 1000 E University Avenue
Laramie, WY 82071
WATR Email: watr@uwyo.edu
Toll Free: 1-888-989-9463



TOGETHER We Make a Difference

PLAY NOW, EAT LATER

SOME ARGUE THAT RECESS BEFORE LUNCH MAKES A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

LATER



Making the change isn't easy, but if you want to start seeing these benefits at your school, consider the following tips:

- Educate yourself—explore the research and resources. Many are available at www.peacefulplaygrounds.com.
- Educate teachers about the benefits of recess first during staff meetings or inservices.
- Educate parents through a parent meeting, school newsletters, bulletins, or by information on printed lunch menus.

EAT NOW

Some interesting new research suggests that putting recess before lunch can have some surprising benefits.

A study that compared students who ate lunch after recess to those that ate before showed that students who lunched later wasted much less food—only 27.2%, compared to 40.1% for students who lunched first. Additionally, students who lunched later consumed more calories and more calcium, Vitamin A, and iron. Given that school lunch may account for roughly 30% of a child's daily food intake, the fact that children ate more and received more nutrients is significant.

Schools who have implemented recess-first programs have noticed other benefits, including:

- Better cafeteria behavior, since students have gotten their “wiggles” out.
- Students eat at a more leisurely pace, since they are not “rushing” to get out to recess.
- Students focus and learn more readily in the classroom due to improved nutrition.
- Students eat more, since the energy expended during the physical activities of recess increase appetite.
- Fewer visits are made to the school nurse, one school reporting a 40% decrease.

- Educate students by teaching them exactly how to adopt the new routine. Include considerations about how to clean hands after recess.
- Plan for the new schedule. Make sure to include everyone who might be involved, including playground monitors, food service workers, lunch monitors, custodians, and teachers.

Sources:

Parker-Pope, T. Play, Then Eat: Shift May Bring Gains at School. New York Times blog:: January 25, 2010. Available at <http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/01/25/play-then-eat-shift-may-bring-gains-at-school/>

Bergman, E., Buergel, N., Englund, T., & Femrite, A. The Relationship of Meal and Recess Schedules to Plate Waste in Elementary Schools. Journal of Child Nutrition & Management, Issue 2, Fall 2004. Available at <http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/newsroom/icnm/04fall/bergman/bergman1.asp>

Bossenmeyer, M. Recess Before Lunch. Available at <http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/recess-before-lunch.htm>

SHEDDING SHYNESS ALMOST ALL CHILDREN ARE SHY AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER. IT IS PERFECTLY NORMAL FOR A CHILD TO BE SHY AROUND AN UNFAMILIAR PERSON OR IN A NEW SITUATION. THERE ARE LOTS OF CASES WHEN SHYNESS IS DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE; HOWEVER, SHYNESS CAN BECOME A PROBLEM IF A CHILD REPEATEDLY TRIES TO AVOID SOCIAL SITUATIONS.

While some shyness is normal, excessive shyness can cause problems for children because they may have more difficulty making friends, communicating with others, and expressing their opinions and emotions. Other children may also misinterpret a child's shyness as being mean or unfriendly.

What Causes Shyness?

All children are shy sometimes, but some children display more shyness than others. There are likely many different factors that contribute to shyness in a child. Some of these factors may include:

Temperament. *Temperament* refers to a child's style of behavior and is evident at birth. Researchers have identified 9 traits of temperament. Depending on their unique combination of temperament traits, some children may be naturally more inclined to shyness.

Shy parents. Children may model the shy behavior of the adults around them.

New situations. Children may withdraw as a way to cope in overwhelming situations.

Inconsistent parenting. If children are not sure what to expect, they may not feel secure enough to assert themselves.

How can I help my child overcome his or her shyness?

Whether or not your child has a "shy" temperament, there are many things parents can do to help their children develop the skills to participate successfully in social situations. Here are seven strategies parents can use to help their children overcome shyness:

Expose your child to a variety of people and social situations at a young age. This will help your child get "used to" new experiences and will give them opportunities to practice their social skills. Enrolling your child in different play groups and other social activities will also prevent them from becoming socially isolated.

Model non-shy behaviors. Children often learn by watching, and if they see their parents being shy, they are more likely to be shy themselves. Modeling healthy expression of feelings and social skills, like introducing yourself to others, can help your child to learn these same skills.



Avoid labeling your child a "shy" child. If a child is frequently referred to as "shy," she may start to define herself in this way and behave accordingly. Instead of saying, "Oh, she's just shy," try saying something like, "sometimes it takes her a minute to get used to new people. She will feel like talking when she gets used to you." This prevents the child from classifying herself as shy and opens the door for her to interact once she feels more comfortable.

Empower your child by teaching him independence and responsibility. Shy children often become dependent on their parents and other significant people, making them reluctant to take risks. Try giving your child chores and responsibilities that are challenging, but doable, and provide opportunities for him to make decisions. By encouraging him to do so, you are empowering him, developing his self-esteem, and reducing his dependency.

Use social communication skills to role play. Only after hours of practice does a performer feel comfortable taking the stage in front of audience. For a child, interacting in social settings may be much the same way. Parents can help children practice their social skills by role-playing different social scenarios. A simple way to start is by practicing simple conversation skills. Ask your child some simple questions about herself and encourage her to do the same to you. You can then get into more specific situations, such as how to join in with other students during recess.

Don't allow children to isolate themselves. Because social situations may be uncomfortable for shy children, they may have a tendency to withdraw. Help your child stay connected socially by keeping her involved in activities and play situations.

Don't speak for your child. Speaking in behalf of shy children reinforces shy behavior and steals opportunities for them to interact. Most children will "speak up" when they have a chance, and it is important for them to learn to speak for themselves.

With your help, even the shyest child can develop the skills he or she needs to have happy and fulfilling social experiences.

Source: PTA Parent, January 2010.

WY WELCOMES BACK NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS

By Robin Gorsuch, WYNG State Youth Coordinator

Approximately 900 Wyoming National Guard Soldiers will be returning to their home communities in early April after a year-long deployment in Kuwait. Research has shown that the reintegration phase of the deployment cycle is often the hardest on families as they all readjust to being together again.

COMMON REACTIONS TO REINTEGRATION:

Preschool or Kindergarten Children

- Feels guilty for making parent go away
- Needs time to warm up to returning family member
- Demonstrates intense anger at home or school due to feelings of being abandoned
- Acts out to get parent’s or teacher’s attention
- Demanding
- Tests limits
- Behavior may regress

School-Age Children

- Any of the signs exhibited by younger children
- Excited to have parent returning
- Feels guilty that they didn’t do enough or weren’t good enough while parent was gone
- Dreads parent’s return if they believe parent will discipline them for all the wrongs committed during the separation
- Boasts about the service and parent
- Attempts to monopolize returning parent’s time and attention in an effort to bring them up to date
- Worry about how their role in the family may change
- Anger
- Children of same sex as returning military member may feel competition for masculine/feminine role in the family

Teens

- Excited about parent’s return if relationship was strong before deployment
- Feels guilty for not living up to standards, expectations
- Is concerned about changes in rules and responsibilities
- Feels too old or is unwilling to change plans to meet the plane or ship when parent returns
- Withdrawn, angry, resentful
- Concern about how household will change after military member’s return
- Self-conscious about expressing feelings
- Mood swings
- Act “cool” in front of others, especially peers
- Appear to be indifferent

WHAT CAN TEACHERS AND OTHERS DO TO HELP?

- Follow your instincts
- Rely on your wisdom and knowledge of childhood development
- Have the child make personal journals, as some kids express their feelings easier by writing
- Have a bulletin board for sharing pictures and experiences
- Record return date of parent (s) on a calendar
- Have the student make a scrapbook of educational progress while their parent is away
- Practice problem solving skills on a daily basis to help students increase their skills--5 steps—(1) Define (2) Brainstorm (3) Discuss alternatives (4) Decide on action, and (5) Evaluate; use real-life examples from school and home
- Maintain a predictable, structured class schedule with specific rules and consequences
- Maintain emphasis on the importance of learning, while leaving room for tending to students’ needs
- Plan for shorter lessons and proceed at a slower pace, if necessary, on a temporary basis
- Increase appropriate physical contact – connect on different sensory levels
- Maintain open and honest communication with parents or guardians
- Expect regressive behavior in younger children
- Help students do something to help others--helping them to take action and taking action with them will give them a sense of being in control and a feeling of community



- Answer questions as honestly as possible at the child's level of development--Validate feelings and give students a chance to talk
- Don't be afraid to say "I don't know;" this serves to keep discussion open and honest
- Reinforce ways to express negative emotions without hurting self or others
- Reassure students that everyone adjusts to change at a different pace
- Be sensitive to the needs of students whose parents or caregivers speak a different primary language
- School counselors, teachers, and school administrators can contact military family support organizations for information on deployment workshops, free educational materials, or counseling services
- Invite representatives from your local military family support organization to a PTA meeting to talk about reintegration and children
- Encourage military families to attend programs designed to provide support, such as Yellow Ribbon Events and Family Readiness Group Meetings
- Provide a school or district primary point of contact for military-related information and resources as appropriate
- Establish support systems and processes to address transition and other educational issues that affect military children
- Provide information and referral services, training, and materials to local school personnel who work with military children

WY NATIONAL GUARD FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

There are many resources available to the military members, their families, and their communities. If you don't see what you need in the list below, please call one of the numbers listed and we'll help you access the appropriate resource. Many of these resources are under the umbrella of the WY National Guard Family Program.

WY Air National Guard Family Program (153rd Airlift Wing)

Denise L Rampolla
Airmen and Family Readiness Programs Manager
307-772-6063 (Office) 307-214-2625 (Cell)
Denise.Rampolla@ang.af.mil

Provides programs, resources and referrals that enhance the readiness of both Airmen and their families; assists in the recruitment of volunteers and the training of Commanders, Military Points of Contact and Lead Volunteers in Family Readiness.

Military One Source

Dave Stephens, WY MOS Consultant
1-307-287-9473

David.Stephens@militaryonesource.com

Free resources at 1.800.342.9647 or militaryonesource.com; One-stop-shop for information on military life, deployment, financial management, relationships, career planning, school, personal health and crisis situations.

Military Family Life Consultants

Rick Souza, LPC

307-772-5364 (Office), 307-287-7005 (Cell)

Charles.R.Souza@healthnet.com Provides problem-solving counseling for service members and their families on a variety of topics.

Operation: Military Kids

Eloise Riley, Program Coordinator

307-633-4383

eriley3@uwyo.edu

Creates state and local community support networks for military youth and helps connect them with youth-serving organizations in their hometowns.

WEBSITES

American Academy of Pediatrics

www.aap.org/sections/uniformedservices/deployment/index.html American Academy of Pediatrics site

dedicated to the effects of deployment on child and adolescent mental health.

Military Child Education Coalition

www.militarychild.org Site includes links to graduation exit exam matrix, checklist for transferring students, K and Grade 1 state eligibility guidelines, SAT and ACT preparation, student enrichment information, and more as well as deployment information.

Military Family Research Institute

www.cfs.purdue.edu/mfri/index.html Site includes annotated bibliography of 66 research studies and links

National Guard Bureau Joint Services Support

(JSS) www.jointservicesupport.org Provides on-line eLearning to individuals who work with individuals impacted by military service (including children and youth) on a variety of subjects.

Operation Healthy Reunions

<http://www.nmha.org/reunions/resources.cfm#5>

Reunion and reintegration resources for children and adults who have been affected by military deployment.



Samantha Crawford & her new son.



Ethelyn Sharpe, PAT Educator

her back in the future! With her departure, we are closing our Laramie office and are excited to welcome back Ethelyn Sharpe, a Parents as Teachers Educator, to assist and provide PAT services in Cheyenne. Ethelyn has worked with PEN in the past and we are all happy to welcome her back to the fold.

Ethelyn and her husband have two adult children. She graduated with her BS in Education from Oklahoma Christian University, and has taught first grade and preschool for fifteen years in Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming. She is excited to be working with parents and young children to enhance their early learning experiences.

TIMES... THEY ARE A CHANGIN'

PEN's early childhood program, the Parents as Teachers Program, is undergoing some changes. We sadly say farewell to our Parent Educator Samantha Crawford in Laramie. She leaves us to pursue the most wonderful task of raising her beautiful new son along with her daughter. Samantha has always been a proponent of the Parents as Teachers motto- *A parent is a child's first and most influential teacher*- and leaves us to do that personally. We wish her well and hope to see

Ethelyn's role as a PAT parent educator is to support and empower families by providing the information and encouragement parents need to help their children develop optimally during the crucial early years of life. If you are interested in learning more about Parents as Teachers, or have a family who would like to enroll in the PAT program in Cheyenne, please contact our Cheyenne office at 307-638-3536.



GOOD APPLE SPOTLIGHT

Trail Elementary School held their **"Desks and Donuts with Dads"** family-school activity in February 2010 with a turnout of more than 200 parents, teachers and community members attending the morning event before the start of the school day! Dads (or adults) were invited to come see what the children had in their desks. Students read stories and poems and showed the Dads what they were doing in Math. Many positive experiences grew from this event. One dad commented about his favorite part of the activity, **"Spending the morning with my best friend; I liked that he was able to show me how proud he was of the work he was doing."** Congratulations to Trail Elementary School for hosting a wonderful event!!



St. Stephens: Looking for something different to attract their parents in for a family function started the planners of St. Stephen's Casino Night **"thinking outside the box."** Planners were able to bundle up math in a fun-friendly way that made it feel welcoming and relaxing so families could visit and play with their kids. Families who attended were able to enjoy time with their students, talk to their teachers in an easygoing setting, and go home with some games that will help their kids improve their



math skills. **All of the ingredients to a successful family night were added to St. Stephens' Math—Casino Night, making it truly a memorable event for all!**

Linking Family Engagement to learning can be FUN!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WYOMING

ART CONTEST FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The WDE, Special Programs Unit, is pleased announce the winners of the Art Contest for Students with Disabilities! Winners were selected in each of three age categories. All art work submitted will be displayed at the **4th Annual Wyoming Special Education Leadership Symposium** in Lander, Wyoming, **July 27-29, 2010**. All questions regarding the Leadership Symposium should be directed to Suzanne Lilygren, Project Coordinator. 307-857-9264 or slilyg@educ.state.wy.us. Winners in each age category are listed as follows:

AGES 3-7

1st Place: Henley Clubb, Douglas Primary, CCSD #1
 2nd Place: Mikey Martin, NW BOCES Children's Center
 3rd Place: Christopher Finnegan, Indian Paintbrush, ACSD #1

AGES 8-12

1st Place: Reilly Clubb, Douglas Primary, CCSD #1
 2nd Place: Melanie Byk, Starrett Jr. High, FCSD #1
 3rd Place: Russell Dayton, Monroe Intermediate School, SCSD #2

AGES 13-21

1st Place: Candie McDowell, East High School, LCSD #1
 2nd Place: Alexis Mann, Cody High School, PCSD #6
 3rd Place: Spencer Luce, Thermopolis Middle School, HSSD #1



Artwork by 8 yr old student
 at Douglas Primary

DEAFOLOGY 101

The Division of Communication Disorders, in association with the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities and the Deaf Association of Wyoming, will sponsor DEAFology 101, a FREE performance by author, humorist, and comedian Ken Glickman, on April 15th at 7:30 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Education Auditorium. For more information, visit uwyo.edu/comdis

WYOMING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST'S ASSOCIATION SPRING CONFERENCE

April 15 & 16 in Casper

Dr David Eagleman will be the presenter for the WY School Psychologist spring conference April 15 & 16 at the Ramkota Inn in Casper, WY. He will speak about multisensory learning, the importance of sleep for students, brain elasticity and a general overview of modern brain science. For registration or more information, contact: Carol Kramer at kpspc2008@ymail.com.

David Eagleman grew up in New Mexico. As an undergraduate he majored in British and American Literature at Rice University before earning his PH.D. in Neuroscience at Baylor College of Medicine. He currently runs a neuroscience research lab where he studies time perception, synesthesia, and how neuroscience will influence the legal system. At night he writes fiction.

EPILEPSY AND SEIZURE DISORDERS

A Wyoming Resource Guide for Parents

The Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) recently published "Epilepsy and Seizure Disorders: A Wyoming Resource Guide for Parents." The guide is not intended to provide medical advice; rather, it contains basic information, such as an introduction to epilepsy and seizure disorders and a valuable directory of state and national resources. For more information or for a copy of the booklet, please contact WIND Associate Director Sandra Root-Elledge (sre@uwyo.edu) or 307-766-2764).

WYOMING SCHOOLS GO GREEN

Wyoming welcomed a new member to its fleet on February 24th, 2010—its first ever diesel hybrid school bus.

The bus, which uses both a diesel engine and an electric battery-driven motor, has the ability to potentially save 1100 gallons of gas per year, improve fuel economy by up to 69%, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 39%.

The \$196,500 bus was funded by the Wyoming Departments of Environmental Quality and Education with funds awarded by the U.S. EPA Clean Diesel Grant

Program.

Sublette County School District 1 will be the first district to experience the new bus. It will then rotate throughout other districts in the state to test its performance under a variety of conditions.

In addition to its green features, the bus also boasts an electric door interlock system, which prevents the doors from being opened while the bus is in motion, and a “Leave No Student Behind System,” which helps the driver ensure that the bus is completely empty at the end of the day.

Dr. Jim McBride, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, commented, “We are excited to be able to have such innovative technology in our Wyoming schools. For years, we have made sure students are served by new technology in the classroom and now, with this bus, we are reaching even beyond the classroom.” Source: Wyoming Dept. of Education Press Release: February 19, 2010



Dr. Jim McBride and John Corra (Wyo. Dept. of Environmental Quality)

POSSIBLE CHANGES COMING TO ASPERGER'S DIAGNOSIS

Proposed changes to the 5th Edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) could bring changes for the way children with Asperger's Disorder are diagnosed.

Experts have recommended that the new edition combine the currently separate diagnoses of Asperger's Disorder, Autism, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified into one, more broadly defined diagnosis of “Autism Spectrum Disorder,” with the clinician indicating the level of severity.

Another change proposed in the DSM-V is eliminating the term “mental retardation” and replacing it

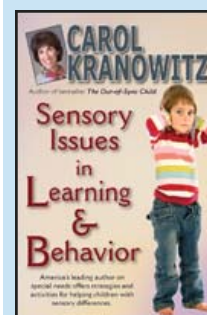
with “intellectual disability,” a term already used by most government and educational institutions. While the term “mental retardation” referred only to IQ, the broader term “intellectual disability” would encompass both IQ and adaptive functioning.

The current version of the DSM (DSM-IV) was released in 1994. The new 5th edition is expected to arrive in March of 2013.

Source: Diament, M. Asperger's, 'Mental Retardation' likely history in revised DSM. Accessed . Disability Scoop: February 10, 2010. Available at www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/02/10/dsm-proposal/6960/



BOOKS AVAILABLE AT THE PHP LENDING LIBRARY:

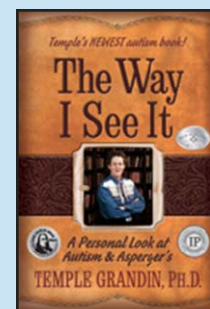


Sensory Issues in Learning & Behavior:

Strategies and activities for helping children with sensory differences

New by Temple Grandin!

“The Way I See It”- a personal look at about how and why people with autism think differently. Other topics covered in her latest book are how sensory sensitivities affect learning and ideas for employment.



Call us at 307-684-2277 or e-mail jbybee@wpen.net to check out these books and/or many others! They are available to loan for two weeks at a time at no cost!

2010 WYOMING ACADEMIC BOWL TEAMS GO TO UTAH

Wyoming Department of Education, Outreach Services for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing entered two teams of deaf and hard-of-hearing high school students in the Western Regional Gallaudet Academic Bowl, hosted by the Utah Association of the Deaf and the Utah Department of Education, on February 18 – 21, 2010.

The top four teams from five regional competitions throughout the United States compete in the National Bowl in Washington, D.C. Within each region, 16 teams compete against each other by answering a variety of questions related to academic studies and current events. Wyoming teams are unique in this competition, as our students have never met or practiced together before boarding the plane for the competition.

This year the members of the WDE-South Team were: Angie Bellamy, Casper-Senior and Captain; Dallas Brutsman, Cheyenne-Sophomore; Diana Brutsman, Cheyenne-Junior; Katie Smith, Cheyenne-Freshman; and Chris LeBlanc, Cheyenne-Freshman. The coach of the South Team was Jennifer McCorkle, and the Chaperone was Lisa McCorkle. The members of the North Team were: Jonathan Welde, Lovell-Junior and Captain; Jessica Leonhardt, Lovell-Senior; Shelly Geggelman, Gillette-Junior; Kayla Morris, Gillette-Sophomore; and Berenice Enriquez, Gillette-Sophomore. Coaches were: Jo Otterholt and Janine Cole.

Though the competition is quite intense between teams, students enjoy developing new friendships and camaraderie with other students from Wyoming as well as their competitors, finding opportunities to socialize between matches and during evening activities. This is especially important for the Wyoming teams, as most of the players are the only students in their school with

hearing loss. Meeting other high school students at the Academic Bowl allows them to accept their own hearing loss and even adopt some new coping strategies. This year's students had several positive and exciting things to say about their experience at the Academic Bowl. The following quotes are from just a few of this year's Academic Bowl students:

What I loved was being able to relate and have no judgments to other people.

Dianna Brutsman, Cheyenne

Jessica Leonhard, a senior from Lovell, had this to say about her experience: "I am happy that I went to Academic Bowl, but I wish my first year wasn't my last year. I would love to go again. I had fun with the competitions. I met a few people and I learned a lot of sign language. The rollerblading was tons of fun, and playing football in the swimming pool. The trip was too short, but I had a lot of fun and I would recommend that others should attend this event."

Dianna Brutsman, a junior from Cheyenne, had this to say about Academic Bowl: "Going to Gallaudet Academic Bowl was a wonderful and thriving experience. Mainly, what I loved was being able to relate and have no judgments to other people. Next year during school and even now, I'll try connecting more freely as I did there. Not to mention studying more!"

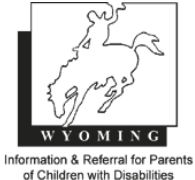
Kayla Morris, a sophomore from Gillette, said, "I learned that I knew stuff I never thought I knew before. I met a lot of cool people who I will be talking to more often. The Academic Bowl was awesome!"



WDE—South Team



WDE—North Team



ABOUT US: 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
Serves Cody, Powell, Greybull, Worland, Lovell & Thermopolis area

Janet Kinstetter, Moorcroft, 756-9605, jkinstetter@wpic.org
Serves Moorcroft, Gillette, Sundance & Newcastle area

Stephanie Harris, sharris@wpic.org or **Jan Jones** jjones@wpic.org
Cheyenne, 635-3536, Serves Cheyenne, Laramie, Wheatland & Torrington area

Michele Pena, 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 or **Tammy Wilson**, 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 or contact the Outreach Parent Liaison closest to you:

Kelly Rogers, Casper, 265-6884, krogers@wpen.net
Serves Casper, Douglas, Glenrock, and Lusk

Terri Nations, Rock Springs, 389-1718, tnations@wpen.net
Serves Rock Springs, Green River, and Evanston

Megan Mitchell, Riverton, 857-1337, mmitchell@wpen.net
Serves Lander, Riverton, Dubois, Shoshoni and Wind River Reservation

Kellie Johnson, Cheyenne, 635-3536, 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, Cheyenne, (307) 635-3536, eswilling@wpen.net

Samantha Crawford, Laramie, (307) 742-6528, scrawford@wpen.net

Blanca Moye, Jackson, (307) 690-8149, bmoye@wpen.net

LiEnisa Martinez, Powell, (307) 754-3430, lmartinez@wpen.net

Tammy Dexter, Riverton, (307) 857-1337, 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.

TOGETHER We Make a Difference

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Parent Education Network
Wyoming State PIRC
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“When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened up for us.”

- Helen Keller

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!

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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

UPCOMING EVENTS

WSPA Spring Conference
featuring Dr David Eagleman
April 15-16, 2010 Ramkota in Casper, WY
contact Carol Kramer at 307-680-2767 or kpspc2008@gmail.com

DEAFology– Ken Glickman author & comedian
WIND and Deaf Association of WY
7:30 pm April 15, 2010
University of Wyoming Education Auditorium
Laramie, WY
For more information, visit uwyo.edu/comdis



**Parent
Information
Center**

Information & Referral for
Parents of Children
with Disabilities

500 W. Lott St. Suite A Buffalo, WY 82834
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