



NREIC
Collaborations

Winter 2012



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We hope you had a most enjoyable holiday season and wish all of our early intervention families a very happy new year!

Included in this newsletter are great resources, information about upcoming events and workshops, fun activities to do with your children during the winter months, a highlight of a New Jersey Early Intervention System Family Right, and information on the use of applications and technology for young children with special needs.



Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|----------|
| Casino Night | p. 1 |
| Who is the NREIC | p. 2 |
| The Parent Corner..... | p. 3-4 |
| Tips for Families..... | p. 5 |
| Parent/Child Activities..... | p. 6 |
| Featured Article: "Apps for EI Families"..... | p. 7 |
| Family Resources..... | p. 8 |
| NJEIS Family Rights Highlight..... | p. 9 |
| Parent Involvement..... | p. 10 |
| Upcoming Workshops/Conferences/ Events | p. 11-12 |

NREIC Casino Night 2011

Our Most Successful Event Yet!



On November 5th, Helpful Hands- NREIC held its 9th Annual Casino Night at The Bethwood in Totowa, NJ. The event was a huge success, raising close to **\$27,000**. The evening's proceeds will benefit our **Special Needs Fund** and other family support activities. **The Special Needs Fund** provides assistance to families of infants and toddlers with disabilities impacted by the high cost of services and supports not covered under early intervention or other sources. At Casino Night, we also honored the following individuals for their contributions to early intervention and the NREIC: **Neringa Fonarev, Diane Klemm & Peter Sanchez**.

Thank you to all that attended or contributed to the evening's success. We would especially like to thank the following sponsors:

Casino: DataPipe Managed Global IT Services.

Dessert Table: "Toilet Bowl Tradition".

Poker Table: GPJNJ, Innovative Intervention, Inc., & Joseph Meyer

Craps Table: Jennifer Lim

Black Jack Tables: Bayonne Glass Company; Sheldon & Carolyn Bross; Robert DeScherer; GPJNJ; Graziano & Company CPA's; Pediatric Therapy Resources, LLC; Platinum Alarms; The Segal Family; & Withum Smith + Brown, PC.

A Special Thank You Also Goes Out To Our Wonderful Volunteers: Maggie Alfonso, Danielle Ciccone, Patti Ciccone, Carol Ferrando, Candice Johnson, Michelle Massimi, Susan Redding, Octavia Wilson & Lisa Weinstein.

**Our next fundraising event will be our
Annual Golf Outing coming on June 29, 2012 at a new location
The Knoll Country Club West.**



Helpful Hands

The Northeast Regional Early Intervention Collaborative, Inc.

Helpful Hands, also known as **the NREIC**, is a not-for-profit organization whose goal is to promote quality, family-centered early intervention services in Bergen, Hudson and Passaic counties. **Helpful Hands** offers family education and support, professional training and technical assistance, and serves as a link between the state agency for early intervention, the Department of Health & Senior Services (DHSS) and the region. **The NREIC** also serves as the regional single point of entry for early intervention and hub for regional data collection. **Helpful Hands** is one of four regional early intervention collaborative offices in New Jersey.

We are a collaboration of parents and professionals working on behalf of infants and toddlers with a variety of developmental delays and/or disabilities. We seeks to ensure that all families are empowered to help their child grow to his or her fullest potential.



NREIC Collaborations Disclaimer

Notice herein of any workshop, seminar, conference, therapy, program, etc., not offered by Helpful Hands, the Northeast Regional Early Intervention Collaborative, Inc. (NREIC) does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation of any specific organization, opinion or methodology by the NREIC or its Family Support Coordinators.

Links to other websites are provided for the convenience of users. NREIC or its Family Support Coordinators are not responsible for the content, links, appearance or information on these linked pages. The NREIC or its Family Support Coordinators have no control over the nature, content and availability of those sites. The inclusion of any links does not imply a recommendation or endorsement of the views or information expressed within them, nor the suitability of the information for any particular purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is at your own risk.

THE PARENTS CORNER

Mom 2 Mom

The Mom 2 Mom program is designed to provide a compassionate and encouraging environment for mothers of children with special needs to come together and share support.

By dialing our toll free number 1-877-914-6662 (1-877-914-MOM2), a mother of a child with special needs will receive the following services:

Peer Support
Telephone Support
Support Groups
Referral to a Comprehensive Network of Service Providers

Hope When Parenting Gets Tough....

Parents Anonymous of New Jersey, Inc.

1-800-THE-KIDS

www.pa-of-nj.org

24 Hour Family Stressline

1-800-843-5437

Parent Support Groups:
check out their on-line groups and in-person groups.

County Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies:

(800)329-2273

www.njaccrra.org

TOTS and TECH

Parents should consider whether Assistive Technology (AT) should be a part of their IFSPS.

Once a child's outcomes have been completed, the team should consider whether AT might help the child reach these goals*. Not all AT has to be high tech. Anything that helps or can potentially aid a child in performing a skill or participating in an activity is considered AT under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Items already in the child's natural environment should be considered and could even aid other children in the home. Homemade solutions as well as store bought items such as a specialized spoon, qualify as "AT"

Below is the link for a university based website that explains the process of including AT in your IFSP planning process. They also have a help desk with ideas for adaptations: <http://tnt.asu.edu/files/Brief6IFSPHandout8-12-09.pdf>

*please note that Early Intervention will not generally provide the Assistive Technology

DDD SERVICES APPLICATION PROCESS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

The New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities is excited to announce that our application to determine eligibility for services can now be downloaded online at:

<http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/services/apply/>

We ask that you begin the process by completing these forms:

[DDD Application for Eligibility](#)
[Applicant Information Form](#)
[DHS Notice of Privacy Practice](#)
[Acknowledgement Form](#)
[Adaptive Behavior Summary](#)

Once you complete these forms, it is important that you mail them to **the Community Services Office that serves the county in which you live.** Address the envelope to the "Division of Developmental Disabilities Intake." After DDD receives your *Application for Eligibility* and *Applicant Information Form*, a staff person will call you. The rest of the application materials will then be mailed to you so a determination can be made.

NJ Parent Link



The Early Childhood, Parenting and Professional Resource Center

Your Information Source for:

Health & Wellness

Ages & Stages

Child Care & Preschool

Family Support Services

Parenting & Early Learning

Career & Family Transitions

Advocacy & Leadership

Professional Resources

www.njparentlink.nj.gov

NJ Parent Link:

Linking Parents and Professionals to New Jersey's Early Childhood Services and Resources

Tips for Families

Reminder From Early Intervention

Please be sure to maintain a
clear, safe path for
practitioners in snow or icy weather &
assist in
arranging a space for parking.

Thank you!



Location Change for Early Intervention Services



If a family wishes to change the location of ongoing early intervention services for their child (for example, from home to daycare), or if they are moving to another community, the family **MUST** notify their service coordinator of the requested change in location **as soon as possible**. Families should be mindful that the coordination of this service change may take a little time to put in place, and to prepare accordingly.



Parent-Child Activities

Whipped Cream Snow

You'll need a can or two of whipped cream and a table. Spray whipped cream all over the table top and let the kids create snow scenes with the cream. They can make hills and mounds etc. Use little people figures, houses, cars, trucks etc. to act out playing, working etc. in the snow!

Cotton Ball Snowman

Cut 2 large circles out of white paper, making one a bit larger than the other. Make flour based paste using 1 part flour and 2 parts water. Dip cotton balls into paste and paste on the circles. Have toddlers decorate the snowman with shapes from construction paper to make eyes, nose, mouth, a hat, mittens, scarf , boots.

Developmental Domains Addressed: Fine Motor, Sensory, Cognition, Focus and Attention



Heart Hop



Cut large heart shapes out of red paper.



Tape the hearts to the floor and put on some lively music.



Hop from heart to heart with your child.



Try hopping backwards and sideways, too!

http://www.preschoolexpress.com/toddler_station02/toddler_station_feb02.shtml

Developmental Domains Addressed: Gross Motor

Apps for the Early Intervention Family



This year, we have seen more and more articles and information on “**apps for the special needs child**”. It seems like there is an app for any need you can think of:

- To teach a very young child to tap the device to practice “cause & effect”;
- To create social stories with voice, text & images;
- To track therapies, medications, etc. when using behavior management techniques;
- To calm with soothing music and images;
- To recognize the different emotions on a face;
- To manipulate sound effects to desensitize a sound sensitive child;
- To educate or entertain with children’s interactive books, or;
- To facilitate early childhood learning with apps for letters, numbers, colors etc.

The following list of websites specializes in categorizing apps that might be useful for our families with children with special needs*.

<http://a4cwsn.com/>-includes video reviews of select apps

<https://autismapps.wikispaces.com/>- breaks apps into helpful categories

<http://www.snapps4kids.com/>- includes many helpful reviews

http://www.oneplaceforspecialneeds.com/main/library_special_needs_apps.html- comprehensive listing of apps, including information about android apps

<http://www.lilliespad.com/apps-for-special-needs/>- includes favorites of the developer’s daughter.

Many of the websites contain reviews and a few even provide a video on how an app works. Another resource to consider before purchasing an app is user reviews and/or visiting the developer’s website. After all, it is easy enough to try out an app that costs .99 but another thing to purchase an app for \$14.99 and then find out that your child won’t use it.



* This list is provided for the convenience of our readers. The NREIC is not responsible for the content, links, appearance or information on these listed websites. The NREIC has no control over the nature, content and availability of these sites. Their inclusion does not imply a recommendation or endorsement of the views or information expressed within them and any questions should be directed to the websites themselves.



The Family Resource Network

Providing families with access, answers and action

The Family Resource Network (FRN) is dedicated to offering individuals and their families with continuing needs the greatest opportunities, resources and services to support a full and happy life.

Rooted in the 35 year history of serving New Jersey residents living with epilepsy, developmental disabilities and chronic illness, the Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey introduced The Family Resource Network in September 2004.

The Family Resource Network is a comprehensive family-focused human service organization designed to meet the growing need for community based programs and services to this rising population. The Family Resource Network is a state-wide organization with offices located in Brick, Parsippany, Trenton, Manasquan, Bordentown and Westmont.

The Family Resource Network affiliated organizations:

- Autism Family Services of New Jersey
- Caregivers of New Jersey
- Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey
- Family Support Center of New Jersey

Autism Family Services of New Jersey was created in order to better serve individuals and families affected by autism. With after school services such as arts and crafts, physical education, music therapy, respite opportunities and recreational programs, Autism Family Services of New Jersey strives to ensure a better quality of life for people with autism and their families.

Caregivers of New Jersey's efforts lie in updating caregivers on their rights and current legislation as well as educating the public on caregiving issues. The growing number of caregivers in the state has increased the demand for advocacy, education and information. Caregivers of New Jersey is proud to offer a centralized location for answers and information on all caregiving concerns.

Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey, an affiliate of the National Epilepsy Foundation, provides necessary programs for families living with epilepsy, such as a residential summer camp, support groups, scholarships, and referral programs. EFNJ also institutes free of charge educational presentations about seizure first aid and police training, as well as a kid friendly puppet show for young children.

Family Support Center of New Jersey is a "one-stop shop" for individuals searching for information about disabilities, services and programs on national, state and local levels. The Family Support Center has a comprehensive Resource Database of services and programs, a lending library and a family friendly guide to opportunities for people with disabilities (the OPTIONS manual), all to keep families informed and involved in the New Jersey Developmental Disability Community.

This website is funded in part through a contract with the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities.

NJEIS Family Rights Highlight

Written Prior Notice

The Right To Written Prior Notice (34 CFR303.403 and N.J.A.C. 8:17-4.1)

Written prior notice must be given to you within 10 calendar days before a provider agency or service provider participating in New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS) proposes or refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child or the provision of appropriate early intervention services to your child and your family. Neither a practitioner providing early intervention services on an IFSP nor the practitioner's provider agency shall revise services or eligibility without going through the IFSP team process.

The notice must be sufficiently detailed to inform you about:

- The action that is being proposed or refused;
- The reasons for taking the action;
- All procedural safeguards that are available under the program; and
- The state complaint procedures, including a description of how to file a complaint and the timelines under those procedures.

The written notice must be:

- Written in language understandable to the general public and provided in your primary language unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.
- If your primary language or other mode of communication is not a written language, the provider agency, or service provider participating in the NJEIS shall take steps to ensure that:
 - *The notice is translated orally or by other means to you in your primary language or other mode of communication;
 - *You understand the notice; and
 - *There is written evidence that the requirements of this section have been met.
- If you are deaf, blind, or have not written language, the mode of communication must be that normally used by you (such as sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

Finally, you have the right to written notice of and written consent to the exchange of any personally identifiable information collected, used or maintained under the NJEIS. (See section on Confidentiality of Information).

For further information on New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS) Family Rights, please go to:

[http://www.thefamilymatterswebsite.org/PDF/
NJEIS_Family_Rights_2010.pdf](http://www.thefamilymatterswebsite.org/PDF/NJEIS_Family_Rights_2010.pdf)
<http://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/documents/familyrights.pdf>

How you can become more involved in your Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Meetings



- Review your current IFSP ahead of time.
- Complete the IFSP review sheet with your service practitioner and note progress toward the present IFSP outcomes.
- Review your six month (or latest available) progress notes.
- Make a list of things you want your child to learn.
- Bring any information that your service coordinator and practitioners may not already have to the meeting, like medical reports, and provide real-life examples demonstrating what your child is doing at home.
- Advise everyone at the meeting of any major changes coming up for your family, such as a new baby or location move.
- Discuss the ways you help your child to learn new things.
- Review your family rights book and ask your service coordinator for any clarifications.
- Participate in the discussion by giving your opinion. Remember, families are an essential part of the IFSP team.
- Engage in active listening by restating and/or responding in some verbal or non-verbal way to comments made during the meeting.
- If any information seems unclear, ask for clarification before the meeting ends.
- By working in partnership with your service coordinator and practitioners, a good IFSP for your family will be developed!

*information adapted from the CPNJ/Building Blocks EIP Parent Handbook

Seeking Parents for the NREIC Family Support and Community Outreach Committee

The Northeast Regional Early Intervention Collaborative (NREIC) is seeking family members of children receiving early intervention services or recently transitioned from early intervention, to participate on our Family Support and Community Outreach Committee. This is a subcommittee of the larger NREIC Board.

The primary purpose of this Committee is to provide guidance and offer insight into ways to enhance supports and access to community resources to families receiving early intervention services in our region comprised of Bergen, Hudson and Passaic counties.

The Committee meets three times per year and includes representatives from the NREIC Board of Trustees, NREIC staff, community representatives and family members of infants and toddlers with developmental delays and/or disabilities. There is a \$25 stipend available for parents who participate, but unfortunately childcare can not be provided.

If interested or you would like further information, please contact Desirée Bonner, Director of Family Support at (973) 256-8484 x204 or email desiree@nreic.org.

Upcoming Workshops & Events

Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool Special Education Services



- Learn about the Transition Process to Preschool Services
- Eligibility requirements for Preschool Special Education;
- Registration & Residency Requirements (Local School District)
- Timelines and what to expect at each step of the process
- The Individualized Education Plan
- Services in the Least Restrictive Environment
- Parental Rights;
- Helpful tips for transition & more.....

Wednesday, January 18th, 2012
10:00am to 12:00 noon

St. Joseph's School for the Blind
761 Summit Avenue
Jersey City, New Jersey 07307

Registration is required.

Please call Michelle at 973-256-8484
or e-mail michelle@nreic.org

*Child care will not be provided for this event

This workshop is presented by the Northeast Regional Early Intervention Collaborative, Inc.



Basic Rights in Special Education - Passaic County

This workshop provides families with an introduction to their rights and responsibilities as parents of children with special needs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the NJ Code, and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. Parents learn to identify their dreams and goals for their children, and learn laws and advocacy strategies that will help them help their children reach those goals. Parents of classified children and children who are having difficulty in school, but may not be classified, can benefit from this training. Deadline to register is March 19, 2012.

Tuesday, March 20, 2012 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM (ET)

Presenter: Nicole Pratt

Clifton Public Library

This FREE workshop is sponsored by The Statewide Parent Advocacy Network

To register go to : www.spannj.org/training



Association for Special Children and Families

1810 Macopin Road, West Milford, NJ

UNDERSTANDING BASIC RIGHTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

An introduction to the rights and responsibilities of parents of children with special needs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004, the State Special Education Code 2006, and Section 504 of Vocational Rehabilitation Act.

Thursday, February 9, 2012

10am - 12pm

Hillcrest Community Center, 1810 Macopin Road, West Milford, NJ

Room # 8

Professional Credit Certificates available

All activities require registration.

Please call : 973-728-8744 or

Email: ASCFamily@hotmail.com