

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Topic of the Month: Intellectual Disabilities



## Upcoming Statewide Events

### Beyond Diversity I Seminar

This seminar, updated and aligned with Courageous Conversations About Race, 2nd Edition, is designed to help teachers, students, parents, and administrators understand the impact of race on student learning and investigate the role that racism plays in institutionalizing academic achievement disparities. Participants will engage in a thoughtful, compassionate exploration of race and racism and grapple with how each influences the culture and climate of our schools.

**Date:** March 2-3, 2017

**Location:** CESA 11, Turtle Lake, WI  
[Information and Registration Link](#)

### Advocacy for Change

A full day advocacy and skills training event for parents and other family members who have children/youth with disabilities or special health care needs. The day will culminate with visits with Legislators at the Capitol.

**Date:** March 2, 2017

**Location:** Concourse Hotel, Madison, WI  
[Information and Registration Link](#)

### Autism of Society of Wisconsin Annual Conference

Friday keynote presentation by Dr. Temple Grandin will provide a look into her personal experiences; intervention, problems with sensory and over-sensitivity. She will also discuss the thinking process, the importance of developing strengths as well as the importance of work skills. Saturday keynote features a Panel of Experts. Full-day and half-day pre-conference offerings

**Date:** April 27-29 2017

**Location:** Kalahari, WI Dells, WI  
[Information and Registration Link](#)

## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - What You Need to Know

By Wendy Overturf

All students with disabilities have the goal of finding a job in the community with a competitive wage after they finish school. A competitive wage is one that is in line with what other employers in the same field offer workers for the same jobs. Historically, many of these students have been unemployed or underemployed – especially students with intellectual disabilities.

To help more young people with disabilities find competitive jobs, both parties of Congress passed a bill which President Obama signed into law as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in July of 2014. The parts of the law affecting services in schools went into effect on July 22, 2016.

The WIOA requires schools and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to make sure that students with all types of disabilities, even severe disabilities, receive services to help them get fair paying jobs in the community. Agencies need to set aside at least 15 percent of their federal funding toward helping students with disabilities get competitive jobs.

Schools and DVR work together to make sure students with disabilities ages 14-21 have a chance to find competitive jobs by giving them “pre-employment transition services” (Pre-ETS). Pre-ETS services are:

- **Job exploration** – learning more about the jobs that are out there
- **Work-based learning** (i.e. in-school, after school, or outside of school experiences, including internships)
- Counseling on **postsecondary education and training programs** (i.e. technical school & college)
- **Social and independent living skills** and **self-advocacy** training (i.e. peer mentoring)

Schools still need to provide any transition services needed to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The law will mean that fewer people with disabilities will start working in sheltered workshops or other places where they would earn less than minimum wage. People with disabilities age 24 and younger will not be able to work for less than minimum wage unless DVR and their school supported them.

Under the new law, most students with disabilities need to try working at a job with competitive pay before working for less than minimum wage. If a student with a disability is working for less than minimum wage, the law requires the state to state to provide career counseling.

You can read more about WIOA on the [DPI website](#) and at [Department of Workforce Development](#). Highlights of many of the changes can be found [here](#) on the DPI website. WI FACETS will be having a training webinar on WIOA on March 8, 2017, presented by Nancy Farnon-Molfenter, WI DPI. [Registration information](#)

## Upcoming Statewide Events

### Circles of Life Conference

Wisconsin's annual conference for parents and family members who have children with disabilities and the professionals who support them.

**Date:** May 4-5, 2017

**Location:** Holiday Inn, Stevens Pt., WI

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### Wisconsin Indian Education Association (WIEA) Conference

This event is titled, MINO-AYAA 'IDIWIN: Let's Be Healthy Together, will be hosted by WIEA's Northeast Region. The conference includes events at Lakeland Union High School in Minocqua and Lake of the Torches Resort Convention Center in Lac du Flambeau, WI. The 2017 Conference includes early extended programming thanks in part to a partnership between The Disproportionality Technical Assistance Network or "The Network", and the Wisconsin Indian Education Association.

**Date:** May 12-13, 2017

**Location:** Minocqua, WI

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### 2017 Wisconsin Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Conference

The Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health (WI-AIMH) promotes the social and emotional well-being of Wisconsin children from birth through age five by supporting families and professionals across disciplines. WI-AIMH efforts focus on weaving relationship-based infant mental health practices and principles into the everyday activities of all individuals who touch the lives of infants, young children, and their families.

**Date:** June 12-14, 2017

**Location:** Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake, WI

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### 24th Annual State-Wide Institute on Best Practices in Inclusive Education

Offering a variety of information on Best Practices in Inclusion, this Institute is co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and the Inclusion Institute, Inc. Registration opening soon.

**Date:** July 24-26, 2017

**Location:** Wausau, WI

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### Endless Possibilities Conference

**Save the Date:** August 3, 2017

**Location:** UW-Whitewater, WI

## RESEARCH TO READ

### Does participation in higher education make a difference in life outcomes for students with intellectual disability?

Butler, Laura N., et al. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation* 44.3 (2016): 295-298.

[Article Link](#)

**Abstract:** **BACKGROUND:** There has been a great migration of students with intellectual disability (ID) into the college world. The Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008 (HEOA) has opened the door to postsecondary education to a previously untapped market of students. As a result, programs for students with intellectual disability have been developed around the country to support this historic systems change (Lee, 2009). Along with improved job prospects as one important measure of success, college participation also brings opportunity for personal and social development. **OBJECTIVE:** With seven years passing since the HEOA, it is prudent to assess outcomes for those students who are choosing to continue their education beyond high school. The National Core Indicators provide a unique opportunity to assess impact of higher education across life domains, historically used to determine developmental disability service system quality of life outcomes. Here, we discuss higher education and outcomes around employment, health, relationships and medications. **METHODS:** Students who had completed at least two semesters of college in Kentucky were surveyed about life outcomes using the National Core Indicators (NCI) Adult Consumer Survey (ACS). **RESULTS:** Findings on health, medications, employment, and relationships are reported. **CONCLUSION:** Participation in higher education can positively impact life outcomes across a variety of domains. This research represents a first step in utilizing a nationally recognized instrument that takes a holistic view of outcomes for adults with IDD to assess impact of participation in higher education. While the results are promising, further studies using larger samples are needed.

### The Place of Peers in Peer-Mediated Interventions for Students with Intellectual Disability.

Schaefer, John M., Helen I. Cannella-Malone, & Erik W. Carter. *Remedial & Special Education* 37.6 (2016): 345-356.

[Article Link](#)

**Abstract:** Although peer-mediated interventions are an evidence-based approach for improving social and learning outcomes for students with intellectual disability (ID), their impact on participating peers has received limited attention. Knowing whether and how peers are affected could influence the extent to which these interventions are more widely adopted in schools. The purpose of this review was to (a) summarize extant research on the behaviors of peers without disabilities and their perception of interacting with students with ID, (b) identify common behaviors measured for peers, and (c) evaluate the effects of peer-mediated interventions on peers. Toward that effort, we reviewed 53 studies. Results indicate that interventions have successfully increased peers' interactions with their classmates with ID and suggest some positive outcome for peers; however, consistent methodological gaps limit further analysis. We offer recommendations for strengthening future research involving peers within interventions for students with ID.

## INSTRUCTIONAL TRENDS: Learner Centered Classrooms

While the term "Learner Centered Classrooms" (LCCs) may be fairly new, some of the concepts behind them have existed since the early 1900s. Here are 5 parts to know about today's evidence-based LCCs:

**Construction of learning** - Students are given lots of opportunities that allow them to make connections to new concepts.

**Metacognition** - Students "think about their thinking" and reflect upon *how* they best learn in addition to *what* they are learning.

**Educator/student partnership in learning** - Students make decisions in the classroom. Teachers understand the students' current knowledge-base and skill set and connect it to new concepts and experiences by working with the students.

**Collaborative learning** - The social needs of a child's brain are met by the teacher providing opportunities for peers to learn from one another

**Meaningful assessment in real-world contexts** - Instead of traditional exams, students are assessed by applying what they've learned in authentic situations, motivating them to learn. The techniques in LCCs allow for students to be active in their learning process. Focusing on individualized student needs and learning styles creates an inclusive classroom environment. To learn more about Learner Centered Classrooms, visit the [Iowa Core Classroom Brief](#).



## Online Resources: Intellectual Disabilities



### Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)

Find fact sheets on intellectual disabilities, and links to resources related to infants, toddlers and school age children. Offers tips for parents and educators. Links to other support organizations. [CPIR website](#)

### Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

This site has information related to eligibility criteria, programming and services and assessment for students with intellectual disabilities. [WI DPI website](#)

### Exceptional Parent

This website had many resources related to children with disabilities. ep (Exceptional Parent) provides practical advice, emotional support and the most up-to-date educational information for families of children and adults with disabilities and special healthcare needs as well as to the physicians, allied health care professionals, and educational professionals who are involved in their care and development. [eparent website](#)

### National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS)

The mission of the National Down Syndrome Society is to be the national advocate for the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome. Their website gives facts about Down Syndrome and also has a section that dispels common misperceptions. As the vision of NDSS is a world in which all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations and become valued members of welcoming communities, there are also numerous links related to advocacy. [NDSS website](#)

### Disability Scoop

While the website provides news related to many disabilities, this link is specifically related to Intellectual Disabilities. There is also the ability to sign up to receive frequent email updates. [Disability Scoop website](#)

### The Arc

The mission of ARC is to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes. Local Chapters provide *individual advocacy*, programs, services, and supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Information about local and state chapters and national programs is available on the website. [ARC website](#)

### U.S. Department of Education

The website has links to news articles, grant information, press releases and other pertinent information related to students with intellectual disabilities. [USD OE website](#)



### [2017 Family and Individual Needs for Disability Supports \(FINDS\) Survey](#)

The Arc of the United States, in collaboration with the Research and Training Center on Community Living at the University of Minnesota have launched the [2017 Family and Individual Needs for Disability Supports \(FINDS\) Survey](#) which seeks to capture experiences of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families on a range of life-span issues.

**Who should take the survey:** People who are at least 18 years old, who provide primary paid/unpaid and frequent support to a person with an intellectual or developmental disability (I/DD) living in the US & its Territories. They hope to gather survey data which is reflective of the diversity of the US.

Please forward this [survey](#) to anyone you know who is supporting someone over 18 who has an I/DD. This will help to make sure that Wisconsin is well-represented.

## Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD)



The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) was established to advocate on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities, foster welcoming and inclusive communities, and improve the disability service system. The Board's mission is to help people with developmental disabilities become independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.

Under Wisconsin State Law, a developmental disability is defined as a list of conditions: brain injury, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, Prader-Willi syndrome, intellectual disability, or another neurological condition closely associated to an intellectual disability. The condition must be severe and permanent.

Because the Board is funded by the federal government, it uses the federal definition of developmental disability. The federal definition is based on the level of need, not the underlying condition. Under federal law, a developmental disability is a severe, chronic disability caused by a mental or physical impairment, or both. The impairment must occur before a person's 22nd birthday result in serious limitations in three of the following areas: self-care; receptive and expressive language; learning; mobility; self-direction; capacity for independent living; and economic self-sufficiency, and create a need for lifelong services and supports.

Per their mission statement, the BPDD is dedicated to improving the independence, productivity, and integration of people with developmental disabilities.

- Independence means having choices available, being able to choose, and exercising control over one's own life.
- Productivity means making a contribution to one's own household, neighborhood and community. It means working in the community and earning a living.
- Integration means being present in the community, participating in the life of the community and being valued as a person, friend, family member and neighbor.

[WI-BPDD Website](#)

## UPCOMING WEBINARS

Information & registration for WI FACETS free workshops and webinars:

[www.wifacets.org/events](http://www.wifacets.org/events)

By phone, Sandra: 877-374-0511

Via email: [smcfarland@wifacets.org](mailto:smcfarland@wifacets.org)

All webinars 12:00–1:00 PM unless otherwise noted

**Serving on Groups That Make Decisions: Tools & Tips for Serving on Groups**

**Date:** February 14, 2017

**Presenter:** Vicki Davis-Davila, WI FACETS

**School Choice: Public, Charter & the Rights of Students with Special Needs**

**Date:** February 15, 2017

**Presenter:** Sally Flaschberger, DRW

**Serving on Groups That Make Decisions: Using and Understanding Data**

**Date:** February 21, 2017

**Presenter:** Vicki Davis-Davila, WI FACETS

**Opciones para Solucionar Desacuerdos sobre Educacion Especial (WSEMS) (Telephone Workshop)**

**Date:** February 23, 2017

**Presenter:** Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

**Serving on Groups That Make Decisions: Skills and the Role of Families**

**Date:** February 28, 2017

**Presenter:** Vicki Davis-Davila, WI FACETS

**WSEMS: Using Mediation to Resolve Issues**

**Date:** March 6, 2017

**Presenter:** Jan Serak, WI FACETS and Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA 7

**Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)**

**Date:** March 8, 2017

**Presenter:** Nancy Farnon-Molfenter, DPI

**Transicion del Programa Nacimiento a 3 a La Escuela (Telephone Workshop)**

**Date:** March 9, 2017

**Presenter:** Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

**Post-Secondary Transition Plan (PTP): Best Practices**

**Date:** March 15, 2017

**Presenter:** Pam Jensen, Transition Improvement Grant (TIG)

**Family-School Partnerships: Info for Parents**

**Date:** March 16, 2017



## HOME-BASED LEARNING

## Literacy

Check out ReadWriteThink's [literacy calendar](#) for February.

Topics include Black History Month, Digital Learning Day, and author's birthdays, and there are selected readings and activities for each top-



ic.

Valentine's Day is full of ways to practice literacy skills! Work on poetry, simple writing prompts, idioms & metaphors, sending e-cards, and check out a suggested reading list from [Reading Rockets](#).



The second full week of February is "Random Acts of Kindness" week. Check out these fun literacy-related [activities](#) you can do to teach and practice kindness with your children.

## Mathematics

Check out this [February Math Activities Calendar](#) from DreamBox (2016). It features fun math activities for both well-known and obscure February holidays!



PBS also has a great [February math calendar](#) for kids – learn about Leap Year, Tooth Fairy Day, and even Elmo's birthday! This calendar is also available in Spanish.



If you're looking for a cute Valentine's craft that will help your child practice number skills, check out this [tissue paper by numbers heart](#) from Crayon Box Chronicles. Or, try this Valentine's Day-themed [Scrabble Math](#) worksheet for older children from AndNextComesL.

[Latino Autism Support Group](#)

**Grupo de Autismo: Buscando las Palabras Claves en el IEP**

**Date:** February 25, 2017 10-12 pm

**Grupo de Autismo: Reuniones de IEP mas Provechosas (WSEMS)**

**Date:** March 25, 2017

**Location:** WI FACETS, 600 W. Virginia St. Suite 501, Milwaukee.

**Contact:** Martha Lechuga  
414) 374-4645, ext 224





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# CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

## Upcoming newsletter topics:

**March: Early Childhood**   **April: Autism Spectrum Disorder**   **May: Mental Health**

To submit contributions, you may use either the attached word document for contributing articles, events, or resources. Send submissions to [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org). If unable to access form, send you may send information in an email.

Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the **1st of each month**. For time sensitive training advertisements, the information should be sent a minimum of two weeks prior to the event date; ideally a month ahead of time. Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles. Family engagement success or impact stories can be written at an individual or family level, classroom level, school building level, district level, county level, CESA level, etc. Your submittal may not be in the final copy of the upcoming month's newsletter if it was in a previous month's email, the event date has passed, the web link doesn't work, or there is already an article in place. Articles and resources will be saved to be used for later newsletters. We reserve the right to edit contributions as needed.

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**This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement.**

DISCLAIMER: Inclusion of information in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training, and Support (WI FACETS), the Department of Public Instruction, the U.S. Department of Education, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

NOTE: If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please go to <http://www.servingongroups.org/newsletter-signup-0>

or contact: Wendy Overturf at [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org).



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