



Family Resource Network

Helping Families Meet the Challenge

Volume 16, Issue 3, Fall 2008

FRN Proudly Announces
the First Meeting of



**Special Parents Advocating for
Resources & Knowledge**

SPARK is a place where parents/caregivers of children with special needs can come together to gain information, exchange ideas and encourage one another. The focuses of SPARK will be:

- to help parents strengthen their advocacy skills;
- to find current, reliable resources that will enrich the lives of their children as well as themselves;
- to foster the strengthening of relationships between parents and professionals.

SPARK will be facilitated by FRN's Program Coordinator, Sandi Sanborn, who is the parent of a son who has cerebral palsy.

SPARK will meet the 3rd Thursday of every month September through May, excluding December.

**SPARK Inaugural Meeting
Thursday, Sept. 18
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Sherwood Executive Center
5250 Claremont Ave., Suite 246, Stockton**

We regret that we are unable
to provide childcare.

There is not cost to attend, but please let us know at least two days before the meeting if you will be joining us. You can call, fax or email FRN with that info. Hope to see you at the first meeting of SPARK!

*FRN thanks PEDS for donating the use of
their office space for SPARK!*



14th Annual Early Start Symposium "Embracing All Children"

The Region 9 Infant Services Committee proudly presents the 14th Annual Early Start Symposium on Friday, October 24, 2008 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Modesto. Dr. Deborah Chen will be the keynote speaker. Dr. Chen is a professor in the Special Education Department at California State University, Northridge. Her keynote presentation "Making the Most of Early Communication" will address different forms of communication that can be used by young children with special needs and their families. In addition to Dr. Chen's presentation, there will be breakout sessions presented by local experts. Session topics will include speech development, behavior, seizure disorders, visual impairment, medical advocacy, adapting toys and cultural diversity.

The registration form is posted on www.frcn.org/calendar. Parent scholarships are available for families whose children reside in FRN's 5 county service area and are receiving services through the Early Start program. Additionally, there are a limited number of scholarships for parents of preschoolers receiving special education services. Out of respect to all attendees, children are not to be brought to the Symposium. Respite may be available to families receiving Early Start Services within the region. Contact your child's Service Coordinator for more information.

We look forward to seeing you
at the Symposium.

Family Resource Network Newsletter
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EDITOR: Ann Cirimele

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Family Resource Network Phone: 209-472-3674
5250 Claremont Ave., Suite 239 Fax: 209-472-3673
Stockton, CA 95207
Email: FRNfamilies@aol.com website: www.frcn.org

**Congrats to the WINNERS of FRN's
latest drawing:
Leticia Centeno
Elvia Garcia
Amie Prutch**



The recreational support group for non-disabled siblings, ages 7 to 14:

**Friday, October 10, 2008
6 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Quail Lakes Baptist Church, Stockton
AND**

**Saturday, November 22, 2008
1 to 4 p.m.**

Valley Community Baptist Church, Tracy

Meet other siblings who have the same kinds of issues. There are games, crafts, discussion activities, food and lots of fun! There is no cost to attend. **And...we welcome Jessica Bossana as the new Sibshop Facilitator!**

Registration is required and must be submitted one week prior to event. Call 472-3674 or 800-847-3030 to request a registration packet.

News About Area Support Groups

The good news is: the number of area support groups has increased significantly over the last two years.

The bad news is: FRN does not have enough space in the newsletter to list all the important information for each group, so...

effective immediately, support groups are encouraged to email or mail flyers and information on their groups to FRN. FRN will have the information on display in the office and will share information as appropriate with families who call FRN asking for info on specific disabilities or support groups.



Get All the Latest Info

FRN will email you up-to-the-minute information on news items, trainings and other issues of interest to families raising children with special needs. FRN's newsletter is published only 3 times per year so email is a great way to keep up on important information. If you would like to be added to FRN's email list, email the following info to FRNfamilies@aol.com:

- Your name
- The county you reside in
- Please indicate if you are a parent of a child with special needs or a professional working with special needs children



'Tis The Season...

Or it will be before we know it. FRN's Annual Holiday Open House will take place on Saturday, December 6th from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at FRN's office, 5250 Claremont Ave., Stockton. This FREE event will have food, fun and Santa will be stopping by. Call or email FRN to let us know how many people will be in your party.

Training Opportunities

Sept. 10 - Building Bridges – Transitioning Your Child from the Early Start Program • FRN Office in **Stockton**, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., free for parents, \$15 fee for professionals, for info call 800-847-3030.

Sept. 16- Parental Rights and Advocacy in Special Education • Presenter: Ann Cirimele, Family Resource Network • FRN Office in **Stockton**, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., scholarships for parents, \$35 for professionals, for reservations call 800-847-3030.

Sept. 17– Writing An Effective IEP for Your Child with Special Needs • Presenters: Area VI Board and Family Resource Network • SCDD, Area VI Board • **Weston Ranch Branch Library, Stockton**, 6 – 8:00 p.m. FREE, reservations are required, for reservations call 800-847-3030.

Oct. 7– Writing An Effective IEP for Your Child with Special Needs • Presenters: Area VI Board and Family Resource Network • SCDD, Area VI Board • Administration Center, **Jackson**, 6 – 8:30 p.m. FREE, reservations are required, for reservations call 800-847-3030.

Nov. 5- Building Bridges – Transitioning Your Child from the Early Start Program • FRN Office in **Stockton**, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., free for parents, \$15 fee for professionals, for info call 800-847-3030.

Nov. 20– Writing An Effective IEP for Your Child with Special Needs • Presenters: Area VI Board and Family Resource Network • SCDD, Area VI Board • **Oakdale Library, Oakdale**, 6 – 8:00 p.m. FREE, reservations are required, for reservations call 800-847-3030.

January 17– Writing An Effective IEP for Your Child with Special Needs • Presenters: Area VI Board and Family Resource Network • SCDD, Area VI Board • Area VI Board Office, **Stockton**, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. FREE, **SATURDAY workshop**, reservations are required, for reservations call 800-847-3030.

Financial and Estate Planning Workshop

Frank Quacinella, First Vice President and National Spokesperson for Families with Special Needs Planning Network for Merrill Lynch, and Mark Drobney, Attorney at Law, will once again be the presenters for FRN's Financial and Estate Planning workshops. Frank and Mark are offering a presentation covering basic topics on the **evening of September 30th** at the San Joaquin County Office of Education, Education Service Center in Stockton. Topics include:

- ◆ Understanding the importance of financial planning,
- ◆ Preparing for when you're not there to help.
- ◆ Protecting government benefits through proper estate planning.
- ◆ Special Needs Trusts – the basics of how they work and when they are appropriate.
- ◆ Conservatorship – What is it? Situations under which it should be considered and when it should be avoided.
- ◆ Personal estate planning

An advanced workshop addressing these and other topics in greater detail will be conducted **Saturday morning, November 15**, at FRN's office in Stockton.

There is no cost to attend these workshops, but reservations are requested. Call FRN or go to www.frcn.org and click on calendar for registration information.

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IEP workshop to be conducted in Spanish

Entrenamiento en Español para la forma IEP(Programa de Educación Individual)
El taller será presentado solamente en español

SÁBADO, 8 DE NOVIEMBRE, DEL 2008
9:30 AM – 1:30 PM

En las Oficinas de Educación del Condado de San Joaquín
2707 Transworld Drive,
Salon Greenwood 1, Stockton, CA

El entrenamiento es gratuito pero se requiere que se registre con anticipación. Las formas están disponibles en [ww.frcn.org/calendar](http://www.frcn.org/calendar) o llamando 209-472-3674.

Check FRN's website, www.frcn.org and click on "calendar" for updated information on trainings and events. Registration forms for FRN events are on the website.

New FRN Library Resources

Books

- Autism Spectrum Disorders Best Practices in Inter-Organizational Collaboration
- Nobody Nowhere: The Extraordinary Autobiography of a Person with Autism
- There's A Boy in Here: A Mother and Her Son Tell the Story of His Emergence from Autism

FRN thanks Emily Bauch for the donation of :

- Autistic Spectrum Daily Helper

FRN thanks the Klunk family for the donation of:

- Living with Children
- Siblings of Children with Autism
- World of the Autistic Child

FRN thanks Sangita Patel for the donation of :

- Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome

FRN thanks the Sanborn Family for the donation of:

- The Hidden Curriculum: Practical Solutions for Understanding Unstated Rules in Social Situations
- The Oxygen Revolution: Hyperberic Oxygen Therapy

Visit www.frn.org and click on Library to see a complete listing of all of FRN's library resources and to find out how to borrow resources from the library. If you don't have access to the internet you can contact FRN at 209-472-3674 or 800-847-3030.



Friends In Deed!

Congratulations to

♥ Nick Fish♥
and

♥ Barbara Poindexter♥

who were honored with Friend in Deed certificates for their exceptional caring and commitment toward children with special needs and their families.

What's a CAC?

CAC stands for Community Advisory Committee, which is a legally mandated group formed to advise Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA) about issues affecting children receiving special education services. CAC members are parents of children with special needs, representatives from private and public agencies and representatives from school districts and the SELPA. Parent committee members are appointed by their school district. CAC meetings are open to the public. One does not need to be an official voting member to attend. Time and duration of meetings vary by SELPA. CACs are a great place for parents to meet other parents of special needs children. It is also a place where parents can meet education and other professionals and learn more about programs/services that are in the community. Many CACs provide workshops or other events on topics of interest to special needs families.

FRN will be conducting workshops at CACs as follows:

Stanislaus County CAC:*

10/22/08 - Special Education Rights

1/28/09 – The Road Less Traveled: Understanding the Emotions Experienced by Families Raising Children with Special Needs

San Joaquin County CAC:*

12/1/08 – Parental Rights in Special Education

3/2/09 – Moving Forward: Helping Your Child Transition to Adult Services

*Contact the SELPA for info re time and location.

For information on your local CAC contact:

Amador County SELPA:
209-257-5330

Calaveras County SELPA:
209-736-6020 or 209-736-6016

Modesto City Schools SELPA:
209-576-4155

Stanislaus County SELPA:
(districts other than Modesto City Schools)
209-541-2944

Stockton Unified SELPA:
209-933-7120 x 2560

Lodi Unified SELPA:
(includes and New Hope and Oak View districts)
209-331-7061

San Joaquin County SELPA
(all districts not served by Stockton or Lodi SELPAs)
209-468-4925



FRN extends its thanks to the following for their generous donations:

- Bank of the West Employee Giving Program
- Emily Bauch
- Michele Coy-Stockton
- Noelle Dick
- John's Incredible Pizza, Stockton
- Beverly Klunk
- Carl Lundblad
- Theresa Lundblad
- Megan Maier
- Riri Nakasone
- Kiyomi Uhde
- Judy Vest
- Valerie Zoccoli

Thank you to the following for their donations in honor of Alex Rangel:

- Margo Bishop
- Jo Cohen
- Jacqueline Lee Gelder
- Robin Klark
- Collette Means
- Wanda Moran-Woods
- Sande Willmes
- Linda Zeigler



Thank you United Way Donors!!

- Ron Cook
- Thea Etheridge
- Kathleen Werner
and
Anonymous Donors



FRN thanks these great student volunteers:

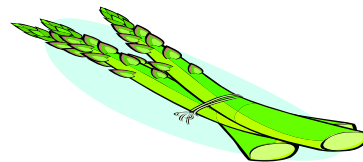
*Carissa Balcao
Edward Klunk
Natalie Miller
Alexis Pettis
Sam Sopath
Gianna Stagnaro
Anna Whitesides*



Many, many thanks go to those who so generously donated to **FRN's Healing Hearts Society**. Funds from these donations are given to families to assist with burial expenses upon the death of their child with special needs. To date the Healing Hearts Society has provided funding to eight families.

Healing Hearts Society Members include:

- Sue Allyn
- PEDS
In memory of Kathleen O'Connor
- Judy Sterling
- Thelma Stewart
- Don & Linda Vest



FRN benefits from Asparagus Festival Spear-it

FRN thanks the following for donating their service hours at the Asparagus Festival to FRN:

- Jeremy Coe
- Cathie Schultze
- Lynne Schultze

And special thanks to:

- Roger Valdez

These wonderful people raised \$951.05 for FRN!

The Legislative Process: How You Can Participate

*Excerpted from presentation by Julia Barnes,
State Council on Developmental Disabilities*

Communicate Your Position

If you are concerned about issues let your legislator know. Call the district office. Write a letter. Meet with your legislator, or a member of his staff. You have valuable information that can help him decide how to vote.

Letter Writing Guidelines

Address your letter properly. Elected representatives are addressed as "The Honorable" followed by their name.

Write about one subject only. Be brief and to the point. A rambling letter that takes up 10 pages and never quite gets to the point will not be as persuasive as one that builds a case.

Writing A Letter

Use your own words. You are the expert. Explain what the impact will be and why your legislator should vote as you ask.

Write legibly. Your letter does not need to be typed.

Be courteous. Most people, including legislators, don't respond positively to threats.

Timing is critical. The best letter in the world won't have much impact if it arrives after the legislator has already voted on the bill.

Visit Your Legislator

Legislators come from different backgrounds and have different experiences. Learn about your legislator, especially what committees he's on.

Be prepared. Review the information you have learned about your issue.

Be on time and stay within your allotted time.

Avoid arguments. You're trying to get the legislator to see things from your perspective, creating an adversary won't help.

Always be honest. You have two valuable things to offer - your experience and your integrity.



The California Memorial Project

Presents

Remembrance Day 2008

September 15, 2008

This even will be held at Stockton Rural Cemetery to remember and honor the people who died while in state hospitals and developmental centers.

The inscription on the memorial states,

"In honor and memory of those who died and were buried anonymously on the Stockton institution grounds between 1852 and 1996. Let no person ever again be removed from the community by reason of disability."

Location Stockton Rural Cemetery,

2350 Cemetery Lane, Stockton, CA

Healthcare Funding Info

The United Healthcare Children's Foundation (UHCCF) has announced that new grants are available to help children who need critical healthcare treatment, services, or equipment not covered or not fully covered by their parents' health benefit plans

The foundation provides grants to families to help pay for child healthcare services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy sessions, prescriptions, and medical equipment such as wheel chairs, orthotics, and eyeglasses.

Parents and legal guardians may apply for grants of up to \$5,000 each for child medical services and equipment by completing an online application at the UHCCF Web site at http://www.uhccf.org/apply_applicant.html

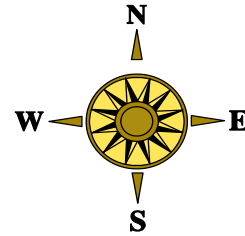


12 Commandments for Parents of Children with Disabilities

By Virginia Richardson, Pacer Center

1. Thou art thy child's best and most consistent advocate.
2. Thou has valuable information about your child. Professionals need your input.
3. Thou shalt put it in writing and keep a copy.
4. Thou shalt try to resolve problems at the lowest level but not hesitate to contact a higher authority if the problem is not resolved.
5. Thou shalt keep records.
6. Thou shalt seek out information when needed.
7. Thou shalt take time to think through information before making a decision.
8. Thou shalt have permission to be less than perfect. Important lessons are learned from both successes and failures.
9. Thou shalt not become a martyr. Decide to take a break now and then.
10. Thou shalt maintain a sense of humor. It is great for your emotional well being and that of your child.
11. Thou shalt always remember to tell people when they are doing a good job.
12. Thou shalt encourage the child to make decisions because one day he or she will need to do so.

The worst thing that can happen to you can be the best thing for you, if you don't let it get the best of you.

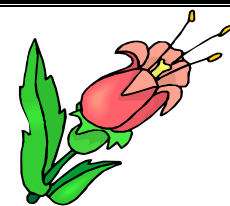


Travel Opportunities

The National Park Service has launched a website for visitors with disabilities and other special needs to help them find accessible trails, programs and activities at national parks. The website is www.nps.gov/pub_aff/access/index and is called "National Parks: Accessible to Everyone."

Attention VMRC Families

Valley Mountain Regional Center consumers and their immediate families can receive discounted tickets to Disneyland through its Community Integration Program. There are strict rules as to when the tickets are available, and the tickets must be used during a specific time in early 2009. **Please contact your child's VMRC Service Coordinator to learn more about the program.** VMRC also provides consumers and their immediate family members with free tickets to the Monterey Bay Aquarium under the Free to Learn Program. Tickets must be ordered at least 10 days in advance. For more information contact VMRC's Becky Estrada at 209-955-3254.



Sad News

Longtime FRN volunteer and financial supporter Kathleen Devine O'Connor passed away on May 2nd. The grandmother of two children with special needs, Kathleen sewed more than 600 preemie-sized blankets which FRN donated to families whose babies were in neonatal intensive care units in San Joaquin County. FRN sends sincere condolences to Kathleen's family, especially her husband of 56 years, Edward.