



Thinking Out Loud... High Five to Start the School Year Right

Mission

To improve educational outcomes for all children, especially children with disabilities, and their families, by providing information, education, and support.

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Did You Know?

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Remember PIC when you are asked to give!

PIC is United Way write-in agency:

- #725 in DE
- #16084 in PA
- #70088 SECC

Parents often ask us about steps they can take to help ensure that their child gets the services they need at school. Here are five quick steps you can take right now as the school year begins that will help you all year long:

- 1. Fifteen minutes of planning for a better future for your child.** First off ask yourself how is my child doing at school? Is he struggling? How is he struggling? What are my goals for her this year at school? What will he be doing in five years? What do I envision for her when she leaves high school or completes special education? How can I help her at school now in a way that will help move her towards the future I envision for her? Jot down a few notes. Get clear on what you want for your child - and go for it! No one knows your child better than you do. Well in advance of every IEP meeting, pull out your notes and do this exercise again.
- 2. Get Organized.** Assemble your child's key school documents and put them in a three-ring binder. Not only will you have all the information you need when you need it, you will look organized, too. In addition to important contact information for school staff, your binder should include your child's last two IEP's, test results from the past two years, report cards and progress reports, copies of any correspondence between you and the school and any notes you made of conversations with the teacher or other school personnel.
- 3. Review your child's current IEP.** Has your child met the goals set forth by the IEP team? If not, review the interim progress reports to see what may have prevented his progress. Be

prepared to ask specific questions of the team to find out why your child is not advancing. Are the goals appropriate and measurable? Are teachers considering her learning style, strengths and weaknesses? Is she given the right accommodations and modifications and provided access to assistive technology where necessary? If behavior is interfering with her learning, is there a positive behavior support plan in place to help her manage behaviors that are disrupting learning.



- 4. Review your child's evaluation report or most recent evaluation.** If what the school provided to you is confusing, you may want to schedule a time with the school staff (psychologist, speech pathologist, etc) to make sure you understand what the evaluation results mean for your child.
- 5. Take Action.** People say knowledge is power - it is a fact that the more you know, the better you will be able to get the instruction and services your child needs. But without action, knowledge won't get you far. So get started today. Take advantage of all the great learning opportunities PIC is offering this fall. For a complete listing of topics, check the center section of this newsletter and be sure to sign up for our weekly electronic newsletter at www.picofdel.org to keep current with local and national special education news and events, **and make this school year the best one for your child.**

Marie Anne

PIC Now Coordinates the Educational Surrogate Parent (ESP) Program on Behalf of the Delaware Department of Education

The ESP Program was established to ensure that children with special education needs, who are in foster care, have the same protections as all other eligible children under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Foster parents and community volunteers interested in assum-

ing the role of an ESP receive training and resources from PIC about special education and advocacy strategies. An individual approved by PIC to represent the educational interests of an eligible child is then appointed by the Department of Education and serves as that

child's Educational Surrogate Parent in the absence of the child's parent. If you or someone you know would like to become an ESP, please contact Kathie Herel (ESP Program Coordinator) at kherel@picofdel.org or call 302-999-7394.

The Link

A Publication of Parent Information Center of Delaware

The Parent Information Center of Delaware (PIC) is a (501)(c)(3) nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of Delaware.

PIC administers Delaware's only Parent Training and Information (PTI) project as mandated under section 1474 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and funded by the US Department of Education- Office of Special Education Programs CFDA 84.328M-H328M0900-09 .

PIC also administers the Parental Information Resource Center for the State of Delaware as mandated under section 5563 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Funded by the US. Department of Education-Office of Parental Options and Innovations CFDA 84.310-U310A070006-09.

The programs and services that the PIC provides are statewide and focus on reaching families and children from birth to age 26 who are from racial, ethnic, or cultural minority backgrounds, economically disadvantaged, geographically or otherwise underserved.

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Additional funds for *The Link* provided by the DE Dept. of Education/Exceptional Children Resources



What Teens want to hear

Teens don't always want encouragement or inspiration. Often times we wish to be completely independent, going forward with our own "superior wisdom". Nevertheless, we still require guidance from adults we can look to and appreciate as role models. This doesn't always mean that adults have to do some type of heroic act to inspire us. It can be as simple as the following points:

1. Believe in us. *Praise us if you want to build our self-confidence. Teens that lack a dream may be overwhelmed with life and unable to motivate themselves. Encourage us to explore things we're good at and build our self-esteem. When we believe in ourselves, we'll be inspired to try new things.*

2. Help us make decisions. *We often beg for independence, but that doesn't mean we want the responsibility of making major life decisions on our own. Stay connected with us and help us when we need you (though we may not always approach you directly with problems). Teach us problem solving and brainstorming techniques along the way. At the same time...*

3. Give us choices so we feel empowered. *With parents and teachers telling us what to do, we can sometimes feel powerless in our own lives. Give us options and let us make some choices on our own. As long as our decisions aren't going to severely damage ourselves or*

others, allow us to make mistakes; it helps us feel empowered and inspired.

4. Encourage us to have our own interests and dreams. *Take the time to listen to us. What you have mapped out for us may not always be the path we've chosen to take. Find out what makes us excited and what makes our eyes light up. Encourage us to build these interests into an attainable dream.*

5. Help us set a goal. *This could be anything from passing a test to starting a career. Teach us to enjoy the little achievements along the way. Attaining goals makes people feel proud and gives them the courage to try new things; teens are no exception.*

These few points will encourage us to respect your wisdom. By simply respecting a teen as a person and not always putting them down, you can inspire them to do great things.

To learn more about the *Born for Greatness Youth Writer's Class*, youth empowerment resources and the top five ways to build confidence in your child, visit their website at: www.bfg-youth.com/

by Asia W. of the *Born for Greatness*

Youth Writer's Class

El Niño Bilingüe y los Trastornos de la Comunicación

Mitos sobre ser bilingüe y los problemas del habla y lenguaje

Muchos padres piensan que si un niño tiene problemas de habla o lenguaje puede ser causa de que se le habla al niño en los dos idiomas. Sin embargo esto no es verdad. Lo que sí es verdad es que si un niño tiene un problema de habla y lenguaje, esto se mostrará en los dos idiomas. Puede ser que el niño sufra de un trastorno de la comunicación. Si un niño está aprendiendo un segundo idioma y los padres tienen preocupación acerca del habla y del lenguaje, lo recomendable es que se pongan en contacto con un patólogo del habla (SLP por su siglas en ingles). Es preferible que este profesional sea bilingüe.



Las Ventajas de ser Bilingüe

Según el Centro Nacional para la Estadística de la Educación (NCES por sus siglas en ingles) , más de uno de cada 5 niños en edad escolar (21%) hablan un idioma dis-

tinto del Inglés en el hogar. De acuerdo a la Asociación Americana del Habla-Lenguaje-Audición (ASHA por sus siglas en ingles) , la mayoría de los niños tienen la capacidad y facilidad para aprender más de un idioma. Algunas ventajas según las investigaciones arrojan que un niño bilingüe puede:

- Ser capaz de aprender nuevas palabras fácilmente
- Jugar juegos de rimas con palabras como "gato" y "pato"
- El desglose de las palabras por los sonidos, tales como M-A-R para el mar
- Ser capaz de utilizar la información en nuevas formas
- Colocar palabras en categorías
- Encontrar soluciones a problemas
- Buenas habilidades para escuchar
- La conexión con otros

Asegúrese que su Niño Escuche bien

Se estima que entre 10% y 15% de todos los niños en edad escolar presentan algún tipo de pérdida de la audición. Algunos de

en cualquier momento como resultado de infecciones del oído, enfermedades infecciosas, lesiones de la cabeza, o exposición a ruidos o música fuertes.

Si los padres sospechan que un niño tiene un problema de audición deben visitar al pediatra para que lo examine. Las infecciones del oído requieren de un tratamiento inmediato. Haga cita con un Audiólogo certificado para que le realice una evaluación y determine si existe o no pérdida de la audición y su nivel de severidad.

NOTA: Los trastornos de la comunicación afectan a más de 42 millones de estadounidenses. De estos, 28 millones tienen una pérdida auditiva y 14 millones tienen un trastorno del habla o lenguaje.

Como buscar ayuda Su niño puede recibir terapias para mejorar los problemas del habla y lenguaje si lo necesita. Para determinar si un niño cualifica para recibir terapias es necesario llevar a cabo una evaluación. Existen programas de intervención temprana para los niños menores de

tres años de edad que evalúan a los niños y proveen los servicios necesarios. Si el niño es mayor de tres años, los padres pueden solicitar una evaluación de habla y lenguaje por escrito a su distrito escolar. El distrito escolar es responsable de proveer los servicios de terapia si dicha evaluación arroja que el niño necesita los servicios.

Para recibir ayuda y/o contestar sus preguntas sobre el proceso de obtener una evaluación por favor comuníquese con el Centro de Información para Padres de Delaware o visítenos en la red de internet www.picofdel.org.

Créditos:
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA): www.ASHA.org

Colorin Colorado: www.Colorincolorado.org

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES): <http://nces.ed.gov/>

Por: *Maria Mendoza, Asesora de Padres, Centro de Información para Padres de Delaware (302) 856-9880*

Don't Miss Our Fall Learning Opportunities on these Important Topics

- When Your Baby Grows Up - Smooth Transitions
- What is Section 504? Another Option for Children with Disabilities
- A Step-by-Step Approach to Building Meaningful IEP's
- The Transition IEP- A Blueprint for Your Child's Future
- The A- Z of Disciplinary Removals from school
- Effective Skills for Advocacy
- Engaged Parents Make a Difference
- Class in Session: What is My Child Learning this Year?
- Beat Back Bullying - Teaching Children to Resolve Conflicts
- Students Planning Ahead for Post-School Success with the Student Success Plan
- Staying Ahead of the Game- Understanding How School District & School Report Cards Impact Children's Education

For workshop / event locations, times and dates, and to register, visit our website at www.picofdel.org/event.asp

Or call us Toll Free :

888-547-4412

STAY INFORMED! Subscribe to PIC News & Events, our weekly electronic newsletter at <http://www.picofdel.org> or call us.

Coming in December 2011 -

**A NEW and IMPROVED
PIC WEBSITE !**

“VIPs with IEPs”

This past spring, approximately 500 attendees of the *2011 Delaware Transition Conference* were introduced to the keynote speaker, Lynnae Rutledge (US Department of Rehabilitation Services Administration), by Chris Coulston and Christian Strange. Chris and Christian were the two youngest advocates and presenters at the conference.



Chris, then an 8th grader at P.S. duPont Middle School and Christian, a 5th

grader at Gallaher Elementary School also gave a presentation focusing on the importance of advocacy and participation in the IEP process. Introducing themselves as “VIPs with IEPs”, Chris and Christian role played with the audience and became highly qualified teachers. Providing the “students” with various instructions, Chris and Christian demonstrated how students learn differently asking “*were you not listening or do you just learn differently?*” Chris and Christian shared “the stage” with their moms, Ellen and Adriane who talked about their personal experiences and offered strat-

egies for heightening parent participation. The session concluded with a team building activity that got participants out of their seats and using hoola hoops!

Another session with young presenters featured college students Clem Coulston and Brad Lovett. Clem and Brad spoke with approximately 100 high school students and shared stories and pictures to help describe their challenges and successes after graduating from high school. Brad spoke openly about how, even as captain of his high school wrestling team, he endured being made fun of because he received special education services and needed extra help in his classes. Clem connected with the students by telling them how, due to a car accident, he now has difficulty processing information. Clem and Brad stressed how important it is to have dreams and goals, but because your path in life may change unexpectedly, it is also important to have a back-up plan.

Brad and Clem discussed how different college life is versus high school. They emphasized how important it is to ask for help and to be a self-advocate. They introduced students to the “5+ Adocacy” activity, in which each student voiced five positive personal characteristics. This is an especially powerful advocacy technique students can use to combat negative thoughts.

Student and parent presentations were supported by the Parent Information Center.

Upcoming Conferences... Plan Ahead!

LIFE Conference XIII

January 19, 2012

Delaware's premier conference for persons with disabilities and those who serve them.

Online registration will be available at www.lifeconference-delaware.org

For more information, visit the above website, email:

info@LIFEconference-delaware.org

or call the Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council at 302-739-3333.

Inclusion Conference

March 15, 2012
Sheraton Dover Hotel
Dover, DE

The Inclusion Conference is designed to address the needs of educators, parents, policymaker, service providers and childcare providers involved with or interested in promoting inclusion for ALL from birth to 21.

SAVE THE DATE!
Transition Conference
April 3, 2012
Sheraton Dover Hotel

NEW in the PIC Lending Library -

The Integrated Self-Advocacy ISA™ Curriculum - A Program for Emerging Self Advocates with Autism Spectrum and Other Conditions -
by Valerie Paradiz, Ph.D.
Teacher Edition

Diez Pasos para Ayudar a su Hijo a Tener Éxito en la Escuela -
by Mychal Wynn

PIC has 592 more titles available for loan... please visit our library!

PIC Awards Leadership Stipends to Five Parents Who Successfully Completed Activities to Improve Services for Children with Disabilities and Their Families

In conjunction with the PIC's Family Leadership Academy, held in June 2010, several parents embarked on the initiative of pursuing their personal leadership endeavors through a series of projects in the Family Leadership Academy Internship Program.

Last summer, several parents who had participated in PIC's first Family Leadership Academy (FLA) committed to using their brand new leadership skills through a leadership internship initiative that PIC developed to help parents reach their individual leadership goals. FLA interns met throughout the year to discuss projects, progress, share ideas and network with peers. Each completed a minimum 36 hours of service on their respective projects that ranged from participating in the development of awareness videos about mental health and cerebral palsy to setting up a school resource center. Thanks to their respective projects, parents honed their leadership skills by engaging and collaborating with community organizations, legislators, and school and district personnel. Several parents joined state level advisory councils while others created venues for other parents to become more involved in their children's educa-

tion and school.

On July 27, 2011, PIC held an award ceremony where four interns presented their projects and received well-deserved recognition as well as a check for \$250 to support the continuation of their projects.

It was particularly rewarding for all present to see that the information and skills parents received during last year's PIC FAMILY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (FLA) enabled them to become accomplished leaders and systems change agents.

Lori Verlingheri - Created venues for sharing disability information and resources with families at the Leach School in the Colonial School District and statewide.

Kimberly Herbert & Robin Delaney - Opened a Family Resource Center, and a school store where students can trade in points for rewards at the Brennen School for students with autism.

Natalye Madric - Established a support group for families of children with special needs at University of Delaware's Early Learning Center.

Debbie Lockerman - Helped in the production of the Delaware's B.E.S.T. PSA to raise Child Mental Health awareness.

About the PIC Family Leadership Academy Internship Program

The Family Leadership Academy Internship Program is designed to provide families with an opportunity to expand leadership and policy development skills. Examples of internships could include, but were not limited to, membership on state advisory boards, state special education advisory boards, committee meetings, participating in a leadership role in a conference or other event, participation in evaluation activities and development work related to a disability advocacy organization.

The next Family Leadership Academy (FLA) is scheduled

for October 29 & October 30, 2011. For more information about the FLA, visit www.picofdel.org.



DID YOU KNOW...

PIC Now Has Evening Hours to Better Assist Working Families

So as to better assist working families, PIC staff are now available from 8:30am to 7:00pm on Mondays and Tuesdays in our Wilmington office and from 8:30am to 6:00pm in our Georgetown office. Wednesday and Thursday hours are 8:30am to 4:30pm. Fridays are dedicated to development and planning and although staff are not answering phones, please leave a message.

Website Provides Special Education Apps Information

Special Needs Apps for Kids and Easter Seals have created a website (www.snapps4kids.com) for parents, teachers, doctors and therapists to learn and share information about apps used in special education. Viewers can share information and read reviews of 30,000 apps now in use by children with disabilities. The devices include the iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch and Android. There is also a list of organizations that can help families fund the cost of a device.



Parents' Guide to Student Success

The Parents' Guide to Student Success (available in English and Spanish) was developed in response to the *Common Core State Standards* in English language arts and mathematics that more than 40 states have adopted. (To find out if your state has adopted the standards, visit CoreStandards.org/In-The-States.) Created by teachers, parents, education experts, and others from across the country, the standards provide clear, consistent expectations for what students should be learning at each grade level in order to be prepared for college and career.

National PTA® created the guides for grades K-8 and two for grades 9-12 (one for English language arts/literacy and one for mathematics).

<http://www.pta.org/4446.htm>

PIC Partners with the Child Development Community Policing Program (CDCP) in the City of Wilmington

In a continued effort to better serve children and families in the City of Wilmington, the Parent Information Center of Delaware recently entered into an partnership with the City of Wilmington's Child Development Community Policing Program (CDCP). Norwood Coleman, Jr., Clinical Supervisor of the program and Meedra Surratte, PIC Family-School Partner, will be working together to provide families with services based on identified needs. This partnership gives families access to additional supports and services that will be provided by PIC and CDCP, as well as by other community organizations and agencies that serve children and families.

About CDCP: Wilmington Child Development Community Policing Program is a collaborative, prevention partnership that includes: The City of Wilmington, the Wilmington Police Department, the Delaware Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health as well as their clinical services provider, Delaware Guidance Services. The CDCP seeks to prevent or reduce the development of post-traumatic symptoms and related disorders after a child has witnessed a traumatic event by connecting families with appropriate treatment and other relevant services in their community. CDCP Services are voluntary, confidential and free.

Family Engagement Series in Wilmington Schools

In an effort to promote family engagement, M*Pritchett & Associates will be partnering with schools in Wilmington to organize monthly meetings for families beginning this fall. It is a means for families to share information, provide support, and communicate with their children's school staff. Both M*Pritchett & Associates and schools view this initiative as a way to empower families, increase family involvement and foster positive relationships between schools and families.



Improve Your Child's Study Skills

At www.how-to-study.com parents can find over 85 articles on improving their child's study skills. The techniques can be applied to children of all ages and cover many areas, including math, writing, reading, note-taking, remembering, preparing for college and test-taking strategies. Also available in Spanish.

What are Common Core State Standards (CCSS)?

Visit www.delawarepta.org

to download the *Parents' Guide to Student Success!*

Contact Delaware PTA at:

de_office@pta.org or

302-838-8770

to schedule a presentation to learn more about Common Core!



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All donations to the Parent Information Center of Delaware are tax deductible under Section (501) (c) (3) of the IRS tax code.

PIC is a United Way of DE write in: #725
State Employee Charitable Campaign #70088

For information on how to make a tax deductible gift or to become a PIC member, log onto www.picofdel.org select DONATE.

If you wish to volunteer with PIC, please contact us by phone at (888) 547-4412 or by email at picofdel@picofdel.org.

Please mail your contribution to:
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