



The Link

"Linking Exceptional Families in Contra Costa County"

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

A Journey of Advocacy

Page 1

Going to College with a Disability

Page 6

The Lanterman Act and Early Start Services for Your Child

Page 6

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A Journey of Advocacy	1,2
Macy's Shop for a Cause	2
Thank you	2
Resources	3
NOYA Restaurant	3
Calendar	4
Care's Support Groups	5
Going to College	6
Lanterman Act & Early Start Services	6
Spotlight on "All in Need"	7
Heroes Among Us	7

A Journey of Advocacy by Karla Maria Arriaga

I am Maria and my son is Isaac. He is eight years old and going into 3rd grade. He is very smart, kind, affectionate, and likes to learn. He loves maps and geography.

When Isaac was a baby, I didn't have any worries about his development, but when he was 3 months old, I noticed that he liked to look at ceiling fans and other rotating objects. I started to worry when Isaac was 1 1/2 years old, and he didn't say any words. He wasn't even babbling. Isaac's pediatrician sent him to another doctor for evaluation, and then that doctor sent us to the Regional Center of the East Bay for evaluation. The Regional Center evaluation showed that Isaac had developmental delays that made him eligible for Early Start services.

Isaac received early intervention services from the Lynn Center and We Care Services for Children. The services really helped him, and I was so happy when he started to say words and to communicate with me. My first contact with Care Parent Network was when Isaac was in Early Start. Angela from Care Parent Network called me. I will never forget her comforting words of support she gave me at that time. Through Care, I attended a support group run by Ceci. I will always remember the first time I arrived at her support group. She made me feel I was not alone. which helped me a lot.

When Isaac turned three years old he was evaluated by the Mt. Diablo school district, and they determined that he was eligible for special education preschool services. The Regional Center also evaluated him, and they determined that he was not eligible for continuing Regional Center services. I felt relieved because I thought that that meant that Isaac didn't have anything. But over the next year I started to have concerns again. I started reading books and getting more information. I knew that something was going on.

When Isaac was six years old, I called the Regional Center again. It took a long time, but in August 2012 they evaluated Isaac again. Their first report said that Isaac had PDD-NOS, but then they said that they wanted to evaluate him a second time. I just wanted a diagnosis. I wanted to understand what was going on with Isaac. After the second evaluation the Regional Center said that Isaac didn't have PDD-NOS or autism and that he wasn't eligible for services.

I was upset. I knew something was going on with Isaac. I was attending a Care Parent Network support group, and Caroline Ortiz, the Director of Care Parent Network,



A Journey of Advocacy ... (cont. from page 1)

came to the meeting in December 2012, I told her about my experience with the Regional Center and that Isaac was denied for services. She told me I could appeal the decision.

I was scared. My first language is Spanish. I speak English, but it is hard for me to be sure that I am really expressing what my concerns and feelings are when I speak English. Many parents have this problem. So I asked Caroline if she would help me with the appeal, and she said she would. Caroline and the Care Parent Network staff, particularly Deborah and Rosa, helped me to be less afraid. They helped me to understand the appeals process and to prepare for my appeal.

The first step in the appeals process was an informal meeting with the Regional Center. Caroline went to the meeting

with me. I had prepared lots of notes about Isaac and why I was concerned about him. When the Regional Center staff member asked me why I thought that Isaac has autism, I read all of my reasons from my notes. The Regional Center reviewed all the information about Isaac and made Isaac eligible for services. I was so happy! I couldn't believe it! Isaac could get the services he needs.

Without the help of Caroline and Care Parent Network I think that my appeal would have been denied and Isaac would be without services. The most important things I learned are not to be afraid of saying what I know about Isaac and not to be afraid to advocate for him and his rights. We are the parents, and we know our children better than anyone.

I want to thank my husband for these years of support towards our son and me.

What is Care Parent Network?

We are a Family Resource Center for families of children with special needs in Contra Costa County.

We provide information referral, resources, training opportunities and family support

Macy's Shop for a Cause

Contra Costa ARC is holding a fundraiser which allows you to do good and to shop!. Purchase a \$5 Shopping Pass for exclusive savings in every Macy's store on Saturday, August 24, and Contra Costa ARC gets to keep 100% of the proceeds. Plus, you can enter to win a \$500 Macy's Gift Card.

The \$5 Shopping/Savings Pass allows customers to save 25% on purchases all day long in any Macy's store on August 24th.

Please contact Michele Ternes to purchase your savings pass at 925-370-1818 or at mternes@arcofcc.org. Deadline to purchase savings passes is Friday, August 23rd.

We are Thankful to our Volunteers and Donors

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| * Suzanne Anthony | * Evelyn Hoskins | * Hilda Mariscal |
| * Franco Carroll | * Julissa Ilizaliturri | * Hannah Michaelsen |
| * Nancy Chan | * Bob Jacobson | * Vianey Perez |
| * Alicia Coleman-Clark | * Christina Keene | * Amy Robbins, Kaiser NICU |
| * Wanda Davis | * Yahaida Lopez, Kaiser NICU | * John Rodriguez |
| * Lacey Friedman | * Norman & Yasmin Lozano, | * Will Sanford |
| * Steven Greenwell | NY Learning Center | * Barbara Sheehy |
| * Heather Hackett | * Sandra Madsen | * Martinez Togo's |

Resources

Crisis Response Project is a service vendorized by the Regional Center of the East Bay. The Crisis Response Project can give advice, suggestions or, if needed, direct intervention to defuse a situation. Families may access this service by contacting their RCEB Case Manager needs and discussing the needs of the child and ways in which the Crisis Response Project can help. More information can be obtained at [925-776-4532](tel:925-776-4532).

Autism Speaks, Early Access to Care Initiative is an initiative to help parents, caregivers, and professionals understand developmental milestones, learn how to screen for autism symptoms, and access proper services. Information may be obtained from the following:

- Early Access to Care: Resource for Parents: <http://www.autismspeaks.org/early-access-care/parents>
- Early Access to Care: Engaging Professionals: <http://www.autismspeaks.org/early-access-care/professionals>

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) :

is a national information center that provides information on disabilities and disability related issues, focusing on children and youth, birth to age 22. Check out these new resources:

- Early Intervention Providers: <http://nichcy.org/earlyinterventionists>
- Families and communities: <http://nichcy.org/families-community>

NOYA Restaurant and Lounge



Norman and Yasmine Lozano, the owners of NY Learning Center, an after-school and summer learning program for children and young adults with developmental and physical disabilities, ,

have opened NOYA Restaurant and Lounge in San Pablo. NOYA, which serves Latin Fusion and American Cuisine., was opened by the Lozanos with the hope of helping the community. For NOYA is not only a restaurant, but it also serves as a vocational training program to NY Learning Center students.

Several NY Learning Center students are currently being taught how to cut produce

and wipe tables. This collaboration will allow NY Learning students to participate in job placement a NOYA Restaurant. Students must be 16 thru 22 years old qualify for the program. The students from NY Learning Center have the opportunity to visit the lounge area and enjoy the space during the day. At night, the lounge area offers music and dancing to customers.

Along with working with the disability community NOYA's vision is to also help graduates from Contra Costa Community College. NOYA gives hiring priority to recent graduates of Contra Costa College Culinary Program.

In addition to the restaurant and full bar service NOYA offers free Salsa lessons followed by dancing on weekends. On Thursdays they have live Jazz music. NOYA is open 7 days week, Monday thru Thursday 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. and Friday thru Sunday 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m..

NOYA Restaurant and Lounge
14350 Laurie Lane
San Pablo, CA 94806

2013 CALENDAR

August 5: Monday Movies in Story Cone, 3:00-4:45 p.m., Hercules Library, ages 5-11 years (free).

August 6: Art Enrichment; Cartooning with Brian Kohn, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Danville Library, grades 2-3 (free).

August 6: National Night Out, 6:30 p.m., Todos Santos Park, Concord, whole family (free).

August 7: Summer Movie Matinee, 3:00-4:30 p.m., San Ramon Library, toddlers-11 years (free).

August 7: Delicious Crafts for Teens, 3:00-5:00 p.m., San Pablo Library, teens (free).

August 8: Brentwood Open Mic, The Gallery, 741 Second St., 6:30-8:00 p.m., ages 12-17 years (free).

August 10: Congreso Familiar, Chabot College, Hayward, For more information: 510-907-8775 or info@congresofamiliar.org, 8:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m., whole family (free).

August 14: SPLAT Summer Fest (Wii games, face painting, singing, dance, crafts), San Pablo Public Library, 3:00-5:00 p.m., ages 5-17 years (free).

August 20: A Road Map to Kindergarten Seminar for Educators, Pathways to School Success and Lifelong Partnerships. Contra Costa County Office of Education, 77 Santa Barbara Road, Pleasant Hill, CA. For information: email Ruth Fernandez at rfernandez@cccoe.k12.ca.us. For registration: <http://www.roadmap2kindergarten8-13.eventbrite.com> (Fee).

August 28: Jer's Traveling Bee Show. Brentwood Community Center, 4:00-4:45 p.m., ages 5-11 years (free).

August 29: California Symphony, Todos Santos Park, Concord, 6:30 p.m. whole family (free).

September 4: Daniel DaVinci's Comedy Circus, Pinole Library, 7 :00 p.m., 5 and younger (free).

September 4: Roderick the Magician, Antioch Library, 3:00 -3:45 p.m., 5-11 years (free).

September 10: Kenn Adams Adventure Theater, Danville library, 4:00-5:00 p.m., 5-11 years (free).

October 2: Tri-Valley Post-High School Transition Fair, Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Boulevard, Pleasanton, 5:30-8:15 p.m. For more information and registration, contact Pam Deaton at (925) 931-5367 or at pdeaton@cityofpleasantonca.gov. (free).

October 16-18: The 29th Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families. Sponsored by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). San Francisco.. For more information and registration: http://www.cal-dec.org/Flyer_for_CA_Involvement4813.pdf (Fee).

CARE PARENT NETWORK SUPPORT GROUPS

NAME OF GROUP	LOCATION	FACILITATOR(S)	SCHEDULE	PURPOSE
Starting Out	Brentwood	Christina Keene (peer facilitator)	3 rd Thur. morning	All disabilities, *mothers of young children
Starting Out	Martinez	Louise Schneiders	1st Tues. evening	All disabilities, *mothers of young children
Mentor Parents Support Group	Martinez	Louise Schneiders	3 rd Wed. morning	All disabilities, * trained mentor parents
Just for Father's	Walnut Creek	Bob Jacobsen (peer facilitator)	1 st Wed. evening	All disabilities
Moving Up	Martinez	L. Schneiders	2 nd Wed. evening	All disabilities, *parents of tweens

GRUPOS DE APOYO DE CARE PARENT NETWORK EN ESPAÑOL

NOMBRE DEL GRUPOS	LUGAR	FACILITADOR	HORARIO	PROPOSITO
Padres Latinos	Oakley	Angela Gattis	1er. Viernes por la mañana	Para todas las discapacidades
Grupo de Autismo	Pittsburg	Cecilia Zepeda	2do. Jueves Por la mañana	Para padres con niños con Autismo
Caminemos Juntos	San Pablo	Hilda Mariscal y Rosa Valledor (Fac. Voluntarias)	2do. Jueves por la mañana	Para todas las discapacidades
Alas de Angel	Concord	Cecilia Zepeda	1er. Martes Por la mañana	Para todas las discapacidades
Transición a Adultos	Richmond	Teresa Soto (Fac. Voluntarias)	3er. Jueves por la tarde	Para padres con adolescentes en transición a adultos
Ángeles en mi Vida	Richmond	Cecilia Zepeda	Ultimo Viernes por la mañana	Para todas las discapacidades

For the purpose of Care's support groups, the term "parent" also refers to foster parents, grandparents, or primary caregivers. If you are interested in attending a support group, please contact Care Parent Network at 800-281-3023 x101 for English, and x105 or x108 for Spanish.

Going to College with a Disability



On Saturday, October 5, 2013, the third annual Going to College with a Disability Conference will be held at the Ed Roberts Campus in Berkeley. The goal of this conference is to educate students with disabilities and their families about the necessary preparation for college and avenues of assistance with this important transition.

The conference is slated to offer a keynote speaker, as well as separate break-out sessions for students and families. This year's keynote speaker is Corinne Morier, a young woman with autism who is currently attending San Francisco State University. Corinne's parents, Dean Morier and Susan Bergmann, will also speak about their experiences as their daughter transitioned from high school to college.

The conference will run from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Registration is \$15 for an individual and \$25 for a family. A limited number of partial scholarships are available to individuals and families. The registration fee includes all conference materials and a light breakfast. Registration is limited to the first 150 registrants. Registration forms will be available from Care Parent Network. Last year the conference sold out so don't delay!

The Lanterman Act and Early Start Services for Your Child

For parents of children birth to age three, a very important presentation entitled

"How to Have the Lanterman Act and California Early Start Work for You and Your Child"

will be held on
Saturday, September 21, 2013,
from **1:00 - 4:00 p.m.** at the
Hilton Concord Hotel.

Presenters will be:

- ★ Barbara Maizie, Executive Director, Contra Costa ARC,
- ★ Peter Bowers, Consultant

This presentation will walk parents through the Lanterman Act and teach them how to effectively access services that their child is entitled to receive through the Regional Center. Topics of discussion include:

- ? Did you know that the Individual Program Plan ("IPP") process delivers a full entitlement to each consumer based on the services and supports identified in their IPP?
- ? Did you know that your child's Individual Education Plan ("IEP") and Individual Family

Support Plan ("IFSP") is part of your child's IPP and that it can help to keep needed services and supports?

- ? Do you know what documentation you need to keep as part of your child's record?

These questions and more will be discussed at the presentation. Spanish language interpreters will be available. For more information about registering for this presentation, please contact Caroline Ortiz at Care Parent Network or register online at www.idaofcal.org.

This presentation is a part of the Northern California Conference of the Infant Development Association of California (IDA). IDA is an organization of parents and professionals committed to optimal developmental, social, and emotional outcomes for infants, birth to three, with a broad range of special needs, and their families

The IDA conference will be held on September 20-21, 2013 at the Concord Hilton, 1970 Diamond Blvd. Concord, CA 94520. Information and registration at the IDA website: www.idaofcal.org.

Spotlight on: All in Need by Autumn Green

In 2006 ,our family moved from our home in Oregon to the East Bay. We have two sons and our youngest, Yaakov, was diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome. Our family’s entire focus was on Yaakov’s needs – getting him hours of therapy, and encouraging social growth. We as a family were so lost in caring for Yaakov, we weren’t meeting our oldest son’s needs or our own. It was then that I realized we were—**all in need**. This idea led to developing All in Need as part of our children’s ministry program through our church. But it soon became apparent that there was greater need and we needed to expand the program.

In 2011, we decided to become a nonprofit agency. All in Need became a respite program offering a three-hour break to families who have children with special needs who are under 18 years of age. We offer respite and social events to children and their families.

One component of All in Need is incorporating “therapy” in our respite program. During the years of therapy for Yaakov, when a therapist gave us exercises to do at home I turned those into fun activities. So building upon those fun activities has become an important part of the respite program. While a child is playing these fun-filled activities, they are also working on fine motor, gross motor, sensory, and speech.

The respite time enables parents to get a much-needed break. The break may be a nap, a date with the spouse or time alone with a sibling. It gives them a chance to regroup and breathe, so they can come back refreshed and enjoy their children.

As a parent of children with special needs ,we sit through hours of IEPs and therapies to help our children become the adults they were designed to be. Through our experience. we have taken our struggles and turned them into opportunities to encourage other families and enrich the lives of children.

For more information www.allinneed.org

Heroes Among Us by Rosa Valledor

I would like to put the spot light on a Burger King franchise in Pinole. This particular Burger King has shown to be compassionate and accommodating to persons with disabilities.

My son, Sid, enjoys eating Burger King.. He has visited the establishment approximately twice a week for about a year now. When we first starting going to this newly built restaurant, with a big plasma TV, the owner, Mr. Ayaz Virje, went to our table and introduced himself. As we chatted, my mother told him that Sid has autism. She also gave him a brief explanation of his disorder. After the first meeting, Ayaz always made it a point to greet Sid by his name, along with a smile and high five. When he sees us driving up, he has his Burger King staff begin our order to minimize Sid’s wait time as we park the car. Even when

Ayaz sees me pull into the drive-thru, our regular order is usually ready for pick up with a nice hello to Sid. As a mother, a shorter wait is greatly appreciated.

Ayaz’s kindness and patience is demonstrated not only with my son, but also with others. Seniors and other persons with disabilities are also greeted with smiles and hugs. When Ayaze is there Sid always gets the VIP treatment in his establishment. Life would be a lot easier if more business owners took the time to learn about persons with special needs. Thank you Ayaz. Virje for making our outings to your establishment always a positive one!

Burger King
1571 Fitzgerald Dr.
Pinole, CA 94564

**Care Parent Network,
A program of Contra Costa ARC
1340 Arnold Drive, Suite 115
Martinez, CA 94553**

Return service requested

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