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COCAF News

Important News in This Edition!

Go to page 5 for a great 2-day workshop to help you get on the right track advocating for your family.

A new section, COCAF Advocacy Actions, starts on page 6 and will keep you informed of the types of things COCAF is doing to make life a little better for adoptive families. If you have any ideas for information to add to our newsletter or website (www.cocaf.org), please be sure to email us and let us know. Send your emails to colleen.tarket@cocaf.org.

Start the New Year Right

I'm not sure exactly how to start the New Year off right, but I do know how not to start it from experience. So I thought I'd share a few "don't try this at home" experiences:

- Never try to update the old adage "If someone told you to jump off a cliff" by asking your child "If someone told you to roll in dog mess..." because they just might do it. It's not a pretty sight and the smell lingers for weeks.
- Never offer up two normal and one ridiculous option to your child thinking that they'll see the wisdom in choosing one of the normal options, because they won't. They'll always go with the ridiculous option and you'll be stuck going to Great Aunt Betsy's memorial service with your child wearing Spider-man underwear on his head.
- Never leave your child unattended with a tub of chocolate frosting. While you might think that the worst thing that can happen is your child eating the frosting, it's not. Try cleaning frosting out of your dog's ear; not a good experience for you or the dog.
- Understand that since the invention of markers that only work on specific paper, most children have not been taught to write only on paper. This means that your children's friends may redecorate your walls and your child with the Sharpie® you inadvertently left laying on the table. This always happens the day before school picture day, the class play, or a visit from grandparents.
- Never resolve not to over-react to the things your kids do, because as soon as you do, one of the things above (or something similar) will happen, and while calmness might be a virtue, being able to rant and rave (to yourself, not your kids) will be what gets you through to the next accident waiting to happen. So resolve to laugh, love, and live and have a happy New Year!

Colleen Tarket, COCAF Development Director
Colleen.tarket@cocaf.org

Three Ways to Help COCAF

COCAF now has three simple ways you can donate:

1. Go to <http://www.cocaf.org> and click on the Donate Now button on the upper right corner of the screen.
2. Go to the Facebook causes website at <http://apps.facebook.com/causes/419195> and click on the green DONATE button.
3. If you don't want to donate online, just mail your check to:

COCAF
5702 West 114th Place
Westminster, CO 80020-6831

COCAF provides critical support to adoptive families in crisis, as well as providing information for adoptive families through both our monthly newsletter and the COCAF website. And we do all this at no cost to our families. Please help us continue providing our services by donating today.

COCAF Services

If you are in need of COCAF's services or just want to pass on some information, you may email Deborah Cave, Executive Director, at deborah.cave@cocaf.org.

COCAF Newsletter

If you have items you think would be appropriate for the COCAF newsletter, please forward those items to colleen.tarket@cocaf.org by the 20th of the month for consideration for the next month.

COCAF Upcoming Events

Find Your Voice: Tackling Challenges Facing Adoptive, Foster, and Kinship Families

Presented by NACAC Community Champions Network (CCN), COCAF, & COPARC
Friday, February 19, **and** Saturday, February 20, 2010, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Daniels Fund, 101 Monroe St., Denver, CO 80206, rooms 126 & 127

This 2-day training workshop is designed for parents, social workers, and other community providers working with adoptive families. Topics will include:

Day 1:

- Colorado's Adoption Landscape and Needs
- Adoption Subsidies
- When Residential Treatment is Needed
- Educational Advocacy
- Supporting Families through Crisis

Day 2:

- Supporting Families through Expected Challenges
- Fundamentals of Case and Class Advocacy Action
- Media Advocacy
- Post-Adopt Resources: Current and Envisioned
- Parents and Professionals as Partners
- Strategic Planning

Cost: \$20 fee (those who attend will be refunded the fee)

For further information and to register: Tanya Hammar at 1-800-451-5246 or by email at tanya@adoptex.org.

COCAF Advocacy Actions

This new section will provide information on topics that COCAF is supporting nationally, statewide, and locally.

CHIP Amendment (#2790)

In December, COCAF joined other organizations in supporting Senator Robert Casey's Amendment #2790 to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (H.R. 3590).

This amendment builds on the provisions of the underlying bill, continuing to protect and improve the country's successful Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and ensuring that no child ends up worse off as a result of health reform.

America's children have a lot at stake in health reform. More than 8 million children remain uninsured, and more are losing employer-sponsored coverage daily. Families are just one playground accident away from medical bankruptcy. Each day a child is uninsured is a lost opportunity to strengthen our next generation, America's future. Senator Casey's amendment goes a long way toward protecting and improving coverage for millions of children in low-income working families across the nation by:

- Providing full funding for CHIP through 2019;
- Maintaining current CHIP eligibility through 2013, and setting a floor for income eligibility for children in all states at 250 percent of poverty (\$55,125 for a family of four) beginning in 2014;
- Streamlining enrollment procedures making it easier for children to get coverage and keep it;
- Ensuring that coverage for children remains affordable;
- Guaranteeing all children in CHIP the comprehensive care they need from head to toe; and
- Requiring an HHS report in 2016 that will compare coverage for children in CHIP with coverage for children in the new Health Insurance Exchange and if coverage (including benefits, cost-sharing, premiums, and other features) is comparable or better, children can be transitioned from CHIP into the Exchange in 2019.

Public Forum for the Child Welfare Action Committee

COCAF Board of Directors President, Frank Bennett, PhD, spoke at the Public Forum for the Child Welfare Action Committee about the need for a better supervisory system for state child welfare services. One example Frank gave was the continuing problem of counties trying to reduce adoption assistance for children eligible for Title IV-E services.

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Lloyd Malone, the Director of the Division of Child Welfare, has offered to assist families if their county is attempting to reduce adoption assistance for Title IV-E eligible children without the parents' permission. Any adoptive family currently facing subsidy cuts should contact Deborah Cave, COCAF Executive Director, at 303-562-9864. ext. 2, to see if your case should be brought to Mr. Malone's attention. You may also call Mr. Malone directly at 303-866-4365.

Adoption/Kinship/Foster Information

Subsidy Cuts

Lloyd Malone, the Director of the Division of Child Welfare, has to offered assist families if their county is attempting to reduce adoption assistance for Title IV-E eligible children without the parents' permission. Any adoptive family currently facing subsidy cuts should contact Deborah Cave, COCAF Executive Director, at 303-562-9864. ext. 2, to see if your case should be brought to Mr. Malone's attention. You may also call Mr. Malone directly at 303-866-4365.

Indiana DCS Sued Again Over Cuts in Subsidies

Subsidy issues are not unique to Colorado. See this article on issues in Indiana: <http://www.indystar.com/article/20091224/NEWS/912240410/1001/NEWS>.

Website for Adopted Teens

Teenadoptees was created by and for adopted teens. This internet community is a place for adopted teens to talk with one another, share ideas, give advice, connect, and have fun. Visit the website at <http://teenadoptees.com/>.

State Statutes: Access to Adoption Records

In nearly all states, adoption records are sealed and withheld from public inspection after an adoption is finalized. This State Statutes publication outlines procedures that most states have that allow parties to an adoption to obtain, from an adoption record, nonidentifying and identifying information about an adopted person, and the adopted person's birth relatives. It provides definitions of nonidentifying and identifying information, an overview of who may access such information, and information about access to original birth certificates. For more information, go to:

www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/infoaccessap.cfm

Adoption Alliance Support Group: Adoption In Schools

Tuesday, January 19, 2010, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Adoption Alliance, 2121 S. Oneida St. Ste. 420, Denver, CO 80224
(303) 584-9900

Adoption Alliance hosts a monthly support group for all adoptive families. This month's topic is Adoption in Schools. It will be a great place to interact with other families and adoption professionals. Bring your questions, your challenges, and your proud moments. Child care will be provided as space allows.

An RSVP is required because seating is limited; email info@adoptall.org or call 303-584-9900 ext. 10.

Conferences

2010 Budget Works Conference

Presented by The Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute (COFPI)
Friday, January 8, 2010

The upcoming budget cycle is poised to be one of the most challenging in decades. Prepare yourself with information through an informative program of budget experts, workshops, and panel discussions. Mark your calendars for the 2010 Budget Works Conference.

Stay tuned for more details about location, time, and registration information. For more information, please contact [Mark Neuman-Lee](#) or go to www.cclponline.org

2010 Conference on Inclusive Education

Presented by PEAK Parent Center
Hyatt Regency Denver Tech Center, Denver, Colorado
Thursday-Saturday, February 11-13, 2010

This highly engaging conference will provide families, educators, professionals, and other community members with new possibilities for students with disabilities:

- Learn practical strategies for supporting and including students with disabilities in general education classrooms, schools, and communities
- Develop your parental advocacy skills and learn ways to empower your child
- Improve results for students with IEPs
- Energize your teaching practices

Conference topics include:

- Accommodations and Modifications
- Advocacy
- Differentiated Instruction
- Dropout Prevention
- Early Childhood
- Homework Strategies
- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- Legal Issues
- Peer Supports
- Post-Secondary Inclusion
- Progress Monitoring
- Reading and Literacy
- Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Restraints and Seclusion
- Transition

[Click here](#) to sign up for PEAK's mailing list and be sure you are notified when the 2010 brochure is available. Email conference@peakparent.org with any questions.

Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conference

Thursday, February 25- Saturday, February 27, 2010
Colorado Springs, CO

The Exceptional Student Leadership Unit and Early Childhood Initiatives Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences are family-centered conferences designed to offer support, information, and education to parents and professionals. PEP promotes the partnerships that are essential in supporting and including children with disabilities and their families in all aspects of the school and community.

These conferences are available to persons residing in Colorado who have a child with a disability, ages birth to 21. Administrators, principals, teachers, medical, and other service providers interested in the Family-Professional Partnership are invited to participate in a PEP Conference.

The 2 ½ days PEP Conference begins Thursday evening, at 5:00 p.m. and continues through Saturday afternoon, until 3:00 p.m. The Colorado Department of Education pays for all participant meals (excluding Friday evening) and lodging. Child care and meals for family members are not provided. With these provisions, we hope to provide the opportunity of the PEP experience to all interested families.

The purpose of this conference is to bring parents and other professionals together, allowing them an opportunity to share ideas, discuss concerns, celebrate successes, and obtain information relating to parenting, educating, and supporting a child with a disability.

Large group session activities include:

- Parenting a Child with a Disability and Rebuilding Dreams
- The Law and the Education of Children with Disabilities
- Early Childhood - Resources and Supports
- The Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Transition IEP

Small group session activities include:

- Advocacy
- Friendships
- Men Only
- Questions for Your Doctor
- Positive Behavior Supports

We strongly encourage that both parents participate in the conference. Single parents are encouraged to attend and may bring a support person who will also participate in the conference. This conference is designed to be of greater value to parents/professionals

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who attend the entire conference. All topics of discussion flow together from beginning session to the end of the conference. No one can be accepted on a part-time basis. Dress is casual.

For more information about PEP, please go to PEP's [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#).

Application Options:

[Apply Online](#)

[Printable Application](#) (PDF) (To be faxed or mailed)

[Protected Application Form in MS Word](#)

(Please save a copy of this form to your computer, fill in form fields, save again and email to keck_k@cde.state.co.us)

For more information about Parents Encouraging Parents contact:

CDE-ESLU-PEP

1560 Broadway, Suite 1175

Denver, CO 80202

Phone: (303) 866-6846

Fax: (303) 866-6767

2010 Colorado Special Education Legal Conference

April 12, 2010

Denver, CO

Registration will open in mid-February. More information will follow.

Tuning Up Your Skills: Improving Services to Children and Families

22nd Annual Colorado Child and Adolescent Mental Health Coalition Conference

Friday, April 16, 2010

University of Phoenix, Lone Tree, CO

The Colorado Child and Adolescent Mental Health Coalition conference is in the planning stages. More information will follow. If you are interested in participating, email cgtjoe@integra.net.

Spotlight on Healing: Creating Healing Families & Resolving Childhood Trauma

Presented by Colorado Post-Adoption Resource Center (COPARC)
Saturday, May 8, 2010, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Aurora, CO

Keynote speaker will be Juli Alvarado. More information to come.

2010 NAMI National Convention

Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C.
Wednesday-Saturday, June 30-July 3, 2010

What better place to celebrate the Fourth of July than in our nation's capital! Washington's celebration of Independence Day, known locally as A Capitol Fourth, opens with day-long performances on the National Mall by some of the country's top musicians and ends with a spectacular fireworks display over the Washington Monument accompanied by a live performance by the National Symphony Orchestra. And, it's all free! (The line-up of performers hasn't been announced yet but we'll share it with you as soon as it is.)

The NAMI National Convention is the annual gathering of some 2,500 mental health activists and advocates from all over the U.S. and several foreign countries. Our attendees include:

- Individuals who have a mental illness
- Family members of individuals with mental illness
- Health and social policymakers from both the public and private sectors
- Treatment professionals, including psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed counselors, nurses, and social workers. (CEUs are available for nurses, social workers, and licensed counselors.)

Attendees have one overarching reason for attending the NAMI National Convention: Improving the lives of people who live with mental illnesses and the lives of the people who love and care for them. Most attendees are responsible for securing or recommending mental health services, products, and information for themselves, loved ones, clients, and patients diagnosed with serious mental illnesses. This conference will help participants learn about the latest information, treatment options, coping strategies, support services, health and wellness information and activities, and legal and financial advice.

NACAC 2010 Conference in New England

Hartford, Connecticut

Wednesday-Saturday, August 4 - 7, 2010

The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) annual conference is for adoptive parents, foster parents, adoption workers, adoptees, kinship care providers, child welfare administrators, and other members of the adoption and foster care community.

The NACAC conference will feature close to 75 workshops by expert professionals and parents addressing a wide variety of topics, including:

- Parenting children with challenges
- Race, culture, and diversity
- Therapeutic techniques
- Agency management
- International adoption
- Search/open adoption
- Post-adoption services

To put your name on a list to receive a conference announcement in January 2010, please contact NACAC at info@nacac.org or 651-644-3036.

To learn more, visit www.nacac.org.

Children with Disabilities Information

Online Portal Helps Children With Autism

A series of free online computer games designed for children with autism has been created by a group of final year multimedia students from Swinburne University, in collaboration with Bulleen Heights Autism School and the National eTherapy Centre.

WhizKid Games is an online portal that aims to help autistic children develop their independent living skills, focusing on areas such as coping with change, recognizing emotions and non-verbal communication.

It includes 16 therapeutic games themed around everyday activities such as getting dressed, going to school, and following a schedule.

In developing WhizKid Games, students were given expert advice by researchers from the Swinburne Autism Bio-Research Initiative (SABRI) and teachers from Bulleen Heights Autism School (all in Australia). According to SABRI director, Associate Professor David Austin, the games will provide a real benefit for children with moderate to severe autism.

The games portal can be accessed at: www.whizkidgames.com. The site for parents and teachers can be accessed at www.autismgames.com.au.

Please note that Australian “English” and American “English” don’t always use the same terminology, so the words used to describe some things in the games will not be familiar. The accompanying pictures, however, make knowing the terminology unimportant.

KEJI College Fair

Tuesday, April 27, 2010, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Rotunda (S100), Community College of Aurora
16000 East CentreTech Parkway, Aurora, CO 80011-9036

The KEJI College Fair inspires students who carry handicap labels, are on IEPs or 504s, and/or are struggling in school to successfully pursue post secondary education.

For further information or to participate as a vendor/higher learning institution representative, please contact Robin Bruce by phone at 303-751-3033 or by email at forkeji@pgdworks.org.

Medical Health Information

The following list of Colorado resources were provided to us by State Rep. Sue Schafer, sue.schafer.house@state.co.us or 303-866-5522.

Colorado PEAK is a self-service website that allows individuals to see if they may be eligible for food assistance, Colorado Works, Medicaid, or the Child Health Plan. Prospective clients can anonymously answer some basic questions to find out if they may be eligible. <http://www.colorado.gov/benefits/>

Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) keeps Colorado kids healthy by offering low-cost health insurance for Colorado's uninsured children and pregnant women who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but cannot afford private health insurance. <http://www.cchp.org/>

Colorado Medicaid is public health insurance for families, children, pregnant women, persons with disabilities, and the elderly for Colorado residents. <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/HCPF/HCPF/1197969485591>

Colorado Indigent Care Program can help pay your medical expenses if you make less than 250% of the federal poverty level and are ineligible for Medicaid. Enroll at your local hospital or clinic. <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/HCPF/HCPF/1214299805914>

Senior Health Care Assistance helps people enrolled in Medicare with questions about health insurance. <http://www.dora.state.co.us/insurance/senior/senior.htm>

COLORADO 2-1-1 is a free and confidential service to help you find health and human services in your community. Dial 2-1-1 or 1-888-217-1215. <http://wc211.mesacounty.us/index.cfm>

The Colorado Rural Health Center offers programs and services to ensure that rural communities have access to adequate health care. <http://www.coruralhealth.org/>

The Grand County Rural Health Network enhances and expands health care services for residents and visitors to Grand County with affordable programs for low-income patients. <http://www.gcruralhealth.com/Default.aspx>

The St. Mary's Hospital Foundation gives care to everyone who enters its doors. <http://www.stmarygj.org/body.cfm?id=18>

Denver Health offers access to high quality health care, whether for prevention, acute and chronic diseases, or emergency care regardless of ability to pay. <http://denverhealth.org/portal/Default.aspx>

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Metro Community Provider Network provides excellent health-related services focusing on the underserved. <http://www.mcpn.com/>

Peak Vista Community Health Center provides primary care services to low-income, uninsured, and underinsured working families, as well as others with access barriers, within the Pikes Peak region. <http://www.peakvista.org/>

Rocky Mountain Youth Clinics is dedicated to providing accessible, affordable, high-quality healthcare to children and adolescents, regardless of insurance status or the family's ability to pay. <http://www.rockymountainyouth.org/index.php?s=whatwedo>

9 Health Fair is Colorado's largest volunteer-driven, non-profit health fair program and serves 100,000 people at 170 locations across the state each year. Go to a 9Health Fair near you this spring. <http://www.9healthfair.org/>

Resources

Adoption Support Groups

For a list of adoption support groups across the state of Colorado, go to http://www.adoptex.org/site/PageServer?pagename=adoption_post_coparc_supportgroups

P2P on Facebook

Parent to Parent (P2P) is now on Facebook. Listservs are open to parents only, but the Facebook group is a place where parents and professionals can gather together in community to discuss, share, and support one another.

Join today and spread the word to your therapists, teachers, caseworkers, and medical professionals. Go to:

<http://www.facebook.com/inbox/?tid=1266596195413#/group.php?gid=53778993386>

Training Opportunities

Adoption Core I

Presented by the Adoption Alliance
Saturday, January 9, 2010, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
2121 S. Oneida St. Ste. 420, Denver, CO 80224

This class is intended to educate those considering adoption. Topics include:

- Adoption as a lifelong process as it pertains to all parties of the adoption
- How children become available for adoption and expectations of the process
- Loss/gain in the adoption triad
- Child's history, possible inaccuracies
- Discussing adoption with the child
- Discussing adoption with others
- Effects of drug/alcohol exposure and strategies for coping
- Adoption terminology.

For more information: Email info@adoptall.org or call 303-584-9900, ext. 10. An RSVP is required because seating is limited.

Transracial Parenting

Presented by the Adoption Alliance
Tuesday, January 12, 2010, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
2121 S. Oneida St. Ste. 420, Denver, CO 80224

This interactive workshop will provide information and discussion about:

- Racism
- Transracial parenting
- Becoming a transracial family

For more information: Email info@adoptall.org or call 303-584-9900, ext. 10. An RSVP is required because seating is limited.

Sirius Kids' Connection

Saturday, January 23, 2010, 10:00 a.m.
Colorado Springs

Sirius Kids' is an 8-week program designed to develop social skills and build self-confidence in children on the autism spectrum using the family dog in a specially tailored basic dog training program. The goal is to involve the whole family in a positive and meaningful common goal.

Topics include:

- Leadership and what makes a good leader
- Positive reinforcement and how do we use it to get what we want
- Understanding differences in each other
- How to adapt what we're doing to meet our goals

Kids develop social skills and self-confidence while the parents come away with additional behavior modification tools.

Cost: \$200.00. Families who have financial limitations can apply to work out a payment plan or assist with fundraising and volunteering.

For more information or to register: Email lyakish@netzero.net; call 719-227-1874; or go to www.siriuskidsconnection.com.

Experienced Adoptive Parents Panel

Presented by the Adoption Alliance
Tuesday, January 26, 2010, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
2121 S. Oneida St. Ste. 420, Denver, CO 80224

This class will have a panel of adoptive parents discussing these topics:

- Parenting a child of a different culture
- Discipline & boundary setting
- Loss and grief
- Attachment
- Effects of trauma & parenting a child with a history of abuse and neglect
- Child development

For more information: Email info@adoptall.org or call 303-584-9900, ext. 10. An RSVP is required because seating is limited.

Do I Belong Here? Parenting Children Who Have Been Adopted Transracially

Presented by The Adoption Exchange/COPARC

Michele D. Hanna, Trainer

Thursday, January 28 2010, 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Adams County DHS, 7401 Broadway, Denver, CO 80221

Topics include:

- Talking with your children about the issues that arise from transracial adoption
- Giving your child coping strategies to deal with the outside world
- Advocating for your children when problems arise

Michele D. Hanna is an Assistant Professor for The DU School of Social Work with a special emphasis on child welfare and adoption.

Cost: Class fee is \$5.00. Fee is waived for parents who have finalized adoptions through the child welfare system, and registration preference will be given to these families.

For further information: Tanya Hammar at 1-800-451-5246 or by email at tanya@adoptex.org.

To register: Go to www.adoptex.org.

Taking Charge

Presented by PEAK Parent Center's Person-Centered Planning
Friday and Saturday, January 29 and 30, 2010 (first sessions) – Saturday, June 12, 2010
Denver, CO

Taking Charge supports young adults with disabilities with planning and taking action steps to move on with their lives in positive ways, including greater inclusion in the community, living in a place they choose, college, jobs, and volunteer opportunities. The target audience for Taking Charge is young adults with disabilities who are between the ages of 21 and 30 years old.

There will be a total of 5 sessions between January and June; four sessions will occur on a Friday and Saturday with overnight hotel accommodations provided; the fifth and final session will be on Saturday only, June 12th. Mileage stipends may be available for those living outside the metro Denver area.

Twelve applicants will be selected to participate in Taking Charge and each of them can invite 2 or 3 additional people (family friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc.) to participate in the sessions with them.

For more information: Contact Beth Schaffner at (719) 531-9400, ext. 117 or at 800- 284-0251.

Learning for Living: Friendship Series

Presented by The Arc of Arapahoe & Douglas

Thursdays, February 4 – March 11, 2010, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Cynde Vaughn, trainer

Compass Bank Building, 8100 E Arapahoe Rd, #208, Centennial CO 80112

This course will assist teenagers and adults with cognitive developmental disabilities who want to learn about relationships. Topics include:

- Session 1: Introduction—class overview, identifying personal and class goals, set up personal workbooks
- Session 2: Identifying Relationship—friends, acquaintances, and strangers, community helpers, “trusted friend” or “safe person,” characteristics of a friendship
- Session 3: Successful Interaction Skills—developing self-esteem, developing self confidence
- Session 4: Communication Skills—body language, saying “no,” respecting others choices
- Session 5: Developing Successful Relationships—what is friendship, being a good friend, boundaries
- Session 6: Protecting Yourself—setting limits, identifying exploitation, “safe person” or trusted friend

The course begins with introductions and class overviews for parents/ guardians and participants. Each participant will develop a personal portfolio with pictures and notes to help them understand and retain the information. Video, pictures, and role playing will be used extensively.

Cynde Vaughn, workshop leader/facilitator, has of experience working with people with cognitive developmental disabilities. With a Master's in Social Work, she has held a variety of positions to include Social Services Director, Q.M.R.P., Area Administrator, and Support/Senior Support Manager. She grew up with a younger brother with multiple sensory and developmental disabilities, and is the parent of two children with disabilities. She researched, developed, and implemented a comprehensive social/sexual/safety awareness training curriculum utilizing nationally recognized training techniques and materials.

Cost: \$60.00; includes snacks and course materials. Scholarships may be available. Call for details.

To register: Call Pam at 303-220-9228 or email at pam@arc-ad.org.

Mobilizing Families

Presented by ARC in Jefferson County
Thursdays, February 18 – April 15, 2010

When a child is first diagnosed with a disability, families are often overwhelmed with everything they need to do, and usually they're not sure where to start or how to get started. This confusion is often amplified by the fact that no one around you seems to know what you're going through or how to help. Mobilizing Families is designed to give participants the essential tools to navigate the complexities of the disability world and better advocate for their children's needs.

Session topics include:

- Identifying the Dream: Helping families identify, accept, grieve, revise, and regenerate their dreams for their children.
- Becoming an Effective Communicator: Learn communication strategies to ensure your educational and service meetings go smoothly.
- Understanding Government Resources: Learn about the government agencies and programs designed to support people with disabilities.
- Accessing Insurance and Medicaid Benefits: Learn how private insurance and Medicaid benefits work, and how to work within these systems.
- Education: Helping families learn about their educational rights, IDEA law, and what to expect during an IEP.
- Accessing Community Resources: Learn about a variety of local agencies that support people with disabilities and their families.
- Building Relationships at Home and in the Community: This session helps families identify and tap into natural, non-agency supports in their communities.

Cost: Free. Thanks to the generous support of the McDonnell Family Foundation, training, meals and child care are provided free of charge.

For more information or to register: Call Jo Lynn Osborne at 303-232-1338, ext 206 or email her at jolynn@arcjc.org.

Developmental Repair: "Never Get Between the Kid and the Door"

Presented by The Adoption Exchange/COPARC

Heidi Hendricks, trainer

Tuesday, February 16, 2010, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Main Library, Ben Delatour Room , 201 Peterson Street, Ft. Collins, CO 80524

In this workshop, participants will learn:

- Why children from the "system" do not respond to adults the way "other" kids do
- How to be a proactive force for permanent healing of abuse and trauma in a child's life
- To identify and fill in developmental gaps
- Interventions that work

Trainer Heidi Hendricks has over 25 years of experience working with youth and families. She was a foster parent for many years, as well as a Clinical Therapist and Residential Program Director specializing in working with high risk children and families. She has helped foster and adoptive parents better understand and respond to the issues of trauma when interacting with the children they care for and love. Currently, Heidi is the Vice President of Program Services for Lutheran Family Services.

Cost: Class fee is \$5.00. Fee is waived for parents who have finalized adoptions through the child welfare system, and registration preference will be given to these families.

For further information: Tanya Hammar at 1-800-451-5246 or by email at tanya@adoptex.org.

To register: Go to www.adoptex.org.

Find Your Voice: Tackling Challenges Facing Adoptive, Foster, and Kinship Families

Presented by NACAC Community Champions Network (CCN), COCAF, & COPARC
Friday, February 19, **and** Saturday, February 20, 2010, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Daniels Fund, 101 Monroe St., Denver, CO 80206, rooms 126 & 127

This 2-day training workshop is designed for parents, social workers, and other community providers working with adoptive families. Topics will include:

Day 1:

- Colorado's Adoption Landscape and Needs
- Adoption Subsidies
- When Residential Treatment is Needed
- Educational Advocacy
- Supporting Families through Crisis

Day 2:

- Supporting Families through Expected Challenges
- Fundamentals of Case and Class Advocacy Action
- Media Advocacy
- Post-Adopt Resources: Current and Envisioned
- Parents and Professionals as Partners
- Strategic Planning

Cost: \$20 fee (those who attend will be refunded the fee)

For further information and to register: Tanya Hammar at 1-800-451-5246 or by email at tanya@adoptex.org.

Step Up Into Your Life

Presented by Arc of Arapahoe & Douglas

Mondays, March 1, 8, 15, 29, and April 12 & 26, 2010, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Southbridge Recreation Center Senior Lounge,
4800 McArthur Ranch Road, Highlands Ranch, CO 80130

The evening will begin with dinner, introductions, and networking. Then speakers will present on the topic for that evening. After the presentation there will be time for questions and more networking.

Topics will include:

- Person Centered Planning: Discuss the concept of “Person Centered Planning” with overview of the PATH Planning and Essential Life Planning.
- How do I pay for it: Provide in-depth information about SSI, Medicaid, Medicaid waiver programs, and financial planning.
- What are you doing all day: Explore a variety of employment options, day programs, and vocational rehabilitation services, as well as discussing recreation and transportation.
- Where will I live: Overview of group homes, host homes, personal care alternatives, apartments, and home ownership.
- Who makes decisions: Guardianship, power of attorney, medical power of attorney, and conservatorship.
- What about health care: Transitioning from pediatricians to primary care physician, medical records, dental, and mental health will be discussed along with current Medicaid benefit packages.

All curriculum materials and dinner will be provided at each session. Childcare reimbursement provided, if needed. Call to discuss your specific needs. Both parents or a parent and a support person are encouraged to attend.

Cost: Free, but you must reserve a space to attend. This class is supported by a grant from the Douglas County Mill Levy Funds, Douglas County Human Services.

To register: Contact Pam at 303-220-9228 or by email at pam@arc-ad.org.

Autism Spectrum Disorders: Practical Applications of Classroom and Intervention Strategies for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Presented by the Rocky Mountain Autism Center and The Tiny Tim Center
Thursday, March 4 and Friday, March 5, 2010, 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Xilinx Retreat Building, 3100 Logic Drive, Longmont CO 80503

This workshop is designed for professionals who work with children with ASD in early intervention and primary grade settings AND who have attended introductory level ASD workshops. This workshop is highly recommended for multi-disciplinary teams and autism support teams.

Day one topics include:

- Training on the Implementation of the SCERTS® Assessment Process
- Linking core challenges of ASD to the SCERTS® assessment and curriculum
- Core components of the SCERTS® Assessment Process (SAP), a criterion-based, curriculum-based assessment tool
- Implementation of the 10-step SCERTS® Assessment Process
- Goal prioritization and program planning using the SAP curriculum-based assessment and planning grids
- Transactional Supports (Families and Professionals)

Day two topics include:

- “Nothing But Practical”: Strategies for Implementing the SCERTS® Model Curriculum in Educational Settings
- SCERTS® Practice Guidelines, Principles, and Goal Setting
- Interpersonal and Learning Supports
- Practical intervention strategies for social, communication, emotional regulation for social, language, and conversational partner stages of development
- Emotional Regulation and Behavior Challenges
- ASD Program Quality Indicators
- Case-studies of selected students

One graduate credit is offered for this workshop through Adams State College. Application information will be available at the workshop. Registration required 30 days prior to the workshop.

Cost: 2-day workshop \$200; 2-day workshop with 2-volume SCERTS® manual \$300

For more information: Go to www.rockymountainautismcenter.com; email elizabeth@rockymountainautismcenter.com ; call 337-322-7776.

Weekend Marriage Retreat

Presented by The Healthy Marriage Initiative
Saturday March 13 & Sunday, March 14, 2010
Glen Eyrie Castle, 3820 North 30th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904

- Spend a weekend away with your spouse and enhance your marriage by learning:
- Communication skills
- Conflict resolution
- Personality strengths
- Keeping fun and romance in your relationship

Retreat includes 1 night stay (if you pick the more expensive package), lunch and dinner on Saturday, and breakfast and lunch on Sunday. Military discounts and partial scholarships are available.

Cost: \$200-265 depending on room choice or \$125 if you choose to commute

To register: Go to <http://www.regonline.com/Checkin.asp?EventId=780134> or call 720-488-8888.

For more information: Contact Rico Figueroa, Colorado Healthy Marriage Project, at 720-488-8888 ext 211 or by email at Rico@waittraining.com.

PEAK Parent Center Class Information

303-758-5574 or 1-800-284-0251
denver3mentor@peakparent.org

The following class information has been provided by the PEAK Parent Center:

January 15-16. *Courage to Risk (a collaborative conference on special education).* Colorado Springs. Visit www.couragetorisk.org. \$.

February 11-13. *Conference on Inclusive Education.* Denver. Sponsored by PEAK Parent Center. For more information, <http://www.peakparentcenter.org>. \$

March 1 (six Mondays). *Step Up Into Your Life.* Arc of Arapahoe/Douglas transition series (after high school). For more information, call 303-220-9228 or pam@arc-ad.org. FREE.

Web-based TRAILS Training

A new web-based training is available to Portal users, and is called **TRAILS ILP/ETP**. It includes information about the:

- TRAILS Emancipation Transition Plan
- TRAILS FSP 4D-I/L Plan Window

The training will be particularly helpful to users who are county caseworkers, and supervisors with caseloads that include serving older youth age 16 and up who need an updated **Independent Living Plan** and/or emancipating youth who will need an **Emancipation Transition Plan** before February 1, 2010. It will also be useful to Chaffee County workers and Chaffee County supervisors who are serving or transitioning youth in care with Chaffee County services.

Access the web-based training through the CDHS Portal by selecting the Training tab and then the Web-Based Training link. The Learning Management System (LMS) will open in a new Web browser. Enter a Portal Username and Password to log in.

Contact OITS.Training@state.co.us with any questions or concerns about the Web-Based Training.

Just for Fun

Free All The Time!

Aurora History Museum, 15051 E. Alameda Parkway Aurora, CO. (303) 739-6666.
Tuesday-Friday 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m., Saturday & Sunday 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Bluff Lake Nature Center, off of Havana near Stapleton. For more information or clear directions call (303) 945-6717. Open sunrise to sunset.

For a comprehensive list of things to do for free in the Denver area, go to:
<http://www.denver.org/events/free-events>.

Fun Things & Coupons

For coupons for local Colorado activities, try these websites:

<http://www.coloradokids.com/listings.php?category=funthings&type=funcenter®ion=colorado>

<http://www.coloradokids.com/coupons.php>

http://www.familyfriendlyamerica.com/colorado_activities.html

Website Topics

This section contains the headings from some of the previous COCAF newsletter items. Rather than reprint these items in every newsletter, we're providing the name of the article and a link to the information on the COCAF website.

Adoption-Related Information http://www.cocaf.org/adoption_topics
Adoption Exchange Support Groups Listing <http://www.cocaf.org/support>
Adoptive Families Denver <http://www.cocaf.org/adoptive>
COPARC <http://www.cocaf.org/coparc>
Encouraging Adoption and Helping Families: The Case for Refocusing Federal Funding on Post-Adoption Services
<http://voice-for-adoption.org/downloads/VFA%20postadopt%20paper%20FINAL%207.9.09.pdf>
Foster Care and Adoption Self-Assessment Guide <http://www.cocaf.org/adoption-foster>
Income Taxes & Adoption <http://www.cocaf.org/tax>
Larimer County Alliance for Grandfamilies (LCAG) <http://www.cocaf.org/kinship-larimer>
Starting/ Managing Parent Support Groups
<http://nysccc.org/family-supports/parent-groups/parent-group-management/>
Supporting Children Exposed to Violence <http://endabuse.org/content/features/detail/1314/>

Adoption Subsidy Information <http://www.cocaf.org/subsidies>
Colorado Subsidy Information <http://www.cocaf.org/adoption-subsidy>
Expanding Title IV-E Adoption Assistance <http://www.cocaf.org/adoption-titleiv>
NACAC Report on Adoption Subsidies <http://www.cocaf.org/adoption-nacac-report>
National Subsidy Information <http://www.cocaf.org/adoption-national>

Conference Calls/Discussion Boards <http://www.cocaf.org/current-conference>
Child Welfare League of America <http://www.cocaf.org/conference-welfare>
Conscious Connections Talk Radio <http://www.cocaf.org/conference-conscious>
"Listening to Parents" Project Discussion Board <http://www.cocaf.org/conference-listening>
NAMI Children's Conference Calls <http://www.cocaf.org/conference-nami>

Education <http://www.cocaf.org/education-menu>
Casey "Foster Parent College" Scholarships <http://www.cocaf.org/scholarships-casey>
Expanded Access to College Financial Aid for Former Foster Youth <http://www.cocaf.org/college-aid>
Foster Youth Internship (FYI) Program <http://www.cocaf.org/youth-internship>
Mobility Issues & Special Education <http://www.cocaf.org/mobility>
Online Educational Advocacy Resource <http://www.cocaf.org/edu-advocacy>
Parents of Adults with Disabilities <http://www.cocaf.org/edu-parents>
Reducing Behavior Problems in the Classroom <http://www.cocaf.org/behavior-problems>
Spanish-Language Child Welfare Resources <http://www.cocaf.org/edu-spanish>

Financial Assistance & Information <http://www.cocaf.org/financial>
Financial Classes <http://www.cocaf.org/financial-classes>
LEAP <http://www.cocaf.org/financial-leap>
United Way's 2-1-1 Service <http://www.cocaf.org/financial-united>

Health Care <http://www.cocaf.org/healthcare>
Denver Options <http://www.cocaf.org/health-denver>
EPSDT: What It Is & Why It Is Important to Behavior Health Providers? <http://www.cocaf.org/epsdt>

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Medicaid Waiver Information <http://www.cocaf.org/health-medicaidwaiver>
UHCCF Grants for Child Health Care Services <http://www.cocaf.org/health-uhccf>

Legislative Information <http://www.cocaf.org/laws>

Colorado Child Welfare Action Committee <http://www.cocaf.org/legislation-cowelfare>
Emancipation Documents Colorado Legislation <http://www.cocaf.org/legislation-upcoming>
Nebraska Safe Haven Law <http://www.cocaf.org/legislative-nebraska>
Voice for Adoption Child Welfare Legislation Information <http://www.cocaf.org/voice>

Mental Health Care <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-health>

Attention Deficient Disorder Association (ADDA) <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-adda>
Autistic Children: ZAC Browser: Zone for Autistic Children <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-zac>
CHART: Children's Help and Assistance for Residential Treatment <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-chart>
Considering Residential Treatment Programs for Children <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-residential>
COPARC Therapist Database <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-nami>
E.R.I.C. Program <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-eric>
Guide on Bipolar Disorder in Children and Teens <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-bipolar>
Mental Health Websites <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-websites>
NAMI Connections Link <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-nami>
NAMI Guide to Crisis Intervention Programs for Youth <http://www.cocaf.org/nami-crisis>
New Parents and Teachers as Allies Resources <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-allies>
Resources for Youth With a Parent or Sibling Living with a Mental Illness
<http://www.cocaf.org/nami-resources>
Therapeutic Services for Jefferson County Victims <http://www.cocaf.org/mental-therapeutic>
Treatment of Children with Mental Disorders
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/treatment-of-children-with-mental-disorders/index.shtml>

Services & Resources <http://www.cocaf.org/community>

C.A.S.E. Adoption-Related Services <http://www.cocaf.org/services-case>
Disability Information www.disability.gov
Family Unification Program Housing Choice Vouchers <http://www.cocaf.org/fup>
Grandfamilies State Law & Policy Resource Center <http://www.cocaf.org/grandfamilies>
Kinship Program at Catholic Charities <http://www.cocaf.org/kinship-catholic>
Respite Care Services <http://www.cocaf.org/respice-care>
Respite: Give Me a Break Respite Program <http://www.cocaf.org/respice-break>

Training Resources <http://www.cocaf.org/trainers>

COCAF Calendar <http://www.cocaf.org/event/2009/04/30/month/all/all/1>
Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) <http://www.cocaf.org/trainers>
Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute <http://www.cocaf.org/trainers>
Foster Parent College (FPC) <http://www.cocaf.org/trainers>
Washington Learning Systems Website <http://www.cocaf.org/training-washington>

Free-For-All <http://www.cocaf.org/free-for-all>

Colorado-for-Free: Things to Do for Free <http://www.cocaf.org/free-colorado>
Free Car Seat Checks <http://www.cocaf.org/carseat>