



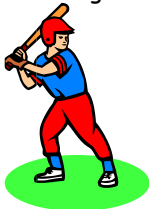
Summer 2010



From Both Sides of the IEP Table

Hidden Blessings by Karen Galilei

As spring approaches, I am reminded of a baseball game our family attended a few years back. We had prime seats (given to us) right along the third base line. We took our son Chris who has Cerebral Palsy and our youngest daughter Lara. We dragged Chris down several stadium steps and placed his portable wheelchair in front of our feet. We all sat down and the kids were miserable. Lara couldn't get up and move and Chris who likes people watching more than the game couldn't see anybody. Shortly after wrestling them into their seats, a kind usher approached us and asked us if we wanted to go into the handicapped section. At first, we were insulted, because we were so proud that we had made into the regular seats but then we were all so miserable we thought why not? Our new seats were wonderful! (Well maybe not if you were a true baseball fan but for us they were). We had a great twelve foot section to ourselves. Lara could play on the floor, color and move about and for Chris we were right by a snack venue, so he could people watch. My husband and I still had great views of the game. But the best part was after the third inning, it began to pour rain. We were under an overhang, so we were dry. All the people near our old seats got drenched. The rain stopped in about twenty minutes but many people left the game. We however stayed until the end. It doesn't always work out to have a child with special needs but that day it sure did. I looked at my son and said "Hey buddy, some days it is great to be you and it is even better to be your mom!"



Karen Galilei is a preschool service Coordinator and school psychologist for DART. She is a parent of three children, Jessica 24 (an occupational therapist) Chris 19 and Lara 13. Chris and Lara both have special needs.

Don't forget to check your DART calendar for the dates of summer break!

Focus on Health and Safety

Proof of immunization (or a written medical or religious exemption) is required of all students before they enter a School District building in Allegheny County. If classes are attended in a building which is not a School District building, the proof is required within 60 days of entry. If your child will be entering Kindergarten in Allegheny County in the fall (private or public), the requirement is very strict. Please obtain the necessary documents as soon as possible before the start of Kindergarten.



According to the Allegheny County Health Department the following documents which show the date of immunization are acceptable: baby book, Health Passport, family Bible, other states' official immunization documents, International Health Certificate, immigration records, physician record, school health records, and other similar documents or history. More information is available at <http://www.vaccineinformation.org/> At this site you can find out the immunization requirements for every State, the recommendations based on age group, as well as specific vaccine preventable disease information.

Parents Corner



Prescription Discount Card to be available to all Allegheny County residents in June

Allegheny County will introduce a prescription discount card program in June to help consumers cope with the high price of prescriptions. Allegheny County has signed a contract to make free prescription discount cards available under a program sponsored by the National Assoc. of Counties (NACo) that offers average savings of 22% off the retail price of commonly prescribed drugs. The cards may be used by all Allegheny County residents, regardless of age, income or existing health coverage. There is no enrollment form, no membership fee, and no restriction or limit on frequency of use. The NACo prescription discount card program is administered by CVS Caremark.

Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) will be mailing surveys to families in June.

It is important that if you receive the survey that you fill it out and return it in the envelope provided. OCDEL wants to hear from you!

Early Learning Standards 101 and The Importance of Play



This month's Key Learning Area is Partnerships for Learning: Families, Learning Environments and Communities (formerly known as Program Partnerships). Schools and families should work together to share information about individualized learning plans and goals; assure positive transition to and from the current school setting; and identify and refer family members to other community agencies when appropriate.

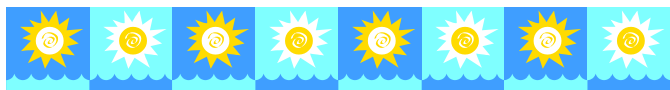
The goals within this area are aimed at parents and teachers and include:

- Sharing families' and school routines and discussing any needed accommodations.
- Learning about the family and home setting and incorporating into the school experience, asking for updates and new information regularly.
- Regularly sending home information about the child's growth and progress and adjustment to the school setting.
- Offering family education events such as parenting classes, sign language, health and safety, etc. that reflect families' interests and needs.
- Identifying and understanding the services that are provided within the community and identify contacts within each to facilitate collaborative work.

Since this month's focus is aimed at teachers and parents, here are some things you can do to be involved:

- Provide your child's teacher with information about your child's interest and skill level.
- Seek information on community services as appropriate to your needs (e.g., questions about wrap-around services, etc.)
- Fill out those surveys! Give your child's program feedback about any concerns, compliments, etc.
- Attend any meetings/workshops that are aimed at improving your skills as a parent and learning more about your child.

Remember...it's important to be an active participant in your child's education!!!!



Sources: "From Both Sides of the IEP Table" created by Karen Galilei, DART Preschool Service Coordinator. "Focus on Health and Safety" created by Cindy Callaghan, DART Service Coordinator for Physical Health. "Parents Corner" created by Sue Vandervort, DART Preschool Service Coordinator. "Early Learning Standards and The Importance of Play" information provided by PDE and DPW. "Psych Files" created by Felicia Humenik, DART School Psychologist.



Psych Files



Before our summer breaks begin, I wanted to wrap up the Autism installment featured in the past 2 editions of the DART Board. This month I will focus on what the National Autism Center (2010) has identified as "Established Treatments", "Emerging Treatments" and "Unestablished Treatments". Since space is at a prime for our newsletter, I will be brief but you may contact me with any questions regarding these treatments or you can go to: <http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/affiliates/reports.php> to get access to the document in its entirety.

Examples of Established Treatments:

- Modify situational events that precede a target or undesired behavior to reduce or extinguish the behavior
- Reinforce positive behaviors
- Model play
- Token economy
- Social Stories™
- Low student ratio
- Picture schedules
- Discrete trial and incidental teaching
- Teach the child to respond to the nonverbal social bids of others or initiating joint attention interactions/pointing to objects, showing items or activities to another person
- Modeling (providing a demonstration of the target behavior that should result in an imitation of the target behavior by the child with ASD/live or video models)
- Teach functional skills in a natural environment
- Teach typical children strategies for facilitation play and social interactions with child with ASD

Emerging Treatments (does not include entire list):

- Augmentative and Alternative Communication Device
- Exercise
- Imitation-based Interactions
- Language Training
- Massage/Touch Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Picture Exchange Communication System
- Scripting
- Sign Instruction
- Technology based treatment

Unestablished Treatment:

- Academic Interventions
- Auditory Integration Training
- Facilitated Communication
- Gluten-and Casein-Free Diet
- Sensory Integrative Package

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