



The Link

"Linking Exceptional Families in Contra Costa County"

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WHAT'S NEW?

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.

This issue of the Link is "a work in progress". We are at work to coordinate our Spanish Link Newsletter with our English one so that both are on the same schedule utilizing the same design. Therefore, this issue is streamlined to allow time to work on the new format to be unveiled for the Spring edition.

AB 1531 provides new protections for accessible parking. AB 1531 increases fines for illegal use of parking spaces for people with disabilities, it limits the number of times a person can renew a temporary parking placard to six, and improved marking of accessible parking spaces to include the needed, cross-hatched space, next to the parking space for people with disabilities. The new law provides for this area to be outlined in blue and the cross-hatched lines to be painted in a contrasting color.



LOCAL MOM DOES IT!

CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| What's New? | 1 |
| Local Mom Does It! | 1 |
| Peer Support Groups | 1 |
| CCS Medical Director | 2 |
| Equipment Available | 2 |
| Find a Way | 2 |
| Special Thanks | 3 |
| Calendar | 3 |
| Support Groups. | 4 |

Alisa Rosillo spends a lot of time driving her two children with special needs to various activities and appointments in the community. Both children, Max, 6, and Leo, 9, use wheelchairs, so Alisa drives a converted van with a wheelchair lift. Finding parking is often a problem for her as she requires the additional cross-hatched space next to the accessible parking space to operate the wheelchair lift to load and unload the children. Unfortunately people often block this needed space by parking in the cross-hatched area or people who do not require accessible parking use these spaces.



We'd like to take the opportunity to recognize Alisa Rosillo for her efforts and commend her for advocating to improve the lives of all individuals with disabilities. Also, we'd like to recognize and thank Assemblyman Mark DeSaulnier for his foresight in selecting this issue as one worthy of his support.

CARE PARENT NETWORK PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

CARE Parent Network parent support groups are organized using peer facilitators, and are shaped by the interests and experience of parents of children with special needs.



The purpose of CARE Parent Network support groups is to help decrease a parent's sense of isolation, stress and anxiety, and increase coping skills, and a sense of empowerment.

CARE Parent Network support groups are (Continued on Page 4)

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.

Instead of giving into the frustration, Alisa decided to advocate for a change in the laws that regulate the use of parking spaces for persons with disabilities. She contacted Assemblyman Mark DeSaulnier, D-Concord, and brought this issue to his attention as an entry in the legislator's "There Ought To Be a Law Contest." DeSaulnier carried this concept for a new law forward in the legislature as AB 1531, introduced in February and signed into law in September.



FROM THE CCS MEDICAL DIRECTOR

As I sit down to write this article for CARE Parent Network, of course, I took a few moments to decide what to write. I considered many topics but realized that I may be “preaching to the choir.” So instead, I wanted to share an experience I’ve had repeatedly that I’d like to ask your assistance with.



In my clinical practice at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and my patient contacts through California Children’s Services (CCS), I remain surprised how often I seem to be introducing families to CARE apparently for the first time. I do not refer only to families whose children are newly recognized to have chronic, significant conditions, but to families who have been struggling for a long time in isolation. I do not always know if the families I refer to CARE take me up on my recommendation, but I always hope so. So I’d like to ask that those of you who read this article and know about CARE Parent Network invite someone to learn more about it. Share your positive experiences. I hope this is a simple, obtainable request.

As you know, CARE has a wealth of information. If they don’t know, the staff there **will** find out. This information can span the gamut from medical information that’s understandable to resources in our community for anything from child care to advocacy, many resources that are likely to meet specific needs for families and children with disabilities and special needs. But you, the reader, already know this. So please share it.

Perhaps the most important resource that I think CARE offers is perhaps one of the most difficult for us to use or avail ourselves of. That is the CARE Parent Network Support Groups and the Parent Mentor Program. These are groups for mothers and for fathers, in English and in Spanish, about specific topics or just generally people supporting people. The Parent Mentor Program offers an opportunity to connect with another parent who has been there. That’s what I think is most important for all of us. We can’t take care of our children alone. That’s the easiest way to be overwhelmed, tired and unproductive. Together sharing ideas, experiences and emotions, we each feel fuller and more competent or see pathways forged by others to help us become more competent. I’m trying not to say, “It takes a village to raise a child;” but I know you can hear it in the background. Okay, it’s true or partially true. It takes our openness to the broader world around us to raise a child who can move into it safely and as competently as is possible or for us to be able to offer as much to our child as we can. A goal that many parents share. This task of raising a child is not one easily done alone, so why not do it together. Talk about CARE so others can join us.



Gwendolyn Hamilton, MD

EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE

- Supine stander (2 large, 1 small, 1 medium)
- 2 strollers with lots of support (Panda & Kimba)
- 2 Rifton strollers, little support (1 medium, 1 large)
- 2 Rifton bath chairs (1 medium, 1 large)
- 3 Rifton potty chairs (1 medium, 2 large)
- 6 small Rifton chairs (1 with base)
- 1 bolster Rifton chair
- 1 Tumble Form (1 medium)
- Different sizes of walkers
- 3 large car seats
- 1 small push cart
- Assorted trays
- 1 small blue Kaye walker
- 1 small blue bath chair
- 1 small potty chair
- 1 small pediatric stroller w/tray
- 1 small ergonomic walker/with user manual
- 5 Pony walkers (3 small, 1 medium, 1 large)

FIND A WAY & HABITOT

Hello, **The Find a Way/Habitot** campaign to bring an interactive museum for children of all abilities to East County is still going strong. We are looking to raise \$25,000 to pay for a financial feasibility study the City of Brentwood has requested in order to move forward.



We have entered the America's Giving Challenge for a chance to win \$50,000 towards our efforts. The object is to get as many people to donate to our cause as possible. It's not important how much is donated, just how many people actually donate. Please visit our entry at: <http://www.networkforgood.org/pca/Badge.aspx?Badgeld=108448>.

When making a donation, please specify it is for the East County Museum Campaign in the space provided. The minimum donation is only \$10! Even if we don't win the contest, if we can get 2500 people to donate just \$10, we will have paid for the study!

Please pass this information along to as many people, blogs, organizations, chatrooms, etc. you know or belong to. Visit our websites for more information on the Find-A-Way/Habitot campaign to bring an interactive museum for children of all abilities to East Contra Costa County: www.findawayfoundation.org; www.habitot.org

Steffany Lohn



SPECIAL THANKS

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT.

- ☆ Jim Burton
- ☆ California Children Services
- ☆ Stephanie Chapralis
- ☆ Cheryl Clift
- ☆ Contra Costa ARC Angels
- ☆ Contra Costa ARC staff:
CSS, CAP and ARC InRoads
- ☆ Ruvi DeGuzman
- ☆ Family and Children's Trust
- ☆ First 5 Contra Costa
- ☆ Shawn Garcia
- ☆ Maria Grosskopf
- ☆ Gina Hale



- ☆ Vi Ibarra
- ☆ Bob Jacobsen
- ☆ Angelica Leigh
- ☆ Kelly Lodge
- ☆ Carol McCrary
- ☆ Caroline Ortiz
- ☆ Aminta Pruitt
- ☆ Carol Rossi
- ☆ St. Stephen's Catholic Church
- ☆ Barbara Sheehy
- ☆ Rocio Smith
- ☆ Rosa Valledor

CALENDAR 2008



January 17, 2008: Teaching Students With Moderate to Severe Developmental Disabilities. Strategies to modify curriculum, support behavior change and utilize assistive technology. For parents, teachers, inclusion specialists, speech/language pathologists, paraeducators. Contra Costa SELPA, Concord, CA. For more information and online registration: <http://www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/selpa/in-service/calendar.htm> (Fee; free to parents from Contra Costa SELPA)

Enero 31, 2008: Taller de Congreso Familiar Como Promover el Lenguaje en los Niños Para mayor información o registrarse comunicarse con Valesca S. al 510-636-1781 o con Rosa Valledor al 510-799-2844 (Gratis) (For Spanish-speaking parents)

February 1 - 2, 2008: 26th Annual Cal-TASH Conference. Annual statewide Conference in the SF Bay Area for Individuals with Disabilities, Parents, Educators, Adult Service Providers, Advocates & Others Concerned About Quality of Life for Individuals with Disabilities. (Fee. <http://www.tash.org/chapters/caltash/index.htm>)

February 2, 2008: 12th Annual Lowenfeld-Akeson Early Years Symposium "Communication: It's the Foundation, Strategies for Teaching Young Children who are Deafblind or Multiply Impaired". Co-sponsored by Blind Babies Foundation, CAPVI, CSB and NCAER. California School for the Blind, Fremont, CA. For information contact Michael McFarland at (510) 446-2229 or mfarlandmike@blindbabies.org. (Fee; Parent/family scholarships available).

February 8, 2008: Medical Approaches in Autism: Clinical Implications of Environmental Toxicology for Children's Neurodevelopment in Autism. NPART (New Paradigms in Autism Research and Treatment) with sponsorship from Collaborative on Health and the Environment, Commonwealth, San Francisco Medical Society and UC Davis Mind Institute. UCSF Laurel Heights Conference Facility, San Francisco. To register: <http://www.eventville.com/AutismEnvSym-SF> (Fee; parent/student scholarships available).

March 8, 2008: Contra Costa Child Care Council conference for professionals and parents. Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, CA. SAVE THE DATE. More information will be provided in coming months. Watch their web site for announcements: <http://www.cocokids.org/>

Marzo 11, 2008 Taller de Congreso Familiar sobre la Pubertad en niños con Autismo en el Centro Regional del Este de la Bahía de Oakland, (se requiere previa registraci3n). Para mayor informaci3n o registrarse comunicarse con Valesca S. al 510-636-1781 o con Rosa Valledor al 510-799-2844 (Gratis) (for Spanish-speaking parents)

April 19, 2008: STAR Parent Conference on Autism. A conference for parents of children (birth to eight yrs old) in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Performing Arts Center, Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, CA. For more information or to receive a conference announcement, call 925-370-1818 x109. (Fee; scholarships will be available). Sponsored by CARE Parent Network, California CADDRE, Children's Hospital & Research Center, Contra Costa ARC, Family Resource Network and Regional Center of the East Bay.



(Continued from Page 1—CARE PARENT NETWORK PEER SUPPORT GROUPS)

facilitated by peers who have received training in active listening skills, understanding how families cope, cultural sensitivity, and setting boundaries.

Our support groups provide a safe, non-judgmental place to share the experience of parenting a child with special needs and we respect the confidentiality of members.

CARE Parent Network support groups are not a substitute for professional therapy.

Our support groups are held at public facilities in communities throughout Contra Costa County.

CARE PARENT NETWORK SUPPORT GROUPS

| NAME OF GROUP | LOCATION | FACILITATOR(S) | SCHEDULE | PURPOSE |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Support for Moms | Brentwood | L. Schneiders | 1st Tuesday morning | All disabilities |
| Support for Moms | Danville | C. Clift (volunteer) | 3rd Thursday evening | All disabilities |
| Support for Moms | Martinez | L. Schneiders | 1st Thursday evening | All disabilities |
| Parent Support Group | Martinez | L. Schneiders | 3rd Wednesday morning | All disabilities |
| Padres Latinos | Antioch | A. Gattis | 1st Saturday afternoon | Spanish-speaking parents, all disabilities |
| Grupo de Autismo | Martinez | C. Zepeda | 1st Friday morning | Spanish-speaking parents of children with autism |
| Caminemos Juntos | Richmond | H. Mariscal (volunteer) | 2nd Thursday morning | Spanish-speaking parents, all disabilities |
| Voces de Amor | Martinez | S. Garcia | 2nd Wednesday of each month | 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

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