

Connections

A Newsletter from Child and Family Connections of DuPage County



Fall 2011

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By The Numbers

- ❖ We are currently serving 1,401 children. At this time last year we were serving 1,406 children.
- ❖ We average between 170-180 new referrals a month
- ❖ 203 children are currently in the intake process
- ❖ 1,198 children have active IFSPs
- ❖ We have 22 full time service coordinators
- ❖ We have one $\frac{3}{4}$ time and one part time service coordinator
- ❖ Caseloads average 57 children for each full time service coordinator
- ❖ On average, service coordinators receive between 15-20 phone calls a day
- ❖ On average, service coordinators attend 26 meetings a month
- ❖ 26 meetings a month translates into an average of 52 hours that service coordinators are out of the office each month
- ❖ We have 2 part time parent liaisons to assist parents

As you can see from the numbers listed above, we have a very busy office. We strive to return phone calls within 2 business days. It is helpful to leave a short message when calling your service coordinator containing the reason for your call and the best phone number where you can be reached.

FUN WITH YOUR CHILDREN

Fall is a great time to explore outdoors with your children. Below is a list of places you can go with your children that are accessible and reasonably priced.

Cosley's Farm

1356 N. Gary Rd., Wheaton
Phone: 630-665-5534
www.cosleyzoo.org

This farm is run by the Wheaton Park District. They have a variety of farm animals as well as deer, coyotes, red foxes, raccoons and birds. There is a shady area with picnic tables for lunch.

Wheaton residents and children are free. \$3.00 per non-Wheaton resident adult

Willowbrook Wildlife Center

Park Rd. and 22nd Street, Glen Ellyn
Phone: 630-942-6200
www.dupageforest.com

This is a wildlife center that rehabilitates injured wildlife. Some animals are permanent residents due to their injuries. Visitors can view eagles, foxes, hawks, raccoons and other woodland animals outside. There is also an indoor exhibit with song birds, frogs, snakes, etc. An area for puppet shows and other activities are also inside. There is a shady area with picnic tables for lunch.

A donation is welcomed

DuPage Children's Museum

301 N. Washington, Naperville
Phone: 630-637-8000
www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org

This hands-on children's museum is lots of fun. They just moved to their new location in Naperville. Exhibits are geared for children up to about 10 years old. Each age range will find interesting things to do within an exhibit.

Call for times and fees.

Teckawitha Woods Nature Center and Forest Preserve

35 W 076 Willa Marie Rd., St. Charles
Phone: 847-741-8350

This nature center is nestled in the woods along the Fox River. They offer nature programs and activities for all ages. The center contains lively exhibits, a wildlife observation room and a discovery corner for children. Wheelchair/stroller accessible.

Donations not required but appreciated

Fullersburg Woods

3609 Spring Rd., Oak Brook
Phone: 630-850-8110
www.dupageforest.com

This is a good place to hike with small children and children in strollers. Wide paved paths that are easily accessible wind along the Salt Creek. A nature center is at one end, Graue Mill at the other. There are picnic tables near the nature center.

To hike is free. There is a fee to tour the mill.

Phillips Park ZOO and Visitor Center

1000 Ray Moses Dr. Aurora, IL 60505
630-256-3750
www.phillipsparkaurora.com

Phillips Park Zoo is a FREE zoo open year round.
Zoo Hours - 9:00 am to 5 pm daily.

This park and zoo are run by the Aurora Park District. It is a small zoo but perfect for young children. Animals include: Bald Eagles, Red Tailed Hawk, Great Horned Owls, Gray Wolves, Cougars, Fox, North American River Otters, Llamas, Elk herd, Goats, Reptiles, Swans, Ducks, Turkeys, Peacocks and more.

Phillips Park also has picnic facilities, a sunken garden and visitor center with mastodon bones.

Sensory Friendly Films

AMC Theaters offer Sensory Friendly films the first Saturday of the month. These films are presented with the lights turned up and the sound turned down. Audience members are invited to dance, sing, walk around, etc. This is a great way to see a movie with your children who are challenging to take to the theater. We have received positive reviews from parents who have done this in the past.

Yorktown and Naperville 16 are two of the theaters who participate in this program. For more info go to:

<http://www.amctheatres.com/sff/>

Fun With Your Children (cont.)

Lake View Nature Center

17W063 Hodges Road, Oakbrook Terrace,
630.941.747

www.obtpd.org

This nature center is run through the Oakbrook Terrace park district. It is just west of Route 83 north of 22nd street and south of Roosevelt Rd. They have live animals on exhibit, walking trails through beautiful gardens that are stroller accessible, and a pond for fishing.

Entrance is free

Bartlett Nature Center at the James "Pate"

Philip State Park
2054 W. Stearns Rd, Bartlett
847.608.3100

www.bartlettparks.org

Nature Center has nature related displays and live animals including snakes, lizards and insects

Open Monday-Friday 9-4, Saturdays 9-1

Entrance is free

Forest Preserve District of DuPage

The DuPage Forest Preserve District offers educational programs, recreational activities, and special events. For information, call (630) 933-7200 or visit their website at: www.dupageforest.com

Morton Arboretum Children's Garden

4100 IL Rt. 53, Lisle
630.968.0074

www.mortonarb.org

The Children's Garden is a great place to visit year round. Lots of activities for children.

\$11 Adults (18-64), \$10 Seniors (65+) \$8 Youth (2-17) Children under 2 are free. Admission includes FREE parking! **Wednesdays are discount admission days:** \$7 Adults (18-64) \$6 Seniors (65+) \$5 Youth (2-17)

DuPage Children's Museum Third Thursday Program

Third Thursday is a special time once each month when families of children with autism spectrum disorders, visual impairments, and/or mobility impairments come together to enjoy the Museum and take advantage of the many parent and community resources available to them. This program is available the third Thursday of every month, from 5-7 p.m.

Photo books are available to help visitors structure a visit. Families are also invited to play and utilize the augmentative communication devices available at our exhibits.

In addition to the Museum's exhibits and activities, during Third Thursday DCM's Community Access Network coordinator provides a resource table offering visitors information, community and parent support resources Normal admission prices apply. No registration required. Free to DCM Members. The Museum is open at this time and everyone is welcome!



Smart911

DuComm, DuPage County's emergency 911 service now offers a free new service to help you when you call 911. First responders will have important information that can help them address your emergency.

To use Smart911, you must register online. Smart911 is a tool the help the EMS team, Police and Fire Department help you when you call 911.

You can enter information about medical conditions for you and your family. When a 911 call is received, they will be able to notify the response team about the condition and location of family members with autism, allergies, Alzheimer's, hearing loss, etc. without having to rely on verbal communication.

You can enter information to help firefighters know how many people live in your house, including pets. You can include information such as where your children's bedrooms are, and if your pet is crated.

Smart911 also assists the police. You can include photos of your children, which will help the police in finding them if they are missing. You can enter your cell phone numbers and tie the number to your home address so the police would know where to look if 911 is called.

The Smart911 system is 100% private. Your family's profile is completely secure and private. The details you enter on the Smart911 website are only shared with 911 dispatchers and the first responders in the field and only when you or a family member has dialed 911.

You can sign up for this new FREE program at Smart911.com.

This is only available for DuPage County residents at this time.

YWCA Childcare Resource & Referral

The YWCA Childcare Resource & Referral (CCR&R) assists parents and caretakers in their search for child care through referrals, individual counseling and provider workshops.

Parents who are looking for child care solutions can call the YWCA and get a list of providers in their area. There is a sliding scale fee to obtain the list, but it is a nominal amount.

They also have nurse consultants who assist parents and providers with including children with special needs in a child care setting.

Another aspect of the CCR&R is the Child Care Assistance Program. Families that meet the income eligibility criteria may get assistance with child care costs.

The CCR&R is just one of the many YWCA programs offered to women area of the Y. You can find out more on their website at: www.ywcachicago.org or call 630-790-3030.

Therapy Cancellations

Therapists get paid only for the time they spend working with your child. They do not get paid for their travel time. Please try not to cancel a therapy session at the last moment or as a therapist arrives at your home. We know that emergencies arise, but try to avoid last minute cancellations. You should review the cancellation policies for each therapist working with your child. Therapists may request to be removed from working with your child if you cancel too often.

Your child's therapists should provide you with a phone number where they can be reached in case of emergency. You can call our office if you need to reach a therapist to cancel for that day. Our secretary can call the therapist if you do not have their phone number. If you do not have their phone number, talk to the therapist at your child's next session.

Transition at a Glance

The word transition has many meanings. There are two ways you will hear about transition in Early Intervention. One definition refers to how well your child can move from one activity to another. You will see this definition in evaluations and progress notes from therapists.

The other type of transition in EI refers to the child's movement out of the EI program. This occurs when a child meets their goals in the IFSP and no longer needs our services or when a child turns three and must leave the program.

Transition to your local school district's Early Childhood program is the next step for many children in Early Intervention.

Your service coordinator will send you a detailed transition packet when your child turns 29 – 30 months. One important item in the packet is the release/consent form.

Written consent must be obtained prior to any reports or evaluations being forwarded to the school district. It is very important that you promptly return the consent form to your service coordinator.

A transition conference will be set up with the school district, the family and the service coordinator. This meeting offers parents an opportunity to meet with a representative from their local school district and hear what options are available when their child turns three. It also offers the district the opportunity to learn about your child and plan appropriately. This conference should occur *at least* 90 days before your child turns three.

Sometimes parents are hesitant to start the transition process. It may seem like we are planning too far into your child's future, but the school district needs time to schedule meetings, evaluations, etc.

We encourage you to begin the transition process even if you aren't sure that you want to proceed in this direction because there are several steps that must be taken to ensure that your child is in an appropriate program on their third birthday.

The Illinois State Board of Education is now required to obtain minimal information on each child enrolled in Early Intervention.

The Early Intervention Program shares your child's name, date of birth, and sufficient parent contact information with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to ensure that every child has a smooth transition to preschool, other community based services or the school district Early Childhood program. This information will be provided to your school district shortly before your child turns three and will only be used for transition. This information will be shared whether or not you sign consent for release of information with your service coordinator.

If you refuse to consent to the release of your child's reports and evaluations, we will not send those documents to the school.

The school district will call you once they receive the report from ISBE if they did not receive a transition packet from us. You have the right to refuse services through your school district. Participation in school at 3 years of age is optional but may be a good choice for your child.

If you have any concerns about transition, be sure to discuss them with your service coordinator or one of the parent liaisons.

You may want to sign up for one of our transition workshops for further information on the process. The Parent Liaisons send out notices regarding upcoming Transition Workshops via email. Make sure they have your current email address. Email contact information can be found on the last page of this newsletter.



Special Recreation Associations

Most towns in DuPage County has a partnership with a Special Recreation Association (SRA). Your local SRA providers classes for developmentally challenged children and can also supply an aide when necessary if a developmentally delayed child is registered for a park district class. Class fees are still enforced, but the SRA aide would be supplied free of charge.

Check your town's park district brochure for the SRA in your area. The number is usually listed in the front section of the park district brochure.

Several of the SRAs have created classes and events especially for children under three. You can attend classes at any of the SRAs, but you might need to pay out of district fees.

Age ranges for classes are suggestions. You can call the SRA staff to determine if your child could take any class offered.

Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Assn. (NEDSRA)
1770 W. Centennial Place, Addison
630-620-4500

Northwest Special Recreation Assn. (NWSRA)
3000 W Central Rd. Suite 205, Rolling Meadows
847-392-2848

Southeast Assn. for Special Parks & Recreation (SESPAR)
6000 S. Main St., Downers Grove
630-960-1144

Western DuPage Special Recreation Assn. (WDSRA)
116 N. Schmale Rd. Carol Stream
630-681-0962

Fox Valley Special Recreation Assn. (FVSRA)
1 N. Lincolnway, North Aurora
630-896-6066
Covers Aurora families within the Fox Valley Park District

Equipment Loan Programs

There are several programs that will loan equipment to families. This is a good way to find out if a piece of equipment or device is appropriate for your child.

Infinitec Durable Medical Equipment
www.infinitecdme.org

The mission of this project is to provide a durable medical equipment resource to benefit children and adults with permanent or temporary disabilities. The DME exchange is designed for anyone who needs this type of equipment but might not be able to afford it. The DME exchange connects individuals who have new or used DME for sale, loan or donation.

Illinois Assistive Technology Program
www.iltech.org

The purpose of IATP's device loan program is to let potential AT users try-out devices prior to purchase, have access to a backup system when their device is in for repairs and/or have access to a device while waiting for their device to be delivered.

Check out their website for more information:

Kid's Equipment Network
www.tken.org

The Kids Equipment Network has donated equipment that can be used for children and their families. Equipment includes wheelchairs, strollers, standers, adaptive seating, and bath chairs.

Clearbrook: Alex Leone Equipment Lending Library
<http://www.clearbrook.org/page.aspx?pid=432>

Various types of equipment are available for loan through this lending library. The Alex Leone Equipment Lending Library offers anyone with access to the library the opportunity to borrow available equipment. The library contains equipment that is suited for children from birth to five years of age.

Websites

APRAXIA KIDS

A comprehensive website for information on childhood apraxia of speech and children's speech and language topics

www.apraxia-kids.org

AUTISM COMMUNITY CONNECTION

DuPage County group created by parents for families with children on the autism spectrum. Wide variety of resources on this site.

www.autismcommunityconnection.com

AUTISM SOCIETY OF ILLINOIS

www.autismillinois.org

AUTISM SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Link above is for local chapter in Illinois, this website is the national one. Site has other links that may be of interest to families.

www.autism-society.org



CAR SEAT SAFETY CHECK

This site lists the dates and locations for a free car seat inspection.

http://www.seatcheck.net/?page_id=33

DO2LEARN

This site has activities and products to promote independence. They have a FREE picture card maker as part of the site which can be used to make picture cards for communication.

www.do2learn.com

EXCEPTIONAL PARENT

This website compliments the Exceptional Parent magazine, which is a great magazine for parents of special needs children.

www.eparent.com

FUSSY BABY NETWORK

Offers support to families who are experiencing a baby who is fussy, crying excessively, or has difficulties with sleeping or feeding. Offers options from calling their warmline to an individual home visit. The Fussy Baby Team works with mom and dad in finding more ways to soothe, care for, and enjoy your baby.

www.fussybabynetwork.org

SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER

Website created by an Occupational Therapist who has a daughter with sensory processing disorder.

www.sensory-processing-disorder.com

STARNET

STARNet Region II, which serves DuPage County, provides free workshops and conferences for families and professionals.

There are workshops and trainings available every month. These classes explore various elements of child development.

STARNet also provides support and information to families and professionals through Family Fellowship Awards, Professional Development Assistance, Mini-Grants, and a resource library. Mini-Grants provide professionals with funding for a specific project that supports the implementation of best practices in Early Intervention programs. Their resource library contains books, videos, and journals that are available to parents and professionals.

Family Fellowship Awards are available to families who have children with disabilities under the age of six. They provide parents with reimbursement for financial expenses

associated with attending workshops and conferences.

To obtain a list of conferences/workshops visit their website at: www.thecenterweb.org

Come Join Us!!

Child and Family Connections (CFC) has a playgroup for children in our program as well as their parents and siblings. We meet once a month, usually on a Friday morning from 9:30 – 11:00. You will get an email with the upcoming dates if you shared your email address with us. Email Marianne at mmcguire@pactinc.net to get on the email list.

For more information about the play group contact Jenny Somone at jsomone@pactinc.net or 331-481-4257 or Marianne McGuire at mmcguire@pactinc.net or 331-481-4259.

Ways to Reach Us

You can reach us through the various addresses listed below. If you would like to be informed about upcoming parent support group meetings, parent workshops or other events please send the parent liaisons your email address. Please note: service coordinators do not have individual email addresses.

cfcdupage@pactinc.net

CFC Service Coordinators

Put the name of the service coordinator in the subject line and it will be given to them.

Lorr@pactinc.net

Lori Orr

Program Manager

jsomone@pactinc.net

Jenny Somone

Parent Liaison

mmcguire@pactinc.net

Marianne McGuire

LIC Coordinator and Parent Liaison

www.pactinc.net

PACT, Inc.

Our agency website

CFC Contacts:

Amanda Krzystofiak	4267	Jillian Gondek	4265	Marianne McGuire	4259
Amy Bramwell	4293	Jillian Santora	4253	Mariel Tyk	4281
Amy Zeman	4301	Jim Reeves	4249	Melissa Otten	4303
Beth Hoppert	4263	Justin Wojdyla	4271	Melanie Arvanitakis	4243
Christine Ranos	4291	Karina Carrera	4269	Mindy Koechling	4299
Haley Mason	4289	Kerra Taylor	4277	Nicole James	4273
Heather Kijewski	4247	Kim Peterson	4285	Paula Santoro	4279
Jenn Brennan	4275	Kristi Gillespie	4283	Sarah Martinez	4221
Jennifer Anderson	4251	Krystal Madai	4255	Stacy Brock-Jones	4297
Jenny Somone	4257	Liz Schaid	4215	Stephanie Glass	4229
Jessica Radner	4287	Lori Orr	4209		