



HARBOR HAPPENINGS

2005 EDITION, VOLUME 1

MEET OUR BOARD MEMBERS: Karen Kinnebrew

After serving as a member of the Harbor Regional Center Board of Trustees for over 5 years, Karen Kinnebrew is serving her first term as our Board President. She is also a parent of a child with a disability. Her son Paul, who has a diagnosis of autism, has been a client of HRC since he was four years old. When her son was diagnosed, Karen felt as if she had lost a dream. She has come to



*HRC
Board of Trustees
President Karen
Kinnebrew presid-
ing over an HRC
board meeting.*

feel that it wasn't so much a loss, but a change in her dream for her son, and she now focuses on how to nurture his every opportunity. Though Paul has an expressive language delay and primarily uses sign language to communicate, Karen and her husband, Elbert, maintain the same expectations for him that they have for

their other children. He is always a part of family outings and has learned how to be successful in social situations.

Having a child with a developmental disability has, of course, been challenging at times, and Karen feels that the involvement and support of her husband and the whole family have been critical to their success thus far. Together, Karen and Elbert have attended parent support groups and conferences, as well as many of the training classes available through HRC. Their other children, Jamie, 17, and Eric, 8, have participated in sibling support groups at HRC. Karen feels that these experiences have made her a better person, with a greater appreciation of others, leading her to try to share her own

NEW FAMILY COST PARTICIPATION PROGRAM GOES INTO EFFECT

The Family Cost Participation Program, which was created by the California State Legislature, went into effect on January 1st, 2005. This law requires regional center families with gross annual income above a minimum level to share in the cost of respite, day care, or camping services provided by the regional center.

Only families that receive one of the above services, and meet the following conditions, will be affected:

- Your children are between ages 3 to 17 years, and are clients of the regional center
- Your children live at home
- Your children are not eligible for Medi-Cal
- Your family's gross annual income is at least 400% of federal poverty level or greater.

Beginning in 2005, Regional Centers are now required to implement this program at the time of your annual service planning meeting (or at the time new families enter the regional center system). If your service plan includes respite, day care or camping services, you should expect the regional center to:

- ask you to provide proof of your gross annual income within ten working days after your service plan is created (or after a new client enters the regional center program).
- notify you if you are included under the Family Cost Participation guidelines above.
- notify you of your cost participation amount. This amount will be determined according to The Family Cost

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*Meet Our Board Members: Karen Kinnebrew
(continued from page 1)*

experiences and make a difference for others in return. Because Karen has always been very proactive, becoming well-informed and taking an active part in ensuring a better future for her son and his peers, her son's HRC counselor inquired about her interest in becoming involved with the HRC Board of Trustees. Karen was eager for this new challenge, and joined our Board in 1999. "The role of the Board President is to have an external oversight of the policies and issues we face," according to Karen. She brings her combined experience, both as a parent of a child with developmental disabilities, and in the field of finance (she is the Financial Director of Unmanned Reconnaissance Systems Business Unit at Raytheon). Karen has served on the HRC Planning Committee and was Vice-President of the Board of Trustees for two years prior to her election as President.

Like so many of our parent leaders, Karen's and Elbert's lives are filled with many other important activities and contributions to their community. Currently, Karen is working towards an MBA at USC. A few years ago, Karen and Elbert founded the California Youth Development Program, a non-profit group that gives girls from ages five through high school a chance to play competitive basketball and travel throughout the country. Karen coached the teams for years but now is a consultant for the program. Their secret to a successful partnership is their mutual support of each other, and their shared active involvement in the day-to-day needs of their children. As a result, Karen looks forward to continuing her duties on the board, and striving to make a difference. HRC is very fortunate to have this dynamic and energetic woman as our Board President! ■

*New Family Cost Participation Program
Goes Into Effect (continued from page 1)*

Participation Schedule, developed by the California Department of Developmental Services. (This schedule can be viewed online at www.harborrc.org. Click on Budget Information/Parent Co-pay).

After determining the family's share of cost, if any, the regional center will arrange to pay the remaining cost of authorized services directly to the service provider. Families will then be required to pay your share of service costs directly to your service provider each month.

The sliding scale for share of costs on the Family Cost Participation Schedule ranges from 5% to 80% of the total cost of services per month, based on the number of persons living in the family home and the family's gross annual income. It will also take into account the number of children with developmental disabilities, and any extraordinary medical expenses being borne by the family.

If you have more than one child ages 3-17 who lives at home and who is a client of

the regional center, your cost participation amount is adjusted as follows:

- for two children, your rate will be reduced by 25% for each child
- for three children, your rate will be reduced by 50% for each
- for four children, your rate will be reduced by 75% for each

If you have more than four children ages 3-17 who are clients of the regional center, you will not be required to participate in the family cost participation program.

Harbor Regional Center is working diligently at this time to create procedures for implementation of this new requirement from the state. Our staff intends to work very closely with our affected families, to provide you with information and answer your questions. Counselors will set aside time to discuss this new requirement at the time of each family's annual service planning meeting, and will provide families with informational materials. In the meantime, you can find additional information online at Harbor Regional Center's website, www.harborrc.org. ■

THE WORKABILITY PROGRAM PREPARES STUDENTS FOR THE WORLD OF WORK

The California Department of Education offers a valuable program, through your local school districts, called WorkAbility. The Workability Program provides opportunities for students with special needs to obtain marketable job skills while still in school. One example of this program is the South Bay WorkAbility program, a joint venture of Redondo Beach and Manhattan Beach School Districts, which strives to give students critical work skills such as showing up on time, calling in when sick and exhibiting appropriate job behavior. According to Jan Mintz, South Bay WorkAbility Program Vocational Education Specialist, "It is one thing to talk about work in class, it is another to go out and learn and practice these skills. Our program tries to find out what each student wants to do and match a job with their interest." This past year, South Bay students worked at Bank of America, Petco, Rite Aid and the school cafeteria.

The WorkAbility program begins in the eighth grade, when the curriculum focuses on becoming career aware. Many middle school students learn job skills through student-run businesses such as selling popcorn or running student stores. In high school, students might visit different work sites and participate in interest and aptitude tests. Those who want to work are able to spend at least four hours a week at a job site and are paid minimum wage. During their last semester of high school, seniors begin monthly meetings to learn how to succeed in college, how to read catalogs and know what kinds of supports are available. After high school, many students attend the El Camino College Transition program where students participate in college classes and continue to test the work environment.

The Rite Aid store in Redondo Beach currently employs five high school students from the South Bay WorkAbility program. Paul Vigneault, Rite Aid Development Manager feels WorkAbility is a benefit for his store, as well as the students who work there. The WorkAbility program, according to Paul, "gives students a chance to see what kinds of jobs are out there and what to expect from work. It also changes the atmosphere of the store. These students really want to succeed and have so much enthusiasm, it becomes contagious to both employees and customers."

When Jan started three years ago with the WorkAbility program, many of the seniors she worked with in local high schools had virtually no work experience. Today, just about all the students who want to work have jobs, and even the high school juniors are employed. For students who may also want to work after school, the South Bay WorkAbility program offers additional assistance.

The program works because it is built on a customized, flexible structure, has built-in mentoring and a network of supports, and because of the commitment of the people involved. The success students find with the WorkAbility program many times translates into finding work after they are done with school, and realizing a successful and more independent life.

To locate the WorkAbility program in your area or for more information, call (916) 323-3309 or log on the website at www.workability1.net for links to local regional programs. ■



With the assistance of WorkAbility job coach Lori Sabrowsky, Bryant Louis and Logan Adaza keep the shelves looking good at the local Rite Aid.

SAYING “YES” TO CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATIONS

While no one enjoys the experience of getting immunized, or of calming tearful children who do not want to get their shots, scientists and pediatricians want us to know how very important it is to continue to keep up children’s immunizations. Until recently, getting these vaccinations against preventable diseases like polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles and mumps was a ritual unquestioned by dutiful parents. Going without was an experience limited only to the poorest undeveloped countries and communities.

AUTISM AND THE MMR VACCINE: Why various research studies have not found a link.

- Although the number of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased steadily since 1979, no sharp increase in the number of these cases has occurred since the time that doctors started using the MMR vaccine.
- Symptoms and diagnoses of ASD occurred at the same ages, regardless of whether children were vaccinated before or after 18 months of age. (If the MMR vaccine caused ASD, the children who were vaccinated earlier would show symptoms earlier.)
- By age 2, the rate of vaccination for children with ASD was the same as the rate for children who did not have ASD. (If a link existed, then research would have found that a greater number of children who had been vaccinated would have ASD.)
- Appearance of symptoms and/or diagnosis of autism were no more likely to occur in time periods following the MMR vaccine than in other periods.

Recently, however, parents in the United States and other highly developed countries have raised questions and fears which have continued to spread (despite sound research findings to the contrary), via sources like word of mouth and the Internet. A study in the medical journal “Pediatrics” found that non-vaccinating parents today tend to be married, have college degrees, and high annual incomes.

“Parents cite several reasons for not vaccinating their children. Many think the vaccines aren’t necessary any more, because the diseases they prevent are rare in this country. Others believe children should develop natural immunity to disease. But most believe vaccines, or the mercury-based preservative once used in some vaccines, can cause diseases like autism, diabetes, and multiple sclerosis. Many anti-vaccine parents believe the medical establishment, in collusion with the government and vaccine-makers, is hiding these dangers from the public.” (“Saying ‘No’ To Immunization,” CBS News October 2004)

As more of these parents postpone or refuse immunization for their children, public health officials worry about the reappearance of diseases which had otherwise virtually disappeared. As reported recently by the news media, this is already beginning to happen with, for example, more cases of whooping cough in this country today than at any time in 40 years.

Health professionals and researchers feel this is tragic for several reasons. HRC Physician Sri Moedjono warns, “One only needs to look at ‘developing countries’ to see what these illnesses, which are fully preventable by vaccines, can do to children who do not have adequate access to immunization. Data has shown time and time again that when vaccinations are not provided, vaccine-preventable illnesses such as measles and whooping cough increase... and their consequences can include severe physical illness, lifelong disabilities, or death. With the influx of foreign visitors to our communities, the risk to acquire these diseases cannot be overemphasized.”

The current tide of concerns that autism might be linked to the MMR vaccine has been fueled because the symptoms of autism tend to appear at approximately the same time that immunizations are given. Attention increased dramatically after the publication, in 1998, of a study by English scientist Andrew Wakefield.

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This study was later disavowed by the journal *Lancet* which published it. Wakefield's study did not rely upon scientific testing, but was based solely upon the reports of parents of only 12 children. Since that time numerous reputable, scientifically-controlled research studies have repeatedly determined that links do not exist between the MMR vaccine and the incidence of autism, learning disabilities, or behavior problems.

Still, many parents who question or refuse vaccinations believe that not enough research has been done to reassure them that childhood vaccinations are not causing autism. Yet a recent objective review by CBS' *60 Minutes* found that in fact nearly 900 studies have reaffirmed the safety of routine vaccinations. The most recent research to show no link between MMR and autism was just published in November, 2004. The head of this British study stated "We hope the results of this study, the most robust and comprehensive undertaken to date, will reassure parents that MMR is not associated with an increased risk of developing autism...Our findings are consistent with evidence from a growing body of high-quality scientific studies. It is now time to move on and focus research into other potential causes of autism, which is urgently needed."

Because of the success of vaccinations thus far, it is easy to forget that diseases such as measles, mumps, and rubella can be life-threatening or can themselves cause lifelong impairments including mental retardation, heart defects, paralysis, deafness, and blindness. For all of these reasons the medical community, including regional center physicians, is united in recommending that we work together to prevent these disabilities in children, by following the recommended schedule of childhood immunizations.

Review of manuscript and related research provided by Sri Moedjono, M.D., HRC Physician. ■

Despite intensive efforts, single genes that cause autism have eluded detection until now. In a new study, researchers at the City of Hope in Duarte, California, have identified a gene defect which may cause autism in about three percent of affected families. This research on the neuroligin 4 (NLGN4) gene appears online at www.nature.com/mp for the journal *Molecular Psychiatry*.

"The importance of this study is that it seems to provide compelling evidence that defective NLGN4 predisposes children to autism, when placed in the context of two previous studies, which used a complementary approach. This genetic mechanism may operate in three percent of families with autism," said senior author Steve Sommer, M.D., Ph.D., director, Department of Molecular Genetics at City of Hope Cancer Center's Beckman Research Institute.

The NLGN4 protein is involved in forming a subset of synapses. Synapses are the communication connections between nerve cells. Higher cognitive functions depend on synapses, which form throughout life. Last year, French researchers found that the NLGN4 protein was prematurely truncated, and presumably completely inactive, in a boy with autism. The boy's brother, who had Asperger Syndrome, also had the defective protein. This year, another group of French researchers found a prematurely truncated protein in a family in which some members had autism and, interestingly, some had mental retardation. ■

FAMILY *matters*

SPECIAL DADS Meeting the Parenting Challenge



James Walsh spends a special moment reading to his daughter Emily.

The life of James Walsh is probably very different from that of most 24-year old guys. James' day-to-day life is now filled with the responsibilities of caring for Emily, his 3-year-old daughter who is diagnosed with autism. After becoming a husband and father in his early twenties,

James eventually found himself divorced and Emily's primary caregiver. Father and daughter share life together in a comfortable apartment filled with lots of love and toys scattered about the home.

Though Emily gives him so much love and satisfaction, it has not been easy. Others may have questioned his ability to raise his daughter alone, or assumed that his parents would do most of the work. James acknowledges that there were plenty of adjustments, but also tremendous rewards. The responsibility of caring for an infant was a very challenging and tiring experience for this young father. His active social life shifted so that it is now geared around taking care of Emily and trips to the park. He has learned early some of the hard reali-

ties of dealing with the court regarding divorce and children, but James feels that Emily has given him focus and something important to fight for. This dedicated father attends meetings with all his daughter's therapists and with his HRC counselor, who James has found is a great source of information and support.

Mark Coutee and his wife adopted two young children. Both Ariel, who is eleven years old, and her brother, nine-year-old Ryan, have learning disabilities and ADHD. Ariel was also diagnosed at age ten with Borderline Mental Retardation, Epilepsy, and Tourette's Syndrome. When the youngest child was just nine months old, Mark and his wife divorced. While living in San Francisco away from his kids, Mark reached a turning point in his life. Though he saw his kids every other weekend, Mark missed them a great deal. To remedy the situation, Mark moved back to Los Angeles and the kids eventually moved in with him. When Ariel was diagnosed, it was overwhelming for Mark. At first, the lack of information and a support system made it difficult for this single father. To get through the challenging times, Mark has attended all of Ariel's school meetings, taken advantage of support services available from HRC, and devoured all the information he could. Though he continues to have a positive relationship with the children's mother, Mark now has primary caretaking duties of his two children. He is very involved with his kids and loves being their full-time dad.

Both of these inspirational fathers find their roles to be as fulfilling as they are challenging. And both have learned the job of parent is much less difficult when you have support. Harbor Regional Center is very gratified to know that when these dads needed support, we

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Special Dads Meeting the Parenting Challenge (continued from page 6)

were there to provide it. We hope to continue to provide vital support to all of our families whenever it's needed. ■

If you are a father who can and likes to get things done, Harbor Regional Center would like to help you start and facilitate a new Fathers Support Group in the South Bay or Long Beach area. For more information, please call Kristin Martin at (310) 540-1711 ext. 4611. The Father's National Network at www.fathersnetwork.org is also a good source of information for fathers.



Ariel Coutee and father Mark prepare the family's meal.

RECOGNIZING EXTRA EFFORT!

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 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 kathryn.scheffer@HarborRC.org**

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.

LISTENING TO COMMUNITY NEEDS The City of Cerritos Responds to Parents

Judy Ren and her eleven-year-old son Alex live in the City of Cerritos. For Alex who has a diagnosis of autism, there were

limited options to participate in fun social activities. Recently, she and other parents in the Cerritos community found that becoming actively involved in your community can make a difference.



Participants in the City of Cerritos adaptive recreation program pose together in their Halloween best.

Five years ago, the city's Recreation Services Program had responded to an increasing interest in full inclusion of children with special needs into regular recreational programs offered by the city. At the same time, the city was seeing a marked decline in demand for separate programs for children with disabilities. According to Alexis Gormley, Recreation Services Coordinator for the City of Cerritos, the city had offered these specialized adaptive programs for a span of ten years, before phasing them out five years ago due to low attendance. But recently, Judy Ren was one of a group of six parents who felt that some specialized adaptive recreation options were again needed, and decided to take their request to their city.

Their letter to the City of Cerritos regarding the needs of their children was signed by over 100 parents and forwarded to Superintendent Joe Mendoza of the Recreation Department. Several of the parents did their research and visited other city programs to gather information about the type of program they would like to see, to present to the City of Cerritos Recreation Services Department. The result was a productive meeting with the City of Cerritos, Kent Yamashiro from Harbor Regional Center, and sixty-five

parents interested in adaptive programs for their children. Almost overnight, a swimming program for kids with special needs was developed and many other classes have followed.

The City of Cerritos listened to parents who were able to voice their interests and desires on behalf of their children. There is now a five-year plan in place to meet their identified needs for social-recreational and after-school programs for these kids. And they will continue to offer important opportunities for inclusion, including participation in the regular recreational programs offered by the city, for those who choose this option.

All of the City of Cerritos classes are split into groups according to ability. For example, the bowling class uses bumpers for beginners, or no bumpers for the more advanced. There is a partnership with Special Olympics and many of the participants in the City of Cerritos Adaptive Program attend Special Olympic competitive events. Parents and their children can pick from an array of choices for activities or classes which include activities nights, golf clinics, swim teams, bowling, soccer, basketball, and crafts. The City of Cerritos has many special events every year that include the whole family. It is an opportunity for parents to meet and network with each other, for siblings to meet other siblings, and for everyone to just have a great time.

For many parents, accessing day care was also a major concern. The City of Cerritos has partnered with The Arc (Association of Retarded Citizens), and provides space at local parks for The Arc's after-school programs. The city donates the proceeds from the annual Festival of Friendship 5K Run/Walk to The Arc program. Judy Ren is very happy with what a few determined parents could accomplish, and Alex loves attending the different activities the city offers. For more information on the City of Cerritos Recreation Services program, contact them at (562) 916-8470 or visit them on the web at www.ci.cerritos.ca.us. ■

Client *focus*

REALIZING HIS DREAMS

Bryan Boyd impresses everyone he knows with his enthusiasm for life and his independent will. At the age of two, Bryan moved in with his foster family where he remained until his elderly foster mother could no longer adequately care for his needs. From the warmth and care of the only family he had ever known, Bryan moved to a community residential home. While he was happy at his new home, Bryan longed to become more independent and to have his own apartment. HRC counselor Cady Laycook worked with Bryan to develop a plan so he could live independently. Since 1998, this determined young man has lived in his own apartment at a complex specially designed for people with physical disabilities.

Because Bryan is diagnosed with cerebral palsy, and is severely physically disabled, his accomplishments haven't always been easy. At home, Bryan is assisted with his daily self-care needs by his In-Home Supportive Services staff. He uses a Pathfinder communication device to converse with others and a motorized wheelchair to move around the community. Bryan has been working with his speech therapist to better communicate using e-mail and to access the Internet to gather information.

Bryan currently attends Long Beach City College, working towards his Associate Degree. In the future, he would like to be employed as a computer programmer in the field of augmentive communication systems. In fact, Bryan takes advantage of the information available to him by regularly attending conferences on augu-

mentive communication. Last year, he raised enough money to attend an important conference in Pittsburg to learn more about augmentive communication and the workplace.

Although he has no family close to him, Bryan has created a wonderful support system which includes people from his church, his HRC counselor, his speech therapist, college staff, his Supported Living Instructor and his neighbors. This remarkable young man finds special joy in his church family, and the social activities the church offers. Through the assistance of his communication device, Bryan is able to participate in the church choir and holiday musicals produced at the church. His church Pastor, Keith, is very supportive of Bryan's needs and will frequently attend Bryan's service planning meetings. Bryan spends many weekends going to museums and concerts, having dinner or enjoying other activities with his best friend, Jeff. Recently, Bryan has begun attending the Harbor Friendship Center in Torrance where he participates in the different activities available or just hangs out with his peers at the center.

Bryan has too many goals to let his disability slow him down. He is in charge of his life and will continue to inspire those around him. Bryan continues to advocate for, and work with, others who use augmentive communication devices. Most of all, Bryan continues to live life to the fullest. ■



Bryan Boyd (center) hangs out with his "dad," Pastor Keith Wells and his best friend, Jeff Bowers.

resource center

CHECK IT OUT AGAIN: The HRC Resource Center Expands with Exciting Ideas and Improvements

Andrea Sunu practices her computer skills with the help of instructor Jim Fite.



In its early days in 1992, the HRC Resource Center received an average of five calls a month, and possessed approximately 40 resource items available for patrons. Today, the resource center receives hundreds of calls and visitors every month, and offers more than 4,500 resource items. The resource center is an exciting place which families, clients and many others seek out

as a primary source of information and support. According to Barbara del Monico, Resource Center Manager, "We continually are adding more comprehensive resources, working to be more responsive to requests, and to offer our patrons a variety of activities to enhance their lives."

The HRC Resource Center is currently working to expand already existing programs and to develop new ideas. The resource center hopes that all of you will take advantage of the many very valuable resources and supports that are available.



HRC Resource Center Assistant Manager Kristin Martin assists HRC parent Wendy Asato to obtain the information she needs.

Computer Lab – Both adults and children can enjoy this state-of-the-art computer lab, with new computer programs and adaptive equipment available. Recently, the computer lab's entire curriculum was revised and expanded.

For school-age clients ages seven and up, there is an after-school computer lab that offers opportunities for any skill level, and is now available four days a week.

The Adult Computer Lab added a new class called "Basic Reading for Life." This class uses interactive software and visuals that move by voice control to teach functional reading skills useful in the community and workplace environments.

Parent Mentor Program – The HRC Resource Center recruits, trains, and matches Parent Mentors with interested families. These compassionate Parent Mentors support other HRC parents, spending time with them in person or on the telephone, to listen and provide information, share experiences and lend support.

Toy Lending Library – This wonderful new program will allow parents to explore and check out toys for their children. Parents can experiment with developmentally-appropriate toys, and see which ones may be right for their child.

Lap Reading Program – The Resource Center continues to purchase books which facilitate the development of pre-linguistic skills. The Lap Reading program will emphasize the importance of reading to children under the age of three years, and train parents how to use books effectively to build language skills.

With the continued improvement of current resources and programs, and the addition of some wonderful new programs, the HRC Resource Center hopes to be an even more valuable resource. For more information contact the HRC Resource Center at (310) 543-0691. ■

WHAT'S NEW AT THE RESOURCE CENTER?

By Dominique DeBorba, HRC Parent & HRC Resource Center Family Support Assistant

One of the most challenging transitions for clients and families might be the transition from school to adulthood. Though there may be a need for different kinds of supports to be in place to facilitate the transition process, many families are unaware of the timelines, laws, and supports available. At the Resource Center, we can support families by giving them the information they may need to make the transition from school to adulthood a little easier and less complicated.

Life Beyond the Classroom *by Paul Wehman*

This book provides practical and creative techniques to ensure careful transition planning for young people with disabilities.

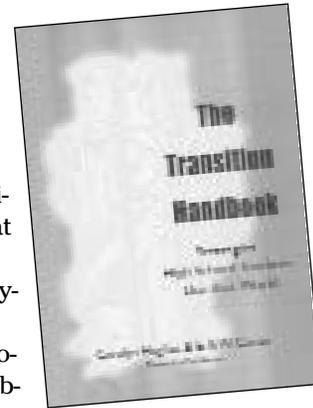
The author discusses the importance of fostering work skills in these young people. In addition, the book also focuses on mobility, financial independence, sexuality, choice, friendship, leisure, and independent living.



with disabilities in basic self-determination skills. Topics include self-awareness and self-advocacy. The techniques discussed are field tested and are proven to help students learn to lead more satisfactory, self-directed lives.

The Transition Handbook *by Carolyn Hughes and Erik Carter*

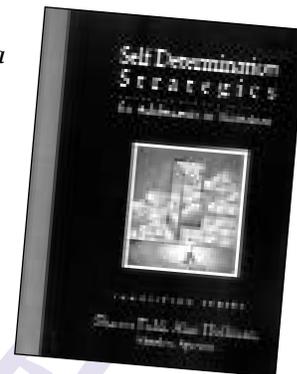
Transition support applies the same general philosophical principles of support that have been developed and applied to supported employment and supported living arrangements. This book provides guidelines for the establishment of a seamless system for moving from secondary education to post-secondary environments at a local community level.



Self-Determination Strategies for Adolescents in Transition

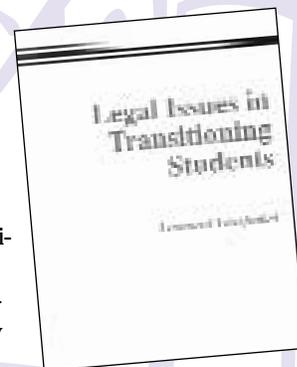
by Sharon Field, Alan Hoffman, and Shirley Spezia

This resource provides strategies to promote self-determination in adolescents and young adults when navigating the transition process from school to the work place and to independent living.



Legal Issues in Transitioning Students *by Leonard Garfinkel*

This is a manual designed to provide an overview of the legalities of transitioning special education students from high school to adult life. Successful transition depends on ongoing collaboration and communication between a variety of persons and agencies. This manual increases better communication by providing everyone with information on how the various statutes interrelate. ■



Teaching Self-Determination to Students with Disabilities

by Michael L. Wehmeyer, Martin Agran, and Carolyn Hughes

Learn practical and user-friendly methods for instructing students



GIVING BACK DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Once again, the tremendous generosity of our community made it possible for Harbor Regional Center to provide extra support to children and adults with developmental disabilities in need during the holidays. With the assistance of our community partners, we were able to offer these clients and families tangible support, in the form of toys, gift certificates, a warm winter coat, or a special holiday party. At the same time these families received the invaluable support which comes from knowing that others care about them.

Holiday Giving Campaign

Many of you responded charitably to our Holiday Giving mail campaign, with contributions to the Harbor Help Fund. As a result, Harbor Regional Center distributed 2500 food and gift certificates to families in need. We sincerely thank all of you for your generosity.

This year, we distributed more than 1000 toys donated by Mattel and the California Highway Patrol to children who would not otherwise have had such a very happy holiday. Along with toys, HRC was able to provide families with hundreds

of warm winter coats, collected and donated to HRC by the Los Angeles Girl Scout Association.

Adopt-a-Family

The HRC "Adopt-a-Family" program pairs an individual or group with a needy family. This holiday season, HRC matched more than 80 families with their special benefactors who showered them with gifts and other needed items. We want to extend a very special thank you to ALL of the organizations and individuals that participated in the "Adopt-a-Family" program. These include:

Artiano, Guzman & Toomey Law Offices
 Bird & Bird, A Law Corporation
 City of Carson Employees
 Cub Scout Troop #922
 David S. Brown, Attorney at Law
 Fluor Corporation, Long Beach
 Harbor Regional Center Employees
 Inclusive Education & Community Partnership
 Law Offices of Chet Taylor
 Michael Norris, Inc.
 Northrop Grumman Employees;
 San Pedro & Manhattan Beach facilities
 The Pellerito Family
 Private Funding Foundation
 Ralphs Grocery Corporate Office –
 Distribution Department
 Sandpiper Foundation
 Southbay Credit Union
 Spierer & Woodward Law Offices
 Twin Towers School Employees
 Unocal Credit Union employees
 Valero Wilmington Refinery Employees



(top) Boeing employee Adrian Uyehara recommended HRC as the recipient of a \$2,500 Employee Contribution Fund grant, here received by HRC's Nancy Spiegel.

(bottom) HRC Board Member Mariano Sanz hands out new toys to children in need.



(top) Unocal Credit Union employees brought lots of presents and smiles to their "adopted" children. (below) HRC board member, George Bird and his law office colleagues "adopted" a family this holiday season.

Holiday Event for Children

Harbor Regional Center and the South Torrance/BIGGS Neighborhood Girl Scout Council again collaborated to throw a

party for HRC children in need. We were joined this year by many more community groups and volunteers, to put on this hugely successful event. As reported in the Daily Breeze newspaper, "The snow was fake, but the smiles on the faces of the children attending a Christmas party in Torrance were as

real as they come." Five hundred children received a picture with Santa Claus, tested their skills, created holiday art, and donned face paint at the activity booths, and sledged down a "man-made" snow run. The event featured former Dodger player Rudy Law signing autographs, caricature artist Nathan Fowkes, balloon artist Bernie Slotnik and his clown crew, music, and much more. For those children who worked up an appetite or thirst running from one activity to another, StateFair Foods/Sara Lee Inc. provided hundreds of hot dogs and brownies, while Pepsi donated the water and sodas.

The Holiday Family Event, 2004 and Toy and Coat Distribution were funded entirely by contributions, and could not have taken place without these sponsors. Harbor Regional Center thanks the following organizations for their generous support of these important programs.



Children enjoy all the fun activities at the HRC Holiday Family Event, 2004.

Event Select Sponsors

\$2,000 and over in cash or in-kind donations

Boeing, California
Diversified Paratransit
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Mattel Children's Foundation
Northrop Grumman ECHO
StateFair Foods/
Sara Lee Inc.

Event Sponsors

Los Angeles Dodgers
Nathan Fowkes
Bernie Slotnik and friends
Pepsi Bottling Company
Sandpiper Foundation
California Highway Patrol
Lynne Alba & the Children's Fitness Health & Learning Center
Wondernation

With Special Thanks to our Many Volunteers!

Angeles Girl Scout Council – South Torrance/BIGGS Neighborhood
King Harbor Church College Group
Peninsula High School Service Club
The Sand Debs from Sandpiper Foundation
Los Angeles Girl Scout Council
Harbor Regional Center Staff and their families



EL COSTO NUEVO YA EN EFECTO POR LA PARTICIPACIÓN PROGRAMA FAMILIAR

El Costo Familiar por la Participación al programa, el cual fue creado por la Legislatura del Estado California entro en efecto el 1ro de Enero, 2005. Esta ley requiere que las familias del centro regional con ingreso anual arriba del nivel mínimo que compartan con el costo de descanso (respiro), cuidado durante el día, o servicios de campamento proveídos por el centro regional.

Solamente las familias que reciban alguno de los servicios arriba mencionados, y reúnan las siguientes condiciones, serán afectadas:

- Si sus hijos son entre las edades de 3 a 17 años, y son clientes del centro regional.
- Si sus hijos viven en casa.
- Si sus hijos no son elegibles para Medi-Cal.
- Si el ingreso anual de su familia es por lo menos de 400% del nivel federal de pobreza.

Empezando en el 2005, Centros Regionales están ahora requiriendo implementar este programa al momento de su junta anual de planificación de su programa (o al momento en que las familias entran al sistema del centro regional). Si su plan de servicios incluye respiro, cuidado durante el día o servicios de campamento, usted debe esperar que el centro regional:

- Le pida a usted proveer una prueba de su ingreso neto anual entre los diez días después que su plan de servios es creado. (o después de que un cliente nuevo entra el programa del centro regional)
- Notificara a usted si usted esta incluido bajo la guía del Programa de Participación de Costo anteriormente mencionadas.
- Notifica a usted la cantidad del costo de participación. Esta cantidad será determinada de acuerdo a el plan de El Programa de Participación de Costo, desarrollado por El Departamento de Incapacidades de California. (Este plan

podrá ser visto en la pagina de la Internet al www.harborrc.org. Seleccione Budget Information/Parent Co-Pay).

Después de determinar su cuota familiar, si es que las hay, el centro regional se encargara de pagar la cuota restante de servicios autorizados directamente al proveedor de servicios. A familias entonces se les va a ser requerida a pagar mensualmente a su proveedor.

La escala usada para su cuota familiar en El Programa de Participación de Costo varia entre 5% a 80% del costo total de servicios por mes, basado en el numero de personas que viven en casa y del ingreso bruto anual familiar. Tambien se tomara en cuenta el numero de niños con incapacidad del desarrollo, y algún otro gasto medico extraordinario sostenido por la familia.

Si usted tiene mas de un niño de edad 3-17 que vive en casa y que es un cliente de el centro regional, su costo de participación será ajustado como sigue:

- Para dos niños, su tarifa será reducida por 25% por cada niño
- Por tres niños, su tarifa será reducida por 50% por cada uno
- Por cuatro niños, su tarifa será reducida por 75% por cada uno
- Si usted tiene mas de cuatro niños de edades 3-17 que son clientes del centro regional, usted no tendrá que participar en el Programa Familiar de Participación de Costo.

El Centro Regional Harbor en este momento esta trabajando diligentemente para crear los procedimientos de implementación para este nuevo requisito del el estado de California. Nuestros trabajadores intentaran trabajar muy de cerca con nuestras familias afectadas, para proveerles a ustedes con información y respuestas sus preguntas. Los consejeros tomarán tiempo para discutir estos nuevos requisitos al tiempo de cada junta anual familiar de planificación de servicios, y proveerán a las familias con materiales informativos. Mientras tanto, usted puede encontrar información adicional en la Internet en la pagina del Centro Regional Harbor, www.harborrc.org. ■

CHECK OUT THESE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES!

In April, Harbor Regional Center offers some great training opportunities for young adults who are transitioning from school or any adult clients who might want more information concerning community resources. These classes and many more are listed in the Harbor Regional Center Training & Events Catalog mailed twice a year to your home, available by request from your HRC counselor, or available online at www.HarborRC.org.

Work & Day Activity Resource Fair

Friday, April 22, 2005 – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Harbor Regional Center and Long Beach Unified School District will co-host this day activity and work fair. This is a great opportunity for young adults to plan for transition into adult life after high school. Come visit and talk to over 20 service providers, who provide supported employment, day activity services, and supported living services. For more information, please contact Kent Yamashiro at (310) 543-0687. Presented at Millikan High School Library, 2800 Snowden Avenue in Long Beach.

Learning About Living Options: Living Alternatives for People with Developmental Disabilities

Thursday, April 28, 2005 – 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

This is a panel discussion for family members, clients, and any others interested in the various living options available to clients of Harbor Regional Center. Several different types of living options will be represented including licensed community care homes for children and adults, foster family homes, and licensed health care homes. Also discussed will be independent and supported living options for adults and the H.O.P.E. program for affordable housing. For more information contact Kent Yamashiro at (310) 543-0687 or via e-mail at kent.yamashiro@harborrc.org. Presented at Harbor Regional Center, Long Beach Training Center.

Pathways to Independence...

A Self-Advocacy Conference for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Saturday, April 30, 2005 – 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Harbor Regional Center Client Advisory Committee invites adult clients of HRC to attend this full-day conference. Break-out sessions will focus on topics such as dating & relationships, employment, self-advocacy and leadership. Members of the CAC and HRC staff will be available to give you information that can guide you on your path to independence. A pizza social and celebration with exciting door prizes will follow the conference. You must pre-register by April 15, 2005 for this conference. Please contact Maria Garibay at (310) 543-0620 to reserve your seat. Cost: \$10.00 per person, payable at the time of registration. Presented at Harbor Regional Center, Torrance. ■

SAVE THESE DATES

HOPE (Home Ownership for Personal Empowerment) creates stable, affordable housing options for people with developmental disabilities. Check out these two great ways to assist HOPE to continue with this important mission.

Macy's Del Amo Community Shopping Day. A \$10.00 ticket will provide amazing discounts and ticket proceeds will be donated to HOPE. Shop until you drop on Friday, May 20, 2005 at the Del Amo Mall in Torrance.

9th Annual Spring Dinner & Auction at the Universal Studios. This exciting event takes place on Saturday, June 25, 2005 at the Universal Studios Globe Theater. Tickets are \$125.00.

If you would like more information about HOPE, volunteer to help with fundraising, or are interested in contributing in any way, please call Jennifer Byram at (310) 543-0635.

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BOARD MEETINGS

March 15, 2005 – 8:00 a.m.

April 19, 2005 – 6:30 p.m.

May 17, 2005 – 8:00 a.m.

No meeting in June

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. The Board does not meet in June, August or December.

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 A1 & A2 at Harbor Regional Center. ■

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

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