



SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2017

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Support for Families of Children with Disabilities is a nonprofit support, resource, and networking organization for families of children with disabilities, concerns, and special health care needs and the professionals who work with them. All services are free of charge including resources, phone line, drop-in center, support groups, workshops & family gatherings.

Save the Date!

Friday, October 6th | 6:00 pm – 10:00 pm
The Galleria, San Francisco Design Center

a fundraiser benefit for



wine +
design

Party Like it's 1982!

Individual reservations: \$150/person
Sponsorship packages start at \$500

For more information, contact us at 415-282-7494

info@supportforfamilies.org

Or visit www.supportforfamilies.org for
donation and sponsorship opportunities!

2017 Information & Resource Conference Recap



Over 600 people participated in our Information & Resource Conference on March 11th at John O'Connell High School! Over 300 parents, professionals, and community members attended 29 morning and afternoon workshops, visited over 80 organizations in the exhibitor hall, gathered resources, and listened to keynote speaker Dr. Ammar Saheli.

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Education

What is a Parent Leader?

If you have any questions about this article, please contact Joe Goyos, SFCD Education Programs Director, at jgoyos@supporttorfamilies.org.

Calling all parent leaders... What exactly is a parent leader? Are you one or would you like to be one? Have you ever or do you see yourself ever:

- **Getting together with other parents to start a new program or group in your community**
- **Helping a friend or neighbor to read a confusing school or doctor's letter**
- **Talking to a new parent about your experiences.**

If you answered yes to any of these questions, chances are that you are or have begun the process of becoming a Parent Leader. The Georgia Department of Education defines a parent leader as one who is able to provide support to parents, students, teachers and constituents in their community with the objective of obtaining positive outcomes for their kids and in turn the children of others.

We know from numerous studies that when caregivers are involved in educational and health decisions that their children benefit. All parents should consider getting involved in their own child's medical and educational issues. There are several avenues for parents who want to take on systems change, reform school activities or are looking for a greater role in their children's lives. Among them are school level, district level, citywide, and statewide leadership opportunities for parents who want to take on a greater role in the schools. Here are some examples of places that will provide parent with leadership opportunities:

Support for Families Parent Mentor Program: Support for Families has a program that trains families to be parent leaders. For more information visit our website, call or check out page XX of this newsletter.

www.supportforfamilies.org

(415)282-7494

Joan Selby, English Parent Mentor Program Coordinator

JoAnna Van Brusselen, Spanish Parent Mentor Program Coordinator

San Francisco Unified School District Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC): The purpose of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for Special Education is to advocate for effective Special Education programs and services, and advise the Board of Education on priorities in the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). Meetings held monthly at Support for Families on the 4th Thursday of every month from 6:30-8:00 <http://www.cacspedsf.org/cacspedsf.org/Home.html>

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC): The San Francisco Board of Education created the PAC as a formal way to include parent perspectives in the district's decision-making process. PAC members actively reach out to engage families in district policy discussions and to represent parent concerns to district leaders. The PAC also supports parents to participate in school site and district-level governance. The PAC holds a regular meeting once each month during the school year. These meetings are open to the public and the dates are posted on their website. <http://www.pacsf.org/>

Parents for Public Schools (PPS): For more than 15 years, Parents for Public Schools – San Francisco has been assisting families and working to ensure quality public schools for all children in our city. They help parents at each stage of the journey, from introducing them to the enrollment lottery process, to developing parent leaders in the schools and at the district, to improving systems at SFUSD and much more. They provide essential support to all families in every community across our city, and they work to ensure that the full range of parent voices is part of policy-making at the District and Board of Education. <http://ppssf.org/>

Parent Teacher Groups (PTA/PTO/PTSA): PTA (Parent Teacher Association) and PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) are very similar groups. One of the most notable differences is that a PTA is supported by a state and national PTA and as a result funds are also sent to these offices to help sustain the PTA program. A PTO is local and does not pay dues or other fees to a national organization. PTSA

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(Parent Teacher Student Association) refers to a group which also adds student representation to their group. Check with your school to see what type of group they have and when they hold their meetings.

California State PTA website: <http://www.capta.org/>

School Site Council: The school site council is a group of teachers, parents, classified employees, and students (at the high school level) that works with the principal to develop, review and evaluate school improvement programs and school budgets. The members of the site council are generally elected by their peers. For example, parents elect the parent representatives and teachers elect teachers. Each school has one so check with your child's school about meeting days and times.

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) formerly known as Area Boards on Developmental Disabilities: SCDD was established by state and federal law as an independent state agency to ensure that people with developmental disabilities and their families receive the services and supports they need. Consumers know best what supports and services they need to live independently and to actively participate in their communities. Through advocacy, capacity building and systemic change, SCDD works to achieve a consumer and family-based system of individualized services, supports, and other assistance. SCDD has a regional office in the Bay Area. <http://www.scdd.ca.gov/bayarea/>

Agency Board of Directors: Most agencies have a board of directors as part of their governance structure. Check with the agencies that you frequent or whose services you utilize. Many of these agencies are looking for parent participation and representation on their boards. Some examples are: Regional Centers, Support for Families, Parents Helping Parents, Disability Rights Education Defense Fund and Matrix Parent Network and Resource Center.

San Francisco Unified School District's Board of Education: The Board of Education is responsible for establishing educational goals and standards; approving curriculum; setting the District budget, which is independent of the City's budget; confirming appointment of all personnel; and approving purchases of equipment, supplies, services, leases, renovation, construction, and union contracts. Meetings are held every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month in the Irving G. Breyer Board Meeting Room at 555 Franklin St Sf, CA. <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/about-sfusd/board-of-education/overview-and-members.html>

Family Voice of California (FVCA): Family Voices of California is a statewide collaborative of locally-based parent run centers working to ensure quality health care for children and youth with special health care needs. FVCA builds the capacity of parent centers throughout California to provide families with the information and support they need to make informed decisions about the health care of their children. FVCA provides information and a forum for parent centers and families to advocate for improved public and private policies, builds partnerships between professionals and families, and serves as a vital resource on health care.

<http://familyvoicesofca.org/>

Hospital Family or Patient Advisory Councils: Most hospitals have Family/Patient Advisory Councils. At council meeting, families of patients and patients participate in helping shape how hospitals interact with families. These groups also give input about the hospitals service delivery, provide feedback about policies and procedures, assist in planning for new facilities and services, and participate in the education of health care professionals and hospital personnel. Family Advisory Councils have helped shape hospital policy in the area of patient visitation, medication management and employee/physician education about family-centered care. Check with your hospital about when their group meets and how to get connect with that group.



For more information on these groups or how to get connected to them, call the Support for Families warmline at (415) 920-5040 and one of our Family Resource Specialist will help you find the group and information that you are looking for.

SFCD Family Success Story

By Dan, Desiree and Daniel S.

On Saturday, January 9, 2016, we welcomed our son, Daniel, to our family. His arrival was full of excitement, joy, love and the unknown. We had an idea that Daniel would likely be born with Trisomy 21, better known as Down Syndrome. We did non-invasive testing during pregnancy and soon after the results told us there was the possibility of a diagnosis. Results were not 100% until Daniel was born.

During our first visit to the pediatrician's office we were introduced to a social worker who in turn introduced us to Support for Families of Children with Disabilities. We had never heard of this group but were excited to learn more about them as we were new to parenthood and eager to build a foundation for ourselves and our son. We called their Warm Line to speak with a staff member. He recommended we attend the IRC, Information Resource Conference, which was soon approaching. We were exposed to a wealth of knowledge and services that we didn't know existed and even available to us.

Support for Families also put us in touch with a Parent Mentor. That Parent Mentor contacted us and took their own personal time to reassure us that we were in the right place. He mentioned the various services and introduced us to a large group of other families who also have children with Trisomy

21. Our mentor had met these families through Support for Families. Immediately we knew we were not alone.

We were also made aware of a Tuesday Night Parents group that meets twice a month. We were excited to meet other parents who had already been working with Support for Families. Onsite childcare was available for our son while we attended the group. We were able to listen to cares and concerns of different parents which always became great learning opportunities. It's been a great platform to learn more about IEP's, peer support, guidance, infant massage classes, playgroups and how to also become a Parent Mentor.

When we learned we could become Parent Mentors we were quite excited. We had gained so much support and guidance from Support for Families that we knew we wanted to give back to the community and learn from the rich knowledge of other Parent Mentors. It's been such a great experience so far!

We've since attended our second Information & Resource Conference and have joined the planning committee for an upcoming fundraising event. It's been an exciting time and great way to meet other families. We can't imagine life without Support for Families. Not only for what it's done for us but what they will continue to do for other families.

What is Assistive Technology? The AT Lab at SFCD

The following is an excerpt from the blog of JonesIT, the IT Dept. that supports SFCD's day-to-day operations. For more information or for the full-length post, visit www.itjones.com/blogs

Assistive technology, according to Karen Baca, is, "something that allows a person with a disability to do something they otherwise could not. It could be anything as simple as a pencil grip, to something a little more high tech, like a communication app or eye gaze technology that allows users to control a computer with their eyes... It can also be everything in between."

Karen was brought onto the team for a series of communication related projects. Most recently, she has been working on an assistive technology lab in order to bring better access to educational resources and communication tools for the families SFCD serves. Karen works with a wide range of children. She teaches children with Down's syndrome, Angelman's syndrome, autism, and many other cases in which there just isn't an exact

diagnosis. Many of the families she works with have been told that their child will never speak. "No, they can't, they're not going to be able to do that, that's too much for them... We hear that a lot. A lot of these kiddos have the potential for speech, it's just going to take longer to develop," she tells me. There was a need for an assistive technology lab for years, but SFCD just didn't have anyone specialized in the subject until recently. Karen has been working with assistive technology for a large portion of her life, so she was just the woman for the job.

She started with a storage closet. It was a part of the office that was rarely used and in just a few months, she turned it into a space for families to explore tools and methods for teaching their children. The lab has a wide variety of equipment ranging from low tech, like drawing supplies, to high tech, like \$15,000 communication devices that most families would have a hard time getting access to.



SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Providing services for families and professionals of children with disabilities

Our Services

CALL US:
415-920-5040

EMAIL US:
info@supportforfamilies.org

FAX US:
415-282-1226

VISIT US:
1663 Mission Street
Suite 700
San Francisco, CA 94103

HOURS:
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
9:30am-4:30pm
Tuesday, Thursday
12:30pm - 8:30pm

GO TO OUR WEBSITE:
www.supportforfamilies.org
to get the latest information
on workshops, events and
new resources.

FIND US ON:



[facebook.com/
supportforfamiliesf](https://www.facebook.com/supportforfamiliesf)



twitter.com/supportforfams

Phone line/Drop-in Center
Get individualized information, referrals, and answers to all your questions from Support for Families staff, who are parents themselves. Staff will follow up to make sure you get the answers you need. Staff speak English, Spanish, and Cantonese. Caregiving for children available 4:30-8:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Resource Library
Access more than 4,500 books, DVDs, and a toy lending collection for families and professionals in our onsite library. Visit the library catalog online at: www.supportforfamilies.org/library.html. On-site computer access and assistance is also available. The library is open during drop-in center hours and during on-site workshops and special events.

Support Groups
Come to a support group to find solutions to challenges, learn advocacy skills, and explore resources. Support groups provide a network for families to gain strength

by sharing experiences with peers.

Volunteer Parent Mentors
Find a match with a trained volunteer Parent Mentor based on a shared issue, condition and or situation.

Educational Workshops and Clinics
Learn about resources, rights, and responsibilities in monthly parent/professional workshops and weekly small-group clinics. Care giving for children and interpretation services are available with advance reservation for clinics and workshops.

Case Management
Get professional consultation from social workers.

Family Special Events
Socialize and network in a fun relaxed atmosphere at quarterly events, such as our annual ice-skating party and Halloween party.

Newsletter
Read the quarterly newsletter in English, Spanish, or Chinese to find articles of interest to families and professionals.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of Support for Families is to ensure that families of children with any kind of disability or special health care need, and the providers who serve them, have the knowledge and support to make informed choices that enhance children's development and well-being. We promote partnership with families, professionals and the community at large, because it is through partnership that we create a community where our children can flourish.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Juno Duenas

How You Can Help

All services and events, even childcare, are always free of charge to encourage participation by all families. With the demand for services greater than ever, your donations help make this possible. A gift to Support

for Families means that families of children with special needs will be better prepared to help their children—and that more children with disabilities will live their lives with dignity and opportunity.

Send a check to the address below or give online at www.supportforfamilies.org/help.html. Every gift can help make a difference in the life of a child with special needs.

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Support Groups

All support groups are free of charge. Groups are located at Support for Families unless otherwise indicated. Childcare can be provided unless otherwise indicated but MUST be reserved in advance. If you are interested in participating in any of these groups, or if you are interested in a specific issue, call (415) 920-5040 or e-mail us at info@supportforfamilies.org for more information. We have staff who speak English, Spanish, and Cantonese.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

Cantonese-Speaking Parents Support Group

Meets 2nd Saturday of the month, 1:00pm - 3:00pm.

Chinatown Child Development Center (CCDC) Group

For Cantonese-speaking families of children with special needs. Meets at the CCDC on the 3rd Monday of the month, 9:30am - 12:00pm.

Living with Loss: Loss, Hope and Healing

A group for parents/caretakers of medically fragile children and children facing life threatening illness. Call 415-920-5040 for dates.

Prader-Willi Group

Meets quarterly on Saturdays. Call 415-920-5040 for dates.

Spanish-Speaking Down Syndrome Parent Support Group

Meets 1st Tuesday of the month, 6:00pm - 8:00pm.

Spanish-Speaking Parent Support Group

Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10:00am - 12:00pm.

Speech Apraxia Parent Support Group

Meets 4th Tuesdays of the month 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Parents of Transition Age Youth

Currently focusing on issues related to housing. Meets 1st Tuesday of the month, 6:15pm - 8:15pm.

Tuesday Night Group

A group for parents who have children with disabilities or special health care needs. Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 6:45pm - 8:30pm.

UCSF Inpatient Parent Support Group

Meets every Thursday, 4:00pm - 5:30pm.

GROUPS FOR YOUTH

Asian & Pacific Islander Disabilities Group for Youth 18-30

Meets 4th Saturday of the month, 1:00pm - 2:30pm

Conversation Club for AAC Users

Meets at the Noe Valley Public Library Meeting Room every Monday, 4:30pm - 5:30pm.

Transition AAC Group

Meets every Monday, 3:00pm - 4:30pm

Young AAC Kids Conversation Club

Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month, 3:30pm - 4:30pm.

Upcoming Family Events!

We are welcoming the sunshine back and looking forward to our spring and summer events!

We are excited to announce that we have hosted our inaugural event with the San Francisco Zoo; we had an amazing morning learning about lemurs, getting fantastical face-paint, and petting our new pals Clint the Donkey, Elgy the Goat, and Spice the Guinea Pig. We have many more Family Access Day's planned this year and we hope to see you there!

Have an idea for an event? See something you would like Support for Families to pursue partnering in? We are always happy to hear suggestions. Send suggestions to Info@supportforfamilies.org; our team will explore all suggestions!

Save the Date! - Upcoming Family and Special Events

Formal invitations for each event are scheduled to be distributed; this announcement is to you can mark your calendar! We look forward to seeing you there!

Saturday, June 17th – Family Access Day – Walt Disney Family Museum

Friday, July 14th – Movie Night – The Jungle Book

To all of you wonderful volunteers out there: we will be reaching out very soon to recruit support for these events; keep watch for the Call-To-Action!

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Workshops & Clinics

WORKSHOPS

Food & Water for Disasters - Sessions 4 & 5

Thursdays, June 1st & 15th; 4:30pm - 5:30pm

Learn to store food/water for emergencies. Will include an overview of products available for long-term storage, and demonstrations on their use and preparation.

Session 4 – No Hot Water Available? Eat MREs and Snacks

Session 5 – Water Storage and Making Water Safer to

Drink

Presented by UCSF students with assistance from the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) - Chinatown Public Health Center.

Behavior Bootcamp for Dads

Thursday, August 3rd; 6:00pm - 8:00pm

A workshop just for dads teaching behavioral strategies that can be used at home and in the community to decrease unwanted behaviors and increase positive behaviors. Dads will learn how to use the four functions of behavior to address behavioral concerns, develop new ways to play and bond with their children and how to use play time to promote academic, social and language development.

Presented by Gateway Learning Group

IEP Development & Dynamics

Saturday, August 12th; 8:30am - 12:30pm

The purpose of this training is to provide parents and professionals with the information needed to advocate for the special education programs and services for their children with disabilities or the children they serve through the Individual Education Program (IEP) process. Training topics will include: basic special education rights, referral procedures for special education assessment including the SST process, and parent rights in the IEP process with a special list of helpful IEP and advocacy hints outlining effective advocacy techniques.

Presented by Joe Feldman

What is Sensory Processing?

Thursday, August 31st; 6:00pm - 8:00pm

"Build Learn Thrive's two pediatric occupational therapists, Meilani Connolly, OTR/L and Sarah Gagnani, OTR/L will host a workshop on Sensory Processing. Topics covered include:

- How our bodies interpret and make sense of sensory information

- Symptoms of sensory processing disorders
- How does sensory processing affect my child's perception and ability to function in the world?
- What are some strategies I can use for my child with sensory processing difficulties?

- How an occupational therapist can treat sensory processing difficulties in therapy sessions."

Presented by Meilani Conolly of Build Learn Thrive

Special Education Discipline Basics

Saturday, September 9th; 8:30am - 12:30pm

Understanding your legal rights when your special needs child misbehaves at school can be confusing. This presentation will explain the basics of the special education discipline process, as well as when your child may be subject to non-special education discipline. We will discuss an overview of IEP behavioral supports and what happens when the supports are not sufficient. The presentation also will address manifestation determination IEPs, special education rights in the discipline process, and what to do if your child has not yet qualified for services.

Presented by Peter Sturges

Medical and Dental Visits Made Easier!

Thursday, September 21st; 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Participants will learn a variety of methods to help make medical and dental visits with their children easier for them and their child. Various strategies such as desensitization, reinforcement, priming and role play will be discussed. The group will also explore what to look for when choosing a medical professional for their child, as well as how to discuss their child's needs prior to the appointment to help things go as smoothly as possible.

Presented by Gateway Learning Group

Workshops and Clinics are **FREE** and held at **Support for Families (SFCD)**, 1663 Mission St., 7th Floor, San Francisco (between Duboce St. and S. Van Ness Ave.). **Pre-registration is required.** To attend, reserve childcare and/or interpretation services, you must register at least one week in advance by calling 415-920-5040 or emailing info@supportforfamilies.org.



Calendar of Events

June 2017			August 2017		
1- Jun	Food & Water for Disasters (4 of 5)	4:30pm - 5:30pm	3- Aug	Behavior Bootcamp for Dads	6:00pm - 8:00pm
1-Jun	IEP Clinic- Cantonese	6:00pm - 8:00pm	3-Aug	IEP Clinic - Cantonese	6:00pm - 8:00pm
8-Jun	IEP Clinic- English	4:00pm - 6:00pm	10-Aug	IEP Clinic- English	4:00pm - 6:00pm
10-Jun	PMP - Parent to Parent - English	8:30am-4:30pm	12-Aug	IEP Development & Dynamics	8:30am -12:30pm
10-Jun	PPW - CANCELLED	CANCELLED	17-Aug	IEP Clinic - Spanish	4:00pm - 6:00pm
15-Jun	IEP Clinic- Spanish	4:00pm - 6:00pm	24-Aug	Transition to Adult Svcs Clinic	4:00pm - 6:00pm
15-Jun	Food & Water for Disasters (5 of 5)	4:30pm - 5:30pm	31-Aug	Get Organized	4:00pm - 6:00pm
21-Jun	PMP: Parent to Parent- Span (1/2)	10:00am - 12:00pm	31-Aug	What is Sensory Processing?	6:00pm - 8:00pm
22-Jun	Transition to Adult Services Clinic	4:00pm - 6:00pm	September 2017		
28-Jun	PMP: Parent to Parent - Span (2/2)	10:00am - 12:00pm	7-Sep	IEP Clinic - Cantonese	6:00pm - 8:00pm
29-Jun	Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy	4:00pm - 6:00pm	9-Sep	Special Education Discipline Basics	8:30am -12:30pm
July 2017			14-Sep	IEP Clinic- English	4:00pm - 6:00pm
6-Jul	IEP Clinic - Cantonese CANCELLED	CANCELLED	19-Sep	PMP: Project Leadership - English	5:30pm - 8:30pm
13-Jul	IEP Clinic - English CANCELLED	CANCELLED	20-Sep	PMP: Project Leadership - Spanish	10:00am - 1:00pm
20-Jul	IEP Clinic - Spanish CANCELLED	CANCELLED	21-Sep	IEP Clinic - Spanish	4:00pm - 6:00pm
27-Jul	Transition to Adult Svcs - CANCELLED	CANCELLED	21-Sep	Medical and Dental Visits Made Easier!	6:00pm - 8:00pm
			28-Sep	Transition to Adult Services Clinic	4:00pm - 6:00pm

For more information or to register for any of these events, please call us at 415-920-5040 or visit us at www.supportforfamilies.org.

CLINICS

IEP Clinic

Learn about Special Education law, the IEP process, what to do when things aren't working, and how to become a more active and effective team member. Bring your questions and real life issues! Chinese: 1st Thursday; English: 2nd Thursday; Spanish: 3rd Thursday.

Transition to Adulthood Clinic

Successfully navigate the transition from school to adulthood. Learn how to navigate special education transition services and how to effectively participate in the development of your child's transition plan. Appropriate for parents of children 12+. 4th Thursday of the month.

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Thank you!

Donations received February 16, 2017 through April 30, 2017

Support for Families gratefully acknowledges gifts from the following individuals, groups and businesses. We apologize for any omissions or misspellings; please contact us so we can correct our records.

Development

Individuals

Anonymous
Diana Blank
Nersi Boussina, in honor of Mr. Raymond Diaz
Helen Brame
Ronald Chen and Lillian Lim
Meilani Connolly
Massimo and Erin De Costanzo
Michelle Diamond
Allyse Eberhardt
Breena Fain
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Yvonne Ryzak, in honor of Jacqueline Ball
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Businesses, Groups, Foundations

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The Moca Fund
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In Kind Donations

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Use your voice! How you can reach out to save Medi-Cal

FVCA

By Sara Godley, FVCA Communications Associate.

For any questions about this article, please contact FVCA at sgodley@familyvoicesofca.org

Although the proposed American Health Care Act was not successful, the new Administration is continuing to examine ways to restructure access to health care that may impact Medi-Cal services for you, your child, or children you know/serve. It's important that we still contact our legislators — even if they're already in support of protecting critical services for children and youth with special health care needs — to let them know why Medi-Cal is such an essential program for our children.

Here's how you can reach out:



Send an Email or Letter

We've created a template letter which you can use to easily explain why Medi-Cal matters. We've also compiled a list of mailing addresses and emails for key policymakers, and have a resource for figuring out who your local representatives are. Lastly, we've created a list of Medi-Cal services that are commonly accessed by children and youth with special health care needs that can aid you in your letter writing or emailing. To access all these resources, head to our website: www.familyvoicesofca.org/we-must-continue-to-protect-medi-cal/

Make a Phone Call

White House public comment line: (202) 456-1111
United States Capitol switchboard (the operator will connect you with the office you request): (202) 224-3121
Visit our website for phone script templates:
www.familyvoicesofca.org/we-must-continue-to-protect-medi-cal/



Use Social Media

Share the video "Family Stories: Medi-Cal is Critical for Children and Youth With Special Health Care Needs" on social media by going here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Npm3vi9FB0Y

Use or search the hashtag #MedicaidMatters to find stories and spread the word about how Medicaid/Medi-Cal is critical for children's health.

Send a Text

Use ResistBot, a texting program that allows you to effortlessly contact your representatives. You don't have to download anything — just text 'Resist' to the number 50409 to get started.

Activities of Daily Living

From the Talking Matters Blog at talkingmatters.com.au

If you have any questions about this article, please email

Amy Pacio at apacio@supportforfamilies.org

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) describe the tasks or activities that people normally complete as part of their everyday lives. Occupational therapists are interested in a person's functional performance in these activities, and how well they are able to do these activities on their own. Some children need support to develop the skills needed for these activities, and occupational therapists can help.

There are 'norms' within which we expect children to achieve certain skills, such as walking, using a spoon or cup, toilet training and being able to manage tasks like buttons or shoelaces. If children have not developed these skills within average time frames, then we consider that they have a delay, and start looking at ways to assist their skill development.

Activities of Daily Living can be divided into two sub-categories: Basic ADLs and Instrumental ADLs.

Basic ADLs describe those that are everyday self-care tasks common to all people, although it is important to note that how a person wants or is expected to complete ADLs is individual to their environment, culture and beliefs. The basic ADLs include:

- Bathing/Showering
- Dressing
- Personal Hygiene and grooming (brushing hair, brushing teeth)
- Eating/Feeding
- Toileting
- Sleeping
- Mobility (walking, transferring)

Instrumental ADLs are those that are not vital for daily functioning, but which enable a person to live and function within their home and community. Some broad examples of these can include:

- Shopping
- Housework
- Managing money

Assessment of ADLs is useful because occupational therapists are often able to work with clients to develop strategies which will help maximise independent functioning. Here is a rough guide to the ages at which children develop activities of daily living. If your child is not able to do this tasks it may be useful to speak to an OT.

At 6 to 12 months children can:

- cooperate with an adult dressing then by holding out arms and legs
- eat cereal or pureed baby food from a spoon held by an adult
- try to hold their own bottle
- Hold and suck or bang a spoon
- begin to self feed soft finger foods

At 12 to 18 months children can:

- pulls off their shoes and socks
- push their arms through sleeves
- dip a spoon in food and bring it to their mouth with spills
- hold and drink from a cup

At 18 to 24 months children can:

- remove clothes without buttons or zips
- remove shoes without laces or buckles
- help pull pants down
- brush their teeth with help
- drink from a cup with one hand
- eat a range of foods though not all meats as yet

At 2 to 3 years children can:

- take off socks, jackets, shorts, shoes, and pants but not tight clothes
- put on socks, coats, and shirts
- unbuttons large buttons
- sits on the toilet with adult help
- develop daytime toilet training with some accidents
- begin to wash their hands
- try to wipe after the toilet with help

Strategies that your OT might use to help maximize your child's performance in ADLs could include:

- simplifying or modifying tasks
- breaking tasks into achievable steps (task analysis)
- helping to identify a gradual process for teaching skills (grading)
- helping to address any sensory or behavioural issues that are impacting on a task
- recommending equipment or tools
- introducing a rewards system to encourage motivation and independence

implementing supports such as visual cues/schedules or help at home care, accessing funding to purchase necessary equipment (identifying funding options and writing supporting documentation, for example the CAPS scheme for difficulties with continence in people over 5

years of age), and assisting caregivers (including teachers or childcare staff) to develop and implement strategies in their environment.

If you are concerned about your child's activities of daily living an occupational therapist is the person to see for advice. An occupational therapist can assess your child's skills and advise you on what to do to help your child's development. For more information about individual and group occupational therapy service, check the Talking Matters website. There are also lots of great activity ideas on the Talking Matters Pinterest page.

The Talking Matters website has lots of occupational therapy information sheets to download on motor skills, sensory integration and daily living skills. Check it out here: www.talkingmatters.org.nz

Be a Parent Mentor!

By JoAnna Marie Van Brusselen

PMP

Parent Mentor Training – Special Education Series

In May 2017 we wrapped up yet another Special Education Series with our wonderful mentors. A big highlight that many of the mentors mentioned was the Professional Panel which included David LaDue, Shilpa Ram, and Michael Chang of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Nicole Bohn from the Mayor's Office on Disability (MOD) and Joe Feldman from Community Alliance for Special Education (CASE). As one of the parent mentors said, "They taught me so much in such a short time and I left feeling really empowered." We're very grateful to these professionals for their dedication to our program and agency.

Project Leadership Training - Fall 2017

Starting in September 2017, we will begin our second Project Leadership series which is a comprehensive training series that includes a seven session training curriculum plus mentorship, information, supports, and linkages with Family Voices of CA's statewide network. The project is designed to help family members

develop the skills and tools they need to partner at all levels of decision making and engage in public policy advocacy activities in California.

Training sessions are dynamic and interactive, offering parents the opportunity to learn with and from one another.

Interested in becoming a Parent Mentor?

If you are interested in becoming a Support for Families' Parent Mentor, please contact us.

For information or to register, please contact a PMP Coordinator, as follows:

Joan E. Selby (English)

Phone: (415) 282-7494, Ext. 113

Email: jselby@supportforfamilies.org

JoAnna Van Brusselen (Spanish)

Phone: (415) 282-7494, Ext. 141

Email: jvanbrusselen@supportforfamilies.org
Note: Registration with Joan (English) or JoAnna (Spanish) is required. Thank you.



**SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES
OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**
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All services are free of charge:

- Phone Line & Drop-In Center
- Information & Resources
- Resource Library
- Support Groups
- Parent Mentor Program
- Educational Workshops
- Family Gatherings
- Short-term Counseling
- Community Outreach
- Website: www.supportforfamilies.org

This NEWSLETTER is published quarterly in English, Spanish & Chinese. If you have a question or comment, email us: info@supportforfamilies.org

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**Family Resource Center Warmline,
Information, and Referral**

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Support for Families strives to present families and professionals with a wide range of views and options in its materials and trainings.

The materials and trainings are not necessarily comprehensive, are not meant to be exhaustive, nor are they an endorsement of the author and/or presenter.

If you would like to offer feedback or if you know of additional resources, speakers and/or materials that may be helpful, please contact us at info@supportforfamilies.org.

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