

Parent to Parent

A Newsletter of the City of Salem Schools Parent Resource Center
Providing Support to Parents with Children in Special Education

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Children First in Salem

Spring 2010

Roanoke Valley Project SEARCH High School Transition Program

The City of Salem Schools is participating in the Roanoke Valley Project SEARCH High School Transition Program. This is a new program in the Roanoke Valley, which started the planning process in the late winter of 2009, and has an anticipated start date of the fall of 2010. No new funds from the school system are being used for this program. Project SEARCH is designed for students with significant disabilities in their last year of high school eligibility and provides training and education leading to employment. The goal of this program is to increase the skill levels and job opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities. Project SEARCH is a collaboration between five Roanoke Valley School systems, four area agencies, and a community business.

Participating in the

Roanoke Valley Project SEARCH High School Transition Program are the public school systems of Botetourt County, Franklin County, Roanoke City, Roanoke County, and Salem. The four agencies collaborating with the schools and host business are Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare, Blue Ridge Independent Living Center, Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), and Goodwill Industries of the Valleys.

The cornerstone of Project SEARCH is total immersion in a large business. Each day students report to the host business, learn employability skills in the classroom and job skills while participating in 3-4 internships/experiences during the year. If available, students utilize public transportation.

Project SEARCH was developed fourteen years ago by Ms. J. Erin Riehle, RN, BSN, at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. She was the Director of the Emergency Room and in need of a reliable worker to stock supplies. Project SEARCH has since been replicated in over 140 programs throughout the United States, and in four other countries. There are four other High School Transition Programs in Virginia at this time.

If you are interested in learning more about Project SEARCH, please contact Dr. Darryl Helems, Director of Student Services, at 389-0130.



Special Education Parent Involvement Survey

All parents of school-aged children and youth who receive special education services in Virginia's schools are encouraged to complete the Department of Education's annual Parent Involvement Survey. This is a great opportunity for parents to provide input to help guide efforts to improve services and outcomes for their children. Your responses will be kept anonymous and never be personally linked to your child. The results of this survey will be made available to the public.

The survey will be available until September 30. The link is listed on the back cover of this newsletter. Paper copies with pre-addressed and prepaid envelopes are available at the School Board Office.



Announcements

Check Out Our New Additions to the Lending Library!

Call, visit, or send an e-mail to the Parent Resource Center to borrow these great new materials.

176 Ways to Involve Parents, Practical Strategies for Partnering with Families by Betty Boulton

Beyond the Bake Sale, The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships by Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson, and Don Davies

The Elephant in the Playroom, Ordinary Parents Write Intimately and Honestly About Raising Kids with Special Needs by Denise Brodey

The Essential Conversation, What Parents and Teachers Can Learn From Each Other by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot

Negotiating the Special Education Maze, A Guide for Parents and Teachers by Winifred Anderson, Stephen Chitwood, Deidre Hayden and Cherie Takemoto



Information for All Disabilities: ♦The Virginia Department of Education has released the new edition of their *Parent's Guide to Special Education*. Printed copies are available from the Parent Resource Center. Stop by, call, or send an e-mail and we will get one to you. It will be available in Spanish soon. You can also download the English version from their website at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/parents/index.shtml.

♦**Access Arts Program** for Children 5-8 Years who have special needs at the Taubman Museum of Art. Next program is on June 8 from 4-5 PM. This on-site program is free but registration is required by calling Abbie Edens, 204-4107, or by e-mail aedens@taubmanmuseum.org.

♦The Technical and Training Assistance Center (T/TAC) at Virginia Tech is holding its 2010 Assistive and Augmentative Communication Conference, **Breaking Through Barriers**, on June 17-18 at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center. Registration cost is \$89. For more information, contact T/TAC at 1-800-848-2714. Registration is available on-line at http://www.ttac.vt.edu/conference_augcom.html.

♦The **Virginia Victory Games** will be held June 26 in Richmond. This is an athletic competition for children ages 6-21 who reside in Virginia with physical, visual, and/or hearing impairments. It is free for all participants. For more information, log onto www.virginiavictorygames.org or call (804) 475-7808.

♦There are a number of summer day camps and overnight **camp**s specifically for children and young adults who have disabilities. ACE camp is a day camp held at Penn Forest Elementary School, and Easter Seals UCP in New Castle and Dare to Care Charities in Bedford County are two other camps. Please call the Parent Resource Center for more information.

♦**Parent's Day**-Things a Parent Needs to Know (for parents who have a child with a disability), Saturday, August 7, 10 am to 4 pm, Williamson Road Church of the Brethren. For more information, contact the Blue Ridge Independent Living Center, 342-1231. Some of the topics: challenging behaviors, special needs trusts, caregiver support groups

Community Resources More Specific to Autism: ♦**Parents Putting Pieces Together:** Informational seminars and discussions for parents and caregivers of children with autism. Meetings will be held the 1st Saturday of each month at Berglund Automotive Administration Building, 2009 Williamson Road, Roanoke, from 10 to 11 am. Topic for June 5 will be "Behavior...from stemming to tantrums. What to do?" For more information, contact Ms. Janna Schwartz by e-mail (pppt4autism@aol.com). These presentations are free of charge.

♦**Access Arts Program** for Children 9-12 Years who have high functioning autism at the Taubman Museum of Art. Next program is on June 10 from 4:30-

Announcements, continued

5:30 PM. This on-site program is free but registration is required by calling Abbie Edens, 204-4107, or by e-mail aedens@taubmanmuseum.org.

◆The [Greater Roanoke Valley Autism Action Group](#) announces its 2010 workshops, all free of charge and to be held at the Roanoke League of Therapists, 1420 3rd Street, SW, Roanoke. Workshops are from 6-7 pm, with Parent Support and Networking from 7 to 8 pm. The topic for Thursday, July 1 will be “How to Support Adults with ASD,” and for August 5, “Advocacy– Meeting individual and division needs.”

◆Pump It Up, located at 3424C Orange Avenue, NE, Roanoke, has Special Needs [Sensory Jump Times](#) on the third Wednesday of each month between 7-8:30 pm. \$6.50 per child, \$5 for siblings, and no charge for parents. Call 345-7867 for more information.

Free Community Resources for Children of All Abilities:

◆Salem Parks and Recreation is offering the 2010 Summer Sports Clinics for Salem residents in grades 2-9. For more information or to register, go to www.salemva.gov and click on the Parks and Recreation link. If you have any questions, please call Salem Parks and Recreation at 375-3057.

◆The Salem Public Library hosts its summer reading program beginning June 1. This summer’s theme for the younger children is “Make a Splash,” and for teens it is “Make Waves.” In addition to reading incentives, the library offers many free programs with guest entertainers during the summer. Call 375-3089 for more details.



How can I support and encourage my child’s learning?

The following suggestions will help to support your child’s learning as well as promote a positive school/home partnership:

- Attend all meetings concerning your child. Prepare by talking with your child about his or her feelings toward school, by listing your ideas about your child’s strengths and weaknesses, your goals for your child, and by making notes about what you want to say during the meeting.
- Ask your child’s teacher when you have questions.
- Talk with other parents of children with disabilities, contact your Parent Resource Center, get involved in a local parent group, and attend workshops to learn more about the education of children with disabilities.
- Let your child’s teacher(s) know that you want to be involved in your child’s education. Make time to talk with the teacher(s) and, if possible, visit the classroom.
- Ask the teacher(s) how you can build upon your child’s school activities at home.
- Encourage behavior that leads to success in school, such as accepting responsibility, following rules, being organized, and being on time.
- Volunteer to help at your child’s school. This will let you see how things work in the school and how your child interacts with others. It will also help the school.
- Remember that you and the school want success for your child. Working together can make this happen.

From the *Parent’s Guide to Special Education*, revised 2010, Virginia Department of Education



Parent Resource Center

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Salem, VA 24153

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e-mail:

pmacdonald@salem.k12.va.us

Coordinator Hours: Tuesday,
Wednesday, Thursday
8:30 to 11:50 AM

The Lending Library is open
Monday to Friday
8 AM to 5 PM

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The Virginia Department of Education is conducting the its annual Parent Involvement Survey. The survey is online at the following link:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Parent-Involvement-2010E>

If you are unable to take this survey online, please contact Dr. Darryl Helems, Director of Student Services at 389-0130 or by e-mail to dhelems@salem.k12.va.us.

The school has paper versions which include a pre-addressed postage paid return envelope. All responses will be sent directly to the Virginia Department of Education.

The survey is also available in Spanish.

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