

**MEDFORD SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEDFORD SEPAC NEWSLETTER**

March 2011

In this Issue...

[Disability Awareness Month](#)

[This Month in Medford](#)

[SEPAC Contacts](#)

[SEPAC Business Meetings](#)

[For Parents and Our Adult Children](#)

- Events
- Training Seminars
- Support Groups
- Research

[For Children under 18](#)

- Sports
- Student-to-Student
- Summer Camp

[Resources](#)

- Tutoring Services
- Medford Special Education School
- Special Education Guides & Information

March is National Developmental Disabilities Month

We would like to create awareness of developmental disabilities by sharing the following information with you.

What are developmental disabilities?

http://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/developmental_disabilities.cfm

Local Events

Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress 27th Annual Conference

Saturday, March 29 in Worcester For more info, call 800-664-6372 or visit

<http://www.mdsc.org/>

Down Syndrome Allen C. Crocker Speaker Series at Children's Hospital in Boston:

All events held from 6:30pm-8:30pm in Enders Auditorium at Children's Hospital in Boston. Dates & topics include:

April 26 on Mental Health and Down Syndrome

May 24 on Feeding and Swallowing

Contact Angela at 857-218-4329 or angela.lombardo@childrens.harvard.edu for more info.

Local Research Opportunities

Shriver Center Research Opportunities

The Shriver Center conducts an extensive program of research on the causes, treatment, and prevention of intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as understanding typical development. They are currently looking for children and adults with and without disabilities to participate in a variety of research programs.

To see a list of Shriver Center studies currently recruiting participants, with links to a description of each one, visit <http://www.umassmed.edu/shriver/recruit.aspx>

You may also call the Shriver Center Human Studies Office at 781-642-0047 or send email to shriver.recruit@umass.edu to get more information about studies that are currently recruiting participants.

This Month in Medford

March 15: Basic Rights & Coffee ~ Hosted by Medford SEPAC

Medford High School Library, 489 Winthrop Street from 6:30pm-7:30pm

Did you miss our Basic Rights workshop? We will cover the IEP special education process and share resources available to parents. RSVP to Kathy at 781-956-8770 by Friday, March 11.

March 15: McGlynn Middle School Open House Hosted by Jake Edwards, Principal

3002 Mystic Valley Parkway from 6:30pm-8:30pm

Features building tour, questions & answers with principal & teachers, and overview of

Features building team, questions & answers with principal & teachers, and overview of programs. Mary Finn, Medford SEPAC Co-Chair will be present as well.

March 29: Transition Fair “Getting Ready for Life After High School”

Medford High School Library, 489 Winthrop Street from 6:30pm-8:00pm

- For the student with special needs, life after high school requires planning.
- Join us to learn about supports & programs available to your student after high school. Over 12 agencies will be represented.
- Who should attend? All Parents/Guardians of students with IEPs and their student aged 14-21.
- Registration is required. Contact Lee at lcempe@medford.k12.ma.us or 781-393-2316 by Thurs, March 24.

Upcoming SEPAC Business Meetings

Medford SEPAC General Business Meeting: The purpose of a general meeting is to plan, review, & discuss SEPAC initiatives and to vote on agenda items that come before the board. Next meeting: March 15 7:30pm.

NEW LOCATION!!!! Medford High School Library at 489 Winthrop Street, Medford.

Contact Kathy Aluia at kaluia@comcast.net or 781-956-8770 for more information.

Have questions about Special Education? Contact us!

School Contacts for SEPAC Board Members

For Early Childhood,
Brooks Elementary,
Roberts Elementary,
Curtis-Tufts,
Medford High School, &
Medford Vocational School

Contact: Kathy Aluia at kaluia@comcast.net or 781-956-8770

McGlynn Middle School,
Medford High School,
Medford Vocational School, &
Out-of-District Students (Privately placed by parents or district)

Contact: Mary Finn at maryfinn@comcast.net or 781-391-2353

McGlynn Elementary

Contact: Kathie Hunt at kevinjhunt@aol.com or 781-391-6148

Andrews Middle School & Columbus Elementary

Contact: Jen Maunsell at falcomaunsell@yahoo.com or 339-221-2002

Columbus Elementary

Contact: Kelly Tello at kellytello@comcast.net

For Parents/Guardians & Adult Children

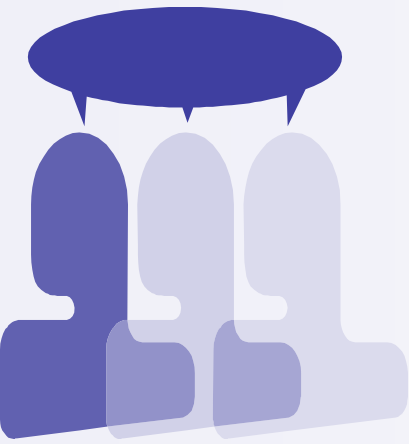
For Parents of Children in Early Childhood ~ Medford now has a support group for parents of young children having special needs titled “Similar Differences”:

For more information or to register, contact Marie Cassidy, Medford Family Network Coordinator, at 781-393-2106.

Life Quest: The Journey to Adulthood: Northeast ARC, 6 Southside Road, Danvers
All events held from 6:30pm-8:30pm. Cost of each workshop is \$5. Dates & topics:

March 8 Options: Work or College

April 12 Stand Up for Yourself! Self-Advocacy



Parent-to-Parent...

Reminders!!!!

It's time to apply to Summer Programs!

Plan for Next Year Now

Thinking about your child's program for next year?

If not, you should be. Planning for any transition in your child's life takes preparation. The transition from one academic year to the next is no different. Consider these things...

- Speak to your child's current teacher. Knowing what your child's needs are now, what does he/she suggest your child's placement focus on for next year.
- Schedule classroom observations through your ETL. You want to visualize your child in the setting, so you can speak to what your child's specific needs

- ...may be.
- Meet with the IEP team.
- Invite next year's teacher to your IEP meeting.
- Work with the IEP team to prioritize the list of accommodations/supports. These lists can cover an entire page on an IEP or 504. Think about what really works for your child and write a note to next year's teacher highlighting what works for your child. Note: As your child goes through developmental stages, you may find that what works for your child changes over time.

Are you any one of the following?

- 1) New to Special Education**
- 2) Been through the basic IEP process, but don't know where to look to learn more about special education information or resources**

Medford SEPAC held it's Annual Basic Rights meeting on Feb 10, 2011.

What we have learned was that not everyone who wanted to attend was able to make that date.

As a result, we will be holding a monthly "Basic Rights & Coffee" session in March, April and May.

We will review the IEP process and have resources on-hand to share with you.

April 12 Stand Up for Yourself: Self Advocacy

May 10 Financial Planning for Every Stage

June 14 Hear it from Others!

Contact Aymee at 978-624-2381 or Nicole at 978-624-2380

March 10 "Aspergers: The Big Picture" Hosted by Cambridge SEPAC with presenters from the Aspergers Association of New England from 6:30pm-8:30pm Citywide Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge. Contact Rosalie at 617-593-4402

March 12 "2011 Annual Conference of Federation for Children with Special Needs" World Trade Center Boston from 7:30am-5:00pm Visit www.fcsn.org.

March 15 "What Makes your Child Tick? Understanding how Sensory Input Impacts Your Child's Behaviors" from 6:30pm-8:30pm Central Middlesex Family Support Center, 100 Sylvan Road, Suite G-800 Registration required. Contact Jackie at 781-686-4527 or jforte@riversidecc.org

March 18 & 19 "Success After High School Conference for College Bound Students with AS" Hosted by AANE Asperger Academy for High School Educators and College Personnel, UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center from 8:30am-3:30pm. For info, visit http://aane.org/upcoming_events/Asperger_Academy.html

March 19 ~ Workshop or WEBINAR: "Real Homes, Real Solutions: Establishing homes for Family Members with a Disability" by Special Needs Practice Group Location: Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Marlboro from 8:30am-1:00pm Cost is \$50 for attendance or webinar connection. Contact Melissa at 508-459-8207

Therapro, Inc Seminar Series: Seminars are free and held from 9am-11am Location: 225 Arlington St, Framingham, MA Register at info@therapro.com

Mar 20 "S'Cool Moves for Learning" Speaker: Debra Wilson (Note: Held on Sunday from 10am-12noon)

April 2 "Praxis Makes Perfect: Strategies for Improving Motor Performance" Speaker: Teresa May Benson

March 26 at 10:30am "Lindamood-Bell's Open House", 4 Water Street, Arlington Learn about their reading, comprehension and math programs. There will be presentations, refreshments, activities for children and a chance to observe students in a session. Space is limited, so registration is required. RSVP by calling 781-643-4567.

March 29 ~ WEBINAR: How do I Obtain Peace of Mind and Create Financial Security for a Family Member with a Disability? A PLAN for the future.

By Cambridge Appleton Trust, Plan of Mass, Inc, and Fletcher, Tilton & Whipple Held from 12pm-1:15pm Registration is required. To receive a link to the webinar, email planofmawebinar@gmail.com

March 31 Language-Based Learning Disabilities Hosted by Cambridge SEPAC Peabody School, 70 Rindge Avenue, Cambridge from 6:30pm-8:30pm Will cover problems with age-appropriate reading, spelling and/or writing and interventions. Speakers: Keryn Kwedor of Landmark High School Contact Rosalie at 617-593-4402

April 1 & 2 "Planning a Life~ Making the Most out of High School": This two day conference in Springfield is hosted annually by the Federation for Children with Special Needs. The program offers transition planning information to include: vision development, self-advocacy issues, how to develop individualized transition goals, housing postsecondary education, employment options and more. For more info, contact Terri McLaughlin at 617-236-7210 ext 336 or tmclaugh@fcsn.org. Registration is necessary and there is a fee of \$100 per person or \$150 per family. Space is limited, so register early.

Transition to Adult Services Workshop Series ~ By ARC Family Resource Center Malden High School, Cafeteria, 77 Salem Street, Malden

Join us! Our first session will be March 15 in the Medford High School library.

Please note: Registration is required. Copying costs money. Call 781-956-8770 to register now.

April 6 "Working with your School System"

April 13 "Adult Services-What, How and When?"

Registration is required. Cost is \$10 for the series.

Contact Michelle at 781-942-4888 ext 4018 to register.

April 9 Lesley University's Focus on Autism Spectrum Disorders Speakers

Series: "Understanding the Role of Stress and Anxiety in Social Competence"

Located at University Hall, 1815 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA

Speakers: Dr Karen Levine, Dr. Matthew Goodwin, Dr. Laurence Hirschberg, Dr. Elsa Abele and Nomi Kaim Registration is required, cost is \$75 and PDPs are available.

Contact Elizabeth at 617-349-8206

OTA Wakefield Information Sessions: Free for OTA Wakefield families. A \$20 fee for all others. Location: 607 North Avenue #14, Wakefield, MA

Call 781-245-4446 ext 20 to register or email sessions@otawakefield.com.

April 12 "Social Skills Group Information Session"

May 4 "Incorporating Sensory Strategies within the Home and Community"

June 8 "Using Pictures to Increase Receptive Language Skills"

For Children (In Medford & Local Cities)

Mary Poppins: The Boston Opera House, 539 Washington Street, Boston, MA

Audio Described: Sat, March 12 at 2pm

ASL Interpreted: Sun, March 13 at 1pm

To purchase accessible tickets, in person at Boston Colonial Theatre Box Office, 106 Boylston Street, Boston from Mon -Sat 10am-6pm; by phone at 617-880-2419 (The Colonial's TTY number is 617-426-3444); or by email at ADABoston@BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com. Program is supported by VSA Massachusetts.

Snow Shoe/Hike at the Fells in Winchester By Outdoor Explorations

Trip cost is \$10. Contact Valerie at 781-395-4999 For more info, visit www.outdoorexplorations.org

EMARC Teen Sibling Group (Ages 13-19): EMARC coordinates a support group for teens who have a brother or sister with special needs. Group meets every other Wednesday at the West Medford Community Center. Full and partial scholarships are available to cover the fee of \$5 per night (includes dinner). For registration and information, contact Chenine Peloquin at 781-942-4888 ext4036 or Rec@themark.org.

For Children with Down Syndrome aged 16-21: Team Up for Fitness (TUFF) is a research project which aims to test the effectiveness of a YMCA-based exercise program TUFF is being conducted by researchers at UMMS/E.K. Shriver Center and is funded by the National Institute of Health. The exercise program will take place at the Waltham Family YMCA starting in February 2011. For more details, contact Heidi Stanish at 781-642-0292 or shriv-health@umassmed.edu.

Kartwheels in Motion Recreational Swimming: Located at Waltham/Boston Sports Club off Winter Street, Waltham, MA from 6:30pm-7:30pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. While this is not an instructional program, it provides children with disabilities the opportunity to enjoy some recreation and practice social skills. Students are matched with a swim buddy, so it is one-to-one who is typically a high school student fulfilling community hours. For more info, contact Jeannie Watson at 781-893-6516.

Universal Access to Winter Sports and Events: For adaptive skating, sled skating, outdoor recreational opportunities and more, visit http://www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_access/a_events.htm.

TopSoccer Indoor Soccer (Open to Medford residents also): The Somerville Recreation Departments Indoor Soccer Program starting on Saturday January 15th - February 19th from 1pm - 2pm at Somerville High School Gym located on Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA. The program consists of instructional soccer, drills and scrimmages. This program is FREE for TopSoccer players. For more information, contact John at jteves@rcn.com

Coming Soon! TopHockey: Interested? Contact John at jteves@rcn.com.

Power Kids Summer Program: Summer enrichment program for children ages 6-11 during the month of July. Located

Power Kids Summer Program: Summer enrichment program for children ages 6-11 during the month of July. Located at St. Joseph's School, 132 High Street, Medford the program runs from 9am-3pm w/morning and extended day options. Contact Michael Coates, Program Director, for more info at trustedtutors2@yahoo.com or 781-507-0144. Visit <http://www.trustedtutors.net/summerProgram.html>.

Educational Resources

Trusted Tutors is an academic tutoring service that provides one-on-one remedial and/or enrichment instruction by highly motivated, professional staff. It has a network of over 100 local educators. Visit www.trustedtutors.net for more info or contact Michael Coates, Director & Founder at trustedtutors2@yahoo.com or 781-507-0144.

Special Education in Medford Public Schools:

For contact listing, service information, 504 or Title II resources?

Site link: <http://www.medfordpublicschools.org/departments-programs/special-education-pupil-services/>

List of National and State organizations & government agency websites:

Link: <http://www.medfordpublicschools.org/departments-programs/special-education-pupil-services/links/>

Looking for information on MCAS?

Overview of MCAS: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/overview.html?faq=8>

“A Parents Guide to Special Education”: Written in collaboration between the Federation of Children with Special Needs and the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Link: <http://www.fcsn.org/parentguide/pguide1.html>

Federation for Children with Special Needs: Offers training, resources and information to families and individual with special needs. The Parent Training Center has trained consultants who will respond to questions specific to your child's issues and information about educational advocates. Phone 617-236-7210 or visit www.fcsn.org

Consumer Empowerment Funds: Reimburses expenses for training of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Prior approval is necessary. Call or visit website for contacts, program guidelines and application.

Phone: 617-770-7676 or visit www.mass.gov/mddc/cefp/index.htm

Tuesday Vision Clinic for Students with Special Needs: Cotting School, 453 Concord Avenue, Lexington, MA Does your child have a physical, communication or learning disability? If so, the Cotting School invites your student to receive a fully funded vision assessment; voucher for eyewear, and transportation provided by the Cotting School for each student. Call Dr. Nancy Carlson on a Tuesday for an appointment at 781-862-7323 extension 136. This service is made possible through the John Alden Trust Fund and the New England Eye Institute and New England College of Optometry.

Get Help with Universal Home Design: HomeFreeHome, Inc., provides free and low cost architectural design services to people with permanent disabilities who need to remove barriers and open up access in their homes. To apply for these services, fill out the questionnaire on HomeFreeHome's website at www.homefreehome.org. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated for feasibility of your proposed project and (if you are selected), assign a local volunteer architect.

Executive Function Skill Development with Sarah Ward M.S., CCC/SLP:

Registration is open for spring workshops.

For info, visit www.executivefunctiontherapy.com

The Kindle Center located in Burlington, MA provides behavioral services and parent workshops to families with children diagnosed with ASD and related disabilities.

See website at www.kindlebehavior.com

Become a Special Education Surrogate Parent: SESRP (Special Education Surrogate Parent Program) is seeking

Become a Special Education Surrogate Parent: SESPP (Special Education Surrogate Parent Program) is seeking volunteers to provide a voice for children who don't have a parent to speak for them in the special education process. Volunteers will attend a training session in which special education laws and regulations, the IEP process, and the role of the Special Education Surrogate Parent will be reviewed. For more info, call 508-792-7679, email sespp@earthlink.net or visit www.sespprogram.org.

To request that an event be posted, contact kaluia@comcast.net.
Posting requests are subject to review of the SEPAC Board.

