

PARENT NETWORK

Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc. Serving Idaho Families for 20 years

CONSORTIUM FOR IDAHOANS WITH DISABILITIES

CHILDREN'S SPECIAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM CHANGES

The Children's Special Health Care Program in Idaho provides medical services to children with special health care needs through regional clinics. The program is funded under a federal Title V Maternal and Child Health block grant. This past year, 2,781 children were served through the CSHP. Of this number 40% are covered by Medicaid, 50% are covered by private insurance and 10% are uninsured.



For the past few years, the Idaho program has operated at a deficit in order to meet the needs of Idaho children and families. They were able to do this by using funds from other Title V programs to fill the budget gap. Those funds are no longer available and Idaho's program is now making changes that will affect how some families across the state access medical care for their children who have special health care needs. These changes went into effect on October 1, 2004.



This information was provided by the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities. For more information contact IPUL

THE PRIMARY CHANGES IN CSHP ARE:

- eliminate the CSHP-sponsored regionally-based clinics and require families to seek services for their child with local and regional (may include out-of-state) specialists; CSHP will provide some subsidies for specialist travel and other costs
- for those with insurance or Medicaid, no longer provide the care coordination that helps families navigate a complex array of services for their children with special health care needs
- eliminate coverage for all services except cystic fibrosis and PKU
- provide coverage for the full range of CSHP services only for those without insurance

These changes mean that CSHP would cover only uninsured children, currently 283 statewide. This may have an adverse effect on families, especially those who may have private insurance but are 'under-insured' because of coverage limitations. In addition, families may have to travel a greater distance and/or visit several different medical professionals to get the medical care they once were able to get through the clinics.

CID RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Seek additional state funding to continue care coordination and services coverage for eligible families and give stakeholders time to come up with a long-term solution to support this program in the future.
- In collaboration with others, develop a comprehensive plan using information being gathered from the capacity and needs assessment that is currently being done.
- Pursue federal and other grant funding opportunities to supplement the Title V MCH block grant funding.
- Review state insurance statutes for possible policy changes around insurance companies' denial of coverage for certain services needed by children with special health care needs.

Letter from the Executive Director

It has been an eventful fall. The last few months have been pivotal in regard to policy changes and laws that affect children with disabilities. As you will see in this newsletter we have a new "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004". The new law was a compromise between a negative House Bill HR 1350 and a slightly better Senate Bill 1248. The final law is a combination of both bills, leaning more toward the Senate Bill. During the recent Conference Committee a few revisions were made to make some of the items parents were protesting a bit more palatable. The information in our article is based on material sent by the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund and minimizes many of the pitfalls of the new Act. Still, this new law could have grave effects for our children if not properly interpreted at the state level. It will be very important in the next year to see how Idaho implements this law.

We have been hearing from a number of families that are dealing with a reduction in the amounts of dollars to fund direct services for Children with Special Health care needs. If you know of a family dealing with extreme health care issues and medical costs not covered by Medicaid please refer them to IPUL. We will add their information to the list of families that are finding difficulty in gaining the treatments and/or services that their children require. A growing coalition of disability organizations will be working during the next year to identify ways that our State legislators can restore the help these kids need.

In order to help parents understand how these changes will affect their children, we will be working over the next few months to develop new training materials. Please save the date for our conference on March 10th and 11th to get the latest information.

Thanks for taking the time to read our newsletter and staying involved in these important issues.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Mason

Our Mission

Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc. is dedicated to the enhancement of quality of life for individuals with disabilities and their families. In pursuance of this goal, Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc. will develop and support projects and activities that provide educational opportunities and disseminate information to individuals with disabilities, their families and other interested people who support or serve individuals with disabilities. By doing so, Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc. hopes to enhance and support the efforts of these individuals and their families and to improve their quality of life.

WE NEED YOUR IDEAS!!!!

The Idaho Division of Health, which implements the Children's Special Health Program, is conducting a statewide needs assessment to collect information about needs - and gaps in services - for ALL Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) and their families. As explained on the front page, the program is undergoing some significant changes due to financing issues. Health Division staff want to hear directly from families about their needs and issues so that a Children's Special Health Program can be designed that best meets the needs of ALL children with special needs. This assessment gives families the opportunity to play an active role in the development of programs and policies that are of benefit to ALL children with special needs and their families.

The Division of Health is dedicated to creating programs which are family-centered, community-based, coordinated services and systems of health care, and they can't do that without your ideas and input. We're asking you to visit the Needs Assessment website and fill out the Survey for Families of Children with Special Health Care Needs. Some of you have already participated in a focus group to discuss CSHCN issues, and the survey is the next step in the process.

The website is currently 'live'. Please complete before January 21. Please tell other families caring for special needs children about the survey and encourage them to complete it. Survey results will be posted on the website.

Your voice matters. Please help guide this important process.

Website: <http://www.hsrnet.net/idahoMCH>

If you have questions, please call Jodi Anthony at 202-828-5100.



Do you know of someone whose daily actions demonstrate a remarkable accomplishment? How about a parent whose efforts on behalf of their child have influenced you or others? Is there a person or agency whose work has made a difference for children with disabilities and their families? If so, IPUL needs to hear about them! These folks should be recognized!

IPUL SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR OUTSTANDING AWARDS RECIPIENTS

The IPUL Nominating Committee is seeking nominations of parents, professionals, individuals, and agencies to be recognized in the categories of Outstanding Parent, Outstanding Professional, Outstanding Individual, and Outstanding Agency. This is an annual award given at Conference to those persons whose actions have enhanced the quality of life for children with disabilities and their families. If you know of such a person, don't wait for someone else to nominate them! YOU DO IT! Please call the IPUL office at (208) 342-5884 or

1-800-242-IPUL and request a nominations form. You can also find the form on the website ipulidaho.org under the Board choice at the bottom of the page. If you have any questions about the nominating process, please leave a message for the Nominating Committee and we will gladly return your call!

Awards will be given out at the IPUL Annual Conference that will be held March 10th and 11th in Boise. Award Nominations close January 31st, 2005.

• I.D.E.A. REAUTHORIZATION RRN #37 •
**THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT
 HAS BEEN RE-AUTHORIZED**

The information below is taken from information provided by the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) preserveIDEA@dredf.org.

The first thing to say is that the voices of parents were raised, we were heard, and we made a difference in the outcome. Everyone's efforts resulted in the bill being better than we feared, but not as good as we would have liked. Given the political and strategic circumstances and the situation on Capital Hill during this reauthorization process, our hard work and dedication paid off in getting our children the best possible bill we could get.

It is not perfect. It is not fully funded. We lost some protections, such as in the way in which a manifestation determination is made. It remains to be seen how "measurable annual goals" and quarterly progress reports will work to replace short-term objectives and benchmarks. Students who violate school codes will have to remain in an

interim placement pending an appeal of the manifestation determination (a hearing must occur within 20 days). Many believe that the new IDEA would give more power to school districts to determine a child's placement and to limit lawsuits.

Yet we also held back ferocious assaults on discipline provisions and due process protections, increased the number of certified special education teachers, expanded access to assistive technology, and gained sanctions on states that do not comply with the law. And we retained continued services for students moved to alternate placements, attorney fee reimbursements for parents who prevail in due process hearings, and functional behavior assessments and manifestation determinations. There are also key improvements in this bill: provisions for alternate assessments, positive behavioral supports, school to life transitions, assistive technology, and personnel standards.

A great deal of the credit for what we achieved goes to Connie Garner, Senator Kennedy's Disability Policy Advisor and chief staffer on the HELP Committee for IDEA. A parent herself, Connie Garner is a true champion of children's rights, and the parent and advocacy communities are indebted to her.

In the main, the principals of IDEA are preserved. The extremely negative provisions in the House bill have been eliminated, and parents' rights remain largely intact. The final bill does contain a few changes that are weaker or that can be interpreted to be weaker than current law.

The Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) will do a complete analysis of the law that is emerging and what it means for our families and supporters and children. As solid information becomes available, IPUL will provide trainings on the changes.

Conferences coming!

TOOLS FOR LIFE: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair, January 13 and 14, 2005 at the Doubletree Riverside in Boise. Sponsored by the Idaho State Department of Education and the Idaho Assistive Technology Project, this is for anyone interested in supporting individuals with disabilities as they transition from school to life. Contact the Idaho Assistive Technology Project for more information: (208) 885-3573 or 1-800-432-8324.

WE THE PEOPLE...LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF ACCESS!

A Statewide Conference on Independent Living for Idahoans with Disabilities, January 31 to February 3, 2005 at the Boise Centre on the Grove Convention Center. Registration brochure is available at www2.state.id.us/silc/ or by calling The State Independent Living Council at (208) 334-3800 or toll free 1-800-487-4866.

RECENT CHANGES IN IDAHO POLICY WILL MAKE EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY MORE ACCESSIBLE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Technology is redefining what is possible for students with disabilities. Specialized computer hardware and software, electronic communication systems, low technology devices, information technology such as email and the internet, as well as thousands of other commercially available devices can assist students with disabilities to achieve their educational goals. According to Idaho's State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Marilyn Howard, "We live in exciting times. Advances in educational technology are changing the landscape of teaching, and Idaho is poised to take full advantage of these changes."

However, in the past, students with disabilities could access assistive technology provided through their Individual Education Plan (IEP), but many faced barriers to accessing the educational technology that is freely available to other students. For example, students who are blind cannot read instructions presented only in a visual format; students who are deaf cannot understand content that is presented only orally; students who are color-blind cannot discriminate between color-coded options; students with specific physical limitations cannot use a software application that requires use of a mouse; students who use wheelchairs cannot operate a computer if they cannot enter the school's computer labs.

Now, thanks to changes in the Idaho "Statewide Plan for Technology in Public



Schools", school districts are required to consider the needs of students with disabilities when planning for, purchasing, and using educational technology. The Statewide Plan which is called "Connections" was presented to the citizens of Idaho in January of 2004. The Statewide Plan for Technology is based on six goals that reflect the essence of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The goals focus on Technology Integration, Technology Literacy, Professional Development, Collaboration, Technology Systems, and Evaluation and Publications.

The Statewide Plan for Technology requires: Goal One (Technology Literacy), "special education students are meeting, and/or exceeding, technology literacy standards, using assistive technology when necessary." For Goal Three (Collaboration), the Plan requires districts to partner with "schools, libraries, community members, state agencies, organizations, business and industry, post-secondary institutions, and public virtual learning environments to meet the needs of all learners." This goal suggests that districts "Provide technical resources necessary to offer accessibility to special needs community members."

The last goal of the Statewide Plan for Technology requires Idaho's educational systems to "Create and maintain compatible and secure technology systems that enhance the efficient operation of schools." To achieve this goal, Idaho's education system must, "Based on Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, develop standards on the employment and application of assistive technology".

Combined, these policy changes offer new legal protections for students with disabilities by providing greater access to educational technology. For more information about what these policy changes mean for your child contact Ronald Seiler, the Idaho Assistive Technology Project at 1-800-IDA-TECH. You can review the Statewide Technology Plan at www.sde.state.id.us/bots.

Honestly, do you have a few?

It's time to remind you to send in your IPUL memberships. At only \$10 per family and \$25 per professional, it's just about the best membership deal around. The dollars that come to IPUL as a donation or as a membership fee support us with important unrestricted dollars to help us give you things that our grants do not pay for.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Membership or Donation: _____



Mail your tax deductible donation to:
 Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc. 600 N. Curtis Rd.,
 Suite 145, Boise, Idaho 83706

UPCOMING PARENT EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

All of our workshops are free of charge. Parents and professionals are welcome!!!

Seating is limited. Please pre-register for all workshops by calling your regional IPUL consultant or the central office at 1-800-242-4785

If you know of another disability topic you'd like to learn more about, please call your regional consultant or the staff at our central office to talk about possibilities for workshops in your area. Check our website at www.ipulidaho.org for updated information about workshops across the state.

North Idaho –1-800-242-IPUL

Southwest Idaho –Julie Cathers or Emma Schlobohm at 342-5884 or 1-800-242-IPUL

Southeast Idaho – Beth Eloie-Reep at 760-0626 or 1-800-242-IPUL

Bilingual Educators: Maria Hines - 219-0300 and Socorra Sanchez - 342-5884

NORTHERN REGION

None scheduled at this time, pending the hiring of new staff.

SOUTHWEST REGION

Date	Time	Title	Location
Thurs. Jan. 13, 2005	11 am - noon	YOUR TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD Youth-oriented workshop. Will be a break-out session at Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair (See Conference announcements elsewhere in Newsletter)	Doubletree Riverside - Boise
Thurs. Jan. 13, 2005	6:00-8:00 pm	IDEA OVERVIEW SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW AND YOUR CHILD	Boise
Fri. Jan. 14, 2005	11 am - noon	YOUR CHILD'S TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD Parent-oriented workshop Break-out session at Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair	Doubletree Riverside, Boise
Fri. Jan. 14, 2005	6:00 - 8:00 pm	Success with the IEP Process	Boise
Sat. Jan. 22, 2005	10:00 am - noon	Success with the IEP Process	Boise
	1:00 - 3:00 pm	Protections Provided by IDEA	Boise
Thurs. Feb. 10, 2005	6:00-8:00 pm	Success with the IEP Process	Boise
Wed. Feb. 23, 2005	6:00-8:00 pm	IDEA Overview Special Education Law and Your Child	Meridian
Sat. Feb. 26, 2005	10 am - noon	Success with the IEP Process	Mountain Home
	1:00 - 3:00 pm	Protections Provided by IDEA	Mountain Home
Thurs. March 31, 2005	6:00 - 8:00 pm	Is Your Child a Target of Bullying?	Idaho City
Wed. April 13, 2005	6:00 - 8:00 pm	Parent & Professional Collaboration: A Cultural Perspective	Boise
Sat. April 23, 2005	10:00 am – noon	Options at Adulthood	Eagle
Wed. April 27, 2005	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Early Childhood Transition	Meridian
Thurs. May 12, 2005	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Overview of IDEA- Special Education Law & Your Child	Boise
Sat. May 21, 2005	10:00 – noon	Success with the IEP Process	McCall
	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Protections Provided by IDEA	McCall
Wed. May 25, 2005	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Understanding ADHD	Boise

IN SPANISH

Date	Time	Title	Location
Fri. Jan. 14, 2005	7:00 - 9:00 pm	The IEP Process	School District Office, Blackfoot

SOUTHEAST REGION

Date	Time	Title	Location
Feb. 2, 2005	9:00 am – 1:00 pm	IDEA: How it Impacts Your Child	Preston
Feb 16, 2005	9:00 am – 1:00pm	IDEA: How it Impacts Your Child	Pocatello
Feb. 19, 2005	1:00 - 3:00 pm	First Steps – IFSP to IEP	Idaho Falls
Feb. 19 TBA	7:00 – 9:00 pm	First Steps – IFSP to IEP	Rexburg

Mark your calendars! IPUL ANNUAL CONFERENCE is just around the corner!

Wednesday March 9th -Spanish Speaking Sessions, and Thursday March 10th –Friday March 11th 2005, Red Lion Downtowner in Boise.

This year’s theme is: IPUL, “ 20 Years of Weaving Lives Together.”

PRESENTERS WANTED: If you know of a person who would be interested in presenting at this years conference please let us know. We want to bring in those people who can broaden our horizons and enhance our lives, and would like to invite presenters and speakers from Idaho and the surrounding area. Slots are available for presentations that are disability, child or education related. This can include subjects on infant/ toddlers, school aged children, and transition or young adults. As a presenter, IPUL will waive your conference registration and pay for lodging if you are from out of the Boise area.

Conference details and registration forms will be sent out in January. Space is limited, so pre-registration is necessary. Limited scholarships will also be available.

If you are interested in volunteering to help with the conference please contact IPUL and we will put your talents to good use.

**Special Membership Meeting
March 10, 2005 at the IPUL Conference
See you there!**

Letter from the Board President

IPUL BOARD ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Summer presented the IPUL Board with the opportunity to embark on a **Strategic Planning mission**. On July 9 and 10, 2004, the IPUL Board, Staff and Advisory Councils congregated in Boise for a two-day strategic planning retreat. Under the facilitation of Kim Steinberg, the group reviewed the IPUL mission statement, drafted core value statements, and developed a strategic plan, which prioritizes IPUL activities for the next 5 years. A draft of the plan was revised by the Board at their quarterly meeting in October and a final draft will be presented to the Board at their January Board meeting for adoption. Once the Board adopts the strategic plan, the Board and staff will focus their efforts on identified priority areas. The strategic planning group worked very hard and I thank them for their dedicated effort. I also want to thank those of you who completed the questionnaire in the last newsletter. Your responses and comments helped to guide us in our strategizing efforts. It is my hope that our priorities will create additional opportunities for Idaho families to gain education and information to meet the needs of their children/youth with disabilities. Please stay posted for future developments!

The IPUL Annual Membership Meeting was held on October 21, 2004. Because the Annual IPUL Conference is now being held in the spring, we recognize that it is difficult for parents outside of the Treasure Valley to attend an annual meeting held in the fall in Boise. To promote statewide participation, we conducted the annual meeting through the University of Idaho's video conferencing service, at sites in Boise, Moscow, and Idaho Falls. At the annual meeting, members received a report of the past year's activities and the following persons were elected to the IPUL Board: Diane Milken, Region 1; Paul Tierney, Region 3; Jerry Todd Miller, Region 3; Manuel Guerra, Region 4; Martha Gilgen, Region 4; Kathy Williams, Region 5; and Cindy Caudle, Region 7. These board members will assume their responsibilities at the quarterly meeting in January. We welcome new board members Diane Milken, Jerry Miller, Paul Tierney, and Kathy Williams and look forward to their involvement on the IPUL Board. And we thank departing members Lisa Robbe Soult, Angie Tate, June Stocking, and Kelly Keele for all their hard work and for all that they did for IPUL. Thanks to all; we couldn't do it without you!

Board President, Martha Gilgen

Thank you to the following persons & businesses who have donated to us, enabling IPUL to continue to serve families in Idaho:

- **Albertson's Community Contributions**
- **Costco**
- **World Reach (Employees of Hewlett Packard)**
- **Renal Lottman**
- **Carmen Totorica**

Board of Directors 2003-2004

Martha Gilgen, Boise, President
Dolores Totorica, Boise, Treasurer
Diane Milken, Region 1
Jerry Todd Miller, Nampa
Paul Tierney, Nampa
Kathy Williams, Twin Falls
Jeff Hooper, Moscow
Yolanda DeLeon, Caldwell,
Audrey Numbers, Boise
Manuel Guerra, Boise
Laurie Borrowman, Boise
Floyd Bearing, Fort Hall
Cindy Lou Caudle, Terreton

CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

Evelyn Mason, Executive Director
Susan Valiquette,
PTI Program Director
Socorro Sanchez,
CPRC Program Director
Nancy Thiessen,
VSA Program Director
Kelly Bolen,
Technical Administration

CONTACT US:

Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc.
Boise Office: (208) 342-5884
1-800-242-IPUL (4785)
FAX/TDD (208) 342-1408
Email: parents@ipulidaho.org
HTTP://www.ipulidaho.org

REGIONAL STAFF

NORTHERN REGION

Open at this time. Please contact the central office (above).

SOUTHWESTERN REGION

Emma Schlobohm - Extension 103
Email: emma@ipulidaho.org
Julie Cathers - Extension 107
Email: julie@ipulidaho.org
600 N. Curtis Rd., Ste. 145, Boise, ID
83706
(208)-342-5884 or 1-800-242-4785
FAX/TDD (208) 342-1408

SOUTHEASTERN REGION

Beth Eloë-Reep - Extension: 132
Idaho Falls, ID 83404
(208) 760-0626
Email: beth@ipulidaho.org

Maria Hines - Extension: 133
Bilingual Parent Ed. Coordinator
Burley, ID 83318
PH/Fax: (208) 219-0300
Email: maria@ipulidaho.org

SECONDARY EDUCATION OR SCHOOL TO ADULT LIFE TRANSITION TEAMS

INDIVIDUAL TRANSITION TEAM MEMBERS

Many different individuals come together to help the student plan for transition. Typically, transition planning is handled by members of the IEP Team, with other individuals becoming involved as needed. It's important to involve a variety of people, for they will bring their unique perspectives to the planning table. The team draws upon the expertise of the different members and pools their information to make decisions or recommendations for the student.

Who are some of the individuals who may be part of the transition team? Naturally, the student and his or her family are core members of the team. They keep the whole team grounded and focused on the goals and on finding services and developing a plan that will benefit the youth with disabilities. When the purpose of the IEP meeting is to discuss transition, the student must be invited to attend. If there is no way he or she can come to the meeting, then the school must take other steps to make sure that the student's preferences and interests are considered in the plan that is developed.

Other members of the team include those normally on the IEP Team (special education and general education teachers, related service providers, administrators, and others as appropriate), plus transition specialists, who may be well informed about resources and adult services in the community.

In addition, representatives that have traditionally provided post-high-school services should be involved. These may include:

- The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agency: The VR agency has traditionally been a primary player in determining the way transition services are delivered. VR has its own eligibility requirements. Therefore, not all students receiving special education services can receive VR services.

- Service agencies for students with mental retardation or mental health concerns such as the Mental Health Agency: Depending on the student's individual needs, it may be important for the transition team to include representatives from service agencies addressing mental retardation or mental health. The services provided by these agencies, however, vary greatly from community to community due to differences in local funding and priorities.

- Independent living centers (ILCs): ILCs are non-residential, community-based agencies that are run by people with various disabilities. ILC services vary from place to place.

- Social Security Administration: Social Security Administration programs provide financial assistance or work incentives to eligible people with disabilities based upon federal guidelines.

This information looks at ways to create effective transition teams. Collaboration between team members and participating agencies is an essential part of the process

WHAT IS COLLABORATION?

There are basically four ways in which people can interact to establish or improve services and plan for young adults preparing for transition from

school to post-school activities. Let us look at these methods briefly.

Through networking, people gain an awareness of available resources and discover how to access or refer individuals to those services. An example of networking might be a transition coordinator talking with local business owners to identify possible job training sites for students. While networking is an essential step in collaboration, it will not be enough for students who have complex transition service needs.

Service coordination assists in the selection and scheduling of services. In coordinating, people arrange for a student with disabilities to receive specific services from different agencies (for example, one agency making a phone call to another agency to determine their respective roles and to schedule activities).

With cooperation, people look for ways to support and complement one another's transition services. For example, an adult services agency may accept a student's recent test results from his or her school to determine the student's eligibility for services. This would prevent the student from being tested twice and would save the adult services agency time and expense.

Collaboration begins with networking, coordination, and cooperation and then requires team members to share decisions, responsibility, and trust. It requires that team members invest time and energy to come up with options and design strategies for carrying out these plans. Because collaboration requires lots of time and energy, it is impossible to make all decisions collaboratively. In some instances, the desired result can be achieved through networking, coordination, or cooperation. Working together, or collaboratively, invites participation of multiple service providers and the use of multiple resources.

This article is an excerpt of an article published by the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, formerly known as NICHCY, highlighting the importance of families working together with school, agency and other community resources. The article is entitled "Transition Planning: A Team Effort". To read the rest of this article, go to www.nichcy.org/pubs/transum/ts10txt.htm

IPUL Has New Staff!



Julie Cathers, our bookkeeper and administrative assistant, will be our new Parent Education Coordinator for regions 3 and 5 starting in January. Julie is married and has three kids with special needs. She has worked with children and parents for many years. Julie said she is glad to work at a place that can help make a difference in the lives of parents and children with disabilities. She is also happy we chose her to be on the advisory committee for the Title V Block Grant Needs Assessment. Parents and Professionals in Regions 3 and 5, give Julie a call in January and introduce yourselves!

Susan Valiquette has joined us as Program Coordinator for the PTI grant. "As another new member of the IPUL staff, I'd like to say hello and share a little of my background with you. Our involvement in the world of people with special needs began 28 years ago when our son, Reuben, was born. He had the first of many surgeries that day and was diagnosed with Down Syndrome a few weeks later. Our journey has taken us through many years of dealing with medical and educational issues. My husband and I were involved in developing parent support groups; later I became the director of an information and referral service serving families having children with special needs. I have an extensive background in leadership development and am looking forward to putting some of that knowledge and experience to work in Idaho. My family and I moved to Boise in the spring of 2001. I look forward to working with families and professionals across the state."



Nancy Thiessen joins us as the new Program Director for VSA, Arts of Idaho. "I am a native Boisean and a graduate of Boise High School and the University of Idaho. I have been involved in education most of my adult life. I have also been an active volunteer in the community in arts and education programs. My husband and I have a daughter who is a student at the University of Idaho, and a new Miniature Schnauzer named Scooter. They both keep us on our toes! I'm very excited to be involved with VSA arts of Idaho."

IPUL has also lost valued staff. We say a reluctant "Good-bye" to Marri McKinnon-Hust, who was our northern Parent Education Coordinator from Priest River. Good-bye and thanks, also go to Phyllis Meinhardt, who was our PTI Program Coordinator, and to Jose Rodriguez, VSA Program Director. We send you all our best wishes.

CPRC and other Advisory Council Members Wanted

The Community Parent Resource Center (CPRC) is looking for Hispanic parents of children with disabilities to become members of the CPRC Advisory Council. The Council helps guide the activities of the program and helps families with emotional help as well as building resources for the Hispanic families.

The CPRC Advisory Council would like to congratulate Yolanda De Leon for her new appointment to the IPUL Board of Directors. Yolanda has been a great help to the Council. And even though she is still a part of IPUL and will be representing the CPRC interest, the Council will miss her.

Thank you Yolanda!

IPUL is seeking Advisory Council Members for ALL of its grants. Please contact the IPUL office if interested: 342-5884 or 1-800-242-IPUL.

RESOURCES AND LINKS

YELLOW PAGES FOR KIDS WITH DISABILITIES

Wrightslaw, an advocacy and information source that provides accurate, up-to-date information about special education law and advocacy for children with disabilities has built the Yellow Pages for Kids with Disabilities so people can get reliable information and support specific to each state. Listings include disability information groups, evaluators, tutors, support groups, advocacy groups, and state agencies. For Idaho: <http://www.yellowpagesforkids.com/help/id.htm>

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM KIT

The Children's Program Kit for Native Americans is designed to help tribal organizations develop cultural- and age-appropriate educational support programs for the school-age children of substance-abusing Native American and Alaska Native parents in substance abuse treatment.

To order this publication, contact SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20847-2345. Telephone: 1-800-729-6686 (English and Spanish) or 1-800-487-4889 (TDD)

STATEWIDE RESPITE CARE PROVIDER LIST AVAILABLE

Idaho's 211 Careline now hosts a database of respite care providers for families to access. To be included on the list, individuals must attend a training that outlines their responsibilities as a provider and they must also pass a criminal background check. Families may receive names of providers specific to their area by dialing 211 or by calling the Family Resource Center at 746-2655 or 1-800-746-2655.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS INTERNET GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

This guide is a great resource, giving both national and statewide information.

www.state.de.us/dhss/dms/epqc/birth3/directry.html

COLLECTING AND ANALYZING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE DATA NEW WEBSITE

The new Web site www.SchoolResults.org is a one-stop shop of education data on schools, school districts and states nationwide.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Employability Skills Training and Implementation Program (ES-TIP) is a software-based learning system that helps consumers build self-esteem, work ethics and workplace success. For more information go to the Vocational Research Institute's web page: <http://www.vri.org>.

NEW FREE NEWSLETTER FROM NCWD/YOUTH

"Intersection", a new free electronic newsletter for and about the workforce development system and working with youth with disabilities is available through the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) website: <http://www.intersectionnewsletter.org/intersection>. This website also includes lots of useful information. To sign up to receive "Intersection", go to: http://www.ncwdyouth.info/intersection/signup_form.php

RURAL HOUSING REPAIR LOANS AND GRANTS

The Rural Housing Service offers up to \$7,500 to make dwellings accessible for household members with disabilities in rural areas. To find out how to apply call 202-720-4323 or go to: http://www.rur-dev.usda.gov/rhs/sfh/brief_repairgrant.htm

CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN HEALTH, SOCIAL & HUMAN SERVICES: DIRECTIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

By Pedro J. Lecca, Ivan Quervalu, Joao V. Nunes, Hector F. Gonzales

This volume presents the latest information and techniques for improving cultural competency in the delivery of health, social, and human services to ethnic and racial minority groups in the U.S. Combining theory and practice, this book also includes material on cultural competency within such special populations as the mentally ill, the elderly, children, and families.

AMERICA'S CHILDREN IN BRIEF 2004

Source: Childstats.gov - July 2004 -The U.S. government has released the 8th annual report on the well-being of the nation's children and youth, America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2004. For more information go to <http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/>.

RESOURCES ON INVOLVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AS MEMBERS OF ADVISORY GROUPS

Rural Practice Guideline from the Montana Disability and Health Program - March 2004; Revised July 2004. This Guideline offers suggestions and a lot of great resources on how to involve people with disabilities as active members and advisors of local and community groups.

<http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/advocacy/Advisory.htm>

"THE HEALTHY STUDENT - A PARENT'S GUIDE TO PREPARING TEENS FOR THE COLLEGE YEARS"

While his brochure is designed for the typical teen, it identifies and briefly addresses many of the issues that are of concern to youth with special health care needs who plan to attend college.

http://www.adolescenthealth.org/html/The_Healthy_Student.pdf or go to <http://www.adolescenthealth.org> and look for the link to "The Healthy Student" on the left side of the SAM home page.

"DISABILITY STUDIES FOR TEACHERS"

This website developed by the Center on Human Policy at Syracuse University contains lesson plans and materials designed to help teachers integrate disability studies into social studies, history, literature, and related subjects in grades 6-12. <http://www.disabilitystudiesforteachers.org/>

COOL LINK TO SITE FOR ADAPTIVE CLOTHING, ETC.

The following site not only has some great adaptive clothing and accessories, but explore the site and you'll find links to disability resources and health and helpful hints galore. www.adaptationsbyadrian.com

Parents, Let Your Voice Be Heard Special Education Monitoring

The Special Education Monitoring and Self-Assessment process has started a new year. This is when the districts look at themselves to see how they are doing in Special Education.

Each year, as part of this process, the State Department of Education hires parents to conduct interviews of a few parents in districts that are in the Self-Assessment stage of the Monitoring process. Some parents in each district are randomly selected to be interviewed, and those parents will have the option of filling out a written or electronic version of the interview, or can have an interviewer call them.

If you are in one of the districts listed below, but are not chosen by the computer, you too, can participate in the process. Just call Pam Schmidt (in the Special Education Bureau of the State Department of Education) at 332-6911 or 1-800-432-4601, extension 6911 and ask to be interviewed. But interviews have already started, so call today!

The districts in which interviews will be conducted this year are:

North:

Plummer-Worley
Kootenai
Nezperce
W. Bonner County
Avery

Southwest:

Hagerman
Bliss
Fruitland
New Plymouth
Cambridge
Meridian
Migrant Head Start

Southeast:

Bear Lake	Minidoka County
Firth	Oneida County
Bonneville	American Falls
Grace	Arbon
North Gem	
Soda Springs	
Richfield	

And one other thing: if you have issues that are not covered by the interview questions, please be sure to bring up your issues anyway. They are all important. All information gathered from these interviews is handled confidentially. Data gathered is passed onto the school district, but every effort is made to keep personally identifiable information confidential.

Parent input is a really important part of this process. Only if we really participate can the school districts be held accountable for what they are and are not doing. So make your call today.

PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE is terminology used when referring to people with disabilities. It refers to the person first, rather than the disability.

A disability is simply a diagnosis given by a physician. If you were recently diagnosed with pneumonia would it make sense to refer to you as pneumatic? No. Likewise it doesn't make sense to call someone who has been diagnosed with autism, "autistic," or someone with mental retardation, "retarded," or someone who has epilepsy as "epileptic."

People First Language is about speaking accurately about an individual with a disability. It emphasizes the person's worth and abilities. It is not about being politically correct, it's about effectively communicating on the subject of disability. The term "handicapped" refers to a person having to beg on the street with "cap in hand." The term "disabled" means "broken down." The use of these terms and others alike, are inaccurate, inappropriate, and offensive and do not reflect the individuality, equality, or dignity of people with disabilities.

People with disabilities are an integral part of the general public. Be careful not to use terms "we/they" that suggests segregation or group all individuals with disabilities together, for example, "the disabled," "the deaf," or "the blind."

Funding Available to Include Kids With Disabilities in Art Education

Creative Access: Improving Access to the Arts in Our Schools

VSA arts of Idaho, a program of Idaho Parents Unlimited, (VSA arts/IPUL) is accepting applications for its “**Creative Access**” program. Creative Access funding is designed to provide an arts experience for children and youth with a disability in a classroom setting. Teachers in any Idaho public school are encouraged to apply for **up to \$1000.00** to carry out one of these programs.

Children and youth with special needs are often the most under served in arts education. Students with disabilities are often taken out of regular education classes during the arts sessions to participate in other disability related therapies, tutoring and special classes. The VSA arts of Idaho’s “Creative Access” program, now in its seventh year in Idaho, addresses this need and reaches kids that may never get music lessons, an art class or perform in a play.

The “Creative Access” program, supported with help from the Idaho Bureau of Special Education and the Idaho Commission on the Arts, is designed to recognize the abilities and strengths of students with special needs and involve them in integrated arts experiences. For children with disabilities, these arts experiences can provide endless opportunities for discovery and connection to their own talents and to the community at large.

How does the program work? Any school in Idaho can apply for funding through the VSA arts of Idaho, “Creative Access” program. In this process the VSA arts program director can assist the school or teacher as they work to develop an inclusive arts project designed to provide hands-on arts experiences for students with special needs and their peers in integrated settings. The school should work with a local artist to provide something extra the student would typically not be able to have during the regular school programming. These activities are called artist-in-residence programs.

The residencies can be in any arts discipline including;

- Performing arts such as theater, dance or music - either vocal or instrumental,
- Writing such as poetry, playwriting or story telling and possibly in combination with other arts such as book making, or
- Visual arts such as mural painting, pottery, drawing, cartooning, glass fusing etc.

In the residencies the students can be introduced to basic techniques and then go on to complete their own individual artworks or produce some type of performance. Every project should try

to include a culminating event for the project participants to invite their friends and family to come and celebrate the student’s pride of accomplishment during the program.

VSA arts of Idaho joined with Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc. (IPUL) as a new program in the fall of 2003. Nancy Thiessen is the program director for VSA arts and can be reached at 208-342-5884. IPUL is located at 600 N. Curtis Rd. Suite 145. Applications for this year’s Creative Access program will be available December 1st. **The final deadline to submit applications is in January 28th, 2005.**

Rollout of new IPUL Curriculum

The big news at IPUL is that we have new workshops for parents this year! We have tried to restructure presentations so that parents can get more information in easier, shorter presentations.

- One of the presentations to look for is a new "IDEA Overview" that looks at all of the important bits of information that really don't fit into our present IEP presentation.
- Another workshop is a brand new presentation titled "Protections Provided by IDEA" which focuses on the essential pieces of the law that really provide protection for your child, but which we haven't covered in detail in the past.
- We have also reworked the IEP presentation into an attractive and better organized format.

All three of these presentations will also include tabbing of the relevant parts of the Idaho Special Education Manual, so that you can be sure that you know all that the schools know on each issue.

ALSO NEW THIS YEAR:

- Our former guardianship presentation has been expanded to look at more of the options available to parents for their adult “children.” It is now titled “Conservatorship, Guardianship, and Other Options”
- Perhaps most exciting is a new training on transition to adulthood, looking at all the issues that face young adults, with special focus on employment issues.

We are now able to give these workshops as power-point presentations so that you have the added bonus of being able to see all of our presentations this year in colorful and attractive new formats.

So be sure to check the calendar for workshops in your area!

TEENAGE SUICIDE

This article was based on an Idaho KIDS COUNT Policy Brief, titled "A Public Health Priority: Teen Suicide in Idaho" written by Peter Wollheim, the Executive Director of Idaho Suicide Prevention Services.

Suicide is the leading cause of mortality in the United States. Among teenagers (15 to 24 years of age) it takes more lives than cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke and chronic lung disease combined. Idaho exceeds the national rate by far: Idaho has the second highest rate of teen-age suicide in the nation.

The 2001 Idaho Youth Behavior Risk Study found that 15 percent of all Idaho high school students entertained thoughts about how to actually kill themselves, while one in four reported behavioral symptoms associated with clinical depression. This same instrument found that 9th grade female students attempted suicide twice as often as males.

The Federal government estimates that some 80 percent of Idahoans are what is known as Medically Underserved populations, meaning that they do not have adequate medical resources to deal with the medical problems of their people. Mental health issues, such as suicide and depression, are medical problems.

There are four sets of inter-related risk factors for suicide.

1) Biological elements include genetic

tendencies toward serious mental illnesses such as unipolar and bipolar depression, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and certain personality disorders which may elevate tendencies towards suicidal thoughts and actions

2) Psychological elements such as cognitive distortions as a result of childhood abuse and domestic violence also contribute to low self-esteem, and feelings of hopelessness, isolation, and despair.

3) Social elements, such as traditional family and community support systems are currently under financial and other strains. Idaho's marriage and divorce rates both exceed the national average, implying greater instability in a young person's social life. The boom and bust economic patterns in the state also place stress on social stability. And in hard financial times the Idaho Legislature tends to cut the kinds of programs that offer support to adolescents.

4) Cultural elements such as ethnic and religious diversity also contribute in ways that amplify tensions. The majority of victims of religious, ethnic, sexual and racial hate crimes in Idaho are under 20 years of age. Victimization of this sort is a contributor to low self-esteem, depression, and self-destructive behavior. Religious taboos against suicide are somewhat of a protective factor, but also inhibit young people from seeking help when they need it. In addition to these, stigmas connected with mental illness, death, trauma, and help-seeking behavior are prevalent in many ethnicities and subcultures, as well as the culture at large.

What can be done?

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare released a document entitled "Idaho's Suicide Prevention Plan" in

November this year. This document is available from the Department's web site.

And in 2001 Dr. David Satcher, then the Surgeon General of the U.S. issued a "National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action", to make suicide a public health priority.

Idaho held a Suicide Prevention Conference in Boise on November 17, 2004, to educate about the issue and move toward prevention.

Building resilience against suicide also means education on the warning signs of mental illness and suicide, knowledge of resources, and positive modeling of help-seeking and help-providing behavior. Among the most successful programs currently operating in Idaho is Red Flags, which provides free trainings on the signs and symptoms of mental illness in children and teens, suicide prevention, and the impact of trauma on children's lives. (See page 15 in this newsletter for their schedule and contact information.)

Project Safe Place, operating in Idaho Falls, Pocatello, and Coeur d'Alene provides a crisis network of supportive sites providing young people access to respite and help.

Boise State University offers the only Certified Crisis Worker preparation program in the U.S.

Idaho Suicide Prevention Services, a non-profit volunteer organization, maintains a suicide prevention crisis hotline (1-800-564-2120) which is available at all times.

RED FLAGS TRAINING

A project of Idaho State University's Institute of Rural Health, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Idaho Chapter, and funded by the Governor's Generation of the Child Initiative

A newly revised Red Flags curriculum is being offered statewide November 2004 through April 2005. You are invited to attend and encouraged to share the word with other people who care for – and care about – our children and youth.

The program provides information on the signs and symptoms of mental illness in children and teens, suicide prevention, and the impact of trauma on children's lives. The **FREE** program helps **EVERYONE** who cares for our children and teens respond to their mental health needs.

January 7-8 2005 McCall, Idaho

NEW! Red Flags Retreat: McCall, Idaho – January 7-8, 2005 A special Retreat is being offered in the mountains of Idaho for those who like snow and winter activities.

March 3, 2005

Pocatello, Idaho

March 4, 2005

Idaho Falls, Idaho

March 10, 2005

Nampa, Idaho

April 21, 2005

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

April 22, 2005

Lewiston, Idaho

Contact Ann Kirkwood, Director

208-685-6768

Toll Free: 1-866-572-9940

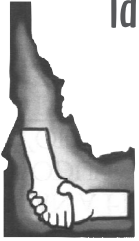


What is Partners?

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO CENTER ON DISABILITY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
IDAHO COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Partners in Policymaking is an innovative leadership development program designed to provide information, training, resources, and skill building to people with disabilities and parents of young children with disabilities. The program explores disability issues and builds skills that individuals need to influence legislation and policy effectively to obtain the most appropriate services for themselves and others. The overall goal is to achieve a productive partnership between people needing and using services and those who are in a position to make policy and law. This is accomplished by educating participants about current issues and state-of-the-art approaches, as well as policymaking and legislative processes at the local, state, and national levels.

Are you interested in making a difference in your life, the life of your child, and other's lives? Requests for applications are being accepted. There is no cost to participate and spaces are limited. Contact Trina Balanoff (208) 364-9931 or e-mail her at balanoff@uidaho.edu for more information.



Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc
600 North Curtis, Suite 145
Boise, ID 83706

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S.Postage
PAID
Boise, Idaho
Permit #518