



Parent to Parent of SW MI promotes opportunities for children with disabilities and special needs to fully participate in society through the support and education of families and communities.

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Fall into the Kalamazoo Parent Network

The Kalamazoo Parent Network presents: **“The Power of Words”**

With: guest speaker, Allison Hammond, The Arcadia Institute.

Thursday, September 3rd, 2009 6:00-8:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

321 West South Street

Downtown Kalamazoo

Parking: Please parking in the rear lot (off Lovell). Enter at the back red & glass door— you may need to ring the doorbell and speak into the speaker. As you enter the church the elevator is slightly to the right. Go to the upper level (UL). Once off the elevator, turn left. Childcare is at the end of the hall on the left. Turn right to find the parent meeting. Signs will help to direct you. **The door is kept locked— if you come late, please call 808-3548.**

Childcare will be provided

(Please RSVP no later than Monday, August 31st)

Next Parent Network Meeting: October 1st, 2009 6-8p.m. First Presbyterian Church

Topic: To be announced

Mother Baby Toddler Group dates and times to be announced



Children's Trust Fund
Protecting Michigan's Children

Don't Forget! Parent to Parent has a Lending Library

Parent to Parent has a small lending library with an assortment of books and videos addressing topics on parenting for families who have a child with a disability or special needs.

Highlighted Book

Check out *Special Parent, Special Child* By: Tom Sullivan



In this book, Tom Sullivan takes us inside the lives of parents who struggle daily to make a difference in the lives of their children with disabilities. It is a journey of parental hopes and dreams. Of heroism and disappointment. Of success and failure. Of unending trials and unpredictable rewards.

To check out our lending media library, you may come in and find what you're looking for. Feel free to check out a book, tape, or video and return at your convenience!

Back to School Ready



End of Summer Activities to Prepare for the School Year

The start of the school year is an exciting time but the transition back to school can be stressful for many children. Help children prepare for the new school year with these helpful strategies.

1. Review Skills and Goals

2. Take Advantage of Natural Learning Opportunities

3. Use a Calendar for Visual Reminders – Many children benefit from visuals.

4. Return to a Schedule-Summer breaks often are not very structured.

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5. Use Art and Literature - Have children draw, make collages, or paint things they remember about the previous school year.

6. Play with Friends from School – Some children regularly see classmates over the summer while others only see school friends during the school year.

7. Enjoy the Rest of the Break – Although planning for the school year is important, make the most of the last few days of summer.

Six Tips for Making the Start of School Less Stressful

The beginning of the school year is an exciting time, but for many children getting back into the routine can be difficult. Becoming familiar with new classrooms, classmates, rules, and teachers can be a difficult transition. Below are ideas for starting the new school year right.

1. Return to a School Sleep Schedule - Help children make the transition easier by getting them ready physically for early mornings. A gradual change is often more difficult than an immediate change.

2. Introduce a New Environment or Re-Introduce a Familiar One: Three months goes by quickly, but children often forget many important things about school. Make a book with your child to remind them of their classmates' names, teachers' names, school layout (auditorium, art room, music room, etc.), bus rules, classroom rules, and school rules.

3. Take Opportunities to Visit the School - Schools often have open houses or let children stop by before the year starts. A child's stress can be reduced by seeing their classroom and meeting their teacher.

4. Involve Kids - Shopping for a book bag, new shoes, pencil holder, and other school necessities is a fun tradition for many families. Help your child write a list of items they need for school. Take the list to the store and let them pick out their own supplies.

5. Plan Ahead - Parents have many things to remember before the year starts. Make a list and check things off so your stress does not become your child's stress. Scheduling medical appointments, buying school supplies, and figuring out the bus schedule in advance will make the days leading up to school more relaxed and less activity packed.

6. Create Summer Mementos – The end of summer can be very sad for many children. To remind them of the summer, have children create a collage of pictures, objects (e.g. event ticket stubs or magazine advertisements of movies or places they attended), or drawings.

“Three months goes by quickly, but children often forget many important things about school.”



Upcoming Events

Information Series for Kinship Care Families-

Sept. 9-Oct. 7 (Consecutive Wednesdays)
5:30-8:30 p.m. at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 1747
W. Milham Road, Portage

Put on by Second Time Around, sessions will provide information about community resources available to kinship families and updates on parenting skills. Probate Court workers and attorneys will be available to give advice on adoption and guardianship. This is also a great networking opportunity for families.

Sessions are free with childcare provided as well as an evening meal.

For more info. And to register, call Joyce Stout, 269-384-8054

Kalamazoo Play Group

Parent Social Group for children with Down Syndrome

Friday, September 4 : 9:30-11:30am at Westfield Park on W. Milham Rd.

The All Kids Can! Social Networking Group-TBA

Mother Baby & Toddler Too Play Group-TBA

**Please call Parent to Parent at 269-345-8950 for more info*

Fall Flower Fundraiser

Parent to Parent will be starting their fall flower fundraiser. Please contact us if you would like to order or help us to meet our fundraising goals! Fundraiser runs Sept. 13-30.

Parent Resources

Newly Released Books

- Adhd and Social Skills : A Step-by-Step Guide for Teachers and Parents by Esta M. Rapoport
- 101 Games and Activities for Children With Autism, Asperger's and Sensory Processing Disorders by Tara Delaney
- The Autism Transition Guide : Planning the Journey from School to Adult Life by Carolyn T. Bruey, Mary Beth Urban
- Blue Sky July : A Mother's Story of Hope and Healing by Nia Wyn
- My First Signs by Michelle Anthony, Reyna Lindert
- A Cup of Comfort for Parents of Children with Special Needs : Stories that celebrate the differences in our extraordinary kids by Colleen Sell (Editor)
- Grandparenting a Child with Special Needs by Charlotte E. Thompson M.D.
- Inclusion Strategies for Young Children : A Resource Guide for Teachers, Child Care Providers, and Parents by Lorraine O. Moore
- I Am Deaf (Live and Learn Series) by Jennifer Moore-Mallinos, Marta Fabrega
- Gifts 2 : How People with Down Syndrome Enrich the World by Kathryn Lynard Soper
- Thicker Than Water : Essays by Adult Siblings of People with Disabilities by Don Meyer (Editor)

Thank You! Your Support is Greatly Appreciated!

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