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Latest news ...

2010 brings about a new decade filled with resolutions; a renewed sense of direction in our lives; and perhaps it will bring us one step closer to finding a cure for autism.

CEP is embracing the new year by providing you with the opportunity to acquire more support for your child through our clinical services! We are offering supplemental services to all families in the Chicagoland area. In addition to home & school consultations, we also offer additional Speech & Language therapy sessions, 1:1 and/or small group behavioral and social services utilizing ABA/VB.

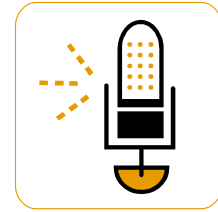
We would like to shout out a welcome to our new staff – Mina, Samantha K., Rachael, Courtney & Rosina – and to Benjamin [new student] & his family.

This newsletter is packed with interesting information - how to beat the winter blues, an evening of Karaoke downtown,

the formation of a parent group (see page 7), upcoming community activities for your family, and more.

Oh, have you heard? HBO is airing a biopic of Temple Grandin's early adulthood. More details can be found on page 4.

Last but not least, December's book fair at Barnes & Nobles may have been hindered by blustery winter weather; however it didn't prevent the children from having a blast looking at and/or reading books, making crafts and participating in small story time groups. With your support, we raised \$193.75! Thank you!



Parent Perspective: QOL Survey Outcome

By Pamela Zavada, LSW

Thank you for completing the Parent Perspective Quality of Life Survey for your child in December! Of the 25 surveys distributed, 10 parents completed and returned it.

In the category of Being [who my child is perceived to be]:

- 80% of the responses stated it was important for other people to treat their child first & foremost as a child. The outcome demonstrated a tie of 30% respectively for feeling not very satisfied, satisfied, and extremely satisfied.
- 90% of the responses stated it was extremely important for their child to be like any other member of the family. The outcome demonstrated 40% feeling satisfied; 30% feeling very satisfied; 30% feeling extremely satisfied.
- 50% of the responses stated it was extremely important for relatives to treat their child as any member of the family. The outcome reflected 30% of the parents feeling satisfied; there was a tie of 20% respectively for feeling not very satisfied, very satisfied and extremely satisfied.
- 60% of the responses stated it was important for their child to be like any other member of the community. The outcome demonstrated 40% feeling not very satisfied; 30% feeling satisfied; 20% feeling very satisfied.

In the category of Belonging [my child's connections to people and places]:

- 70% of the responses stated it was extremely important for family members to include their child in family activities & occasions. The outcome reflected 30% of the parents feeling satisfied; there was a tie of 20% respectively for feeling not very satisfied, very satisfied or extremely satisfied.
- 50% of the responses stated it was extremely important & 40% indicated it was very important for their child to play with his/her sibling(s). The outcome demonstrated 70% feeling not very satisfied; 10% feeling not at all satisfied; 10% feeling extremely satisfied.
- 60% of the responses stated it was extremely important for their child to have friends. The outcome reflected 80% of the parents feeling not at all satisfied; and 20% feeling not very satisfied.
- 70% of the responses stated it was very important for the community to include their child by addressing them, involving them in local events and activities. The outcome demonstrated 40% feeling not very satisfied; there was a tie of 20% respectively for feeling not at all satisfied, satisfied and very satisfied.
- 50% of the responses stated it was extremely important for the community parks, playgrounds and pools to be accessible for their child.

The outcome demonstrated 30% feeling satisfied; there was a tie of 20% respectively for feeling not at all satisfied, not very satisfied and extremely satisfied.

In the category of Becoming [my child's nurtured growth and development]

- 50% of the responses stated it was extremely important for the government to support my family in ways that help meet my child's needs. The outcome reflected 50% of the parents feeling not at all satisfied; and 20% feeling extremely satisfied.
- 60% of the responses stated it was extremely important & 40% indicated it was very important for professionals providing services meet my child's disability related needs. The outcome demonstrated a tie of 40% respectively for feeling satisfied and very satisfied.
- 70% of the responses stated it was extremely important for their child's school instructors to guide and help their child learn important academic skills. The outcome demonstrated 40% feeling very satisfied; there was a tie of 20% respectively for feeling satisfied, and extremely satisfied.

This is a brief outcome report for the Parent Perspective Quality of Life Survey. A comprehensive report is available by request.



"... 30% of the parents feel satisfied with other people treating their child first and foremost as a child."

Kristi's Class

2010 is off to a great start! We changed up the schedule a bit and are rearranging the classroom frequently to work on flexibility.

We have also introduced a reward system called "Student of the Week" where at the end of each week, the teachers vote for the student that they feel did the best job behaviorally, academically or in their overall performance in the classroom. The winner receives a certificate, their name on the Student of the Week board, and a special surprise. This has been really motivating to the students so far.

For the month of February, we will be focusing on friendship and how to be a good friend. We have already talked a bit about qualities that make a good friend and how we can be friendly or nice to others.

Instead of a Valentine's Day party, we will be having a friendship party to celebrate the great friends that we have in our class! Look for information about this party in your child's folder this week!



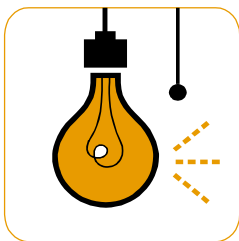
Did you know?

The Arc of Illinois [through a grant] provides consumer stipend funds to enable people with developmental disabilities and their family members to attend conferences of their choice that are directly related to topics pertaining to their disability.

Stipends can be used for conference fees, child care, meals, and/or travel expenses. Reimbursement is capped at \$200 per person per year or \$400 per family per year.

Visit <http://www.thearcofil.org/document.asp?did=35>

for more information and/or to print an application.



Angela's Class

So far this school year has been running smoothly. We have been working 1:1, focusing on IEP and supplementary goals. We also have been continuing our groups of following directions, association method, math, and spelling.

The kids are learning well in small group settings. We will continue going on our weekly outings—we normally go Tuesday afternoons. We are always looking for new places to go and areas you would like us to focus on with your child.

This January we welcomed new staff, Mina and Rachael, and a new student, Benjamin. We are very lucky to have wonderful students and a great staff!

We also want to say THANK YOU to all parents for your encouraging words and support. We truly appreciate your thoughts and feedback!

Free IEP App for iPhone & iPod Touch



[Excerpt from PEATC]

The Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC) is pleased to announce the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Checklist iPhone application.

This new IEP app helps parents of students with special needs become better-informed advocates by making IEP information easier to access. "The playing field for families just got more level," says Cherie Takemoto, PEATC's Executive Director. "With this new app, parents can use their iPhone to make notes on their child's IEP, and access critical information quickly."

To see a video of the app before downloading it for free go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tBAOF7tWSo&feature=player_embedded

To get the IEP Checklist App, please visit the Apple iTunes store, and type IEP Checklist in the search box or visit www.peatc.org.

Winter Blues ...

By Courtney Murray, OTR/L

Today it was brought to my attention that we have had 10 consecutive days without sunshine. It is no wonder that winter is a time when it is sometimes hard to get motivated and energy seems to be lacking. Luckily, there are things we can do to help improve arousal and alertness, even when the skies are gray.

Alerting sensory strategies are helpful for increasing energy and attention and can be incorporated throughout the day to improve self-regulation. All of our senses can be “woken” up through the use of these strategies. Some ideas include:

Tactile (touch):

- cold temperatures: take a quick walk outside, eat a popsicle, drink a glass of ice water

Olfactory (smell):

- Citrus and peppermint scents are alerting. Lotions, gum, candy, and room scents can all alert this sensory system.

Auditory (hearing):

- Listening to fast paced, louder music can wake up our bodies.

Gustatory (taste):

- As with olfactory, citrus and peppermint can stimulate the body when eaten as well. Eat an orange or a peppermint to help wake up.
- Crunchy and sour foods can alert our systems. Snack ideas include: lemonade, sour patch kids, pretzels, chips.

Vestibular (movement):

- Many movements are alerting. Get up and take a walk, bounce on a large ball, do jumping jacks, spin in circles on a swing.
- Exercising in the morning before getting the day started can help improve alertness throughout the day.

Visual (seeing):

- Watching television or video games can be alerting, but be careful to limit the amount of screen time because too much can cause eye fatigue.

These strategies can be helpful to prevent the winter blues. They are useful for both children and their parents.



HBO: Temple Grandin biopic

“ ... Grandin is portrayed in the film by Claire Danes, a Golden Globe-winning and Emmy-nominated film, television and theater actress. Danes and Grandin spent a half-day lunching and visiting in Danes’ New York City apartment as part of Danes’ research, she says. Grandin’s assistant, Mark Deesing, who has visited the set during filming, told Grandin that Dane’s depiction of her is so convincing that it “sent a shiver down my spine.”

Grandin says the script was developed via in-person interviews and her various published books and writings. The working title of the film is “Temple Grandin - Thinking In Pictures,” which also is the title of the 2006 book that chronicled her childhood and life with autism.

She worked with the writer to ensure the chronology on this latest project. “I read over the script and they changed things that I hated. I was adamant that they depict me as I was. I wouldn’t stand, for instance, for my character to swear in the movie because I don’t swear. I want to make sure that they not present me as doing something out of character,” she says. ...”

Excerpt from *Temple Grandin Talks About Her Upcoming HBO Biopic* by Joe Roybal
<http://beefmagazine.com/cowcalfweekly/1031-temple-grandin-hbo-biopic/>

Community Resources



AMC Entertainment & the Autism Society of America have partnered together to bring AMC Sensory Friendly Films to families affected by autism on a monthly basis to select communities. The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. The auditoriums dedicated to the program have their lights up, the sound turned down and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout or sing! Families are also welcome to bring in their own gluten-free, casein-free snacks.

Upcoming Sensory-Friendly showings* include:

Saturday, February 6 th	The Tooth Fairy
Saturday, March 27 th	How to Train your Dragon
Saturday, April 24 th	Oceans
Sunday, May 22 nd	Shrek 4

All shows are at 10:00 am.

*Dates and films are subject to change.

Participating Illinois Locations

AMC Northbrook 14
1525 Lake Cook Rd, Northbrook, IL 60062
847-562-1620

AMC Barrington 30
175 Studio Dr, South Barrington, IL 60010
847-765-2262

AMC Cantera 30
28250 Diehl Rd., Warrenville, IL 60555
630-836-8265

For more locations nationwide:

<http://www.amcentertainment.com/SFF/>



Saturday, May 15, 2010 • Soldier Field, Chicago, IL

Join CEP's team in support Autism Speaks as we walk to change the future for all who struggle with autism!

Walk Now for Autism Speaks is a fun-filled, family friendly event and is the single most powerful force to fund vital research that will lead us to the answers we need.

We look forward to seeing you at the event!

Link to CEP's team page:

<http://www.walknowforautismspeaks.org/chicago/chicagoeducationproject>

Karate Kids

Downer Grove's Communication Clubhouse
Ages 5 – 10 Wed. 4:30 – 5:30 pm

Exercise, coordination, and FUN! Our martial arts instructor, teams up with our licensed O.T. to create a dynamic program that emphasizes coordination, balance, motor planning, and strength -- and helps children of all abilities develop focus, attention, and self-control. Participants should be independent in group. OT PRESCRIPTION REQUIRED.

Call Diane or Sue for more information 630-495-6800

Family Swim

5:30 – 7:30pm
Fridays: February 19th; March 19th; April 16th & May 21st
Cost: \$15 per family, free for NICA members

825 Munshaw Lane | Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Come join us at Dolphin Swim Club's indoor heated, salt water swimming pool! We offer monthly family swim times for families with autism or related disorders.

Dolphin Swim Coach and NICA social group assistants are onsite to assist. For more information, go to <http://www.nicaautism.org>



Meet CEP's new SLP!

Hi my name is Rosina DeNicolo and I am the new speech language pathologist for Chicago Education Project. I would like to begin by thanking all of the parents and staff for the opportunity to work with your students. I am thrilled to be here!

Here is a little background information about myself. I grew up in the Schaumburg area where I attended Hoffman Estates High school. I received my Bachelor of Arts degree at University of Iowa and then my Masters of Science degree at Saint Xavier University in Chicago.

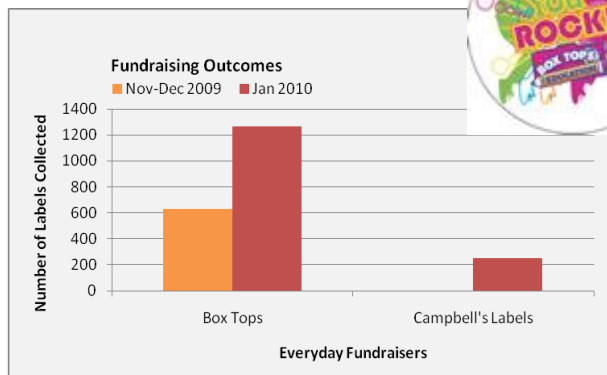
I have worked primarily with the pediatric population in a variety of settings, including an outpatient rehab clinic, early intervention, high school, and transitional programs. Over the course of this school year, I hope to have the opportunity to meet each of you.

Because of you,

we are off to an amazing start with our everyday fundraisers for the 2009 – 2010 school year! Congratulations to Angela's class for winning January's contest. They earned a class trip to Lucky Strike Lanes for bumper bowling!

We'd also like to give a special shout out to the Brodeur family, the Elliott family, the Smidt family and the Hudoba-Postek family for contributing many Box Tops and/or Campbell's Labels. So far we have collected:

Fundraiser	Amount Collected
Box Tops	\$188.90
Campbell's Labels	163 points



We also raised \$328.40 through the Funding Factory!

Attention Parents ...

We would like to officially form a "Parent Group" who will organize and plan activities/events that help to **"enrich"** the lives of the students, families, and staff at CEP.

The mission is to bring our "school family" more opportunities to participate in things that will enhance learning and connection to our overall school experiences.

More details during next week's Coffee Talk. [February 11th at Starbucks from 9:30-11am]

If you cannot attend next week and are interested in hearing more or in being part of the group, please email any of the following Moms and they can provide more details.

Johna - johnasommer@sbcglobal.net

Kelly - xylo40@comcast.net

Danielle - paws4email@aol.com

Karen - kboyle@wowway.com

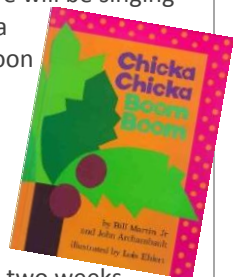
Barb - barbarakot@comcast.net

Katie's Class

This marking period we will have a new weekly theme in the classroom. Each week, during morning circle, the students will be introduced to the theme of the week. Our first theme will be the alphabet. We will be singing ABC and reading the book Chicka Chicka Boom Boom in the morning and afternoon circle. In art, we will be decorating the letters of our name.

We will also begin playing group games this marking period. The class will play one game for two weeks, at which time we will begin a new game. For the past two weeks, we have all enjoyed playing Musical Chairs, and the impromptu to dance sessions that have sprung out of the game! The next game we will be playing is Simon Says. We are all looking forward to this fun game.

In classroom news, we are all very sad to see Jill Bisluk, a 1:1 aide, leave our classroom. Jill will be student teaching both, special education and typical development students in pursuance of a dual teaching certification from the University of DePaul. While she will be missed, we know she is entering an exciting time in her life. We wish her all the luck!



CHICAGO EDUCATION PROJECT

**presents an evening of fun,
drinks, food, raffle prizes
& karaoke at Trader Todd's**

**3216 N. Sheffield Ave.
Chicago, IL 60657**

- half a block North of the intersection of Sheffield and Belmont
- right off the Belmont stop for the Red, Brown and Purple lines

Friday, February 19, 2010
from 6:00p–9:00p
\$35 per wristband

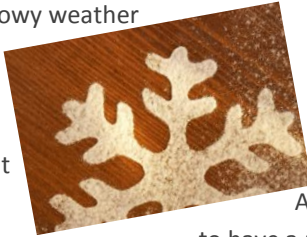
Wristband fee includes unlimited drinks (alcoholic & non-alcoholic), 20% discount on food orders and a donation to Chicago Education Project, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization certified by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) as a special education facility that services children with autism and related disorders. In sum, public schools refer students to us when the student's disability outweighs the school's ability to effectively teach them. Funds raised will help us continue providing quality education by acquiring needed sensory gym materials as well as teaching tools & curriculums.

Raffle tickets will be available for purchase at Trader Todd's to win cash and other prizes. And, did you know? Trader Todd's has been voted best for Karaoke by **Aol City Guide** and **Best of City Search** and ...**WGN's Morning News** has joined us three times for a live karaoke broadcast!

Wristbands are available for advance purchase & at the door, contact Heidi at HMateja@chicagoeducationproject.org or 847-884-7030.

Julee's Class

As the winter months continue to progress we have been focusing on the snowy weather as a theme for our class projects and stories. Students have learned about outdoor activities during the snowy months, as well as created a



number of snow themed art projects. As the months get warmer we are excited to transition to more activities to fit the season.

Also, we are excited to have a new staff member, Samantha Kruger. She has

been a great addition to our team! Samantha has her master's from DePaul University in Elementary Education and she is currently working towards her BCBA certification.

Finally, thanks to everyone who sent in box tops, we appreciate your support!!!

Autism Vaccine Journal Article Retracted!

Excerpt from "Medical journal retracts study linking autism to vaccine" By Madison Park, CNN

"The medical journal The Lancet on Tuesday retracted a controversial 1998 paper that linked the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine to autism. The study subsequently had been discredited, and last week, the lead author, Dr. Andrew Wakefield, was found to have acted unethically in conducting

the research.

... The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention praised The Lancet's retraction, saying, "It builds on the overwhelming body of research by the world's leading scientists that concludes there is no link between MMR vaccine and autism. We want to remind parents that vaccines are very safe and effective and they save lives. Parents who have questions about the safety

of vaccines should talk to their pediatrician or their child's health care provider."

... A September 2008 study replicated key parts of Wakefield's original paper and found no evidence that the vaccine had a connection to either autism or GI disorders"

The full article can be read at <http://www.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/02/02/lancet.retraction.autism/index.html?hpt=T1>

Tiffany's Class

Over the past couple of months our classroom has been concentrating on group learner skills. Our academic groups have focused not only on important academic goals, but group responding goals as well. Our students are now sitting at various groups during the day for up to 15 minutes. In those groups, students are responding to whole group questions, song

fill-ins, and 1-step directions.

Our classroom has also introduced a group game 3 times a week to get whole class involved in social interaction.

When we introduce a new game we break it down, and teach it step-by-step.

Once the students master the first step, we introduce the second step, and so on.

Last month, we concentrated on musical chairs. The kids enjoyed it! This month, we introduced



"hot potato".

I know the therapists and I are truly excited to see how

far our students have come along within the past couple months.

Puzzles Puzzles!



		9						7
5			1	7	8	9		
	2	7		9		8		6
4		2		8				3
6			4		5			9
		8			7	6	4	
2	9			4	1			8
			9		6		1	2
	6	1				4		

Sudoku directions:
 Fill the grid with numbers 1 to 9 so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9, without repeating any numbers.

ACROSS

- 1. Bowling, Bocce & Bistro
- 5. Valentine’s gift
- 6. February’s furry animal
- 7. Chicago Basketball
- 8. Keeps you dry

DOWN

- 2. April showers bring May ...
- 3. Kid’s game
- 4. Small, mischievous sprite
- 9. Capital of Ireland
- 10. An Irish dance
- 11. Outdoor alerting sensory activity

CROSSWORD PUZZLE KEY

Across

- 1. pinstripes
- 5. chocolate
- 6. groundhog
- 7. bulls
- 8. umbrella

Down

- 2. flowers
- 3. Hot potato
- 4. leprechaun
- 9. dublin
- 10. jig
- 11. walk outside

Parent Social

The next parent social will be at Pinstripes, a unique bowling / bocce / bistro experience! Tentative Date is the last weekend in February or the first weekend in March. Details will be confirmed & shared with you as soon as possible.

100 W. Higgins Road
 South Barrington, IL 60010
www.pinstripes.com

*If you have suggestions for future outings, please let Pam know.

School Closings

Chicago Education Project closely follows the calendar of Schaumburg School District 54 for holidays and vacations. If we should need to close for an emergency, weather-related or otherwise, we will post such information on the Emergency Closings website [www.emergencyclosings.com] by 6:00a, the day in question. Additionally, a message will be left on CEP's main phone number [847-884-7030].

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Feb. 11	Coffee Talk
Feb. 12	Lincoln's Birthday; school closed
Feb. 19	Parent Training: Increasing Motivation
Feb. 26	Parent Teacher Conferences; no students
March 12	Parent Training: Functional Life Skills
March 17	Coffee Talk
March 22-26	Spring Break; school closed
March 29	Students return to school
April 2	Good Friday; school closed
April 7	Coffee Talk
April 16	Parent Training: Teaching Strategies
April 30	Teacher Institute Day; no students
May 12	Coffee Talk
May 14	Parent Teacher Conferences; no students
May 21	Parent Training: Topic TBA
May 28 & 31	Memorial Day Weekend; school closed
June 1	Students return to school

February 2010

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2010

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2010

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2010

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Chicago Education Project

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