



Educating, Assisting, Supporting, and Informing through this newsletter...  
A newsletter for and by parents with sons & daughters with disabilities and education advocates.

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Wichita, KS 67203  
(316) 945-7747 or 888-815-6364

[Kansas City Center](#) 1-877-499-5369  
[Garden City Center](#) 1-888-820-6364  
[Topeka Center](#) 1-800-264-6343  
Statewide Spanish parent line 1-800-499-9443

(All toll free numbers for Kansas parents & education advocates)

[www.familiestogetherinc.org](http://www.familiestogetherinc.org)

Volume 69

June 2006

## Kans Trans: Transition Summit 2006



Submitted by [Laurie Gerber](#), Garden City Center

**W**ow! Can you believe 32 Transition Teams consisting of 250 people from across the state of Kansas gathered in Wichita at the Airport Hilton Inn to learn, network and develop transition strategies to help our kids with their plans after school? How exciting! Teams gathered for strategy developing sessions. They worked on a model the state team brought back from a conference it attended in Washington, D.C., last fall. Each team was asked to answer a pre-summit needs assessment that was used to identify the transition areas that were weak for their school district. Teams took the top one to three identified areas and worked on developing strategies to strengthen those areas. The teams turned in plans at the end of the Summit. The Kansas State Department of Education will be contacting the teams this fall to follow up on the progress made toward the goals each team set for itself.

The Summit started with a bang with Denise Bissonnette presenting "Rekindle the Flame". Denise is a Job Developer, and she found that when she tried to make her clients fit into certain jobs, things didn't always work well. When she found herself going beyond traditional job placement services and really talking to her clients about why they wanted certain jobs, she found much better job matches for her clients. That means thinking outside the box. Denise works at finding job placements that match her clients' unique strengths. She is truly inspirational and has a marvelous sense of humor.

In addition, participants attended sessions on topics including: Transition, Job Development, Interagency Collaboration, Technology, Behavior Management and Self Determination.

To top off the Summit, LeDerick Horne, the closing keynote speaker, facilitated a student panel. The panel was truly inspiring and shared the difficulties they had experienced in their transition experiences. All of the youth on the panel had been involved with the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) and highly recommended YLF. It was the one thing that really inspired each of them. The information they shared was priceless to those of us preparing our children for life beyond high school.

LeDerick's closing keynote speech was the "icing on the cake". He gave an account of his experiences in the education system and with his family and peers that was very insightful. This young man shares through poetry that is set to rap and it touches your very core. He tells it the way it is. He left members of the audience invigorated and excited about possibilities for youth in Kansas. We would like to see and hear more from him!

Thank you to the team that set up this Summit. It was a wonderful experience. Families Together hopes that many of you will take advantage of the opportunity to attend next year's Summit March 13-14, 2007, at the same location.

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# Hello! my name is Yolanda

Submitted by [Yolanda Corraal](#), Garden City Center

**H**ello, my name is Yolanda M. Corral I am the Bilingual Parent Information Specialist in Garden City, Kansas. I was born in San Antonio, Texas and raised in Garden City. I have lived in Holcomb, Ks for 25 years. My husband's name is Antonio Corral, we have 6 children Patricia Myers, Laura Lerma, and Juan Corpus Jr. 3 granddaughters and one grandson, they live in Kansas City, Missouri. Our other 3 daughters at home are Erica 20, Marissa 17, and Angelica Manriquez 15.

I started working for Families Together, Inc. on April the 3<sup>rd</sup>. I am here to help you gain information concerning the specific disabilities of your child, special education services, and financial resources and understanding your parent rights.

I have had some requests about starting a walking program for stress management and support group. If you are interested or if I can help you with any other kind of assistance you can call me at 620-276-2380 or 1-800-499-9443. I am in my office Monday-Wednesday 8:00-2:30 and Thursday 8:00-1:30.



# Hola! Mi nombre es Yolanda

Submitted by [Yolanda Corraal](#), Garden City Center

**H**ola! Mi nombre es Yolanda M Corral yo soy la Especialista Bilingüe de Información para los Padres de Garden City, Kansas. Yo naci en San Antonio, Texas y fui criada en Garden City tengo 25 años viviendo en Holcomb, Ks. Mi esposo se llama Antonio Corral tenemos 6 hijos, Patricia Myers, Laura Lerma, y Juan R. Corpus Jr. 3 nietas y un nieto quienes viven en Kansas City Missouri. Las otras hijas quienes viven en casa son Erica 20, Marissa 17, y Angelica Manriquez 15. Yo empeze a trabajar por Familias Unidas, Inc. el día 3 de Abril. Y estoy aqui para ayudarlos obtener información tocante las discapacidades especificas de tu niño (a) los servicios de la educación especial y los recursos financieros y para que entiendas los derechos de los padres.

He recibido llamadas sobre empezar un programa de caminar para el manejo del estres, y grupo de apoyo. Si estas interesada, o te puedo ayudar con cualquier otro tipo de asistencia tu puedes llamarme al numero 620-276-2380 o 1-800-499-9443. Yo estoy en mi oficina Lunes-Miercoles de 8:00-2:30 y Jueves 8:00-1:30.

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## It's Not Rocket Science Linking IEPs to State Standards

Submitted by [Leia Holley](#), Kansas City Center

**N**o matter what a child's label/diagnosis is, as parents we set high standards for them. We surround our children by others who help them to achieve those high standards. When parents send children with disabilities to school, many times they believe they must lower those expectations. A key component to helping children reach those expectations is to know the Kansas State Department of Education's strategic goal; "all students will meet or exceed state standards."

Why is it important for parents to understand this strategic goal? According to this strategic goal, the Kansas State Department of Education has set high standards for your child and all Kansas students. By having a basic knowledge of the Kansas State standards, parents have a better understanding of the expectations for all students. With this knowledge parents and the rest of the IEP team must ensure that the child has the appropriate supports, services and specially designed instruction necessary to progress towards their individual goals and meet and/or exceed the state standards.

Through the Parent Empowerment Project, Families Together in collaboration with KSDE's Student Support Services will provide individual parent assistance and trainings statewide to help parents and educators understand the importance of linking IEPs to the state standards.

During the interactive training session, participants will: 1) get to know the IEP and understand the importance of not only the legal obligations but also the personal connections of each member; 2) get to know the student through activities and begin to brainstorm and develop their child's Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance; 3) get to know what peers are learning by exploring not only the state standards and general education curriculum but also the hidden curriculum; 4) develop measurable goals; and, 5) understand supports and services.

With the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act '04, the link between the IDEA and the No Child Left Behind Act was strengthened holding school districts accountable for all students. As part of this accountability many districts have already begun to link IEPs to the state standards. All team members must understand this linkage, elements of the IEP, and that all students are general education students. Linking IEPs to the state standards means all students count.

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## Contributions

Swede Creek United Methodist Church  
Lee Price

The Torrez Family

Stan & Connie Zienkewicz

Business Systems Incorporated

Jerald and Annelle Betts

Francine and Jeff Parker

Joe and Mary Graves

Enterprise Rent-a-Car Foundation

Quick Trip Corporation

Paul & Jeanice Shimon

Troy & Jeanette Rebold

Shane & Kimberly Morris

Patricia Meyers

John & Kristy Atkinson

Dorothy Biggs

Kansas City T-Bones

Gates Bar-B-Que

Helzberg Diamonds

Great Wolfe Lodge

Kansas City Chiefs

Negro League Baseball Museum

Kansas Speedway

Union Station

Legends 14 Theatres

Hyatt Regency

Karen Snell

Peggy Geoffert

Colette Schupner

Joe Steffey's Kettle Corn

Sam's Club

Starbucks

New Theatre Restaurant

KC Zoo

Ice Sports

Autism/Aspergers Publishing Co.

Planet Sub

Panera Bread

Western Kansas Foundation

Smart Start

Wilcoxon Family

Home Depot

Rick Wasinger

Sonic

United Builders

*In Memory of Natalie Rateliff:*

*Margarite Rateliff*

*Randal and Deana Coen*

A special "Thanks!" goes out to all of the volunteers who help make Families Together a success!

## A Note From the Director's Desk...



Dear Families and Appointed Advocates:

Another school year is behind us and a summer of adventure stretches ahead. Don't forget to reinforce the skills that your son or daughter, or the student for whom you serve as an advocate, learned from school this year. It may mean going to the library, encouraging appropriate behavior, or giving them more responsibly. BUT, always make sure there is a large measure of fun, too.

Another year has ended in Topeka, too - The Legislative Session.

The legislature struggled with funding for schools and for persons with disabilities throughout the session. In the end, they appropriated a sizable increase for schools with some emphasis on Special Education programs, and additional money to make services to persons with disabilities more readily available.

During the session, I encouraged each of you to contact your legislator about the issues that affect your family. Now it is time to say "Thank You" for the job they did. Whether or not all the items on your list were fulfilled, would you write a short note to your representative and let them know that the money they spent on schools and services to persons with disabilities is appreciated?

If you don't know who your representatives are, send the card to Families Together. We will send it to the appropriate senator or representative. Only a few minutes writing a thank you note can go a long way in encouraging the legislators to continue to support programs for children and persons with disabilities.

As soon as you finish your thank you note - you may go out to enjoy your summer!

[Connie Zienkewicz](#)  
Executive Director



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# FAMILY STORY

## A Summer Story

I sit watching old video clips of our boys playing with the water hose in the little blue plastic pool.

Sean, 10 months old, is trying to get the fish off the bottom of the pool as his brother, JP, 2 years old, looks sheepishly at the camera and then... you guessed it... gives Sean a quick, cold shower.

Those were simpler times. A water hose and a five dollar plastic swimming pool occupied the boys for the hot summer afternoons.

Fast forward through the years, and the summers become crammed with extended school year (summer school), private therapies and long road trips to see yet another medical professional. Lost was the laughter and special moments between brothers replaced by waiting rooms and fast food in the car, again.

The first two years of Sean's life were gifts we celebrated, every day. Then the diagnoses came: first autism, then epilepsy, obsessive compulsive disorder, then Pediatric Autoimmune Neurological Disorder Associated with Strep. As I look back I wonder what summer gifts we missed during those five years, as we searched to find not only Sean, but our family again.

Fast forward again, the boys' summers are once again full of laughter, swimming, picnics, camps and friends. Somewhere around the time Sean turned 7 years old, I began to realize our life revolved around a disability, not around our children. While still ensuring that Sean's and JP's educational and medical needs were met, we began to focus on becoming a "real" family again, a family who once again stops to enjoy the precious gifts summer brings for a fleeting moment. Sean still attends summer school but he and his brother also enjoy being teenagers in their community.

For Sean, this means a buddy (personal care attendant) to act as his big sister. Sean and his buddy, Heather, will go swimming, eat out, go to the zoo, go shopping, watch movies, and do all the things Sean loves to do. Sean will be with his friends from school at the local pool and parks. He will attend the National Sports Center for the Disabled Camps with Heather's support and join the Special Olympics swim team, to help prepare him for the high school swim team.

JP will take drivers education and then spend the remainder of the summer doing one of his favorite things, working on the farm and old cars with his grandfather and uncle.

Before JP leaves for the farm though, I do believe the boys need to wash my car. And, in the end, it will be Sean's turn to give his brother a cold shower, as I sit back and enjoy just one of the many gifts this summer will bring.

## For Johnny

**A winged boy, with strawberry kissed hair,  
A crooked smile and a laugh that lingers mid-air,  
He stole my heart with his peace-filled caring grace,  
And gave it back to me fuller fatter, heavier, in a shiny gold case.**

**Oh how I will miss his precious love,  
When his angel's wings spread open and fly up above.  
But gifts from the angels can't stay on the earth,  
For they are just that - gifts, gifts of the greatest worth.  
So I will share the golden treasure that to me he gave,  
And hope that his pure love my fuller, fatter, heavier, golden memory can save.**

**My angel, my brother, by gift from above,  
I thank you for teaching me forever to faithfully love.**



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# Siblings in the Spotlight

Saturday, July 29, 2006

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Plaza Hotel

1911 E. Kansas Avenue

Garden City

**Siblings in the Spotlight** is a one day event for siblings who have a brother or sister with a disability. Siblings will discuss concerns they often experience such as: peer issues, resentment, loss, and concerns about the future. They will learn how to increase the unique opportunities often experienced by siblings including advocacy, insight, compassion, and tolerance. Siblings between the ages of 8 and 18 are encouraged to attend. To sign up, please contact [Families Together](#) at 620-276-6364. Deadline is July 21, 2006.

# Legislative Update

From ACTions Newsletter, May 2006

Now that the 2006 legislative session has come to a close, be sure to thank your elected officials for their public service.

On the disability service front, there were many positive outcomes this year, including:

- ★ more than \$20 million in new funding that will flow to communities in Kansas;
- ★ the first significant new dollars for infant and toddler services in more than a decade;
- ★ first-time funding for dental care for people with disabilities;
- ★ money for training direct support professionals through the College of Direct Support;
- ★ and effective work by community stakeholders during the SRS strategic planning process to address system
- ★ An increase to the Education budget of \$541 million.

# Ed. Advocate Update

Submitted by [Karen Snell](#), Topeka Center

*Summertime is upon us!*

*But there is no time to rest on your laurels. As you sit poolside, sipping your lemonade, you may need something to read.*

*May I make a suggestion???*

If you did not attend an education advocate training this past year then summer may provide the chance to review some changes in the law that were made when the IDEA was reauthorized in 2004. One particular area of interest may be "discipline". In short, regarding discipline procedures, IDEA 2004:

- 1) adds new authority for school personnel,
- 2) establishes a new standard for manifestation determinations,
- 3) adds a new provision when there is a determination that a behavior was a manifestation of the disability,
- 4) establishes a new standard for special circumstances,
- 5) adds a new definition for "serious bodily injury",
- 6) readdresses the authority of the Hearing Officer and placement during appeals,
- 7) establishes a timeline for expedited hearings for placement during appeals, and
- 8) revises the standard for a basis of knowledge for children not yet eligible for special education and related services.

For more information:

[www.kansped.org](http://www.kansped.org)

[www.reedmartin.com](http://www.reedmartin.com)

[www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)

[www.ideapractices.org](http://www.ideapractices.org)

[www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers)

# FAMILY VOICES...



A vast amount of information is available to us with the internet. Information can be found on any topic you can imagine. Nearly one-third of all visits to the internet are from medical help and news on health issues.

The National Institute for Health has a link with information on "[10 Things to Know About Evaluating Medical Resources on the Web](#)".

The following questions are something to consider the next time you are checking health resources, and perhaps any other topic, via the internet.

1. Who runs this site?
2. Who pays for this site?
3. What is the purpose of the site?
4. Where does the information come from?
5. What is the basis of the information?
6. How is the information selected?
7. How current is the information?
8. How does the site choose links to other sites?
9. What information about you does the site collect and why?
10. How does the site manage interactions with visitors?

Answers to these questions are discussed at:

<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/webresources/>

Remember the use of the internet for medical information does not take the place of consulting a medical provider.

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# RESOURCES



## FAMILIES TOGETHER TOLL FREE NUMBERS:

[Wichita](#) 1-888-815-6364  
[Topeka](#) 1-800-264-6343  
[Kansas City](#) 1-877-499-5369  
[Garden City](#) 1-888-820-6364  
[Spanish line](#) 1-800-499-9443

[www.familiestogetherinc.org](http://www.familiestogetherinc.org)

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE INFORMATION NETWORK

1-800-332-6262

An information service for children and adults with disabilities, their families, and their service providers.

[www.makeadifferenceks.org](http://www.makeadifferenceks.org)

## KPIRC

Kansas Parent Information Resource Center  
(A resource for parents of any child)

PO Box 320 • Lecompton, Kansas 66050

785-887-6711 • 866-711-6711 • fax: 785-887-6711

e-mail: [nkraft@nekesc.org](mailto:nkraft@nekesc.org) • website: [www.kpirc.org](http://www.kpirc.org)

## NICHY

*National Information Center for  
Children and Youth with Disabilities*

**NICHY Website**

[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

- ★ All text-only publications have been reformatted to a new easy-to-read layout
- ★ A side-bar menu makes navigation easy
- ★ The ALL-NEW resource library featuring the Technical Assistance & Dissemination (TA&D) Network makes finding information a breeze

Call us or visit  
our website!

1-800-695-0285  
[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

## Check Out these Internet Resources!



**PACER Center's Kids Against Bullying** Hear what kids are saying about bullying. Learn how to spot it; how to stop it; and more.

[www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org](http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org)

There are hundreds of websites parents of kids with learning difficulties can access to find information, products, and services. How skilled are you at deciding whether a site is right for you? Take this quiz and find out! [www.schwablearning.org/quizasp?q=8](http://www.schwablearning.org/quizasp?q=8)

**The HIKE Fund, Inc.** is a not for profit philanthropic project of the International Order of Job's Daughters. The purpose of the Fund is to provide hearing devices for children with hearing impairments between the ages of newborn and twenty years whose parents are unable to meet this special need financially. An estimate of 100 children are provided with hearing devices each year. Children are eligible to receive a grant providing the need is verified by a prescription from an audiologist or physician. Many of the recipients are children of working parents. The Fund has awarded many types of devices including, but not limited to, hearing aids, FM systems, closed caption converters, tactile units, alerting systems, and specialized sports equipment, to aid hearing impaired children in communication. The International Center for Job's Daughters, 233 West 6th Street, Papillion, NE 68046 (402) 592-7987. Website: [www.thehikefund.org](http://www.thehikefund.org)

### **Kansas Assistive Technology Cooperative (KATCO)**

The Kansas Assistive Technology Cooperative was established and is directed by persons with disabilities. It is a consumer run financial program founded to provide persons with disabilities and their families access to financial resources for acquiring assistive technology through education, savings and borrowing.

[www.katco.net](http://www.katco.net)

### **Disability Rights Center of Kansas (DRC)**

DRC provides legal representation, advocacy, technical assistance and information and referral to Kansans with disabilities. Their priority areas include Abuse Neglect and Exploitation, Guardianship, Healthcare, Community Integration, Accessibility, Employment and Fair Housing.

[www.drckansas.org](http://www.drckansas.org)

**Kids on Wheels** is a new publication for young wheelchair users and their parents that enables and encourages active, independent living.

[www.kidsonwheels.cc](http://www.kidsonwheels.cc)



# Summer 2006 Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Contact
June 23-24, 2006	Parent Networking Conference, <a href="#">Topeka</a>	800-264-6343
Sept. 9, 2006	Families Together, Inc. Board Meeting, <a href="#">Topeka</a>	888-815-6364
Oct. 4-6, 2006	First International Symposium on Usher Syndrome and Related Disorders, Omaha, Nebraska	402-498-6729
Dec. 9, 2006	Our Combined Voices Inclusion Conference, <a href="#">Wichita</a>	888-815-6364
Dec. 9, 2006	Families Together, Inc. Board Meeting, <a href="#">Wichita</a>	888-815-6364
Feb 17, 2007	Families Together, Inc. Board Meeting, <a href="#">Kansas City</a>	888-815-6364
Feb 17, 2007	Together We Can Learn Inclusion Conference, <a href="#">Kansas City</a>	877-499-5369

## Attendant Care

The Families Together [Wichita Center](#) has a list of people who wish to be personal care attendants during the summer months. Families in the Wichita area who are on the HCBS waiver and are looking for attendant care during the summer can call the [Wichita Center](#) at 316-945-6364 to get more information.



## The KAW VALLEY SPECIAL RODEO

*Sponsored by: The Kaw Valley Rodeo Association*

**Friday, July 28, 2006**

**7:00 pm**

**Wells Arena, Cico Park  
Riley County Fair Grounds  
Manhattan, Kansas**



You are invited to participate in the Kaw Valley Rodeo Association's Special Rodeo. Come join the Prorodeo Cowboys and Cowgirls, while they show you what it's like to participate in rodeo events. There is no cost for participating children. The ages are 5 to 12 years old. Each child will receive a cowboy hat, bandana, a contestant number and a t-shirt. The KVRA encourages the children and parents to stay and be their guests for the regular PRCA Rodeo which will follow the Kaw Valley Special Rodeo.

Please contact by July 24th:

**Sandy Chandler  
1530 Pierre St  
Manhattan, KS 66502  
785-776-0338**



Families Together, Inc.  
501 Jackson, Suite 400  
Topeka, KS 66603

If you wish to receive the Families Together newsletter by e-mail rather than mail, please contact the Families Together Kansas City Center at:  
**877-499-5369** or  
[kansascity@familiestogetherinc.org](mailto:kansascity@familiestogetherinc.org).



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