



HARBOR HAPPENINGS

2003 EDITION, VOLUME 1

A DEFICIT IN THE CURRENT YEAR Budget Update for 2002-2003

We have reported in earlier editions of this newsletter that regional centers were required to reduce expenditures this year by \$52 million. Even though we are implementing Expenditure Plans, and even if we succeed in saving \$52 million according to plans, the centers still face a deficit this year of between \$60 and \$80 million, statewide. This means that additional funding had to be provided by the state government, to prevent regional centers from running out of funds before the end of June.

To fill at least part of this deficit, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has sought to secure additional funding for regional centers from the legislature. Without sufficient additional funding, some regional centers could begin to run out of funds and may be in danger of closing their doors in the late Spring of this year.

Harbor Regional Center is also projecting a deficit at this time, but we believe we

CALIFORNIA'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2003-2004: Continued Challenges for Regional Center Clients

"The Legislature finds that the state faces a deepening fiscal crisis requiring that unprecedented measures be taken to reduce General Fund expenditures."

California legislators are continuing to have difficult discussions and to make proposals for how to balance the state budget. The size of the state budget

deficit has been estimated to be between \$26 billion and \$35 billion. It will be some time before we know exactly what the final, approved budget will contain for regional center services for next year. The new fiscal year begins July 1st, 2003, but because of the difficult decisions which must be made to deal with this unprecedented budget deficit, it is likely that the passage of the budget will be delayed for many weeks or even months – possibly even longer than it was delayed last year.

Regional center advocates are working to find ways to secure a portion of our funds for the beginning of the new fiscal year – and continue to provide services – in the face of such budget delays. One way we have done this in the past is to obtain a loan from our bank, but the longer the budget is delayed, the

We may need to call upon you to voice your concerns

to our elected officials, if they delay in passing a budget – and by doing so, put our clients and programs in jeopardy. We will keep you informed and thank you in advance for your support.

To be kept informed of major developments in the budget crisis, and what you can do to help maintain our service system, join the HRC Email Network. Send an email to Nancy@hddf.com and ask to be added to the network mailing list.

(continued on page 11)

(continued on page 2)

*California's Proposed Budget for 2003-2004
(continued from page 1)*

more difficult this becomes. HRC anticipates that we will begin using credit immediately with the start of the new fiscal year, in July, and will be able to continue until as late as mid-September. Whether our elected officials can agree upon a budget by that date remains our most immediate challenge.

We do know that the Governor has proposed major budgetary changes for regional center services, as well as new language for the Lanterman Act which would allow these changes to occur. Whether or not these changes will actually go into effect depends upon the legislative process that is still underway.

- The Governor's budget for 2003-2004 proposes to cut \$100 million from regional centers' Purchase of Services budget statewide. To accomplish this amount of reduction, and to give the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) authority "to limit services purchased by regional centers to ensure expenditures do not exceed the Department's appropriation", he recommends that statewide Purchase of Service Standards be developed by DDS. These standards would tell all 21 regional centers what services they are allowed to purchase and what they are not allowed to purchase. At the time of this writing, we do not yet have information on what such standards would allow.

- It proposes that California can save \$2.1 million by beginning to use the more strict federal standard for "substantial disability" when deciding whether a person who is applying for regional center services is eligible. This change would require that a child or adult applying for services must have "significant functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activity, as determined by the regional center and as appropriate to the age of the individuals: self-care; receptive and expressive language; learning; mobility; self-direction; capacity for independent living; and economic self-sufficiency." This change would not affect clients who are already clients of a regional center.

- It proposes that parents of children between age 3 and 17 years of age, who live in the parent's home, receive services purchased through a regional center, and who are not eligible for Medi-Cal would be required to pay a co-payment for services. Families with an income of at least 200% of the federal poverty level (\$40,000 for a family of four) would be required to pay a share of cost for services, up to 10% of their gross income.

- It proposes that California can save \$2.3 million if funding for Habilitation Services, currently being provided for many adults with developmental disabilities through the Department of Rehabilitation, was moved to the regional centers. These savings would come from a reduction of staff, who now work for the Department of Rehabilitation. It does not propose to give any staff positions to the regional centers to manage this program.

- Emergency regulations which would implement these proposed changes "shall conform to the following principles: services and supports shall be directly related to the individual's developmental disability; families are responsible for providing those services and supports to a minor child with a developmental disability that families provide to children without disabilities; regional centers shall aggressively pursue all possible alternative sources of funding before using regional center funds."

Even with the major reductions being proposed, the Governor's budget for 2003-2004 still proposes to provide an overall increase of \$321 million for regional centers due to the growing need for regional center services, and the transfer of Habilitation Services to our service system. Some advocates feel strongly that the proposed changes are a major threat to the entitlement to services which is so unique to California's developmental services system. Others however have expressed the position that some kind of fair and reasonable guidelines are necessary, to preserve a sustainable entitlement into the future.

CITY PROGRAMS OFFER EDUCATION AND FUN!

Many of our area cities provide social and recreational opportunities for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Harbor Regional Center has compiled a listing of such programs in our Social Recreation Programs Resource Directory. Two examples are those offered in Rancho Palos Verdes and the City of Bellflower.

In the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, the Recreation & Parks Department offers the REACH program, designed to serve adults. The REACH program strives to promote self-confidence, communication skills, and social interaction with participants – but the main priority, according to REACH Program Director Mona Dill, is to have fun! She adds that many clients, once they leave school, lose touch with friends and may become isolated. This program allows participants to establish a new group of friends, and offers the flexibility to schedule activities at times that are convenient.

Most REACH outings are held on Monday and Wednesday evenings and all day on Saturdays. There are many activities to choose from, such as investigating your inner artist at the Palos Verdes Art Center, or having dinner with your local fireman while exploring the fire station. REACH also offers camps, dances, three-day trips, special events, and art and music therapy.

The City of Bellflower also offers several programs. The Recreation Therapy Program at Sims Park is for developmentally disabled teens and adults. Activities include monthly excursions and special events such as art projects, basketball, swimming, movies, cooking, and much more. There is transportation available for Bellflower residents. Will McDaniel has been attending the program for a year and a half now. His favorite activities are “going places” and playing basketball.

Ronald Arceo likes the various craft projects but also has met new friends while attending the program.

The “Share” program for children and adults with developmental disabilities is offered on Monday evenings and includes activities such as games, sports, crafts and movies. Activities are structured by age and functioning level of the participants. Square Dancing is offered on Thursday night, while swimming is a popular event on Friday evenings at Thompson pool. The swimming program has become very family-oriented with activities such a pizza days or dances. Participants and families from the various City of Bellflower programs often get together for Saturday excursions to movies, picnics or other fun events. It’s a great way for parents to network, and for clients and parents alike to meet new people.

To contact the Rancho Palos Verdes REACH program, call Mona Dill at (310) 544-5266. For information about the City of Bellflower programs, call (562) 804-1424. For information on both specialized and inclusive opportunities in communities throughout HRC’s area, check the Social Recreation Resource Directory. The directory is available on our Web site at www.HarborRC.org, in the HRC Resource Center, or by requesting a copy from your HRC counselor.

(top photo) Flowers and cards specially delivered by REACH participants bring smiles to the faces of the residents and friends of the Earlwood Convalescent Center in Torrance. (middle) A group of friends at the REACH program in Rancho Palos Verdes enjoys a night out.



(above) There are many fun activities at the City of Bellflower programs and for Will McDaniel and Ronald Arceo, this craft project was a blast.

A PLACE FOR FAMILY

Parents Greg and Gina Hubert understand the emotions that come with the diagnosis of autism. The Huberts have three boys, all of whom are diagnosed with autism. They also know that often families become isolated because it can be too much of a “hassle” as Gina states, “to go on a vacation, to dinner, or any other kind of recreational activity, because your child might act a little different or take some extra care.” The Huberts observed that when they were doing well emotionally their kids also did better, and when they were able to do things as a family their children thrived. To allow other families to experience precious family time together, Greg and Gina began working in conjunction with Michael Farah, Chairman of the Celebrity Foundation for Children, to create a unique retreat for

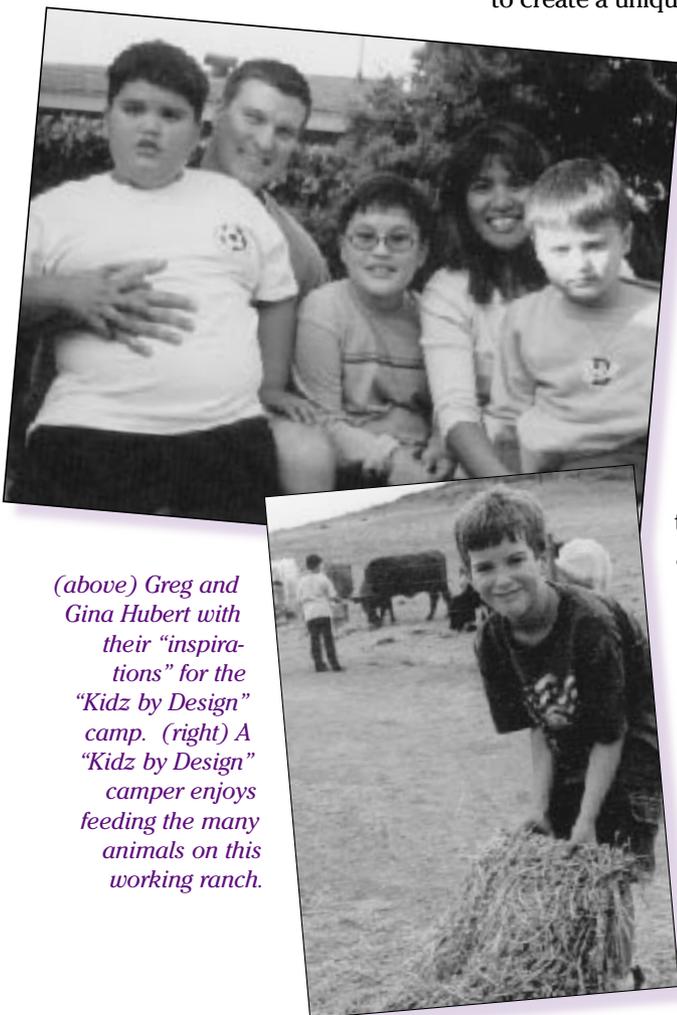
families of children diagnosed with autism. “Kidz by Design” is the result of this collaboration. This innovative family camp is designed to give parents the support and skills they need to strengthen their family unit, while supporting their child with special needs.

Parents can meet other parents, have quality couple time, reconnect with their kids and get some rest. They can enjoy practical workshops offering strategies to help them guide their child and enrich their family, or fun activities such as a local wine county tour. A frequent problem for parents is sleepless nights, so there is “night staff” available who take care of a child who is not sleeping so parents may have their first full night’s sleep in months.

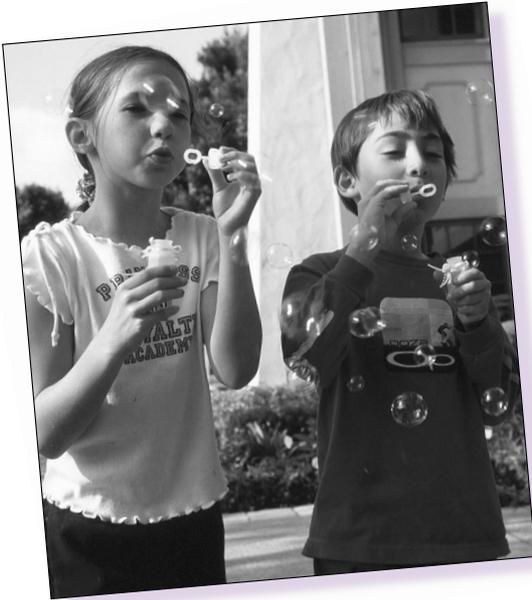
For children, camp means a three-day retreat where they can participate in many wonderful activities such as feeding horses and other animals, arts & crafts, sporting events, hiking, swimming and therapy services. There is a therapist assigned to every two children, along with plenty of volunteers. The brothers and sisters also have a lot of fun activities available, and can take part in sibling workshops to discuss their feelings and emotions.

The “Kidz by Design” camp is located on a working ranch in Hemet. Currently there are two sessions offered, one in June and the second in July of 2003. The camp is limited to 12 families per camp session. Families pay \$99.00 per adult and \$79.00 for children under 14. Whenever possible, “Kidz by Design” will attempt to offer a partial scholarship for families in financial need.

Greg and Gina’s goal is to build on the camp by adding more sessions in the future, and to someday allow any family to attend free of charge. Having a place where the whole family can come and just have fun, a place where families can strengthen their bonds, is their mission. If you would like more information, would like to volunteer, or donate to “Kidz by Design,” you can access information on their web site at www.kidzbydesign.org or by calling (310) 493-6290.



(above) Greg and Gina Hubert with their “inspirations” for the “Kidz by Design” camp. (right) A “Kidz by Design” camper enjoys feeding the many animals on this working ranch.



A NEW VIDEO ON AUTISM

Just Released by Harbor Regional Center

*By Nancy Spiegel, Director of
Information and Development*

Harbor Regional Center has developed a new video on the diagnosis of autism, especially for parents of children newly-diagnosed with this condition. We know that parents entering this world can be overwhelmed with information, and want to understand. Why has autism occurred? What should they do about it? What does it mean for the future? We are very hopeful that this video will begin to help answer their questions, and will offer some important information about possible approaches to therapy. Topics covered in the video include:

- Autism – What Is It?
- What Causes Autism?
- What Do We Know About Treatment
- Applied Behavioral Analysis
- Discrete Trial Training
- Relationship-Based Approach – Floor Time

- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Augmentative/Alternative Communication and Assistive Technology
- Speech Therapy
- Choosing A Program
- What Is “Enough” Treatment?
- What About Medication?
- What About Alternative Treatments?
- The Future

The video features interviews with a number of experts, including a pioneer in the field of autism and original researcher of Discrete Trial Training, Dr. Ivar Lovaas, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at UCLA. Other noted specialists in the field are interviewed, and treatment approaches are demonstrated by service providers including: Autism Spectrum Therapies; the HRC Assistive Technology Lab; the Children’s Speech Care Center; Autism Behavior Consultants; California Psych Care; Center for Autism and Related Disorders; Family Behavioral Services; Helping Hand; Sponderworks Children’s Services, and Wayne Tashjian.

The video also features words of understanding, advice and hope from parents “who’ve been there”. In the words of one parent who was interviewed for the video, and who has now seen the finished result, “I am so glad that you have made this video. It has such an important message of hope for parents.” We hope that parents viewing this video will find it to be supportive, informative, and useful in facing the challenges they experience with this diagnosis. We hope that others who are interested in learning more about autism may also find it valuable.

This video is now available for viewing, and can be checked out in the HRC Resource Center. *Harbor Regional Center sincerely thanks the parents and service providers who graciously agreed to appear in this video.*

Client *focus*

IN MY OWN WORDS

Erik Soe, HRC Client

At an HRC training presentation on autism, client Erik Soe spoke of his personal experiences before a rapt audience. He gave us permission to reprint an excerpt of his presentation here. Erik is now employed at Cambrian Homecare, providing office support.



HRC client Erik Soe shares his memories of growing up with autism with the audience.

All my life I have had a severe problem called autism. This problem affected me because it gave me the lack of ability to communicate properly, and it kept me from being social with other people. It gave me trouble understanding what was going on. Because my mom and dad were both concerned about me and wanted me to do well, they came up with ways to deal with that problem. From my early childhood to the present, each of the following characteristics related to autism occurred.

My earliest memory related to autism occurred to me at the age of one, when I could only eat Swedish pancakes. So in

order for me to try anything new, I used to have a friend of my elder brother come over to my house and teach me to eat hamburgers. This was very helpful because he helped me get used to eating the same thing everyone else was eating.

Another symptom of autism that gave me problems when I was three or four was echolalia. That is, when someone asked me a question, I could simply say it back to them. For example, when my mom asked me, "Erik do you want a cookie?" I could only say "Do you want a cookie?" My mom dealt with the problem by putting down the words in plastic letters, "Yes, please," thereby teaching me how to say yes.

Another feature that is related to autism is that since I was very young, I have developed an interest in numbers. I used to enjoy having my mom write up to 120 numbers on the blackboard, ten numbers per row, because that was how many fit. However, because it got so boring for my mom to keep writing every row of numbers, she taught me how to fill in the ones she left out for me. At the age of five, I learned addition and subtraction in school, which was related to all the numbers that I had been learning very quickly. That is how I developed a talent in mathematics. When I was between the ages of six and eight, Dr. Ivar Lovaas, a professor at UCLA, used to send students to my house. He said I was autistic, because autistic people cannot resist numbers.

(continued on page 7)

In My Own Words
(continued from page 6)

Another disadvantage of my middle to late childhood, ages seven to ten, with respect to autism was the development of big deals from minor mistakes. I could not tolerate making mistakes because I used to think it was always important to be perfect. Then because even any minor mistake would trouble me, I could simply make those troubles into a terrible temper tantrum. Because it was awful for my health to keep having tantrums, I learned to deal with my emotions by soothing them with music. A therapist taught me to write songs and lyrics whenever I would get angry about something. At the age of 16, I wrote a song about how I could keep my cool so that before my young adulthood, I would never have any tantrums again.

I went to a high school called the California Academy of Math and Science, located at California State University Dominguez Hills. I ran into difficulties my first year because everyone was new to me, and I did not have any best friends that year. I had trouble understanding what the teachers in every class were saying, and had a hard time taking good notes. That is why I was not always sure about the exact assignment for every class. Then my work in high school improved, because I had an excellent Resource Specialist Program teacher. She organized a team of students in each of my core classes who would take good notes for me, write down my assignments, and teach me to take good notes. She also worked with my teachers so that they could understand my disability better. Before my brother went away to college, he worked with me on my homework. After that, my parents hired a tutor who assisted me with my science courses, and came with me to my organic chemistry lab class to help me with my

lab experiments. She helped me to keep getting good grades so that I could graduate from high school. The same tutor helped me with my first two years of college. One way that she did this was that she was in two of my classes. She came to my other classes on the first day so that she could help me find a good note-taker. However, because she was soon going to graduate, she thought of another place where I could get tutoring which was the Learning Assistance Center at the college.

Because it was difficult for me to communicate with other people, this still kept me from being social. For example, when I used to ride the bus to and from school, I used to sit alone until someone would sit next to me. One way that I have learned to be social is that since my high school senior year, I have been part of the Life Steps program. This program was very beneficial because it was all about preparation for independence. My counselor, Jeff Guenther, also taught me how to be curious about other students such as by asking “Where are you from?” or “What’s your major?” The more Jeff and I worked on my social skills, the more social I became. Therefore I have learned not to be so quiet anymore, whenever it is OK to talk without being too loud.

In conclusion, every way that I have dealt with autism is now preparing me for the future. It has always been important for me to improve my communication skills and stay in good shape. That way I can be much more social now and for the rest of my life, and have the following future goals: independent living (i.e., my own apartment), marriage, and a job as a math teacher. Then when I live with all these plans, this will be an extreme pleasure.

CEREBRAL PALSY STUDY OFFERS HOPE

For children diagnosed with cerebral palsy-related spasticity, a new treatment available through a research study at Miller Children's Hospital may provide an increase in mobility and independence while decreasing pain and delaying or even preventing surgery. The study uses Myobloc, which is FDA-approved for use in adults with cervical dystonia, but has not been approved for pediatric cerebral palsy. Your child will be seen by a multi-disciplinary team six times during a four-

month period at no cost to you. Upon completion, your child will receive \$100.

If your child is between 7 and 18 years old with a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, has spasticity but is able to walk using braces or a walker, and has never been treated using botox injections, he or she may be eligible to participate. Eligible children will need to discontinue their therapy at California Children's Services for the duration of the study. For more information, please contact or have your child's physician contact Linda Towne, R.N., (562) 933-8832 or e-mail her at ltowne@memorialcare.org

SAVE THE DATE!

HOPE's Seventh Annual Fundraising Event Supporting Housing Opportunities for HRC Adult Clients

HOPE will roll out its seventh annual fundraising event at the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach on Saturday, May 17, 2003 from 6:00-10:00 p.m. The evening promises to be as fun and exciting as ever. For the adventurous, there will be both a live and silent auction which will include fabulous packages. Last year, items auctioned were a trip for two to Tuscany in Italy, a signed album by Frank Sinatra, and a trip for two to New York. This year's packages should be just as spectacular! A dream vacation for two at the Royal Kona Resort at Kailua-Kona on the Big Island of Hawaii will be raffled. The cradle of Hawaiian culture, this island features cattle ranches, deep-sea fishing, diving, snow skiing, active volcanoes, golf, hiking and much more. Raffle tickets are \$5 each, 5 tickets for \$20 or 10 tickets for \$30.

HOPE is a nonprofit organization that currently owns 28 properties that are rented to more than 76 Harbor Regional Center adult clients. This event will help HOPE continue to purchase and renovate properties so that HRC adult clients can live in affordable, clean and safe housing.

For tickets to the event or to obtain raffle tickets, please contact Jennifer Byram at, (310) 543-0635.

SHOP AT MACY'S...SAVE MONEY...ASSIST HOPE

Come to Macy's Day at the local Macy's Department Store at Del Amo Mall in Torrance on Thursday, May 8, 2003 and save up to 20% even on sale items! Purchase a \$10 ticket from HOPE and use the ticket all day to save at Macy's. All proceeds from pre-ticket sales go to HOPE. On the day of the sale, tickets will still be available for purchase from Macy's and all proceeds from those sales will be split among the organizations participating. This is an easy, fun and smart way to assist HOPE. For more information or to order your ticket today, please call Jennifer Byram at (310) 543-0635.

UCI STUDY INVESTIGATES PARENTAL ATTITUDES

The University of California Irvine Medical Center (UCI) is currently conducting a study of parental attitudes towards sexuality and personal safety education for their child (ages 6-22) with a developmental disability. The information derived will be used to improve doctor-patient communication in this area.

This study is seeking parents to participate by completing a survey which is estimated to take 15 minutes, and which will be kept completely anonymous. The survey will be mailed to your home with a self-addressed stamped envelope to return the questionnaire. Parents who are interested in participating can contact Melissa Hill, Genetic Counseling intern at UCI, at (714) 456-5837. Ms. Hill may also be able to provide assistance regarding resources related to sexuality issues in children diagnosed with a developmental disability.

RECOGNIZING EXTRA EFFORT!

Would you like to recognize someone at Harbor Regional Center for their efforts?

HRC is dedicated to providing **support, information** and **choices** to our clients and their families. Our staff, from the receptionists to our psychologists, strive to demonstrate our core values through their interactions with you.

You can help us recognize those individuals who, through their actions, have provided you with outstanding care and service. When you see an HRC staff member who is **demonstrating respect by treating people considerately, working collaboratively, looking for ways to be helpful, responding quickly and explaining any delays, listening, sharing information, or any other assistance you found helpful**, simply fill in this form and mail it to: **Kathy Scheffer, Public Information Specialist, 21231 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 or by e-mail at Kathryns@hddf.com**

We will make sure that the HRC Counselor, support staff, clinical staff, Resource Center staff or other members of the HRC team receive your note along with our special recognition.

Name of person you wish to recognize: _____

Your name: _____

How that person demonstrated outstanding service or fulfillment of our core values: _____

We appreciate your support in helping us acknowledge these outstanding individuals.

HEALTH *wellness*

LEARNING ABOUT MEDICATIONS

Having a good understanding of the medicines you take is very important, and can in fact save your life. For some Harbor Regional Center adult clients who live independently, dealing with their medication regimens can be challenging. Some might not understand what their medications are for, why they should refill their prescriptions from the same pharmacy, or how to dispose of their unused or expired medications. For all of these reasons, HRC created the “Learning about Medications” two-day workshop, designed specifically to teach adult clients about medication issues and to recognize problems when they arise. The program uses training techniques and information designed to be interesting and understandable for adults with developmental disabilities.

Adults who live in their own homes and receive assistance from a supported living service provider participated in the workshop. All of them had past difficulties complying with their medication regimens. At the beginning of the workshop, almost half the clients did not know the purpose for which they took one or more of their medications. Several of the participants said they did not always take their medications when they were supposed to. The most common reasons given for not taking their medications were because “I forget” or “I don’t like the side effects.”

Besides teaching important facts about the medications themselves, participants also received handouts they could take

along when they visit their doctor or pharmacist, containing questions to ask when receiving new medications. Also presented at the workshop was information concerning possible side effects of medications, what to do if you forget to take your medication on time, and other valuable information.

Roberta Nielsen has multiple medical needs and takes medications for her arthritis, asthma, and seizure disorder. When asked what she thought of the class, Roberta responded, “It was awesome. I liked how we learned about the different kinds of medications by playing games.” Roberta felt that the most important thing she learned was to take her medication every day. This had been an ongoing issue for Roberta and she was experiencing increased seizure activity because of it. Through the workshop Roberta learned how to devise a system to ensure that her medications were in a place where she would see them, and be reminded when she needed to take them. She now reports her seizures have drastically reduced.

Other clients report similar successes. A participant described how, “I learned the names of my medicines. I didn’t know them before.” “I remembered to ask the pharmacist about side effects,” another participant stated.

The HRC “Learning About Medications” Workshop has been highly recommended by the clients who attended. Many have told their friends that they should also attend the training. Due to the interest, HRC is planning to present this workshop to additional HRC adult clients in supported living in the near future.

DID YOU KNOW?

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury and death to young children ages four to fourteen. All 50 states require that children ride in approved car seats when traveling in motor vehicles. As of January 2002, California law required all children under age six or over the age of six but weighing 60 pounds or less, to ride in a car safety or booster seat. Boosters fit most children from about age four until at least age eight. The National Highway Traffic Safety administration has noted that child safety seats reduce fatal injury by 71% for infants and 54% for toddlers.

Though approved car safety or booster seats have been shown to greatly reduce the severity of a child's injury and prevent death for children in motor vehicle crashes, many parents may not know how to correctly secure the seats, or even if their child should be riding in one. The HRC Resource Center is your source for printed information and also practical consultations on your child's specific needs. The Resource Center is also participating in several community events where you can receive valuable information concerning car safety and booster seats. On Saturday, May 3rd from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the Resource Center will be at the Miller Children's Hospital Celebrating Families Safety Fair at 2801 Atlantic Ave in Long Beach. The Parent Success Conference & Resource Fair will be on Saturday, May 10th from 8:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Manhattan Beach Marriott located at 1400 Parkview Avenue. Easter Seals of Southern California will be at both locations with samples of car seats made especially to accommodate special needs children so parents may see what is available.

For more information concerning either car safety and booster seats or these resource fairs, please contact the HRC Resource Center at (310) 543-0691.

A Deficit in the Current Year (continued from page 1)

will have enough funds to continue providing services for the remainder of this fiscal year. Now HRC's biggest concern is how soon the Legislature and the Governor will get a budget in place for 2003-04, and how long we can continue to operate until we receive funds for 03-04. (See accompanying article, California's Proposed Budget for 2003-2004).

The Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) has made proposals to avoid a major crisis, such as short-term loans or advances to the regional centers to get through to the end of the current Fiscal Year, and to keep going if the budget is delayed in July.

Throughout the state and in Sacramento, regional center representatives are working with our legislators, and we hope to find a solution for this immediate crisis. We may need to call upon you to voice your concerns to our elected officials, if they delay in passing a budget - and by doing so, put our clients and programs in jeopardy. We will keep you informed and thank you in advance for your support.

To be kept informed of major developments in the budget crisis, and what you can do to help maintain our service system, join the HRC Email Network. Send an email to Nancy@hddf.com and ask to be added to the network mailing list.

MEET THE EXPERTS

A Training Especially for Parents or Caregivers



Recently, HRC psychologists Sylvia Young, Ph.D. and Rita Eagle, Ph.D. hosted a lively training presentation on autism for HRC staff, parents, and service providers.

Meet the Experts is a series of educational opportunities for parents, concentrating on the various health and developmental issues that parents deal with on a daily basis. Scheduled in June are two wonderful training opportunities. "Communicating in the Best Way Possible," a session dealing with language development and therapeutic interventions is scheduled on Tuesday, June 10th at HRC's offices in Torrance. "Nutrition & Staying Healthy" a great review of how good nutrition can help prevent illness is on Tuesday, June 17th at HRC's Training Center in Long Beach. All these sessions are scheduled from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

You may find more information about these and other trainings offered by reviewing the HRC Training & Events Catalog which is mailed twice a year and is also available at the HRC Resource Center, from your HRC counselor, or online at www.HarborRC.org

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

On May 1, 2003 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. the Fifth Annual Cinco de Mayo Career Expo will feature the first annual Assistive Technology Showcase, entitled "Expanding Possibilities in the Workplace". This show will exhibit the latest in mobility equipment, computer accessories and model workstations, to show potential employees real-life situations for use of assistive technology in the work environment.

This wonderful opportunity to learn about the latest in Assistive Technology will take place at Hollywood Park, 3883 W. Century Boulevard in Inglewood. The Career Expo and Assistive Technology Showcase are being presented by the State of California Department of Rehabilitation, and sponsored by the City of Los Angeles' EmployABILITY Partnership, Proyecto Vision, and AbilityFirst.

The event is free and no reservations are needed. For more information call Steve or Gina at AbilityFirst at (626) 639-1731.

Issues of
Harbor Happenings
can be found
at the Harbor
Regional Center
World Wide
Web site at
www.harborrc.org

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Tools to aid in working, learning, communicating and living

By Brenda Crosby, HRC Assistive Technology Lab Speech/Language Pathologist

Assistive Technology (AT) is defined as "...any piece of equipment...that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities." Walkers, wheelchairs, communication devices and alternative keyboards are a few examples of assistive technology. Devices range from the very simple to complex, and enable individuals with disabilities to participate in home, community, educational and employment activities.

The most successful users of Assistive Technology are those individuals who have the right information on services, resources and equipment that may be available. An Assistive Technology consultation ensures that the equipment selected is the best match for the needs, skills and goals of the client, as well as the people in their environments. Through the Harbor Regional Center AT Lab, clients and their families may receive consultation services.

Many clients have benefitted from a visit to the lab. HRC client Paul is a 51 year old man who was born with cerebral palsy. Paul is an author of a book and uses his home computer several hours each day for writing and recreational use. Last year, Paul experienced a medical setback which affected his motor abilities and made it difficult for him to type accurately using a standard keyboard. A computer access consultation, conducted by the HRC AT Lab staff, indicated Paul would benefit from several hardware and software adaptations. With the recommended modifications,

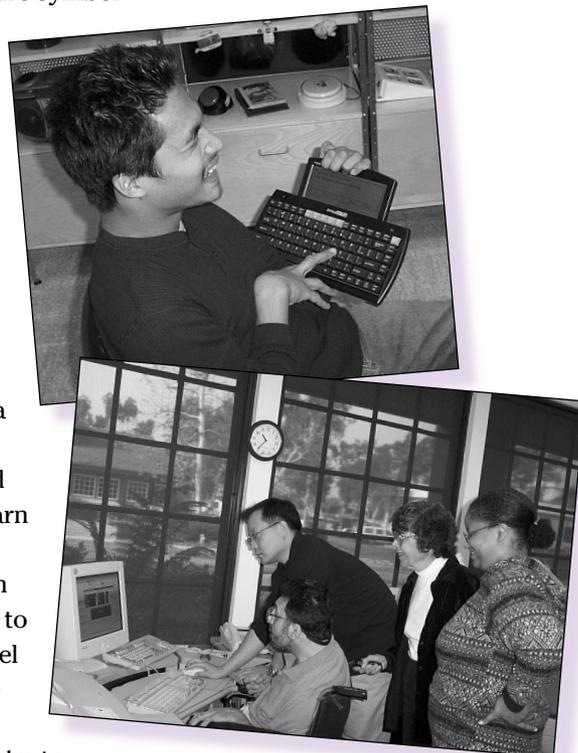
Paul is now able to use the computer with less effort and more efficiency.

Casey is a thirteen-year-old boy with a diagnosis of Down Syndrome. After a consultation, the HRC AT Lab staff recommended the implementation of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to improve Casey's ability to communicate with others. Using this method Casey can give a picture symbol

of an item to his listener to request an "exchange" for that item. The AT Lab even created a PECS communication book just for him and provided training for Casey and his mother. Michael is a student at Long Beach City College and has a diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy. Michael visited the HRC AT Lab to learn about the technology available to assist him to improve his ability to communicate. Michael now uses a voice output communication device which allows him to type his messages on the portable device. The device then speaks the message to others. Both Casey and Michael, with their enhanced methods of communication, can now participate more fully in class, social situations, and with family members.

Assistive technology can enhance the lives of many individuals. The AT Lab at Harbor Regional Center assists clients and their families in determining if Assistive Technology may be of benefit in such areas as communication, computer access, and electronic aids to daily living. To see if a Assistive Technology consultation is right for you or your child, contact your HRC counselor.

(below) Being able to type his thoughts into his new voice output communication device has enhanced Michael's ability to communicate with others.



(above) HRC AT Lab staff, Andy Lin shows Paul all the different kinds of AT devices to assist him to use his computer.

resource center

WHAT'S NEW AT THE RESOURCE CENTER?

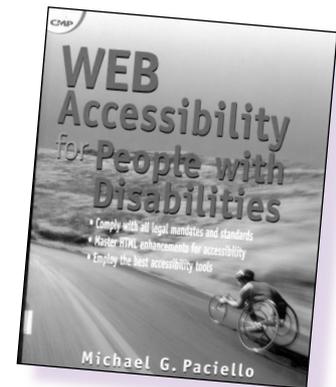
BY DOMINIQUE DEBORBA
HRC Parent & HRC Resource
Center Family Support Assistant

The Harbor Regional Center Computer Center, located in the Resource Center is in full swing. It is open daily and offers an open lab time for individuals or small groups of clients, families or service providers. The most popular classes are the computer classes offering introductory or advanced training. To supplement these classes, or for those who can't attend classes but have computers at home, we have some excellent books to assist in learning computer skills, Web accessibility, or exploring the world of assistive technology. This month I would like to highlight some of these and encourage our families to "get ONLINE"!

disabilities. This indispensable guide for anyone interested in expanding their horizons in employment, education, or any other area of their lives includes a special "toolbox" section about state-of-the-art computer technology, including screen enhancement, speech synthesizers and customized keyboards.

WEB Accessibility for People with Disabilities – by Michael G. Paciello

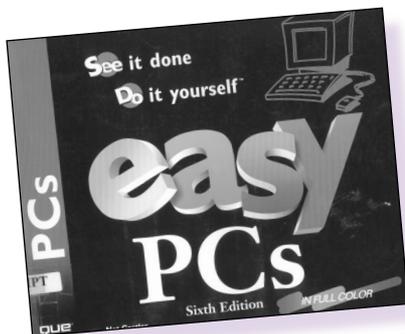
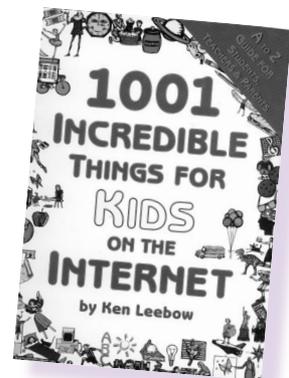
This useful resource provides Internet users with everything they need to understand current legal requirements and initiatives, evaluate



Web site accessibility, and learn fundamentals of programming. It provides direction on how to master HTML enhancements for accessibility resources, and implementing specialized Web accessibility software.

1001 Incredible Things for Kids on the Internet – by Ken Leebow

The sites provided in this book are meant to help families and educators enjoy a positive and rewarding experience on the Internet. It includes hundreds of categories organized into an A to Z format, as well as thousands of educational, entertaining and useful Web sites. Kids can go on just to find sites about things that interest them, as well as gathering information for projects. This is a must-have reference for home or the classroom.

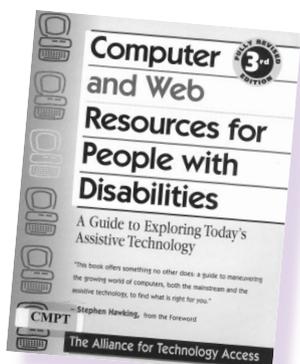


Easy PCs – by Nat Gertler

This book teaches how to understand computers with straightforward text and clear cut definitions. The visual step-by-step guide uses pictures rather than lengthy explanations to show the basic parts of a computer system, how the operating system works, basic DOS and Windows commands and procedures, and what software can do for you.

Computer and Web Resources for People with Disabilities – A Guide to Exploring Today's Assistive Technology – by The Alliance for Technology Access

The material in this book is intended to provide an overview of the hardware, software, and other considerations surrounding computer resources for people with



TECNOLOGÍA DE ASISTENCIA:

Las herramientas utilizadas para asistir personas con la comunicación, el aprendizaje, el trabajo y la vivienda.

Por Brenda Cosby, Tecnología de Asistencia, Patología en el Habla y Lenguaje

La Tecnología de Asistencia (AT) es definida como "...cualquier equipo...que es utilizado para aumentar, mantener o mejorar la capacidad de los individuos con incapacidades." Los andadores, las sillas de ruedas, los aparatos de comunicación y teclados especiales son algunos de los ejemplos de lo que es la tecnología de asistencia. Los aparatos varían desde simple artículos hasta mas complejos, y le permite a las personas con incapacidades a participar en actividades en el hogar, comunidad, educación y empleos.

Las personas que mas éxito han tenido son aquellos que obtienen la correcta información de los servicios, recursos y equipos que pueden estar a su disposición. La consulta de la tecnología de asistencia asegura que el equipo seleccionado sea el mejor para las necesidades y metas del cliente, y que también sea lo mejor para los individuos en su propio ambiente. Los clientes pueden, por medio del AT Lab en el Centro Regional Harbor, recibir consultas acerca de los servicios de la tecnología de asistencia.

Muchos clientes han sido beneficiados al visitar el AT Lab. Un cliente, llamado Paúl, es un hombre de 51 años de edad que nació con parálisis cerebral. Paúl ha escrito un libro y el utiliza su computadora por varias horas, cada día, para escribir o para su recreo. El año pasado Paúl tuvo algunos problemas de salud que afecto su habilidad motor y debido a eso se le dificultó el poder utilizar el teclado estándar de la computadora. Con la ayuda de una consulta llevada a cabo por el personal del AT Lab del Centro Regional Harbor, se hizo posible determinar cuales adaptaciones de la computadora serian beneficiosas. Con las modificaciones recomendadas, Paúl puede mejor utilizar la computadora con menos esfuerzo y con mas eficiencia.

Casey es un niño de trece años de edad diagnosticado con del Síndrome de Down. Después de una consulta, el personal del AT Lab del Centro Regional Harbor recomendó la implementación de un programa llamado Sistema de

Comunicación de Intercambio de Ilustraciones (PECS) para de esa manera mejorar la forma con la que Casey se comunica con otros. Por uso de este método, Casey puede dar el símbolo de un objeto para el que lo escucha y pedir un "intercambio" con ese objeto. El AT Lab hasta creó un libro de comunicación solamente para el y entrenó a Casey y a su mamá en su uso.

Michael es un estudiante del Long Beach City College y tiene el diagnostico de Parálisis Cerebral. Michael visito el AT Lab del Centro Regional Harbor para aprender acerca de la tecnología disponible para asistir su habilidad de comunicarse. Michael ahora utiliza un aparato de comunicación que genera voz cuando el escribe sus mensajes en un aparato portátil. El aparato entonces le dice su mensaje a otros. Los dos, Casey y Michael, con sus realizados métodos de comunicación, pueden ahora participar mejor en la escuela, situaciones sociales y con miembros de sus familias.

La tecnología de asistencia puede realzar las vidas de muchos individuos. El AT Lab del Centro Regional Harbor asiste a los clientes y sus familias al poder determinar si la tecnología de asistencia puede ser de beneficio en las áreas de comunicación, acceso a las computadoras y otras formas electrónicas para mejorar sus vidas. Para ver si una consulta de tecnología de asistencia seria beneficiosa para su niño, por favor pongase en contacto con su consejero.

Exposición de la Tecnología de Asistencia

El día Mayo 1, 2003 de 10 a.m. a 3 p.m. se celebrara la quinta "Exposición de Carreras Cinco de Mayo" que incluirá por primera vez la exposición de Tecnología de Asistencia titulada "Expandiendo las Posibilidades en el Lugar de Trabajo." En esta exhibicion se presentará lo mas moderno en equipos de movilidad, accesorios para computadoras y estaciones de trabajo, para enseñar a los empleadores lo que se puede lograr con la tecnología de asistencia en el ambiente de trabajo. Esta gran oportunidad se presentara en el Hollywood Park, 3883 W. Century Blvd., en Inglewood. La exposición de la tecnología de asistencia es presentada por el Departamento de Rehabilitacion del estado y por la Ciudad de Los Angeles (por EmployABILITY Partnership, Proyecto Vision & Ability First)

La Exposición de Carreras y Exhibicion de la Tecnología de Asistencia es gratis y no reservaciones son necesarias. Para mas información llame a Steve o Gina en el programa de Ability First al numero (626) 639-1731.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mr. Mariano Sanz
President
Mrs. Karen D. Kinnebrew
Vice-President
Mr. Robert F. Bethel
Treasurer
Dr. Bobbie I. Rendon-Christensen
Secretary
Mr. Robert A. Irlen
ARCA Representative; Ex-officio Member
Mr. George Bird
Past President

Ms. Rebecca Barrios
Mr. Wesley T. Dale
Ms. Kristine Engels
Byron D. Lane, Ph.D.
Ms. Colette Madore
Mr. Bruce McKinley
Mr. Vincent E. Pellerito
Mr. W. John Rea
Mrs. Patricia Wainwright

Patricia Del Monico
Executive Director

BOARD MEETINGS

April 15, 2003 - 6:30 p.m.
May 20, 2003 - 8:00 a.m.
No Meeting in June
July 15, 2003 - 6:30 p.m.
No Meeting in August

The Board of Trustees of the Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation, Inc. meets regularly once a month on the **THIRD Tuesday** of the month.

Board meetings alternate between morning and evening times to provide opportunity to people in the community to participate. Morning meetings are from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and evening meetings are from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

All regularly scheduled business meetings of the Board are open to the public and visitors are welcome to attend both morning and evening meetings of the Board. The meetings are held in Conference Room B at Harbor Regional Center.

Harbor Happenings is a publication of Harbor Regional Center, a program of the Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation, Inc.

EditorsKathy Scheffer
Nancy Spiegel
Family Resource Center
InformationSherry Leopold
Translation.Mercedes Guzman
Photography Kathy Scheffer
Lyle Walter
Production DesignJanas Communications



HARBOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOUNDATION, INC.
21231 Hawthorne Boulevard, Torrance, California 90503
www.HarborRC.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Torrance, CA
Permit No. 28

IN THIS ISSUE

California's Proposed Budget for 2003-2004.....1
A Deficit in the Current Year1
City Programs Offer Education and Fun!3
A Place for Family4
A New Video on Autism5
Client Focus.....6
Health & Wellness10
Resource Center14