



CARE PARENT NETWORK

# The Link

*"Linking Exceptional Families in Contra Costa County"*

Volume XIII, Issue 3 Published quarterly Spring 2005

## NEWS FROM CARE PARENT NETWORK

### **Farewell to Victoria Sanabria**

We are sorry to announce that Victoria Sanabria, our bilingual Family Support Specialist, will be relocating to be closer to her family. Victoria has been at CARE for a year and has made many contributions to our Spanish-speaking families. We are especially grateful for all the effort she put in to translate our resource directories. Victoria will work through March. Beginning in April you can direct callers who speak Spanish to Cecilia Zepeda at 925-313-0999, Ext. 108.

### **And, Farewell to Diana Jorgensen**

Diana Jorgensen, Executive Director of the Developmental Disabilities Council, has announced her retirement effective June 30. Diana has also been the director of the Medically Vulnerable Infant Program for many years. Her leadership of the developmental disabilities community in Contra Costa has been admired and respected by all who work with her. Plus, our community has huge affection for Diana! Although we will miss her greatly, as she enters a new phase of her life we wish her the best. We hope Diana will come back to visit us from time to time!

### **The California Early Start Interagency Coordinating Council Seeks Parents**

Are you a parent of a child with special needs? If so, the Interagency Coordinating Council wants to hear from you. The ICC is appointed by the Governor to provide advice and assistance to the Department of Developmental Services about the Early Start Program. Early Start provides services to infants and toddlers at risk for developmental disabilities or delays, and their families. Parents who are invited to join the ICC may be eligible for a stipend to help defray the costs of attendance, including travel, lodging, and child care. The ICC meets four times a year in Sacramento. For more information, call 800-578-2592.

### **Area Board 5 Honors Congreso Familiar Organizers**

Each year Area Board 5 hosts a dinner and honors those who have made outstanding contributions to the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. This year the leadership of Congreso Familiar was selected to receive an award. They were honored for the excellent conference which is offered each year to Spanish-speaking families. In 2004 the conference attracted over 700 attendees! The President of Congreso Familiar is Angela Quiroga, who is a Family Support Specialist at CARE Parent Network. Congratulations to Angela and the other hard-working leaders of Congreso Familiar!

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.

## NEWS FROM CALIFORNIA CHILDREN SERVICES (CCS)

### **New Medical Director**

The California Children Services program is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Gwendolyn Johnson as their new Medical Director. Dr. Johnson replaces Dr. Robert Nolan who recently retired. Dr. Johnson completed her pediatric internship and residency at Children's Hospital Oakland and has worked as a pediatrician in private practice in Pleasant Hill as well as at a community clinic in East Oakland. She joined Contra Costa Health Services in 1989 and has served in many capacities at the Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers. As many of you know, Dr. Johnson has a strong interest in caring for the medically underserved pediatric population and children with developmental disabilities. In recognition of her many contributions in this area, she was awarded the Excellence in Service Award by the Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County. She has served as an advisor to CARE Parent Network on one of our health-related projects, the Health Care Connections Manual. We are delighted to join Contra Costa Health Services in welcoming Dr. Johnson as the new CCS Medical Director.

### **Spotlight on CCS Financial Eligibility Specialist**

California Children Services is a need-based state program. One of the requirements for enrollment in the program is financial eligibility. As financial Eligibility Specialists it is our responsibility to determine if a family is within the income parameters as set by the State of California, to qualify for CCS services. A family's eligibility is based on annual adjusted gross income (AGI) on the previous year's California State tax return. If a family's AGI exceeds the limit, additional considerations can be given for eligibility depending on the verified out-of-pocket expenses related to the child's CCS medically eligible condition. We also determine annual assessment and/or enrollment fees if applicable. Since each county is separately responsible to administer the CCS program for the state, we are also required to verify residence within the county for each applicant. This means permanent residency and often can be a complex process involving employment verification, school enrollment, Visas, resident cards, etc. There are sometimes other peripheral issues to be dealt with by the Eligibility Specialist as assisting families with Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, researching and/or evaluating other insurance coverage, and referring a client to other services through our medical social worker.

### **Equipment Available:**

For the following items call Joan, CCS Parent Liaison, at 925-313-0999, extension 104:

Jogger stroller  
 Manual wheelchair  
 Bath chair  
 Walk-a-Bout walker  
 Promise briefs petite/small adult size 23-31' waist  
 Toilet chair-medium size, plastic, lots of trunk support

*"If opportunity doesn't knock,  
 build a door."*

Milton Berle

## RESOURCES

### **FREE online course on special education and the IEP process**

Are you interested in learning more about special education and the IEP process? Is it hard for you to attend a parent workshop to learn more about it? If so, then an online course may be just the resource you need. We have found an excellent online course called "Partners in Education" at [www.partnersinpolicymaking.com](http://www.partnersinpolicymaking.com). This course will take you about three hours to complete and is well worth the time. If you don't have a computer, please come into our office and use our parent computer.

### **FREE Dance and Zoo-phonics Classes**

Help your 3-to-5-year-old get ready for school. Children will have fun, gain self-confidence, practice the alphabet, learn about other cultures via African, salsa, and Hawaiian dancing, and enjoy a healthy snack.

Date: April 5, 12, 19, 26, 2005

Location: Brentwood Community Center, Oak and Second, Brentwood

Time: 9:30 am—11:00 am.

Call 925-516-4578 to sign up and for more information.

### **Social Language Groups**

A group of Speech and Language Pathologists is currently organizing their summer program for students ages Pre K to 16 years old with pragmatic language difficulties. These groups use a communication based approach to teaching social skills. Contact: Elizabeth Sautter or Hillary Kissack at 510-530-3085 or email at [sociallanguagegroups@yahoo.com](mailto:sociallanguagegroups@yahoo.com)

Date: Begins June 8, Wednesdays for 8 to 10 weeks (flexing for vacations)

Place: North Berkeley

### **2005 Camp Information**

Community Assistance for the Retarded and Handicapped, Inc. (C.A.R.H., Inc.) is offering partial camp scholarships of \$500 to applicants with developmental disabilities in Contra Costa County. Applications are available by calling 510-537-6611. They can also provide you with a list of camps which applicants must attend to qualify for the scholarships. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis. C.A.R.H., Inc. also offers cash grants to cover the cost of special medical and dental needs, equipment, and other items that **would not be available through conventional agencies**. Information can be obtained from their office.

### **Earned Income Tax Credit**

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a tax benefit for people who work. If you qualify, it will reduce your taxes. Even if you don't owe income tax, you can get the EITC. You may qualify if you were raising two or more children and earned less than \$34,458 (single person) or \$35,458 (married). If you were raising one child and earned less than \$30,338 (single) or \$31,338 (married); or, you had no children in your home in 2004 and earned less than \$11,490 (single) or \$12,490 (married) and were between 25 and 64 years old. If you have children you may also qualify for the Federal Child Tax Credit which provides up to \$1,00 for each dependent child under age 17. Call 800-358-8832 for more information.

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## RESOURCES (continued)

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### **New Positions Available**

As many of you know, due to budget shortfalls Contra Costa County will no longer be operating the George Miller Centers in Richmond and Concord. After an extensive Community Task Force process, Contra Costa ARC was asked to take responsibility for the operation of these services. The transition of services has gone smoothly thus far, and the Home-based and Center-Based Early Intervention services of the Miller Centers have now transitioned to operation by Contra Costa ARC.

**Contra Costa ARC is now hiring staff for the adult services at the Miller Centers. If you know of individuals you believe could be successful staff members working with adults who have developmental disabilities, please let them know that this hiring process is now underway.**

Interested individuals can learn about the available positions by visiting the ARC web site or calling:

**925-370-1818**

[www.contracostaarc.org](http://www.contracostaarc.org)

Your help in letting people know about these positions would be very much appreciated.

### **George Mark Children's House**

Providing compassionate, comprehensive and life-affirming care to children with life-limiting illnesses and their families, George Mark Children's House (GMCH) in San Leandro, CA is the first freestanding pediatric respite and end-of-life care facility in the United States. Modeled after similar facilities in England and Canada, many of which have been in place for more than two decades, GMCH provides an important addition to the continuum of care for children with life-limiting or terminal illnesses and their families in Northern California. The House offers respite support (round-the-clock), transitional care (between hospital and home) and end-of-life care. All care is informed by the principles of palliative care, focusing on quality of life.

The House features private family quarters that allow parents and siblings to stay together with a child, when care at home or in the hospital is no longer practical and/or desirable. An interdisciplinary team of specialists staffs the House: pediatric physicians, nurses, social workers, spiritual care counselors, therapists, and intensively trained volunteers. Extra effort is made to honor the individual needs and traditions of the culturally diverse families we serve. All services are accessible to medically eligible families, regardless of race, religion, national origin, availability of insurance, or the ability to pay. In addition, GMCH has a vendor relationship with Regional Centers.

For more information: [www.georgemark.org](http://www.georgemark.org)

George Mark Children's House, 2121 George Mark Lane, San Leandro, CA 94578

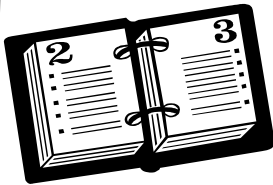
(510) 346-4624 Phone

(510) 346-4620 Fax

## FAMILY SUPPORT

- E** Drop-In Clinics on the IEP and IFSP are offered on the first and third Tuesday of the month from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. (noon). Please call first so we can determine if this will meet your needs and review with you what to bring to make this session productive for you.
- E** Make & Take Care Notebooks to help organize paperwork for parents of children with special health care needs are scheduled by request. Call Joan Crook at 925-313-0999 x 104.
- E** Padres Latinos is a group for Spanish-speaking parents that usually meets the first Saturday of the month at 2 p.m. The dates are April 2, May 7, June 4 and July 9. For information please call Angela Quiroga at 925-313-0999 x 105.
- E** Just for Fathers meets on the first Wednesday of the month in Martinez at 7:30 pm. The dates are April 6, and June 1. **They will hold their annual reunion picnic on Saturday, May 7.** Please call for more information.
- E** Support for Moms meets on the first and third Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm in Concord. The dates are April 7 (note: no group on 3rd Thursday); May 5 & 19, and June 2 & 16. Call Louise Schneiders, Family Support Coordinator, to discuss attending the group.

## CALENDAR 2005



**April 23:** Special Needs Trusts (repeats on May 28 and June 25), offered by the Dale Law Firm. Call 925-280-0172 to register.

**April 23:** Limited Conservatorships (repeats on May 28 and June 25), offered by the Dale Law Firm. Call 925-280-0172 to register.

**April 30:** Spring Summit: Everyone Matters, a conference for parents of children with special needs, child care providers, and the community. Contra Costa College, San Pablo. Sponsored by Contra Costa Child Care Council. Call 925-676-5442 for more information.

**May 21:** Spring Summit, a conference for parents of children with special needs, child care providers, and the community. Embassy Suites, Walnut Creek. Sponsored by Contra Costa Child Care Council. Call 925-676-5442 for more information.

Check out the Calendar on our web site for a more extensive listing of events.

### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- ★ Cheryl Clift
- ★ Carolyn Dodds
- ★ First 5 Contra Costa
- ★ Stephen Greenwell
- ★ Sonya Neely-Johnson
- ★ Diana Jorgensen
- ★ Barbara Maizie

# THANK YOU

- ★ Kathy Marshall
- ★ Evelyn O'Dell
- ★ Caroline & Celso Ortiz
- ★ Barbara Sheehy
- ★ Kim Shipley
- ★ Rocio Smith
- ★ Sharon White

**Youth Leadership Forum**

This year’s Youth Leadership Forum will taken place in Sacramento on July 24-28. The Forum is a five-day leadership program for high school students with disabilities. It is sponsored by the Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Students can apply to attend and there is no cost to those who are selected. Applications are on file in our office and are due on April 8.



*“The person who moves a mountain begins by carrying away small stones.”*

Chinese Proverb

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