

Maine Parent Federation
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Parent Connection

Since 1984 ... because every family matters

Summer 2011 - Published Quarterly



The **P3** Collaborative, a parent program partnership between the Learning Disabilities Association of Maine, Maine Parent Federation, and Southern Maine Parent Awareness, is conducting a survey to collect information from families and providers on their training and information needs. Your answers will help us redesign and develop needed information and future trainings.

We need your help! Please complete the survey online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/P3Survey2011 or contact one of the **P3** organizations if you have questions or would like a printed copy of the survey.



Learning Disabilities Association of Maine

179 Main Street, Suite 410, Waterville, ME 04901
1-877-208-4029, Email: info@ldame.org, Website: www.ldame.org



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Maine Parent Federation, Inc.

PO Box 2067, Augusta, ME 04338
1-800-870-7746, Email: parentconnect@mpf.org, Website: www.mpf.org
Online Community: www.startingpointsforme.org



Southern Maine Parent Awareness

886 Main Street, Suite 303, Sanford, ME 04073
1-800-564-9696, Email: support@somepa.org, Website: www.somepa.org



New & Updated Information Packets

Maine Parent Federation has informational packets available on more than 200 topics. These packets contain researched information, tips, local and national resources, and a list of related lending library material available here at MPF. The following information packets have recently been updated:

Disability / Disorder Related Topics:

- Crohn's Disease
- Developmental Delay
- Lupus
- Sensory Integration

Education Related Topics:

- Individual Education Plan (IEP)

General Topics:

- Physical Therapy (PT)
- Letter Writing

Laws, Rules, and Regulation-Related Topics

- Emancipation of Juveniles

.... and many more!!!!

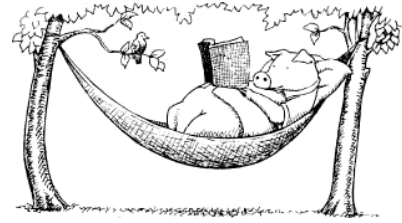
If you would like to receive any of our information packets or would like information on another topic, please contact MPF by:

- Phone: **1-800-870-7746**
(Ask to speak with a Parent Information Specialist)
- Email: **parentconnect@mpf.org**
(Please provide mailing information)

These materials are offered *free of charge!*

This newsletter is paid for through grants from the Federal Department of Education and the State of Maine, Department of Education utilizing funds under I.D.E.A. Information contained in this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of the departments or MPF, nor does it imply endorsement of a product or service.

Summer Reading Ideas from the MPF Lending Library



50 Activities and Games for Kids with ADHD by Patricia Quinn & Judith Stern

An Autumn Called Evan: Life with an Exceptional Child by Deborah Kane

Common Sense Parenting of Toddlers and Preschoolers
by Bridget Barnes & Steven York

The Gift of ADHD: How to Transform Your Child's Problems into Strengths
by Lara Honos-Webb

Getting the Best for Your Child with Autism by Bryna Siegel

New Hope for Children and Teens with Bipolar Disorder by Boris Birmaher

Not Much Just Chillin': The Hidden Lives of Middle Schoolers by Linda Peristein

Straight Talk: Families Speak to Families about Child and Youth Mental Health
by Conni Wells

Transition of Youth & Young Adults with Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties
by Hewitt Clark & Deanne Unruh

Understanding Your Special Needs Grandchild by Clare Jones

When Love is Not Enough: A Guide to Parenting Children with RAD (Reactive Attachment Disorder) by Nancy Thomas

To borrow any of these materials, call the MPF library at 1-800-870-7746 or email dnewcombe@mpf.org. The complete library list is available on our website, www.mpf.org.

NEWS from the Family Support Regional Coordinators

Region 1: Cumberland, York, Androscoggin, and Oxford Counties

Theresa D'Andrea, 207-423-8190 – tdandrea@mpf.org

Parent-to-Parent Support: Parents are needed to support other caregivers of children with special health care needs. Your experience can help support families through the maze of complex issues that can arise when raising a child with special health care needs. Please call Theresa for more information.

Family Support Partner Program: MPF is delighted to announce a major program, which will provide Family Support Partners (FSP's) who will work in partnership with High Fidelity – Wraparound Maine. FSP's provide support, skill development, resources, and encouragement to families receiving this service. Wraparound Maine is currently provided statewide. Please call MPF to learn more.

Family Support Partners are parents who have experience with their child in the mental health system and are ready to take a more active role in helping other families navigate the systems. FSP's are trained parents who are integrated into powerful teams that are family centered and success orientated. Theresa is providing training and supervision to FSP's working with parents who are receiving High Fidelity Wraparound in Aroostook County.

Region 2: Waldo, Lincoln, Knox and Sagadahoc Counties and the Brunswick Area

Beth Jones, 207-622-2787 – bjones@mpf.org

The Belfast Region Transition Series introductory meeting at Broadreach will begin in late spring. The date and time will be announced soon. This series focuses on students with disabilities and their transition out of high school. The series is intended for families, schools, and providers who are interested in learning about guardianship, special needs trusts, financial planning, housing, job opportunities, and post-secondary programs. Please contact Beth for date and time or to join her list serve for updates.

Ongoing Housing and Quality Services Coalition meetings are held on the second Monday of each month from NOON - 2 PM at Avesta Housing, 309 Cumberland Avenue in Portland. Pizza is provided. This parent-led, family-centered work group offers a great networking opportunity for parents, providers, state agencies, legislators, and people with disabilities. These statewide coalition meetings are responsive and pro-active. For more information, contact Cullen Ryan, Chair, and facilitator, at cullen@chomhousing.org or 207-879-0347. Visit the coalition website so see their interactive blog and current legislative activities: www.maineparentcoalition.org.

GEAR Parent Network offers a great series of trainings and support groups in May and June for Midcoast Maine families who are raising children and youth with emotional/behavioral, autism, and/or a mental health diagnoses. All workshops are free to parents/guardians of children with behavioral health needs. For more information, contact Norm LeBlanc at nleblanc@crisisandcounseling.org, 207-721-0161, or 1-800-264-9224.

Region 3: Kennebec, Somerset, Piscataquis, and Franklin Counties
Veronica Boucher, 1-800-870-7746 – vboucher@mpf.org

Support Parent Trainings:

- Saturday, June 18 from 9 AM – Noon in Piscataquis County.
- Tuesday, September 27 from 5 PM – 8 PM at Franklin County Children’s Task Force in Farmington. Call Veronica for more information or to register.

Region 4: Penobscot and Southern Aroostook Counties
Robin Levesque, 207-538-0866 – rlevesque@mpf.org

- **A series of workshops** are being held throughout Aroostook County in 2011. Workshops will be located in Houlton, Presque Isle, and Fort Kent. The monthly workshop topics are listed below under **Region 6 News**. Please call Robin for more information on dates and times of workshops in *Southern Aroostook*.
- **Hermon Parent-to-Parent Support Group** meets every six weeks. Please call Tammy at 207-848- 0756 for location, time, or more information.
- **Parent-to-Parent** – Please call Robin if you are interested in learning more about becoming a trained support parent, or possibly connecting with a support parent.

Region 5: Washington and Hancock Counties

Bahia Yackzan, MPF staff in Washington County, seeks parent support group opportunities for parents of children with special needs. She is currently attending Maine’s Hi-Fidelity Wraparound training program and serves on the Community Mobilization Team facilitated by Rebecca Beal, Catholic Charities Maine, and the Community Caring Collaborative work group. Bahia is a great source of support for any parent of a child with special needs, particularly children affected by substance use in utero or born pre-term. Bahia can provide one-on-one phone support to parents and offers support at group meetings. Bahia is available to present an overview of MPF programs and facilitate parent groups for parents or parent organizations. Bahia is an active participant in monthly national Community of Learners calls, which focus on developing cultural competence in relationship to Tribal community partners. Please call Bahia with questions or suggestions related to parent support in Washington County at 207-598-7424 or email byackzan@mpf.org.

Region 6: Northern and Central Aroostook Counties
Catherine Jandreau, 207-834-5867 – cjandreau@mpf.org

- **Parent-to-Parent Support:** Any parent of a child with special health needs or a child with disabilities, who would like to offer another parent the benefit of their knowledge, are invited to become a support parent. We offer a training to help prepare you for communicating with different families. It is free, easy, and very rewarding.
- **Children with Special Health Needs Parent Group:** We are interested in providing an opportunity for families who are raising a child with special health needs to come together for the purpose of support and education. We would love to hear from you if you or someone you know is raising a child who spends a great deal of time in the doctor’s office. The purpose of the group is to bring together families who may otherwise feel alone. We want to provide support as well as learn from each other. Most importantly, we want to be able to create social opportunities for our children.

The following workshops are being held throughout Aroostook County in 2011. Workshops will be located in *Fort Kent, Presque Isle, and Houlton*. Each session will be offered twice – a brown bag *Lunch and Learn* from 11 AM – 1 PM and an evening session from 6 PM – 8 PM. Please call Catherine for more information.

May	<i>Mental Health Awareness</i> – Learn the signs, symptoms, and treatment options.
June	<i>Effective Communication</i> – Learn how to effectively communicate with providers.
July	<i>Play Therapy</i> – Learn what it is and how it works!
August	<i>Back to School</i> – Learn about the IEP and special education process.
September	<i>Relationship Development</i> – Learn how to set boundaries.
October	<i>Understanding Health Care Options</i>
November	<i>Managing Stress</i> – Learn to manage day-to-day stressors



Wraparound Maine

Wraparound Maine is a statewide initiative that serves youth with severe emotional and behavioral difficulties whose needs put them at immediate risk of being placed in residential treatment. The initiative's goal is to help keep those children at home by using teamwork to help their families identify and prioritize their needs, and use natural supports and service providers to brainstorm sustainable ways to get those needs met. This team model places heavy emphasis on empowering families and encouraging them to look to their communities as the starting point in getting their needs met. Community Wraparound boards play a vital role in achieving this objective – members educate others about the needs of those being served by Wraparound Maine, serve as system-wide liaisons to overcome obstacles, govern Wraparound program policies, and act as “community connectors” to members of the community who may have in-kind resources or volunteers that could benefit Wraparound youth and families.

Each of the nine Wraparound sites serving Maine is looking for creative and dynamic members of the community to participate on their local Community Wraparound Boards. No previous board experience is necessary, just a desire to help our communities' most vulnerable residents using strengths-based brainstorming and networking. Please do not hesitate to contact your community's Wraparound Mobilization Specialist for more information about board membership:

York County: Marshall Abbott, mabbott@sweetser.org, 207-294-4796

Cumberland County: Jessica Moninski, jmoninski@yimaine.org, 207-766-1357

Bath/Brunswick/ Sagadahoc County: Irene Sophie Yocz, iyotz@sweetser.org, 207-373-3040

Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties: Ben Strick, bstrick@spurwink.org, 207-782-0079

Knox and Waldo Counties: Dennis Grannis-Phoenix, dgrannis-hoenix@sweetser.org, 207-593-1267 ext. 8404

Penobscot County: Jessica Cambridge, jcambridge@wingsinc.org, 1-800-823-2988

Aroostook County: John Hayes, jhayes@wingsinc.org, 1-888-946-4745

Kennebec and Somerset Counties: Brandi Farrington, bfarrington@kbhmaine.org, 207- 626-3455

Washington and Hancock Counties: Rebecca Beal, rbeal@ccmaine.org, 207-255-4116



THE ROLE OF FATHERS IN THEIR CHILD'S LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Dads: Did you know that reading with your preschool child could lead to better school performance later on? Studies show that when fathers participate in learning, children receive higher marks, enjoy school more, and are less likely to repeat a grade. Reading time creates a bond between you and your child that will stay with you both forever.

What should I read?

Children will respond to your enthusiasm. You can select nonfiction – books about famous people, places, or how things work, or fiction. The important part is that you are enthusiastic about the book. Stop by the children's room at your local library for more ideas.

What if I am not with my child every day?

If you don't see your child each day, try arranging a regular time to read books over the phone, or create your own podcast! Your child will look forward to this individual time with you, and you will be modeling behavior that will keep your child on a path toward learning.

What if I don't like reading?

Even if you're not a reader yourself, your participation in literacy activities at home can have a profound impact on your child's academic achievement. You just have to send the message that reading is important! Here are some other simple ways to incorporate literacy into your everyday routine with your child:

- Tell stories about when you were young
- Recite nursery rhymes or jingles
- Read environmental print (e.g., road signs or brand names on food containers)
- Ask your child about his day. Conversation with adults helps children learn new words and practice creating a narrative – both linked to better reading skills.
- Check out books of photography or art and talk about the pictures
- When you are doing household projects, describe what you are doing to your child
- Involve your child in everyday writing tasks like shopping lists or paying bills
- Create games that use letters, words, or problem solving

Use the language you are most comfortable speaking! Reading skills transfer between languages and you will be better at playing with words and language in your native tongue.

Walk the walk

Your child learns from what you do. Make sure the messages you are sending about reading reinforce that knowledge and literacy are valuable, achievable, and powerful.

For more information about early literacy development, visit: www.ReadingRockets.org/article/c442 or call Maine Parent Federation at 1-800-870-7746.

Reading Rockets, Colorin Colorado, and LD OnLine are services of public television station WETA, Washington, D.C. Reading Rockets is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Colorin Colorado, a web service to help English language learners become better readers, received major funding from the American Federation of Teachers. Additional funding is provided by the National Institute for Literacy and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. LD OnLine is the world's leading website on learning disabilities and ADHD, with major funding from Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes.



Keeping Kids off the Summer Slide

Research shows that children and teens that don't read and write outside of school, especially during long breaks such as summer vacation, decline in literacy growth and learned skills, compared to those who continue learning throughout the year. The summer months and other breaks from school offer wonderful opportunities for families to help improve or maintain reading and writing skills. As adults, we know how important reading and writing are in our daily lives. A passion for reading and writing can help children and teens find ways to understand not only different cultures and worlds but also themselves. Children can discover themselves by writing and communicating their hopes, fears, and dreams.

Research has proven that the most effective forms of parent involvement are those that engage parents to work directly with their children on learning activities at home. You are your child's first teacher! Here are some of the ways you can help your child continue learning and maintain their academic skills while having fun!

Children of all ages love a scavenger hunt. There are a variety of ways to create a scavenger hunt. Young children can play Shape Hunt. *The Greedy Triangle* by Marilyn Burns and *Eight Hand Round* by Ann Whitford Paul are two great books to help get you started. Older children can learn new vocabulary words and maintain their math facts using a scavenger hunt.

Here are some other activities to do with your children during the summer months:

- ◆ Sort and classify things in nature and write about them. This is a fun and exciting way to learn and maintain language skills.
- ◆ Have your child write out your grocery list, research sales, and cut out coupons. This helps teach writing, reading, and math skills.
- ◆ Play "Eye Spy" when traveling in the car.
- ◆ Sing silly songs to math facts by rhyming words or telling stories.
- ◆ Take photographs of your family adventures throughout the summer and label the pictures in an album or write a book about your adventures and use the pictures to illustrate it.
- ◆ Help older children write a script and produce a movie.
- ◆ Help your child research your family genealogy and make a family tree.

The key to keeping your child in a "learning" mode throughout the summer is to find out what they are interested in and expand upon it. Be creative, think outside of the box, and have fun playing games with your child to maintain and develop language and math skills.

Maine State PIRC offers parents free *Make & Take* games to play during the summer break. Contact Angela Burgess, Director of the Maine State PIRC, at 1-800-870-7746 or email aburgess@mpf.org for more information.

~ Upcoming Events ~

Maine Autism Alliance

“Wretches & Jabberers”

Maine Autism Alliance and Space Gallery

Thursday, June 9, 2011 at 7:30 PM

Saturday, June 11, 2011 at 1:00 PM

A documentary film screening featuring two men with autism who embark on a global quest to change attitudes about disability and intelligence.

“Reducing Problem Behavior in Children with Autism”

Presented by Dr. Vincent J. Carbone, BCBA-D

October 14, 2011

Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland, ME

Maine Autism Conference

Augusta Civic Center

October 15, 2011

8:30 AM to 4:00 PM

Contact the Maine Autism Alliance at 207-626-3042 or www.maineautism.org for more information on the above events.

The University of Maine College of Education and Human Development Invites Parents of Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders to:

Twenty Practical Tips for Addressing Behavior Challenges

An Address by Dr. Cathy Pratt, BCBA-D
*Director of Indiana Resource Center for Autism and
Mark R. Shibles Distinguished Visiting Professor*

Tuesday, June 28, 2011

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

University of Maine, Orono

Wells Conference Center, Room 2

FREE of Charge – No RSVP Necessary

Maine Kids-Kin

Maine Kids-Kin, a program of Families and Children Together (F.A.C.T.), is a unique and innovative program designed to assist family members who are raising a relative's child. These families, referred to as grandfamilies, consist of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, or other extended family members or friends. There are over 11,000 children being raised by a relative in the state of Maine.

At the heart of Maine Kids-Kin is its experienced and knowledgeable staff. With offices in Bangor and Westbrook, they provide services to grandfamilies statewide.

Staff members are available to listen to the concerns of each grandfamily and offer information, resources, and support on a wide range of issues. In addition to our expert staff, Maine Kids-Kin offers support groups across the state, a lending library, respite and emergency funding, a clothing exchange, and social events for grandfamilies.

If you, or someone you know, are one of the estimated 5,000 grandfamilies in Maine and would like to utilize any of the services offered by Maine Kids-Kin, please contact Cathy Paglio at 207-591-6278, cpaglio@mainekids-kin.org or visit their website at www.mainekids-kin.org.

MPF Needs Your Feedback!

Please help us plan for the future of MPF by completing our annual survey located on our website at www.mpf.org.
We would love to hear from you!

If you would like a paper copy of the survey, call the MPF office at
1-800-870-7746.