

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Topic of the Month: Early Childhood

Upcoming Statewide Events

Autism of Society of Wisconsin Annual Conference

Friday keynote presentation by Dr. Temple Grandin will provide a look into her personal experiences; intervention, problems with sensory and over-sensitivity. She will also discuss the thinking process, the importance of developing strengths as well as the importance of work skills. Saturday keynote features a Panel of Experts. Full-day and half-day pre-conference offerings

Date: April 27-29 2017

Location: Kalahari, WI Dells, WI
[Information and Registration Link](#)

Circles of Life Conference

Wisconsin's annual conference for parents and family members who have children with disabilities and the professionals who support them.

Date: May 4-5, 2017

Location: Holiday Inn, Stevens Pt., WI
[Information and Registration Link](#)

Wisconsin Indian Education Association (WIEA) Conference

This event is titled, MINO-AYAA 'IDIWIN: Let's Be Healthy Together, will be hosted by WIEA's Northeast Region. The conference includes events at Lakeland Union High School in Minocqua and Lake of the Torches Resort Convention Center in Lac du Flambeau, WI. The 2017 Conference includes early extended programming thanks in part to a partnership between The Disproportionality Technical Assistance Network or "The Network", and the Wisconsin Indian Education Association.

Date: May 12-13, 2017

Location: Minocqua, WI
[Information and Registration Link](#)

Child Find

By Wendy Overturf

This is the time of year when many school districts are promoting registration for pre-school and kindergarten programs. As part of this process, districts may also be doing "screening" to identify children who may have a disability. This is part of their Child Find requirement.

Child Find is a part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires states to have a system to locate, identify, and refer as early as possible all children with disabilities, aged birth to 21, for early intervention or special education services. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2 years of age) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B.

Child Find seeks to identify all children with disabilities from birth through age 21. This includes children who are being homeschooled or who are in private schools. While districts may have set aside "screening" times for preschool children, parents can request a special education referral at any time during the year if they suspect that their child may have a disability. If parents of children between the ages of 3-21 have questions on how to go about this process, one of the best methods is to contact the Director of Special Education in their school district. In Wisconsin, parents of children under the age of three can find local contact information through the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#) (DHS) or by calling 608-266-1865. The DHS website also has information about the referral process and eligibility criteria for Birth to 3 programs as well as other resources related to typical child development.

At times, referrals for Special Education are made by service providers such as teachers, doctors, nurses, school workers, child care workers or anyone who may be concerned about a child's development. These referrals do not require parental consent. However, the person making the referral needs to let the parent know that the referral has been made. Before a child can be evaluated, parent(s) do need to provide informed written consent. More detailed information about the special education process for children 3-21 can be found in [Special Education in Plain Language](#). *IEP Part 1* is a webinar presented by WI FACETS that also has information about the referral and evaluation process. It can be requested at the [archived webinar section](#) of their website.



Upcoming Statewide Events

2017 Wisconsin Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Conference

The Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health (WI-AIMH) promotes the social and emotional well-being of Wisconsin children from birth through age five by supporting families and professionals across disciplines. WI-AIMH efforts focus on weaving relationship-based infant mental health practices and principles into the everyday activities of all individuals who touch the lives of infants, young children, and their families.

Date: June 12-14, 2017

Location: Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake, WI
[Information and Registration Link](#)

24th Annual State-Wide Institute on Best Practices in Inclusive Education

Offering a variety of information on Best Practices in Inclusion, this Institute is co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and the Inclusion Institute, Inc. Registration opening soon.

Date: July 24-26, 2017

Location: Wausau, WI
[Information and Registration Link](#)

Endless Possibilities Conference

Save the Date: August 3, 2017

Location: UW-Whitewater, WI

YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2017 By: IndependenceFirst & WI FACETS

Who: For high school students with disabilities who are interested in becoming leaders and advocates for themselves and others with disabilities.

What: A **FREE** summit all about leadership, advocacy, college, careers, and healthy relationships. Meet other teens and learn how to plan for your future.

When/Where: 5 day summit, 10-4 daily
June 19-23, 2017 Milwaukee location
@ IndependenceFirst
July 10-14, 2017, Mequon location
Mequon Nature Preserve

For information and application, contact Matthew Zellmer at 414-374-4645 or mzellmer@wifacets.org

Application must be accepted
(Participation is limited to 20 students for each date)

RESEARCH TO READ



Family Engagement within School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

Garbacz, S. Andrew, et al. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth* 60.1 (2016): 60-69.

[Article Link](#)

Abstract: Parent educational involvement is an important avenue for enhancing student outcomes. Schools seek myriad ways to include families; however, the parent involvement practices used by schools lack coordination and are disconnected from existing school approaches. School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a systematic and coordinated framework used in more than 19,000 schools to support student behavior. Despite its success, PBIS implementation underemphasizes comprehensive systems for engaging families. The purpose of this article is to present a framework of family engagement within PBIS. The purpose of coordinating and sequencing family engagement within PBIS is to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, and durability of PBIS by supporting students across settings. Furthermore, this model extends current parent involvement frameworks by coordinating systematic family engagement in education

Integrating Mathematical Thinking Into Family Engagement Programs

Harris, Barbara, Dana Petersen, and Claire Smither Wulsin.

No. 1543ca9e092e49818b5f4b095463f3f0. Mathematica Policy Research, 2016

[Article Link](#)

Abstract: Exposing young children to early math concepts is important in the development of their math skills, in their confidence in these skills, and in their ability to use math later in life.1-2 Early exposure to math also supports the development of children's reasoning and problem-solving skills, both of which contribute to success in and out of school.3 In addition, a child's early math skills are an indicator of later success in both math and reading.4-7 Unfortunately, children who begin kindergarten with weak math skills are likely to remain behind in the later grades.5,8-9 And the students who are the least prepared in math when they begin school tend to be from minority and low-income families.10-11

Response to Intervention with Preschool Aged Children



Response to Intervention (RTI) refers to a process of providing supports to children who are at-risk for learning disabilities to:

- Identify learning difficulties earlier and more reliably
- Decrease the number of inappropriate referrals to special education
- Decrease the disproportionate representation of minority children in special education

It had been brought to the attention of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) that some school districts may be using RTI strategies to delay or deny a timely initial evaluation for preschool children suspected of having a disability.

On April 29, 2016, the U.S. Department of Education released a [memorandum](#) stating that "A Response to Intervention Process Cannot Be Used to Delay-Deny an Evaluation for Preschool Special Education Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)." The memorandum further states, "States and LEAs (typically school districts) have an obligation to ensure that evaluations of all children suspected of having a disability, including evaluation of 3-, 4-, or 5 year -old children enrolled in preschool programs, are not delayed or denied because of implementation of an RTI strategy." In other words, once a school district receives a referral from a preschool program, the district must start the process to evaluate whether the child has a disability under IDEA. The school district may *not* hold off on the evaluation in order to complete the RTI process. [Additional information](#) on Early Childhood and the WI RtI framework.

Online Resources: Early Childhood



Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)

This website has a variety of resources related to early childhood education. It also has a link to a webinar series on early childhood education. [CPIR website](#)

Early Childhood Special Education-WI Department of Public Instruction

This website gives information about the special education laws and eligibility criteria related to early childhood special education. It also has a link to the DPI bulletin and frequently asked questions related to early childhood special education. [DPI website](#)

Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program

The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is committed to serving children under the age of 3 with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. They work to enhance the child's development and support the family's knowledge, skills and abilities as they interact with and raise their child. [WI DHS Birth to 3](#)

Too Small to Fail

Too Small to Fail aims to help parents and businesses take meaningful actions to improve the health and well-being of children ages zero to five, so that more of America's children are prepared to succeed in the 21st century. The website has an abundance of links to resources related to children from 0-5 years of age. [Too Small to Fail website](#)

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

NAEYC is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children from birth through age 8. The Association administers a voluntary, national accreditation system for high-quality early childhood programs, sponsors a variety of initiatives to improve professional preparation of early childhood educators, and produces a wide array of early childhood resources. [NAEYC website](#)

ZERO TO THREE

ZERO TO THREE's mission is to support the healthy development and well-being of infants, toddlers and their families. This multidisciplinary organization advances its mission by informing, educating, and supporting adults who influence the lives of infants and toddlers. [Zero to Three website](#)

Wisconsin Head Start Association

The Wisconsin Head Start Association (WHSA) is a private not-for-profit membership organization representing over 16,000 young children and their families and over 4,000 staff composing the 62 Head Start/Early Head Start programs—including American Indian and Migrant/Seasonal programs—in Wisconsin. One purpose of WHSA is to provide a network for information, training, advocacy, support, and action for directors, parents, and staff of Head Start & Early Head Start programs in Wisconsin. [Headstart website](#)

United States Department of Education-Early Learning Resources

This website has an extensive list of websites related to early literacy development and other critical early learning skills. [U.S. Dept. of Ed. website](#)

Milestones Checklists

These milestones checklists can be used to help family and staff track the developmental progress of children ages three months to five years. [Milestones checklist website](#)

Get Ready to Read

It is critical to help young children be ready for school by working with them to develop early literacy and learning skills. Because strong reading skills form the basis for learning in all subjects, it is important to identify those who struggle with reading as early as possible. Children who have been read to at home come to school with important early literacy skills. This site has an abundance of information related to early literacy. The site also has videos and webinars of examples of how parents can promote these important early literacy skills. [Getting Ready to Read website](#)



Quality early care and education is fundamental to creating a better world. WECA works to advance positive change for children by focusing on the professionals who provide child care for well over 70% of Wisconsin's children. WECA strengthens the capacities of child care professionals through:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT for child care providers. New discoveries on brain development and social-emotional learning call for new approaches. Through workshops, an annual conference, a statewide member network, and more, WECA helps providers advance their skills.

ADVOCACY for policies and programs that support the well-being of children and the early childhood education workforce.

COMMUNICATIONS that convey what early childhood professionals do and how valuable their contributions are to families, businesses, our communities, and the world.

RESEARCH on the child care workforce that identifies strengths, needs, and strategies for improvement.

Part of WECA's mission and vision is: "With high-quality care children do better in school and in life, becoming adults with social and emotional skills that enable them to work, play, and relate well to others. With high-quality care, working parents can feel more confident and productive on the job, knowing that their children are safe and thriving."

The [weca website](#) has an abundance of resources related to early childhood that are intended for both parents and professionals.



UPCOMING WEBINARS

Information & registration for WI FACETS free workshops and webinars:

www.wifacets.org/events

By phone, Sandra: 877-374-0511

Via email: smcfarland@wifacets.org

All webinars 12:00–1:00 PM unless otherwise noted

Post-Secondary Transition Plan (PTP): Best Practices

Date: March 15, 2017

Presenter: Pam Jensen, Transition Improvement Grant (TIG)

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation: DVR 101

Date: March 22, 2017

Presenter: Sara Lincoln, DVR

Defendiendo los Derechos de su Hijo con Necesidades Especiales (Telephone Workshop)

Date: March 23, 2017

Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

Transition Planning Application (App)

Date: March 29, 2017

Presenter: Nancy Farnon-Molfenter, DPI and Brenda Swoboda, Western Regional Transition Coordinator

Self-Advocacy Workshop: Employment Panel

Date: April 4, 2017, 6-8 pm

Location: WI FACETS Office, Milwaukee

To register: Contact Matthew Zellmer @ 414-374-4645, ext.203 or mzellmer@wifacets.org

Educacion Especial: Que Necesito Saber? (Telephone Workshop)

Date: April 6, 2017

Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

Extended School Year

Date: April 12, 2017

Presenter: Sarah Okonkwo, DPI

Crisis Prevention Institute Training: An Overview for Parents

Date: April 19, 2017

Presenter: Judith Schubert, Crisis Prevention Institute

Learning Opportunities



HOME-BASED LEARNING

March is Reading Month! Celebrate literacy in all its forms with these activities:



Check out the [March Literacy Calendar](#) from Reading is Fundamental. Everyone knows St. Patrick's Day- but did you know Hiccup Day and Chip & Dip Day are in March too?



International Women's Day is in March – here are some [books](#) to read about women who have made an impact on history.

It's finally time to get outside! Check out these literacy-builders that you can do [outdoors](#).



March can be a rainy month. Measure the rainfall with your child by making a [rain gauge](#) together.



For a nice, windy day – practice your measuring and geometry skills and build a [kite](#).

Spring time is a great time to get to the farmer's market and grab some fresh veggies. Practice math skills through cooking these yummy [veggie dishes](#) as a family.



[Latino Autism Support Group](#)

Grupo de Autismo: Reuniones de IEP mas Provechosas (WSEMS)
Date: March 25, 2017

Location: WI FACETS, 600 W. Virginia St. Suite 501, Milwaukee.
Contact: Martha Lechuga (414) 374-4645, ext 224

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Upcoming newsletter topics:

April: **Autism Spectrum Disorder** May: **Mental Health** June: **ADD/ADHD**

We would love to hear your family engagement news, strategies & stories!

To submit contributions, you may use either the attached Word document for contributing articles, events, or resources. Send submissions to woverturf@wifacets.org. If unable to access the form, you may send information in an email.

Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the **1st of each month**. For time sensitive training advertisements, the information should be sent a minimum of two weeks prior to the event date; ideally a month ahead of time. Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles. Family engagement success or impact stories can be written at an individual or family level, classroom level, school building level, district level, county level, CESA level, etc. Your submittal may not be in the final copy of the upcoming month's newsletter if it was in a previous month's email, the event date has passed, the web link doesn't work, or there is already an article in place. Articles and resources will be saved to be used for later newsletters. We reserve the right to edit contributions as needed.

This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement.

DISCLAIMER: Inclusion of information in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training, and Support (WI FACETS), the Department of Public Instruction, the U.S. Department of Education, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

NOTE: If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please go to <http://www.servingongroups.org/newsletter-signup> or contact: Wendy Overturf at woverturf@wifacets.org.



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