



Supporting Inclusive Education Worldwide

Inclusive Schools Network News

May 2009

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Inclusive Schools Network

"Supporting Inclusive Education Worldwide"

The Inclusive Schools Network (ISN) is a web-based resource for families, schools, and communities interested in the topic of inclusive education. This network has grown out of Inclusive Schools Week™, an internationally-recognized, annual event sponsored by Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC). In 2009, ISN will be expanding its capacity to offer new products, conferences, online events, and social networking opportunities.



Inclusive Schools Network News is your source for updates and information about the Inclusive Schools Network, Inclusive Schools Week, and other resources and events related to building more welcoming and supportive schools and communities. Click below to subscribe:

**Featured Resource -
UNESCO's Guidelines
for Inclusion**



**Inclusive Practices
Around the World**

ISN Resources & Events:

ISN Webinar: Sign Up Now!

**"Paraprofessional Supports in Inclusive Schools:
Research, Practices and Alternatives"**

With Michael Giangreco, Ph.D. of the University of Vermont

Wednesday, May 27, 2009

The Inclusive Schools Network and the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative are proud to host a webinar with Dr. Michael Giangreco on the topic of Paraprofessional Supports in Inclusive Schools. Paraprofessionals have emerged as a key mechanism for supporting students with a range of disabilities in general education classrooms. This webinar will provide an overview of research on the provision of paraprofessional supports in inclusive classrooms, including a look at key national data on the use of paraprofessionals and related special education service delivery. Participants will examine issues such as overreliance on paraprofessionals and will explore a series of alternatives that schools can consider. The session will be interactive, providing opportunities for participants to ask questions and engage in discussion. For more information, and to sign up for this event, go to:



http://www.inclusiveschools.org/Events_Registration

Dr. Beth Harry Shares Her Memoir and Poetry with ISN and FCSN

*Melanie: Bird with a Broken Wing, A Mother's Story, and
In Sunshine And In Shadow*



Dr. Beth Harry is well-known for her research and writing on topics related to students with disabilities in schools, but she is also a poet and the author of a memoir about her daughter Melanie who had cerebral palsy. The Inclusive Schools Network and the Federation for Children with Special Needs in Boston, MA hosted an event with Dr. Harry on May 4th, 2009, where she read from her memoir *Melanie: Bird with a Broken Wing, A Mother's Story* and her book of poetry *In Sunshine And In Shadow*. These two books will be on sale through the ISN website later this month. Look for more information at www.inclusiveschools.org and in next month's newsletter.

The 9th Annual Inclusive Schools Week

December 7 - 11, 2009

Save the Dates!

Featured Events:

Including Samuel on PBS

The documentary *Including Samuel* will be broadcast on New Hampshire Public Television on May 23rd and 24th, 2009, and will be broadcast on PBS stations nationally this fall. To read more about this film, purchase the DVD, or view clips of filmmaker Dan Habib discussing his work and the importance of inclusive educational practices, go to:

http://www.inclusiveschools.org/ISN_Video_Including_Samuel_Discussion

"Contours of Inclusion" Conference: The Intersection between the Arts and Universal Design for Learning May 15, 2009

The Partnership for Arts-based Instruction and Inclusion is hosting a one-day conference to explore the intersection between arts-based instruction and the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to support learning across disciplines for all students. The Partnership is a collaboration between VSA arts of Massachusetts, Lesley University and the University of Massachusetts Graduate

College of Education. Visit www.vsamass.org for more information and to register for this event, or download the event flyer at:

[http://www.vsamass.org/Fliercontuorsofinclusion%20\(3\)%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.vsamass.org/Fliercontuorsofinclusion%20(3)%5B1%5D.pdf).

**Toronto Summer Institute
on Inclusion, Community and Diversity
July 11-16, 2009**

Early Bird registration is now taking place for the Toronto Summer Institute on Inclusion, Community and Diversity. The Institute will be held at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada, during the week of July 11-16. Download the Institute pamphlet for more information about this event and early registration:

<http://www.inclusion.com/2009torontopamphlet.pdf>.

Tip of the Month:

**Seven Tips for Partnering with Your Child's
School During the Transition Years**

By Amanda Green, Federation for Children with Special Needs

Before you realize it, your child is a teenager. When he was young, he was eager for you to admire his finger painting, attend school events, and help out with math circle. Now school notices are lost in the backpack, and the answer to "How was your day at school?" is a mutter. Your child is learning to be independent, yes, but does this mean that you have a lesser role to play? No! In fact, during the Transition years of 14 - 22, the partnerships you foster with your child's school can be key to his success as an adult.

Contrary to what you might think, research clearly shows that parents - not peers - still exert the biggest influence on teenagers. Teens whose parents are involved at school, check homework, and know their children's friends have more positive post-high school outcomes than teens whose parents do not.

How can you stay involved during the middle and high school years? Here are seven tips:

1. Most importantly, get to know your child's teachers, and make sure they know

you and your child. Middle and high school teachers are committed to helping kids - yet they are exceptionally busy people, often with large numbers of students. At the beginning of the year, make a pleasant phone call or send a cheerful e-mail introducing yourself as Sarah's Mom, expressing your interest in partnering, and asking how you can be most helpful.

2. By law, teachers are responsible for implementing your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Ease your child's transition to the new year by creating a "Sarah-at-a-Glance" one-page document, highlighting your child's learning strengths and needs, as well as necessary accommodations and modifications. Sitting down with your teen to draw this up together will help to develop her self-advocacy skills. Distribute this document to all your child's teachers and service providers. Your child's teachers will still need to read the entire IEP, but your one-pager will help the process along.

3. According to the law, your child is entitled to receive progress reports as often as children who do not have IEPs. If you want more frequent updates, phone your child's teacher at regular intervals - perhaps once a week - and ask for a return phone call. Educators are usually good about returning calls, but they are busy people and appreciate reminders. If your child's school uses a Website to update parents on student progress and assignments, be sure to check it regularly. Talk to your child about his schoolwork, too. Even though he's older, he will be more successful if he knows you're still interested and involved.

4. During the Transition years, it's important for you, your child, and the school to begin partnering together so that your child will develop the skills necessary for a successful adulthood. Before the IEP meeting, talk with your child about his vision for the future. What kind of job would he like to have? Where would he like to live? What are his hobbies, talents, interests? What are his needs? What skills will he need to develop to achieve his vision? At the IEP meeting, use this information to guide the Team's discussion. From age 14 onward, your child must be invited to attend IEP meetings so both you and your child will be able to provide key input into the process. Once the discussion is concluded, goals should be transferred from the Transition Planning Form to the IEP.

5. Learn about best practices in Transition by searching the Web, by reading, and by attending workshops. Share information and resources with your child (to help her become an effective self advocate) and with her teachers. The Federation for Children with Special Needs' Spring 2008 issue of Newsline, available online at http://fcsn.org/publications_resources/newsline/nlv28n4.pdf, lists a number of websites with Transition resources.

6. Network with other parents in your local special education parent advisory council (PAC). Learn about your school district's services for students of Transition age, and volunteer to meet regularly with school officials as a PAC representative to discuss district Transition programming. According to state law, the PAC's role is to advise the school district "on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities." By partnering with other parents and with your school,

you can have a positive impact on both your own child's education and on the education of all students on IEPs.

7. Make community connections. Get to know local business owners. Find out how people with disabilities can become involved in your community through recreation programs, volunteering, or jobs. Not only will you build future connections for your own child, you will also help to increase opportunities for other students when you share these resources with your school.

This month's Tip is reprinted with permission of the **Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)** from their Newslines, Winter 2009. FCSN is an **Association Partner** of the Inclusive Schools Network, and as a federally-funded Parent Training and Information Center, FCSN provides information on **Transition** and other important topics for families and educators throughout the state of Massachusetts.

To read more Tips about Transition and other topics, check out the **Tips** and **Resources** sections of the ISN website.

Featured Resource:

"Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All"

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published a report in 2005 entitled "Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All" in support of their Education For All (EFA) global initiative. The report, which discusses inclusive education as a human rights issue, can be downloaded at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001402/140224e.pdf>.

Inclusive Practices Around the World:

Inclusive Education in Pakistan

Prior to the 2008 International Conference on Education, Pakistan's Ministry of Education produced a National Report on the Development of Education in that country. The report features an entire section on inclusive education, and is available on the UNESCO website at: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2008/pakistan_NR08.pdf.

Support Inclusive Schools Network and Inclusive Schools Week!

Here's how YOU can make a difference:

Your purchase of products or tax-deductible contribution supports the work we are doing to support families, schools, and communities around the world to create awareness, build knowledge, and encourage systems change toward more inclusive educational opportunities for all children. We are a nonprofit, 501 (c) (3) organization, and we are extremely grateful for your support!

ISN products are available for purchase online! Use these items, including Celebration Kits, posters, pencils and much more, to promote your 2009 Inclusive Schools Week celebration and to raise awareness about inclusive educational practices throughout the year. This year, ISN is delighted to be collaborating with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, who will host the official online store for ISN products. To view these products, order online, or download a PDF order form, please visit our new **[Products Page and Secure Online Order Form](#)**:

<https://fcsn.org/inclusiveschools/orderform.html>

Click here to **[download a contribution form](#)** and make a donation today:

<http://www.inclusiveschools.org/files/Contribution%20Form.>