



Uniting Parents' Newsletter



Director's Note

Join us!
Wonderland Family Fun
Day
Saturday, July 11, 2009

Spring 2009
<http://unitingparents.cohs.net>

Dear Parents,

I hope that as the school year ended that you enjoyed graduation ceremonies and family events. Uniting Parents was pleased to highlight several students from around the Panhandle who graduated, attended proms or were recognized for an award. Our newsletter has a section called "Kid's Corner" and this is where I want to highlight youth activities so please keep our newsletter in mind.

As I pondered about what to write this time, I wanted to recognize the accomplishments and efforts of dedicated parents across Texas and those organizations that helped towards improving the lives of people with disabilities during the 81st legislative session. Many parents and organizations spent countless hours ensuring that our legislatures were well aware of important issues and bills that ensure a better Texas for people with disabilities. Items addressed during this session included issues surrounding: state schools, employment, volunteer advocate programs, autism, budgets, and education. Family members and advocates were able to impart their knowledge on how to improve services by writing letters, making visits to the capitol, e-mailing and attending rallies all in hopes to capture the support of their representative or senator.

Uniting Parents was formed for the sole purpose of improving the lives of families of children with disabilities. I hope as you work with your case manager and you learn about advocating for your child that you will also become involved in the legislative process at the state and/or local level, if you are not at this time. It is remarkable how a few parents can influence change in so many ways. Voting is a perfect example of how to influence government and change. I hope all of you take advantage of our personal right to vote and will help your youth register to vote when they are 18 years of age. This simple but very important right is another way that we can improve the lives of our families of children with disabilities.

Through the support of TX A&M University and TX Advanced Leadership and Advocacy Conference, I joined a group of parents and self advocates this spring at the capitol and visited several legislators at the capitol. Our team decided to dedicate time on SB 187 which would allow families with incomes up to 300% of federal poverty levels to purchase Medicaid for the children with disabilities on a sliding scale fee basis. Each family member and self advocate told their personal story of how SB 187 could alleviate the financial hardships of not having health coverage and improve the health status of most working middle class families.

First hand, I watched how parents became the voice of individuals with disabilities and advocacy in motion.

What was very interesting was that some of our legislators and their staff were not totally informed on proposed bills regarding disability issues; therefore, the information provided by parents and advocates to help educate legislative staff as well as our legislators. To date, SB 187 has been signed by the governor with a proposed implementation date of December 2009.

To learn about the status of other proposed bills on disability issues log on to:

<http://www.thearcoftexas.org/advocacy/news/> or

<http://tcds.edb.utexas.edu>.

Have a great Summer!

Maria

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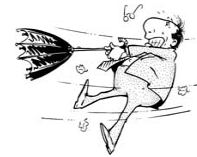
Lubbock's New Parent Case Manager:



Hello, my name is Timela Salazar, the new parent case manager for Uniting Parents in Lubbock. I was born in Lubbock but moved to Dallas when I was 17 and then returned to Lubbock in 2003. I have three children, two of which have been diagnosed with PDD(NOS) which is a form of Autism. I have always loved helping people and realized that social work would be the perfect career for me. I plan to return to school this fall to continue on my Social Work degree. I believe Uniting Parents has given me the opportunity to fulfill my dream in helping people which is what I absolutely enjoy. Being a parent of special needs children isn't always easy but I believe that we, as parents are special ourselves because we were chosen to take care of them. We are their light and they are ours.

Web Sites of Interest to Parents and Professionals:

- A Guide to Social Security Benefits and Employment for Young People with Disabilities (2009): <http://communityinclusion.org/pdf/GTW2009.pdf>
- Northwest Texas Autism Network: www.nwtxautismnetwork.org
- Emergency Management: www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem
- Ready, Prepare, Plan, Stay Informed: www.ready.gov



Medicaid / CHIP Programs!

Summer break is a great time to catch-up on your well-child check-ups. Medicaid can help provide financial assistance so you can go to see your doctor, dentist, or get to the pharmacy to pick-up prescriptions. If you would like more information on Medicaid or the CHIP insurance program, call a counselor at the Coalition of Health Services at (806) 337-1700 or (888) 892-2273 ext. 217. Prevention is the Best Medicine.



View our newsletter on our *web page:*
<http://unitingparents.cohs.net>
 View staff information, workshops, events, photo gallery, & links to other resources.

Do you want to mentor other parents ? Let us know. We will add your name & number to our networking list.



Uniting Parents' Networking List:

Amy Chapman / Aspergers	359-4009	Lucerzia Coats / RETT's Syndrome	940-937-6584
Alma Galvan / Leukemia**	935-9787	Lynette Mixon / Marden Walker & Dandy Walker	353-9599
Betty Allison / Down Syndrome	373-6363	Maria Garcia/Down Syndrome **	337-1700
Brenda & Robert Rodriguez / Cerebral Palsy	655-3300	Marilyn Williams/Hearing Impaired	352-4124
Dalia Ruiz/Mental Retardation / Seizure Disorder	535-1583	Neysa Spurrier / Autism / Aspergers / CD & NACD Curriculum	359-3833
Glendie & Roth Farra ADHD / Tourett's	355-0271 / 679-5709	Norma Baeza / Spina Bifida	376-5104
Hope Huerta / Diabetes **	935-8687	Peggy Easley / Down Syndrome	249-5190
JoAnn Taylor /Spastic Deplegia	934-2402	Stacey Campbell / Autism / Torticollis / Plagiocephaly	355-1198
Josephine Valadez / Prader Willie Syndrome**	966-3333		

****Families that speak Spanish****

Workshops & Events:

Jun. 25 - 5th Annual Texas Parent 2 Parent Conference is an event in Austin for parents, youth with disabilities and providers. Stipends are available but limited. For more information, call Laura J. Warren at 866.896.6001.

Jul. 6 - 2009 Texas Behavior Health Institute Conference is a five-day event in Austin. For more information, call 877.451.8700.

Jul. 20 - The Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum is a five-day event in Austin. For more information, call 979.458.1593.

Jul. 22 - Autism Society of America's 40th National Conference is a four-day event in St. Charles, IL. For more information, call 301.657.0881 ext. 110.

Jul. 31 - National Down Syndrome Congress Convention is a three-day event in Sacramento, CA. For more information, call 800.232.6372.

Aug. 7 - Texas Advocates Conference-Texas Advocate Stars are Big and Bright is a three-day event in Irving. For more information, call 800.252.9729 ext. 112.

Aug. 19- Sixteenth Annual 2009 At-Risk Conference will be held from 8-3pm at the Amarillo Civic Center. For more information, call Vickie Ansley at 806.677.5134.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - Relative Caregivers Support Group - This support group will meet on Fridays, 5:30 - 6:30 pm at West Texas Family & Community Services at 601 West 10th Street in Amarillo. For more information and to reserve your space, call 806.236.4122.

Northwest Texas Autism Support Group Meeting. Held the first Sunday of every month at 2400 Lakeview Drive in Amarillo inside the Specialized Therapy Services offices from 2:30-3:30pm. For more information, call Lisa Mooring at 806.354.2381.

The Rural Children's Initiative of West Texas!

The Rural Children's Initiative of West Texas is proud to sponsor a very special family training event with Brad Thompson, Executive Director of the HALI Project. The purpose of this 11/2 day training is to help families learn skills to better:

- ◆ Partner with agencies in order to access services.
- ◆ Advocate for their children to receive appropriate services.
- ◆ Reduce the stigma of having mental health issues.

Families may register to attend any of the following dates & locations:

July 10th & 11th - Floydada - Contact: Kim Peralez - 806.983.4929
or 806.549.0867

July 17th & 18th - Plainview - Contact: Dorothy "Dot" McDowell
806.291.0388
806.223.3241

Free Childcare - Free Friday Dinner and Saturday Lunch
Door Prizes!!!

Parent Support Group!

Texas Panhandle MHMR
presents
A Parent Support Group
Every Saturday at 4:00pm
at 1500 S. Taylor.

Everyone is welcomed. Please come and share with others who understand what you are going through. Support from others always makes things a little easier.

Sorry, no childcare available.

For more information, call Charles at 806.354.2191 or 349.5663.

Volunteer at one of our special events or help us with clerical needs. Give us a call, we will find just the right spot for you!!!! Call any of our offices listed on the back page of this newsletter.

Wonderland Family Fun Day

Where: Amarillo's Thompson Park - Area 12

When: Saturday, July 25, 2009

Time: Registration 4pm - 5pm

Entry into Wonderland 5pm - 10pm

Hand stamps include Putt-Putt Golf

\$11 per person

Gate passes are \$5 at the entrance to Wonderland.

Picnic sponsored by Tyson Foods.

Please RSVP the number in your group to Anna Shores at 337.1700 or 1.888.892.2273 ext. 210 or Laurie Roybal at ext. 211.



Thank You-¡Gracias!

Uniting Parents would like to "Thank" everyone who donated to the LiTE Scholarship Fundraiser in April sponsored by Amarillo College and the Panhandle Coalition for Transition Services. Monies raised will help students with disabilities attend Amarillo College this next year.

Wal-Mart Distribution Center
of Plainview

Frank's Plumbing

Cumulus Broadcasting Inc.

KGNC Radio Station

The Eagle

The Party Stop

TGI Friday

Vickie's Vogue

Sam's Club

Richard's Body Shop

Dumas Discount Liquor

Montana Mike's

Herbert Olivarez

Darla Sanders

American Snow Cones

Tacos Garcias

Midas Oil Change

Western Bowl

Nalini's Salon

Tracy Cortesi

Carol Webb

Pro Cuts

Wendy's

O'Reilly's

Thanks to those of you who attended for your attendance and participation!

Challenge Air!

Challenge Air for Kids and Friends

Amarillo Area FLY DAY

Saturday, August 29th, 2009

Coyote Flight Centers

11001 Airport Blv. Amarillo, TX 79111

806.335.9763

Please join Uniting Parents and many other volunteers for a day of aviation fun and activities at Coyote Flight Centers. Register on-line at www.ChallengeAir.com or call Angie at 806.335.9763. This special event allows children with disabilities an opportunity to take a ride on a small engine plane across Palo Duro Park and back along with many other fun crafts and activities for the whole family. All inquires must be made to Angie and you must register online. Come join the Fun!

Kids' Corner:

Graduation & Junior-Senior Proms

Peggy Jean Ford
 Graduate
 Canyon High School
 PJ as she is known by her family and friends has been employed by United Supermarkets. PJ has applied for the WTLC program at WTA&M University and plans to go to Camp Agape this summer.



Andrea Torrez
 Junior
 Floydada High School
 Andrea was a lovely high roller at her Prom this year. Can't wait to see her senior picture next year.



Jeremy Coats
 Junior Childress High School
 Jeremy loves motorcycles and cars. He worked with classmates and built a Cobra car in shop class and they were featured on the news. Jeremy plans to attend Texas Tech after he graduates next year.



Joe Garcia
 Junior
 Randall High School and
 Nikki Camarillo
 Senior
 Tascosa High School
 This lovely couple danced though out the night at the Randall High School Prom. They had fun and never ran out of energy when it came to dancing.



Award!

Ryan Keadle
 7th Grader at Amarillo's Westover Park
 Junior High



Ryan poses proudly with his Soapbox Derby and Third Place Trophy. This was Ryan's first time in entering a Soapbox Derby Race and his family and friends are proud of his efforts.

Appreciation & Donations Requested

Uniting Parents has depleted their Camp Fund. We would like to "Thank" the **La Salud de la Mujer-Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health Foundation** for their help with these funds. We were very fortunate to have had these funds the last two years to help families send their children to different camps or join local activities. Uniting Parents, as a program of the Coalition of Health Services, Inc. accepts donations to help families with funding for camps as well as emergency needs. If you would like to make a donation to our organization, please contact us. We use these funds to help families in our 32 counties service area. Donations help our families directly when there is no other source of funding. For more information on how you can help, call Maria Garcia-program director at 806.337.1700, ext. 212 or Anna Shores at ext. 210. You may also use our toll-free number-1.888.892.2273.



Uniting Parents

a program of the

Coalition of Health Services, Inc.

301 South Polk, Suite 740

Amarillo, Texas 79101

<http://unitingparents.cohs.net>

www.cohs.net

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Administrative Office:
Coalition of Health Services, Inc.
301 S. Polk, Suite 740
Amarillo, TX. 79101

Amarillo Office Numbers:	
Office Number:	1.806.337.1700
Fax Number:	1.806.337.1702
Toll Free Number:	1.888.892.2273
Web Address::	http://unitingparents.cohs.net

Amarillo Office:	
Program Director:	ext.
Maria Garcia, M. Ed.	212
Administrative Assistant:	
Anna Shores	210
Parent Case Managers:	
Juanita Keadle	215
Alma Benavides	214
Isabel Camarillo	213
CSHCN Respite Assistant:	
Laurie Roybal	211

Dumas Office:	
Parent Case Manager:	Hope Huerta
Ph: 806.935.8687	Fax: 806.935.3525
Toll Free: 800.442.7893	

Lubbock Office: WELCOME To Our	
Parent Case Manager:	Timela Salazar
Ph.: 806.785.5818	Fax: 806.687.0249

Plainview Office:	
Parent Case Manager:	Olga Ybarra
Ph.: 806.293.5667	Fax: 806.293.3213
Parent Case Manager:	Belia Alvarez
Ph: 806.288.9068	Fax: 806.288.9069
Toll Free: 877.488.9068	