

CMH TOOLBOX RESOURCES FOR BUILDING BETTER LIVES

ANOKA COUNTY CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH



Educational Advocacy for students with disabilities

As children enter the new school year, many parents find they have questions regarding school advocacy for their child with disabilities. "How do I request services for my child? How do I even know if my child qualifies for help?"

This is the first of a three-part series on the subject. This article focuses on PACER Center and the role of educational advocacy.

Federal law mandates that every state have a "Parent Trainings and Information Center" for parents of children, age 0-22, with disabilities. PACER, Inc. is the agency in Minnesota that provides this service. All services and information are available to parents of children with disabilities free of charge.

According to Carolyn Anderson, PACER Parent

Advocate, PACER provide a range of services, including parent advocacy, education and training opportunities, written materials, and occasionally, attendance at IEP meetings (Individualized Education Plan).

PACER is a coalition of 18 disability organizations. It recommends that parents be connected with the disability organization that focuses on the child's disability as well as with PACER Center for special education information. Contact information can be provided via Internet or by requesting written material.

While educational services can be a confusing process for many families, it can also be powerful one when a child receives the services he/she needs to be successful. For further information on any of these topics, please contact PACER Center at

952-838-9000. Services are statewide. Information also can be obtained at www.pacer.org.

See the insert for additional information on the IEP process. The next newsletter will include information on 504 plans. They are special documents that can be written to accommodate student's needs without having to complete a full Special Education Assessment. The final newsletter in the spring of 2007 will provide information on grievance procedures parents can follow if they disagree with Individualized Education Plan accommodations / interventions.

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Six strategies for starting school successfully

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Starting school whether it is pre-school, daycare, or elementary through high school means an adjustment for everyone in the family. Even after bed times are established, morning routines are set, and homework patterns are created, it is important

to keep a focus on healthy and happy kids to ensure a successful year.

Here are six strategies for starting school on the right foot and making it a memorable and positive experience.

Limit children to no more than two

structured activities when starting school for the year.

Kids who are involved in lessons, music, church, scouting, dance, and sports may seem like they are getting a diversified and well-rounded educational

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Encouraging News! Success stories....

This is a letter from a parent whose family participated in the ADHD Program through West Lake Family Services.

I just want to give my thanks to both of you for making this happen!! I am just finishing up working on the program: Kids with Incredible potential ADHD and also working with Dean Grauds and Carrie Burk.

It was a huge commitment on all our parts and I was very scared, not knowing how this was going to help my family.

It came at a time in our lives, were we just couldn't keep going the way we were, but yet not knowing how to or what to change.

I loved both Dean and Carrie they are a great contrast from each other, yet complimenting each other in their work. Dean is very straight forward and tells you like it is and what he sees. He is very insightful, and can see the family as a whole and how we are as individuals. Dean had a way

of making me think and see things differently, which gave me a different attitude about situations. I thought he would come into my home and work on the kids. I was so wrong. He was working on me. (It made a difference.) My daughter protested (age 8) against Dean coming to the house each week.. I saw her open to him, and tell him things she had never told me. And he focused on each of us, not just my daughter who is ADHD. I can tell he is concerned and compassionate for his clients.

Carrie is a charming lady and lots of fun. She really made fast friends with the kids, and I felt at complete ease with her. She also was very insightful, of my family and pointed many things out, whether it was a good job and doing something right or doing some things that really needed to be looked at and the behavior needed to change. She was a great resource and knew her material and the book well.

My last meeting is next

week for the closing, and I have mixed feelings. I will miss them. They became such apart of our lives. I'll be scared of not having their support, to feeling excited about putting all I have learned into my daily life with my family, and seeing my family grow.

It is important for me to tell

"I thought he would come into my home and work on the kids. I was so wrong, he was working on me."

you this program is excellent!!! I wish everyone who is having trouble with their family could have the opportunity to experience this. I realized I was not alone, and what was happening to us was not because I was a bad parent, but because I didn't have the tools to deal with some of the situations. I hope this program stays with Anoka County. I think there are so many families that could

benefit from this program.

I am not saying my life is perfect, nor do I know everything, but now I have tools to help with situations, and be able to bring a bad situation into control.

Again, I just want to say thank you, for giving me and my family: peace, control, and much needed support to change.

I believe we will all be happier in the future. Please let Dean and Carrie know what a great job they are doing, and their time and efforts are well worth it, and they do make a difference!!

*Sincerely,
Patti*

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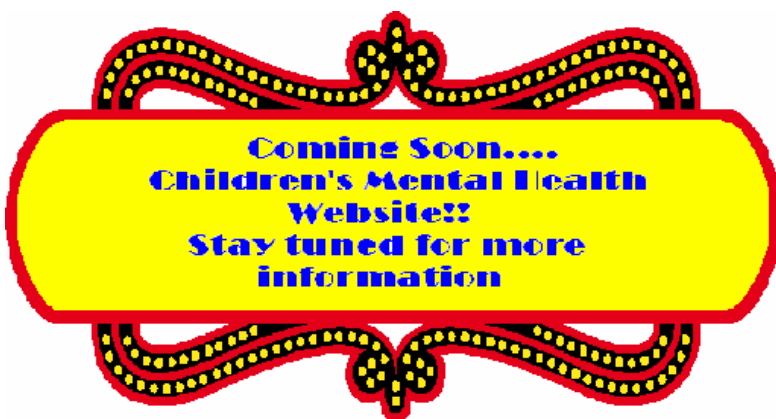
If you would like to share a success story in a future newsletter, call your county case manager.

Treatment options for Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD):

Treatment is available and may employ different strategies including:

- Psychotherapy
- DBT: Dialectical Behavior Therapy/Skills Training
- Pharmacological Interventions; Medications
- Treating Co-Existing Disorders, i.e. Substance Abuse, Eating Disorders
- Hospitalization

How long does treatment last? It varies from person to person. In many cases, individuals with BPD need long-term, out-patient treatment. Findings show that most people with BPD achieve more stability in their 30's, 40's.



Working with people to improve lives



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Promote public awareness
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Brought to you by the Children's Mental Health Newsletter
Committee: Sandy, Angie, Denise, Julie, and Gena.

Borderline Personality Disorder

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to stay calm.

Encourage the person to stay in treatment.

Make contracts, but make sure all agreements are clear and concise. Keep them simple. Important to make consequences for unacceptable behavior clear.

Be consistent, try to follow through with what you say, this way the person learns what to expect from you. By setting limits, you're making the person accountable for their behaviors. Don't let unacceptable behavior go unnoticed or you may actually be reinforcing

them.

Manage your energy. Take time for yourself. Good personal self-care is different for everyone, from maintaining proper nutrition to keeping life in balance, i.e. family, work, social relationships. We tend to see that if there is an imbalance in one aspect of our life, there will be a domino effect in the rest.

If you or someone you know has signs of BPD, or you'd like to learn more, Contact your doctor or health care provider, community mental health center, mental health professionals including psychiatrist, psychologist, therapist, hospital, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill; Social Services.

Calendar of Events

Call 763-712-2703 for more information

September 27-29, 2006 Community Mental Health Annual Conference, Duluth MN

October 27-28, 2006 The ARC of Minnesota State Convention, Rochester MN

Anoka Hennepin Parent Involvement Trainings. If interested contact Pam Naegele at 763-506-1278 or by email at Pam.Naegele@anoka.k12.mn.us.

- October 2, 7-9pm - Developing Goals and Related Services to Meet Mental Health Needs
- October 9, 7-9pm - Self-Injurious Behaviors
- October 9, 7-9pm - Children's Mental Health: Navigating the System
- October 16, 7-9 pm - "No" means "No" - Developing Responsible Youth
- October 10 & 17, 7-9pm - Managing Children's Challenging Behavior
- November 16, 7-9pm - Join Author Mary Sheedy Kurcinka - Temper Tantrums, Morning Wars, Homework Hassles



Educational Advocacy for students with disabilities



An IEP is an Individualized Education Program and is written to serve specific needs a child has based on evaluation of those needs. If a parent is wondering if his/ her child has learning disabilities, behavioral issues, speech / language needs, etc. The parent can make a request to the school to have a special education evaluation completed.

The request needs to be in writing, with the date and a signature. Address it to the principal of your child's school as well as the special education director of your school district. The school should contact you to set up a time to talk about the evaluation request within a *reasonable amount of time* (approximate 10 school days or two calendar weeks). If no evaluation has ever been done, the school and parents should develop an evaluation plan. If the school refuses to evaluate, they should document the refusal on the Denial of Parent Request Form that will give their reasons.

Once the evaluation plan is signed by the parents and returned to the school, the school has 30 *school days* to complete the evaluation,

meet with the family to review the findings, and present them a written copy of the results. If the child is eligible for special education services under one or more of the 13 eligibility categories, the child's new IEP team (which always includes the parents) will meet very soon to write an IEP.

The parents should receive a copy of the IEP to consider in about two weeks or less. The parent then has 14 calendar days to respond to whether he/ she wants to approve the IEP. The first or initial IEP will not go into effect without a parent signature. For later IEPs, if the parent doesn't sign the form and return it within 14 days, the IEP *still goes into effect*. If a parent objects to the IEP they need to let the school know immediately in writing on the form attached to the IEP.

Every three years children who receive special education will be reevaluated to determine continued eligibility and to update the educational needs (including behavioral). A full reevaluation can be requested prior to three years, but should be done so only if there is a significant change/ event/ testing result that would deem this necessary and may affect school services for the child. Parents will participate in the planning of the evaluation and will receive a permission form outlining the assessments to be done. If a parent disagrees with the testing he/ she

should contact the school in writing immediately as *the school will/ can proceed with this testing if the form hasn't been returned within 10 school days*. The school again has 30 days to complete the evaluation process including meeting with parents to give the results.

While educational services can be a confusing process for many families, it can also be powerful one when a child receives the services he/ she needs to be successful. For further information on any of these topics, please contact PACER Center at the following: 952- 838-9000, or at 800-537-2237. Services are statewide. Information can also be obtained through the Internet at www.pacer.org



Every IEP should include the following components:

- *Present level of performance (where the child is at now in a particular area)
- *Goals to build skills (including behavior if applicable)
- *Behavior Intervention Plan (if applicable)
- *Positive Behavior Intervention Plan (if applicable)
- *Adaptations for academic work or expectations including behavior
- *List of services and who will provide them for how much time
- *Progress report timeline (reports on goals as often as children at that school receive report cards)
- *Other areas

Commonly used abbreviations:

- ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorder
- BIP: Behavior Intervention Plan
- D/HH: Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- DCD: Developmental Cognitive Disability
- E/BD: Emotional and/or Behavioral Disorder (this is not a diagnosis)
- ECSE: Early Childhood Special Education
- FBA: Functional Behavior Assessment
- IEP: Individualized Education Program
- IQ: Intelligence Quotient (often measured by the WISC-IV or Woodcock Johnson tests)
- PBIP: Positive Behavior Intervention Plan
- OHI or OHD: Other Health Impairment or Disability (can include some mental health diagnosis)
- Spec.Ed.: Special Education