



# The Link

*"Linking Exceptional Families in Contra Costa County"*

Volume XIV Issue 3 Published quarterly

Spring 2009

## What is CARE Parent Network?

We are a Family Resource Center for families of children with special needs in Contra Costa County. We provide information, referral, resources, training opportunities and family support.

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Opinions expressed in **The Link** do not necessarily reflect the endorsement of CARE Parent Network or any of its associations. We do not recommend any treatment, therapy, institution or professional system, etc.

## THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE WORLD

By Jillian LaFontaine

There's a twelve year old girl sitting on the couch in her home, with another girl who's a



Shelly (12) Jillian (14)

couple years older than her. The girls are looking at a picture book together. The youngest, Shelly, is grabbing the other girl's finger and pointing at the pictures. "Apple. Ahh-puhl. Can you say apple?", the oldest girl says. Shelly laughs and points to the next picture; "Cookie, Cooo-key, Cookie." Shelly stands up and pulls on the girl's hand. The girl stands up and Shelly walks over to the cabinet where the cookies are located. Shelly points and says, "Uhh, DAH!" the girl gives Shelly a cookie and says, "Say, 'please', Shelly." Shelly claps her hands, her way of signing "please." The girl gives Shelly a cookie and says, "Now say 'thank you'." Shelly puts her hand to her mouth, signing "thank you." Shelly is the most innocent and caring person. Her smile is contagious, and her heart is full of love. She's the most important person in the world.

Shelly doesn't know about the "real world." She knows what makes her happy: music, cookies, and swimming.

She knows what frustrates her: too much noise, being caught during a game of chase, and having her hair done. She doesn't know about death, drugs, or money; all the things that destroy others' lives. She'll never feel the emotional pain that other people feel. Shelly doesn't judge, she doesn't know about stereotypes, and thinks of all people equally. She knows that there are people who love and adore her, and want what's best for her. She knows only the good things, and her heart is pure because of it.

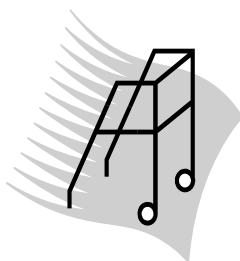
Shelly is a very kind and caring person. When she sees someone upset, she tries to make them laugh. Even though she doesn't understand why the person is upset, she tries to make them feel better by playing a game with them or distracting them somehow. When Shelly sees someone crying, especially when it's someone she's familiar with, she gets upset and starts crying too. She pokes the person in the eye, trying to make the tears stop, not understanding what's wrong with the person. She can tell when someone is angry or sad, and she'll give the person a hug or lean in to let them give her a kiss.

Shelly has a beautiful smile. When Shelly smiles, everyone else smiles. Shelly makes someone feel like the luckiest person in the world just by smiling at them or laughing with them. Whenever Shelly is in a room, she puts everyone in a good mood. **(Continue on Page 6)**



## EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE

- 1 Large Rifton Supine Stander
- 1 Medium Bailey Box Stander
- 1 Medium Sammons Preston Supine Stander with Tray
- 2 Medium Rifton Potty Chairs
- 1 Small/Med Supine Stander
- 1 Small/Med Dinosaur Stander
- 1 Small Rifton Potty Chair on Wheels
- 1 Adult Bench Style Commode
- 1 Adult Size Toilet Extender
- 1 Small Rifton Potty Chair
- 1 Small Bath Chair
- 1 Easy Stand 5000
- 1 High Chair
- Multiple Small & Large Walkers
- 1 Large Kaye Posture Control Walker
- 1 Medium Pony Walker
- 2 Small Pony Walkers
- 1 Large Quad Cane
- 1 Set of Large Lofstrand Crutches
- 1 Medium Four Wheeled Walker with Seat & Brakes
- 1 Small Otto Bock Panda Stroller
- 1 Medium Pink Rock n Roll Push Bike—(need upper body strength to ride and the bike needs some gear adjustment)



## MOBILE DENTAL SERVICE

**Golden Scalers** is a mobile dental hygiene service. California recently passed a law allowing specially trained dental hygienists to provide oral healthcare to people who cannot get to a dental office. Darci Trill is one of a small group of dental hygienists in the Bay Area that has taken the required special training and provides mobile dental services.

She devotes most of her practice to children and adults with special needs. Darci travels with one assistant and is fully equipped to handle children and adults with any positioning, anxiety or other issues that may arise. She mostly goes to facilities where she can see 6-15 clients at a time. We are working on finding a location to make this happen for those who want her services. Contact CARE for information on locations by sending an email to [sproctorcare@aol.com](mailto:sproctorcare@aol.com). Darci is affiliated with Delta Dental and the Regional Center of the East Bay.



For more information, visit the website at [www.goldenscalers.com](http://www.goldenscalers.com), or contact Darci by phone at 510-886-4199 or by e-mail at [trilogy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:trilogy@sbcglobal.net)

## MEDICAL INTERPRETER SERVICES

When patients or their families cannot communicate with their health care providers because they do not speak the same language, the situation is not only stressful and frustrating; it becomes potentially life threatening. It is very important for families with limited English proficiency to understand they have the right to ask for oral interpretation or written translation of information in their primary language. Family members of the patient should not be relied upon to provide this service. Medical interpreters are specially trained in medical terminology and standards of practice so they can accurately explain the prescribed medical treatment.

To receive the services of a medical interpreter:

- ✂ - Ask for an interpreter when you are making your appointment
- ✂ - Ask your doctor to write your spoken language in your chart
- ✂ - Ask for an interpreter when scheduling your follow-up appointment



## CHILDCARE/RESPITE OPTIONS AND STRATEGIES

**Being a parent of a child with special needs can be stressful. That is why it is important to find child care for your child so that you and your loved ones can get a chance to re-charge your energy. Here are some resources that might be helpful.**

- ☺ Place an ad:
  - Websites: St. Mary's College(carrier placement section) [www.stmarys-ca.edu](http://www.stmarys-ca.edu) or 925-631-4000
  - Craigslist: [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com) place under childcare heading
  - Bulletin boards at local colleges or the child development programs at the college:
    - Diablo Valley College, [www.dvc.edu](http://www.dvc.edu) or 925- 685-1230
    - Los Medanos College, [www.losmedanos.edu](http://www.losmedanos.edu) or 925-439-2181
    - Contra Costa College, [www.contracosta.edu](http://www.contracosta.edu) or 510-235-7800
- ☺ Contact your Regional Center case manager to get updates on vendorized respite providers.
- ☺ Regional Center Vendorized Providers:
  - Delta YMCA in Oakley for children 3 years through 5th grade. The hours are Monday-Thursday 11 AM-4 PM, Friday and Saturday 1PM-8PM. Call 925-625-9333.
  - Maxim Health Agency-510-597-9111 or [mmorris@fssba-oak.org](mailto:mmorris@fssba-oak.org)
- ☺ Ask other parents who their childcare/respite providers are and get their names.
- ☺ Join a Mother's Club that offers a babysitting exchange or find a parent that is willing to exchange babysitting hours.
- ☺ Ask the aides in your child's program, class or after school program.
- ☺ Contact the Contra Costa Child Care Council, [www.cocokids.org](http://www.cocokids.org), to find your local office. They assist parents by providing referrals to licensed caregivers.
- ☺ Make use of Trustline to do background checks for in-home child care providers, [www.trustling.org](http://www.trustling.org), 800-822-8490.
- ☺ Utilize All in Need (Respite Care): free for children with special needs ages 3 through 5th grade. The first Friday of every month from 6:30 PM-9:30 PM, sibling care is \$10 per child/\$25 max per family. Pre-registration is required, download form at [www.opccag.org](http://www.opccag.org), click All in Need or call 925-934-3056 ext. 179.
- ☺ Fee-based on-line service:
  - Care.com provides access to hundreds of child care providers.
  - Barefoot.com provides access to posts and you can post an ad for child care. This site's target is college students.

## RESOURCES

**Financial Planning for Your Child with Special Needs:** The following professionals in the area are available to assist in Limited Conservatorships, Special Needs Trusts, Estate Planning and other financial matters.

- Dale Law Firm, PC —Steve Dale, 1670 Riviera Ave., #101, Walnut Creek, 925-280-0172
- Mass Mutual / Gene Gracey, CLTC —Special Care Planner, 2121 N. California, #395, Walnut Creek, 925-979-2391 or [genegracey@finsvcs.com](mailto:genegracey@finsvcs.com)
- Metlife / Andrew Vasquez, Financial Planner—2001 N. Main St., #380, Walnut Creek, 925-949-5165
- Leonard Heller, Certified Financial Planner—2333 San Ramon Valley Blvd, #185, San Ramon, 925-876-8482

**Developmental Disabilities Council** meets the 4th Wednesday of each month from 9:45 a.m. until 12p.m. These meetings are held at the Regional Center of the East Bay, 2151 Salvio Street, #365, Concord. For more information contact Gina B. Jennings at 925-313-6836 or [gjennings@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:gjennings@hsd.cccounty.us) .

**Call 211 or [www.211contracosta.org](http://www.211contracosta.org)** to find local social and health services. It is free and confidential, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and multi-lingual. Call if you need: a hot meal, free or low-cost health care, information on child care, care for aging parents, employment resources, help for a drinking problem , etc.



## CALENDAR 2009



**March 26-28, 2009:** Play, The Optimal Way to Learn, 2009 CAEUC Annual Conference & Expo. Sponsored by California Association for the Education of Young Children, Sacramento Convention Center, Hyatt Regency Hotel, and Sheraton Grand Hotel, Sacramento, CA. For more information and to register online: [www.caeyc.org](http://www.caeyc.org) (Fee)

**April 2-3, 2009:** Northern California Family Resources and Supports Institute. Sponsored by WestEd. Contact: Kelly Young, [kyoung@wested.org](mailto:kyoung@wested.org) (Fee).

**April 4, 2009:** 3rd Annual Seminar on Post-Secondary Transition Planning for Young Adults with Aspergers, NLD and other Neurocognitive Deficits. Sponsored by Orion Academy, held at the Lafayette Park Hotel, Lafayette. Contact Orion Academy for details. 925-377-2028.

**April 25, 2009:** 15th Annual Early Learning Conference: The Heart of Learning Foundations, Coming Together for Children. Sponsored by Contra Costa Child Care Council. Held at Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, CA. For more information: [www.cocokids.org](http://www.cocokids.org) (Fee).

**April 27-30, 2009:** Excellence in Early Childhood Educational leadership (EXCEL) Seminars. Sponsored by Special Education Early Childhood Administrators Project (SEECAP) [www.sdcoe.net/seecap](http://www.sdcoe.net/seecap), email Kathleen Finn at [kfinn@sdcoe.net](mailto:kfinn@sdcoe.net) or call 714-761-5526.

**April 30-May 3, 2009:** Cal-TASH 27th Annual Conference and Meeting. Concurrent session featuring best practice strategies in the areas of: School, Inclusive Practices, Work, Adult Services, Transition, Community Living, Community Recreation. For more information visit: [www.tash.org/chapters/caltash](http://www.tash.org/chapters/caltash)

**May 13, 2009:** CARE Parent Network Early Education Council. Sponsored by CARE Parent Network. CARE Parent Network office complex. Conference Room (Bldg 1340). Call 925-313-0999, Ext 107 for more information.

**May 16, 2009:** 2009 Bay Area Romp for Research. Down Syndrome Research and Treatment Foundation is sponsoring a fun-filled day in the park full of arts & crafts, games, water activities on the lake and plenty of food and fun. Shoreline Lake, Mountain View, CA. Contact: [caliromp@dstrf.org](mailto:caliromp@dstrf.org) (Free)

**May 20, 2009:** Speech and Language Concerns in Young Children. Sponsored by the Contra Costa Child Care Council Inclusion Project. For child care providers and other early education professionals. Contra Costa Child Care Council Learning Institute, 1035 Detroit Ave., Suite 100A, Concord, CA. Reservations required. For more information, call: Cecilia Tosoni 925-676-5442 x 3105. (Free)

**June 2-3, 2009:** Early Start Institute Skill-builder III: Facilitation, Cognition and Early Learning. Sponsored by WestEd. Sacramento, CA. For more information: email: [cpei@wested.org](mailto:cpei@wested.org). To register: [www.wested.org](http://www.wested.org) (Fee).

## SUMMER CAMPS

☆ **June 29—July 10, 2009:** Travolta ASD Inclusion Film Camp. St. Mary's College, Moraga~ The Joey Travolta summer film camp is designed to address social cognitive communication and interpersonal skills of individuals diagnosed with high functioning Autism or Aspergers. Age range: 9-21 years old. Vendorized by Regional Center. Contact: Lisa McLarin: [jjlmcclaurin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jjlmcclaurin@sbcglobal.net) or [www.JoeyTee.com](http://www.JoeyTee.com)

☆ **June 5 - June 7, 2009:** Special Needs Family Camp Weekend. Located at Camp Newman, Santa Rosa. A weekend to be enjoyed by the entire family. Youth ages 3-21. For more information call: Flora Kupferman: 415-751-6983 ext. 122.

**For a list of additional summer camps, e-mail: [sproctorcare@aol.com](mailto:sproctorcare@aol.com) or call our office.**



**SPECIAL THANKS :**  
**IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT.**

- |  |                             |                      |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| ☆ Mandy Bladl & All the Staff<br>at Delta First 5 Center | ☆ Laura Kahapea             | ☆ Caroline Ortiz     |
| ☆ Franco Carroll   | ☆ Stephanie La Londe        | ☆ Joann Rossi        |
| ☆ Stephanie Chapralis                                    | ☆ Hector Rivera-Lopez, Ph.D | ☆ Barbara Sheehy     |
| ☆ Ema Davila, Psy. D                                     | ☆ Arlette Merritt           | ☆ Anna Tague         |
| ☆ Jenifer Gorton   |                             | ☆ Christmas Donors ! |
| ☆ Gina Hale  |                             | ☆ Con Torget         |
| ☆ Bob Jacobson   |                             | ☆ Rosa Valledor      |



**CARE PARENT NETWORK SUPPORT GROUPS**

<b><u>NAME OF GROUP</u></b>	<b><u>LOCATION</u></b>	<b><u>FACILITATOR(S)</u></b>	<b><u>SCHEDULE</u></b>	<b><u>PURPOSE</u></b>
Just for Fathers	Martinez	Bob Jacobsen (peer facilitator)	1st Wednesday evening	All disabilities
Support for Moms	Brentwood	L. Schneiders	1st Tuesday morning	All disabilities
Support for Moms	Martinez	L. Schneiders	1st Thursday evening	All disabilities
Augmentative & Alternative Communication Parent Group	Martinez	Gina Hale (peer facilitator)	3rd Monday morning	All disabilities
Support for Parents of Teens	Martinez	L. Schneiders	2nd Wednesday evening	All disabilities
Padres Latinos	Antioch	A. Gattis	1st Friday morning	Spanish-speaking parents, all disabilities
Grupo de Autismo	San Pablo	C. Zepeda	1st Friday morning	Spanish-speaking parents of children with autism
	Brentwood		2nd Friday morning	
Caminemos Juntos	Richmond	H. Mariscal (peer facilitator)	2nd Thursday morning	Spanish-speaking parents, all disabilities
Voces de Amor	Martinez	S. Garcia	2nd Wednesday morning	Spanish-speaking parents of children with special health care needs

**If you are interested in attending a support group, please contact CARE Parent Network at 800-281-3023 x 101 or 925-313-0999 x 101.**



**(continued from Page 1)** She dances, smiles and laughs, and she just brightens up the life of everyone around her. There isn't one person who really knows Shelly, and doesn't love her with everything in them.

The world needs more people like Shelly. Shelly doesn't understand what she has, how lucky she is. But at the same time, Shelly doesn't understand what she doesn't have, and how unlucky she is. While everyone else feels heartbreak at some point, the closest Shelly will ever feel to that is when they don't have her favorite episode of Dragon Tales on "On Demand". Shelly will never have the chance to really communicate with her peers, while everyone else is upset that their parents won't let them have texting. Shelly is the most important person in this world, because she is 100% pure, and she has no hate. She forgives, forgets, gives an infinite number of chances, and she loves.

*Shelly is the niece to the Author, Jillian.*

## A TEENS DREAM FOR HER FUTURE

BY JAZMIN ZEPEDA, AGE 15



The college that I always wanted to go to is Academy of Art University, San Francisco. I always dreamed of going there ever since I was little. When I was little, I didn't know how to speak until

the age of six or seven. So I had to talk through my drawings. I draw so often that I grow to love drawing. I did different kinds of art while growing up. I did drawing, painting, oil pastels, photograph, chalk art, and even computer art. I did so many different things, that I love it more with each different kind of art. I loved it so much that I wanted to study art and become an artist. So that's why I want to go to Academy of Art University, so I can do what I love as a future career. In Academy of Art University there are different kinds of classes for each student, for example painting, computer art, photography,, fashion, modeling, and so many others. The classes that I want to take are photographing, storytelling, computer art, some fashion, and old fashion drawing. I just love creating the un-seeable that other people couldn't or never see. I want to make something new and do what I love to do. So I hope I can go and get a good job from it.

## SUPPORT FOR PARENTS OF TEENS

If you would like to receive information and resources on parenting a teen with special needs, including transition to adulthood, please send your e-mail address to:

[sproctorcare@aol.com](mailto:sproctorcare@aol.com)



## CHILDREN'S BOREDOM RELIEF KIT

.. sitting in the Pediatrician's office waiting for your appointment, the nurse walks over and says, "the doctor is running 30 minutes behind." Oh, no, your child is restless and has that "look", what do you do?

### **Pull out your kit!**

#### Contents:

- ✂ Special blanket, lovey, or pacifier
- ✂ Snacks
- ✂ Notebook
- ✂ Favorite book
- ✂ Safety scissors
- ✂ Bandages
- ✂ Travel size magna-doodle/etch a sketch
- ✂ Notebook/coloring book
- ✂ Crayons
- ✂ Audio story and book (tape, CD, MP3)
- ✂ Finger puppets
- ✂ Deck of cards
- ✂ Sticky notes
- ✂ Tape
- ✂ Cereal rings and string licorice to make edible jewelry
- ✂ Mirror
- ✂ Small tape measure
- ✂ Magnet (Keep this away from credit/debit cards)
- ✂ On-the-go cards



## CHANGES IN IDEA INVOLVE PARENTS' RIGHTS

New regulations of the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) became effective Dec. 31, 2008. IDEA provides a free, appropriate public education for children with disabilities. Two changes of particular importance to parents of children with disabilities involve:

- ☆ a parent's right to revoke consent for special education and related services
- ☆ representation of parents and schools by non-attorneys in due process hearings

Since the passage of the first special education laws in 1975, parents have had the right to withdraw consent for special education services. However, school districts also had the right to contest the parent's decision. The new regulations allow parents to revoke their consent for special education and related services and require the school district to comply with the parent's request for the student's removal from special education. Consequently, schools will not be able to challenge a parent's decision through mediation or due process hearing.

Parents, however, must provide written consent to discontinue special education and related services. Schools must provide the parents with prior written notice detailing the changes in educational placement and services before the services are actually discontinued.

Parents should be aware that once the child is removed from special education services, the school is not required to remove references to special education in a child's records. Parents can still request amendments to anything in the records that might be inaccurate or misleading. Parents should consider the following additional facts when revoking their consent to their child's special education services:

- ☆ When a parent withdraws consent, the student and parent no longer have rights under IDEA. The student becomes a regular education student and will be required to meet all state requirements for graduation.
- ☆ The child will be required to follow the same discipline policies as regular education students.
- ☆ Accommodations permitted to a student on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for statewide accountability and graduation-required assessments will no longer be available when a student exits special education.
- ☆ If the parent withdraws consent and the child is removed from special education, the parent at any time may request an evaluation, which will then be an initial evaluation.

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## CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

If you are interested in keeping up-to-date on legislation and activities that affect our community of children and adults with disabilities, there are a number of web sites to visit. Some of these sites also provide "Action Alerts" or requests when calls and letters are needed to legislators.

**California Disability Community Action Network - CD-CAN** is written by advocate Marty Omoto in Sacramento. Marty reports on the budget, bills, and other activities addressed in Sacramento. His updates are timely, accurate and easy-to-read. [www.cdcan.us](http://www.cdcan.us)

**Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund – DREDF**  
[www.dredf.org](http://www.dredf.org)

**California Legislative Analyst Office - LAO**

"The Legislative Analyst's Office provides nonpartisan fiscal and policy analysis for the California Legislature."  
[www.lao.ca.gov](http://www.lao.ca.gov)

**CD-CAN**



## SPECIAL EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY WORKSHOPS

**3/14/09: Understanding the Special Education Process:** Become knowledgeable about the Special Education process, Section 504 and IDEA laws, the rights of children with disabilities, and how to assert those rights.

- ☆ **Place: Care Parent Network**  
1340 Arnold Dr., Suite 115, Martinez, CA
- ☆ **Time: 9 a.m.—12 p.m. (Noon)**
- ☆ **Registration: E-mail Sheri at CARE: sproctorcare@aol.com**

**4/25/09: Advocacy Skills:** Good advocacy skills help parents obtain the supports their children need. Learn skills to ensure that IEP members truly hear your perspective, take you seriously, and know that you understand the IEP process and your rights.

- ☆ **Place: Care Parent Network**  
1340 Arnold Dr., Suite 115, Martinez, CA
- ☆ **Time: 9 a.m.—12 p.m. (Noon)**
- ☆ **Registration: E-mail Sheri at CARE: sproctorcare@aol.com**

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