

## Who's On the Job? We're On the Job!



One person at a time. One story at a time. This is how employment success is measured. Every day people are realizing their own personal employment successes. Securing their dream job. Transitioning from a workshop. Transitioning from school to work. Becoming an entrepreneur. Earning money. Being supported to have success “On the Job.” Using their skills and talents. Learning to travel to and from work. Earning money. Contributing to their community. Developing relationships. Making friends. Being part of a team. Increasing self-esteem. Making community connections. Developing natural supports. And, that all-important function – earning money!

Some individual employment success stories are included in this issue of Family Forum. There are so many reasons why, for most people, having a job is an essential part of living an everyday life. Although

there are specific roles some of us have (individuals, families, employers, providers of employment supports, supports coordinators), what kinds of things can each of us do to spread the word about the power and benefits of employment in the community? Think about it – how can each of us be “Employment Ambassadors,” from supporting people to consider employment, educating employers about people we serve, asking about job opportunities, and so much more. There are so many ways to support community employment for all, and to “Make Employment Happen!” As part of Vision for Employment 2010, we’re compiling a list of 2,010 ways to be an Employment Ambassador! Starting with this issue of Family Forum, we’ll be sharing some ways to be one. Also, be sure to check out <[www.philaonthejob.org](http://www.philaonthejob.org)> for an up-to-date list and Employment Ambassador daily features. What are your ideas? What else can people do to be Employment Ambassadors? What can you do? Send your ideas – let us count the ways!

**EMPLOYMENT AMBASSADOR**

**PHILADELPHIA**  
Vision  
for  
Employment  
**2010**

**We're On the Job!**

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

Let me tell you more about how  
YOU can become involved!

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

My contact info: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**What's this card? What's it for?  
How can you get some of these?  
See Page 5!**

# MRS Publishes Directory of Services & Supports

Mental Retardation Services has produced a new Directory of Services and Supports (the green book). The purpose of the Directory is to assist people with disabilities, their families, and professionals to identify and use services and supports from the system, as well as identifying community resources and natural supports.



It includes descriptions of the Commonwealth's mental retardation service system as administered by Philadelphia MRS. It also includes information from nearly 100 service providers and vendors, current Service Definitions, and other helpful information.

Be sure to check out a new section in this year's Directory, "Community Resources," containing lots of helpful information about how to get involved in your community. There are tips on how to increase your social capital, a look at Vision for Employment 2010, informative websites, and so much more. To order a free copy, contact [jeffrey.orlin@phila.gov](mailto:jeffrey.orlin@phila.gov), or call 215-685-5911.

**Call for New Registrations & Customer Service**  
**215-685-4MRS (4677)**

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## Let's hear from you!

Please submit articles to: Editor, Family Forum,  
Mental Retardation Services, Suite 5200,  
701 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19106-1532

The Family Forum is a publication of Mental Retardation Services and is mailed from PDDC. Note that when more than one person lives at the same address, one addressee has been randomly selected. To receive The Family Forum, contact the Editor.

All copy is subject to editorial approval and may be edited. Publication in this newsletter does not necessarily represent the position of Philadelphia Mental Retardation Services.

### Family Forum Editor Contact - Jeffrey Orlin

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Recent issues of The Family Forum are archived on  
<[www.philly.networkofcare.org](http://www.philly.networkofcare.org)> and  
<[www.phila.gov/dbhmrs](http://www.phila.gov/dbhmrs)>

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CATCH, Community Integrated Services, PDDC, SPIN;  
JFK MH/MR Center*

Feel free to reprint articles from *The Family Forum*  
Just give us credit. Thanks!



# Spotlight On My Employment Success Story



Family Forum is really serious about sharing employment success stories. We know there are so many stories that are truly inspiring. To help you tell a story, we are providing a form right here. Of course, you can use other paper, but we hope this form will motivate you!

My name is:

I can be contacted at:

The highlights of my story are:

The people who helped me make this story happen are:

Can Family Forum take a photo of you at your job? ( ) Yes ( ) No. Or, you can submit a photo taken by someone else.

Your signature:

Date:

Send your success story to: Jeff Orlin, MRS, Suite 5200, 701 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106-1532.

We are always glad to write your story for you. To have your story written for you, contact Family Forum's editor, Jeff Orlin, at 215-685-5911, or [jeffrey.orlin@phila.gov](mailto:jeffrey.orlin@phila.gov).



**Read about becoming an  
Employment Ambassador  
on Page 5!**

**We're getting closer to 2010! By that time, we want to have 2010 Ways to Be an Employment Ambassador. Check out the first ten ways on page 9, and look for more in each issue of Family Forum. Can you think of ways to be an Employment Ambassador? Send 'em in to Jeff Orlin (contact info on Page 2).**

## MY EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STORY

### **Michelle Works Her Way to Independence!**

*Submitted by CATCH, Inc.  
Employment Service*



**Michelle Pickett's job realized her desire to "get outta the system."**

Michelle Pickett, a single parent with three children, was referred to CATCH's Employment Service by her supports coordinator. Although Michelle has a co-occurring debilitating condition, paramount in Michelle's goal planning discussion with her supports coordinator was

finding a job. Michelle had discussed her ideas about employment with her doctor, who strongly encouraged her to pursue her interest of becoming independent – and to Michelle that meant financially independent! During the initial referral meeting, Michelle explained to her supports coordinator and the Employment Director that she wanted to “get outta the (welfare) system” – she wanted a better life for herself and her three daughters.

Michelle is an orderly individual and is just a tad on the compulsive side. She actually enjoys cleaning and organizing her house. It seemed that housekeeping would be the ideal job match for this highly motivated person! Several months later, the Job Development Specialist found the ideal housekeeping job – one that included a good salary and benefits following the probation period.

However, travel concerns became the new challenge. Michelle lives in Southwest Philadelphia and the job with the subcontractor to the Federal Government was in Northeast Philadelphia. Michelle was both excited and apprehensive. “Way up there,

more than an hour from home, how will I ever get there?” she wondered. After a few weeks of travel training, Michelle's fears disappeared as she became a SEPTA regular!

Four years later, Michelle's desire to “get outta the system” and become a model of independence for her three daughters has been realized. She's working 40 hours a week, earning just under \$12 an hour with benefits! Congratulations, Michelle, you're a role model every single day!

CATCH Employment Services can be reached at 215-755-9804.

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### **“The Button Man” Business is Booming!**

Adolfo Burgos – The Button Man – prodded his Job Coach, Joe Bernardo of Community Integrated Services (CIS), to help him start a button business. After some research, and some trial and error, ABInc. was in business! His first sales came at the October 2005 Brighter Futures event where he made \$44. Since then, his business has grown. Adolfo makes pins, magnets and keychains with pictures and slogans of all types.

Adolfo and his team are hopeful that his business will continue to grow to provide him with substantial, steady income. “I like working for myself,” Adolfo says. “I want to get out there more and buy more machines to make more buttons and more money.”

Supporting Adolfo to achieve employment success are Miguel Gonzales, Regina Boyer and the staff at Volunteers of America, Adolfo's residential support provider; Joe Bernardo and many other job coaches at CIS. To order buttons, or for info, call 215-535-1005, or [abincorporated@msn.com](mailto:abincorporated@msn.com).

## Vision for Employment Focus of TASH Presentation

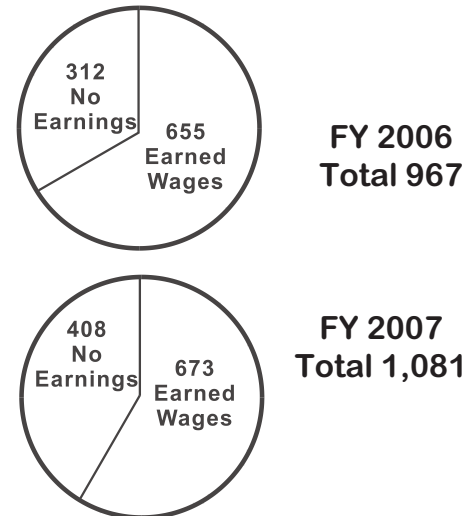
At the national TASH conference in Seattle, Washington, the efforts and successes of Vision for Employment 2010 were the subject of "Creating a Culture of Employment: Philadelphia Vision for Employment 2010." Michael McAllister, Ph.D., of Networks for Training and Development, and Kathy L. Sykes, Director of Mental Retardation Services, were the presenters.

From the roll-out of the "Year of Employment" at the November 2005 My City, My Place, through development of the PATH for progress and various other events, a chronology of activities was presented, leading to a discussion of today's emerging issues and strategies to support all stakeholders to "Make Employment Happen."

The presenters wanted to answer the questions, "How is Philadelphia's Vision for Employment progressing?" and "What has been accomplished so far?" The answers to these questions were revealed by data reported over the last two years. The data shows that although there have been more referrals made to Community Integrated Employment (CIE) services, and more people working in the community, proportionately there have been fewer employment outcomes. Emerging issues include comparing rates for CIE services and quality employment outcomes; the impact of increased CIE referrals on other day services; and the limited number of 'job types' for individuals. Strategies to address these issues include refining the assessment of individual preferences, focusing on provider practices and job development practices, and developing and increasing system capacity.

Data reporting also has revealed an increase in the number of people who have earned wages, and the total amount of wages earned by people supported to have jobs in the community, as noted in the charts.

## Philadelphia MRS People Receiving Community Integrated Employment Services



In FY 2006 the total wages earned were \$3,443,890. The average annual earnings were \$5,258.

In FY 2007 the total wages earned were \$3,600,734. The average annual earnings were \$5,324.

### The Employment Ambassador Card Don't Leave Home Without It!

You, too, can be an Employment Ambassador! Be a card-carrying member and share the 2010 Vision! Get your hands on some Employment Ambassador cards. They're a quick, easy way to spread the message about the power and benefits of community employment. Give them to friends, employers at neighborhood stores where you shop, at meetings of civic groups, places of worship, or to anyone ... get the conversation going about jobs, win-win success stories, and the benefits of employment for all.

The Employment Ambassador Card ... don't leave home without it! For your first stack of Employment Ambassador cards, contact Networks at 215-546-4111, or Jeff Orlin at 215-685-5911, [jeffrey.orlin@phila.gov](mailto:jeffrey.orlin@phila.gov). Look for more information at [www.philaonthejob.org](http://www.philaonthejob.org).



## **My City, My Place Shouts – Everyone Communicates!**

*By Judy Kresloff  
MRS Public Awareness Coordinator*

The 16th Annual My City, My Place and Brighter Futures Awards on November 1 was a big success as the theme “Everyone Communicates!” put the focus on supporting people to communicate fully. Informative workshops and a slew of resources were available to support, enhance, and get people thinking about the ways Everyone Communicates!

It’s true for everyone – real choice-making and self-expression comes down to being understood. How can an individual best be supported to have a voice? What resources are available to explore possibilities for improved communication? It all starts with a commitment to the belief that, indeed, everyone communicates. Whether through spoken word, with support of assistive technology, through physical movement, as the root of challenging behaviors, or other direct and indirect ways, there is a continuing need to raise awareness, provide practical tools, and explore ways to support people to communicate fully.

Rosa McAllister, Assistant Executive Director at Networks for Training and Development, Inc., and other Networks’ Communication Mentors will often be heard saying, “Everyone communicates and, often in very clear ways...we just do not always acknowledge it as communication.” They understand that only after recognizing ways in which a person already communicates can we hope to enhance their voice, augment it, and “hear” it become stronger.

That message was delivered loud and clear from Patti Gross using an augmentative communication device to spread the message that there are options and resources here in Philadelphia to support people to be “heard.” Patti and Jennifer Williams, an assistant director at SPIN, Inc., participated in the Community Mentors Course in 2006. In the course,

they explored Assistive Technology (AT) and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) to update Patti’s communication device. Along with Shauna Roman of Networks, they facilitated the morning program at My City, My Place. Amy Goldman, of Temple University’s Institute on Disabilities, and Director of Pennsylvania Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT), also presented at My City, My Place, along with Kathleen Curcio, who uses a Pathfinder Plus to help her communicate. Jenn Seale supports Kathleen and is the coordinator of Augmentative Communication Services. She and others are available to tell you about the ways that augmentative and alternative communication (ACC) devices – especially those that produce speech – can help people who are unable to speak.

The Family Forum wants to hear from you about how your life has been enhanced by the use of augmentative and alternative communication devices. Contact Judy Kresloff, 215-685-5923, [judy.kresloff@phila.gov](mailto:judy.kresloff@phila.gov), with your stories about how you or someone you support is experiencing more control of his or her life because of the ability to communicate fully.

Watch for information from the MRS Quality Council about their initiative to measure positive outcomes related to individual’s communication goals. MRS also will ask service providers to identify a “Communication Champion” – a staff member to act as a point person, raising awareness of the importance of communication across the agency’s policies and quality improvement initiatives.

Contact these resources: Call Networks for Training and Development, 215-546-4111, website <[www.networksfortraining.org](http://www.networksfortraining.org)>, for information about the Communication Mentors Network and ways to support individuals to communicate fully. Call PIAT to find out what they can offer using technology and other ideas that will make it possible for a person to communicate. 800-204-7428, or TTY 215-204-1356, [ATinfo@temple.edu](mailto:ATinfo@temple.edu).

## MY EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STORY

### From Workshop to Employment Success

*Submitted by SPIN, Inc. Employment Services*

When the announcement was made that SPIN's sheltered workshop would close its doors on June 30, 2007, many of the participants were confused about what they would do in the future, but not Joseph Racitti. Joe said, "I will get a job." Without skipping a beat, he listed at least twenty businesses where he thought he would like to work.

For the past sixteen years, Joe worked in the sheltered workshop as part of an 'enclave' at a company that supplies nails, screws, etc., to home supply stores. Joe packaged nails – finish nails, framing nails, roofing nails ... nails, nails and more nails! Joe enjoyed working and liked getting a pay check.

We talked to Joe often about community employment. We talked about what is expected of members of the workforce. In addition, we modified the structure of the workshop to closely resemble community employment. Joe worked every day with a positive attitude, looking forward to the future!

Joe was the first person to sign up for SPIN's pilot project, the Career Development Series, to provide 'tools for success' to individuals transitioning from sheltered employment into community employment. The Career Development Series also addresses personal and professional competencies, focusing on communication and social skills. Joe was eager to learn as much as he could to help him find employment success.

During the eight-week project, Joe participated fully in every class! Always a positive force in the classroom, Joe particularly enjoyed the classes that had a competitive activity. Joe said, "My favorite part was the job sampling," consisting of participating in a variety of positions so individuals can learn about jobs they prefer. Joe loved working at SPIN Frankford in the cafeteria and also enjoyed cleaning and stocking. Actually, Joe loved everything he tried!

After completing the Career Development Series, Joe worked with Chantelle Pickett, an Employment Specialist, to find a job. After a few weeks, Joe secured a position as a stocker at his local Wawa. Joe approached his job with enthusiasm. He quickly became a valued employee and a well-liked coworker. The social and professional skills he learned served him well in his first job in the

community. When you ask Joe what he likes about his job, he grins and states, "Everything!" Joe eventually expanded his duties from working in the cooler to doing other tasks in the store. He always is eager to help out with whatever needs to be done; Joe is truly a team player!

Joe has learned how to travel independently to work by SEPTA. This important accomplishment was a big challenge, but he enjoys having the responsibility for getting to his job.

SPIN is especially proud of Joe as he is the first person to successfully transition from SPIN's workshop to community employment since the workshop closed.

To reach SPIN Employment Services, call 215-613-1074, ext. 3082.



**Joe Racitti fills the cooler in a Wawa convenience store.**

## Health-ful Newsletter



The US Food and Drug Administration publishes a "FDA Consumer Health Information E-newsletter." It provides monthly notices of product approvals, safety warnings, and other health information. To subscribe, go to [www.fda.gov/consumer](http://www.fda.gov/consumer).



Acorn Housing has been providing free housing counseling to low and moderate income homebuyers since 1987. Acorn Housing provides one-on-one mortgage loan counseling, first-time homebuyer classes, and helps clients obtain affordable mortgages through unique lending partnerships. Call 215-765-1221 or visit [www.acornhousing.org](http://www.acornhousing.org). Information found at [www.cap4kids.org](http://www.cap4kids.org), The Children's Advocacy Project.

## PA's Education for All Coalition

PA's Education for All is a partnership of parents, educators, related professionals, and others working together to support the education of all children, together in their neighborhood schools, including children of different backgrounds and abilities. The group works together to promote education that includes all children by providing individual technical assistance, advocacy and supports to families, assisting institutions of higher education to better prepare teachers to effectively teach all children and influencing and supporting schools, policymakers, and the community to effectively implement inclusive practices and policies. For more information, call Diane Perry, 610-522-0698, or email [dperry300@rcn.com](mailto:dperry300@rcn.com). You can also visit [http://disabilities.temple.edu/programs/inclusive/ed\\_coalition.htm](http://disabilities.temple.edu/programs/inclusive/ed_coalition.htm). Information provided by PA Ed for All pamphlet.

## Find Out About Training You Can Get



Some of the training offered by Self Advocates United as 1 are Understanding the MR System in Pennsylvania: Background, Funding, Getting into the System, Self-Determination, Waivers, and Life After High School/Planning for Transition. The training materials are developed and presented by families and self-advocates and approved by the Office of Development Programs. For more information, visit [www.thetrainingpartnership.org](http://www.thetrainingpartnership.org), or call Sharon Harper-Young, Project Assistant, at 215-923-3349, ext. 132.

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## MY EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STORY

### Thank You for Helping Me Grow

*Submitted by PDDC Employment Partners*

Hello, my name is Kevin McAfee and I wanted to share the wonderful things that have been going on in my life for the past year.



**Kevin's hard at work at his neighborhood Shop-Rite.**

Wow! I can't believe it has been one year since I began my Janitorial training with PDDC Employment Partners Vocational Training program. At first I was so nervous, shy and quiet that I had some difficulties adjusting to my training program.

During our weekly Job Club workshops, I would sit all the way in the back of the room to somewhat hide from being asked to do a "mock interview." That surely didn't last for too long before I was finally called up front to do my interview in front of the entire room. Oh my goodness, the sweat ran down the side of my face and my heart skipped two beats!

The Employment Partners Supports Team always made me feel comfortable and positive that I can do anything if I tried hard enough. I began to show them, with the help of my instructor, that I had good working abilities and could work with a team..

Although I am still rather quiet, you can always catch a huge smile on my face. Do you know why? I feel great that I now have a job working at Shop Rite! I am a hard worker. I have good customer

service skills. I am always on time and prepared for work. Best of all...I have a paycheck! No matter how quiet I am, my work speaks for itself. I guess I am a product of the saying, "actions speak louder than words."

I am so thankful to have been given this chance. My family and the Supports Team at PDDC Employment Partners have so much confidence in me that I can do anything. Thank you all for helping me grow into the man I am today.

To contact PDDC's Employment Partners, call Mattie Harrigan, 215-229-4550.

### 2010 Ways To Be An Employment Ambassador

Here are the first ten ways on our list. How many can you add? Send 'em in! Contact info on Page 2.

1. Ask about jobs when visiting businesses
2. Carry "Ambassador" cards and story templates
3. Call on seasonal employers for jobs
4. Frequent the establishments of participating employers; let them know!
5. Leave info about 2010 with employers
6. Spread the news of 2010 to community groups you belong to
7. Send in a success story to Family Forum
8. Remember special event jobs or months, such as sweet potato month
9. Post 2010 news on blogs
10. Include info on business cards about what job coaches do



## **Assistance Programs Available for Heating Costs**

The Philadelphia Gas Works, along with the Federal Government, offers Assistance Programs to help people and families with low-income pay their heating bills. Several programs are available.

**LIHEAP** – Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program is a federal grant to assist low income customers with their annual heating bills. If you received a LIHEAP grant last year, you will receive an application in the mail. Applications must be in by March 21, 2008.

**CRISIS** – A Federal grant to help pay for heating costs in a heating emergency when service is off, or threatened to be shut off.

Other programs are called **CRP** (Customer Responsibility Program), **CWP** (Conservation Works Program), and **CARES** (Customer Assistance Referral and Evaluation Program).

All information is available at <[www.pgworks.com/assistanceprograms/index.htm](http://www.pgworks.com/assistanceprograms/index.htm)>, or call 215-235-1000 and ask for Assistance Programs.

## **News of Speaking for Ourselves**

Speaking for Ourselves has happily announced its new office location at 3 West Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446. The new telephone number is 215-361-3100.

Their new home features a “Tribute Wall.” You can buy a “brick” for the wall. These bricks “speak.” Each brick will tell a story – celebrating the people and events that are important to SFO members and friends, their history, and the self-advocacy movement. Your brick’s message can be in honor or memory of someone, an event, or maybe a favorite saying of yours. Your purchase of a brick is a permanent memory of your contribution and supports the ongoing work of Speaking for Ourselves.

Levels of brick donations are \$25 for a Blue Brick, \$50 for a Silver Brick, and \$100 for a Gold Brick. Make your check payable to “Speaking for

## **Medicaid Will Pay for Augmentative Communication Devices**

Are you on Medical Assistance (Medicaid)? If so, you will want to know that Medical Assistance (Medicaid) pays for augmentative communication devices, which are also called speech generating devices. These devices produce speech for a person with a communication disability and range from simple devices to sophisticated devices with many features.

The Department of Public Welfare has recently raised the rate that fee-for-service Medical Assistance (ACCESS and ACCESS Plus) will pay for many augmentative communication devices. (Note that Managed Care Medical Assistance – HealthChoices or voluntary managed care – cannot pay any less than the fee-for-service rate.)

If you or someone you know is having trouble getting an augmentative communication device through Medical Assistance (Medicaid) because of the rate paid, please contact Chava Kintisch, Staff Attorney, Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania, [ckintisch@drnpa.org](mailto:ckintisch@drnpa.org), or call 215-238-8070, ext. 210. Source: Disability Rights Network of PA.

**A thought: You can either complain that rose bushes have thorns — or rejoice that thorn bushes have roses. Have a great 2008!**



Ourselves” and mail to P. O. Box 1214, North Wales, PA 19454. Be sure to include what you want your brick to “speak,” and how you want your name to appear.

# DID YOU



# KNOW?

▶ **AT Lending Library** – Pennsylvania's Assistive Technology Lending Library catalog link has a new, easier to use link. Visit the Lending Library at <<http://disabilities.temple.edu/atlend>>. Contact Maureen Cannon at Temple's Institute on Disabilities at 215-204-1356 if you need assistance with using the Library.

▶ **Biblioteca de Préstamo de Tecnología Asistiva "AT Lending Library"** – el catálogo de enlace de la Biblioteca de Préstamo de Tecnología Asistiva de Pensilvania tiene un nuevo enlace más fácil de usar. Visite la Biblioteca de Préstamo en <<http://disabilities.temple.edu/atlend>>. Contacte a Maureen Cannon en el Instituto de Discapacidades de la Universidad de Temple al 215-204-1356 si usted necesita ayuda con el uso de la Biblioteca.

▶ **Listserv for PA Advocacy Groups** – The Disability Advocacy Support Hub (DASH) has created a Lister for disability advocacy groups in Pennsylvania to share information and support each other. You and members of your group can ask questions or get advice about disability advocacy from other groups, and you can share the things that your group has learned. It will give you the chance to find other groups to work with and to build coalitions. To become a member of the DASH Lister, a form must be completed about yourself and your group. Email [dash@drnpa.org](mailto:dash@drnpa.org), or call 866-915-3274 for a copy of the form.

▶ **"Listserv" para los Grupos de Consejería en Pensilvania** – El Centro de Apoyo de Consejería en Discapacidades (DASH, siglas en inglés) ha creado un "Listserv" para grupos de consejería en discapacidades en Pensilvania para compartir la información y apoyarse los unos a los otros. Usted y los miembros de su grupo pueden hacer preguntas u obtener consejo sobre consejería en discapacidades de otros grupos. Usted puede compartir las cosas que su grupo ha aprendido. Esto le dará a usted la oportunidad de encontrar otros grupos que están trabajando con y construyendo coaliciones. Para hacerse miembro del Lister de DASH, un formulario debe ser completado referente a usted y a su

grupo. Correo electrónico [dash@drnpa.org](mailto:dash@drnpa.org) o llame al 866-915-3274 para una copia del formulario.

▶ **Transition to High School and Beyond!** – Information from the Local Right to Education Task Force – Now is the time to start preparing for moving up to high school in 2008. And it's always the time to learn about services, supports and educational options for those transitioning into adulthood. Contact the Philadelphia Right to Education Local Task Force for information at 215-400-5151, or visit <[www.philadelphialtf.org](http://www.philadelphialtf.org)>. For information about the School District's Voluntary Transfer and Admission Process, contact the Office of Student Placement at 215-400-4290, or email <[studentplacement@phila.k12.pa.us](mailto:studentplacement@phila.k12.pa.us)>.

▶ **Transición a la Escuela Secundaria y más Allá!** – Información del "Right to Education Task Force" local – Ahora es el tiempo para comenzar a prepararse para moverse hacia la Escuela Secundaria en el 2008. Siempre hay tiempo para aprender sobre servicios, apoyos y opciones educativas para aquellos en camino a la adultez. Para información contacte al "Philadelphia Right to Education Task Force" al 215-400-5151 o visite <[www.philadelphialtf.org](http://www.philadelphialtf.org)>. Para información sobre el Proceso de Admisiones y Transferencias Voluntarias del Distrito Escolar, contacte la Oficina de Colocación del Estudiante (Student Placement) al 215-400-4290 o al correo electrónico <[studentplacement@phila.k12.pa.us](mailto:studentplacement@phila.k12.pa.us)>.

▶ **Parents of Autistic Children Spectrum Groups** – Call Roberta Bellamy in West Philadelphia, 215-472-2764, for meeting information. For information about Autism Parenting and Sharing (ASP), which meets in Roxborough, call 215-413-7106, or email [nasya06@msn.com](mailto:nasya06@msn.com).

▶ **Grupos de Padres de Niños con el Espectro de Autismo** – Comuníquense con Roberta Bellamy en el oeste de Filadelfia al 215-472-2764 para información sobre reuniones. Para información sobre "Autism Parenting and Sharing" (ASP), el

Continued on Page 12

Any websites noted in The Family Forum are provided for your information and are not rated or reviewed. We welcome your input about useful sites you have visited. Email [FamilyForum@phila.gov](mailto:FamilyForum@phila.gov).

## Did You Know?

Continued from Page 11

cual se reúne en Roxborough, llame al 215-413-7106 o al correo electrónico [nasya06@msn.com](mailto:nasya06@msn.com).

► **New Email Address – PA Families, Inc. (PFI)** has a new email address. Be sure to change your link to [pafamilies@comcast.net](mailto:pafamilies@comcast.net). For more information about PFI, call 800-947-4941.

► **Nueva dirección de correo electrónico- PA Families, Inc. (PFI)** tiene una nueva dirección de correo electrónico. Asegúrese de cambiar su enlace a [pafamilies@comcast.net](mailto:pafamilies@comcast.net). Para más información acerca de PFI, llame al 800-947-4941.

► **Foster Care Initiative – The Juvenile Law Center** (<[www.jlc.org](http://www.jlc.org)>) and the **Education Law Center-PA** (<[www.elc-pa.org](http://www.elc-pa.org)>), with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, are working together to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for the 23,000 children in foster care in Pennsylvania. The initiative seeks to prevent them from being bounced from school-to-school; create and enforce policies to ensure that children are enrolled immediately in a new school when they do move; ensure that children in foster care who need special education receive the services mandated by law; and educate biological and foster parents, as well as case workers and other professionals, about the education and special education rights of children in care. The Initiative has a new website to visit <[www.fosteredpa.org](http://www.fosteredpa.org)>.

► **Iniciativa Cuidado de Crianza – El “Juvenile Law Center”** (<[www.jlc.org](http://www.jlc.org)>) y el “**Education Law Center-PA**” (<[www.elc-pa.org](http://www.elc-pa.org)>), con el apoyo de la Fundación Annie E. Casey, están trabajando juntos para mejorar las oportunidades educativas y los resultados para los 23,000 niños en cuidado de crianza (foster care) en Pensilvania. La Iniciativa procura impedir que estos niños sean expulsados de escuela a escuela; crear y hacer cumplir políticas para asegurar que los niños son matriculados inmediatamente en una nueva escuela cuando ellos se mudan; asegurarse que los niños en el cuidado de crianza que necesitan educación especial reciban los servicios requeridos por ley; y educar a padres o madres de crianza y biológicos, así como asistentes

*Thanks to Emilio Pacheco for the Spanish translation.*

social y otros profesionales, sobre la educación y los derechos de educación especial de los niños en el cuidado. La Iniciativa tiene un nuevo sitio Web para visitar <[www.fosteredpa.org](http://www.fosteredpa.org)>.

### **Networks and The Communications Mentors’ Network of SE PA Announces Monthly Communication Clinics**

**Have a private session for you and your supporters! This is an individual support session, not group training. Look at what you can learn to do —**

- ❑ Increase your “voice.”
- ❑ Communicate more fully.
- ❑ Better utilize or update communication equipment, modes, support.
- ❑ Express more choice and control.
- ❑ See Assistive Technology (AT) or Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC).

To make an appointment on one of the scheduled dates, contact Beth McKeown at [bethm@networksfortraining.org](mailto:bethm@networksfortraining.org), or 215-264-2833. The dates are January 23, February 27, March 26, April 30, May 22, and June 25. Sessions will take place at Networks’ Valley Forge office.

Funding provided by DBH/MRS for people and organizations served by them. For all other individuals, a \$100 fee applies unless accompanied by a member of the Communications Mentors’ Network.

### **Provider Retreat to Discuss Employment**

**February 28, 2008**

A Provider Retreat, to be held at MRS, 701 Market Street, 5th floor, Main Conference Room, is being planned to discuss employment. This is a TENTATIVE date. More information will be distributed shortly.



## REPEATABLES

These activities are marked on the calendar with an asterisk. It is best to call before going.

### **Mondays**

- ☆ 1st Mon 6:30-9p Speaking for Ourselves, The Arc of Phila, 2350 W. Westmoreland St, Bill Krebs, 267-257-0109
- ☆ 1st Mon 10:30a-12:30p Quality Progressions, 125 S. 9th, 5th fl, Susan Fellows, 267-765-2000 x110

### **Tuesdays**

- ☆ 2nd Tues Hall-Mercer Parent/Caregivers United, Lynn Youngman, 215-928-0765
- ☆ 2nd Tues Family Support Group NW, Verna Edwards, 215-248-4415
- ☆ 4th Tues Asperger Support Group, 7p, St. Christopher's Hospital, Peggy Blank, 215-698-0217

### **Wednesdays**

- ☆ 1st Wed Consumer/Family Advisory Committee, Partnership for Community Supports, Mary MacAvoy, 267-350-4513
- ☆ Every Wed. free legal advice and representation on general legal problems, Liberty Resources. Call for appt. 215-204-1800
- ☆ 4th Wed West & SW Parent Support Group, 6:15p, 215-473-8744

### **Thursdays**

- ☆ 2nd Thurs 1:30p SEPTA Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation, 1234 Market St, 11th fl, 215-580-7145
- ☆ 2nd Thurs School District Parent & Community Roundtable at 2121 Winter St, 1st fl boardroom, 215-299-3634
- ☆ 3rd Thurs 9:30a-12p Phila Right to Education Task Force, The Arc, 2350 W. Westmoreland, Cathy Roccia-Meier, 215-875-3538
- ☆ 4th Thursday There's a Place for Us, Anita Wright, 215-763-0447

### **Fridays**

- ☆ Every Fri. 1-3p, Training on Accessing Public Transportation, Liberty Resources, for appt. call 215-204-1800, Debbie at x255
- ☆ 1st Fri 6-9p First Friday Gotta Dance at PDDC, 2350 W. Westmoreland St, Lisa Savaria, 215-229-4550 x172
- ☆ 1st & 3rd Fri 7-9p Easter Seals Teen Social Club, 3975 Conshohocken Ave, Kendra Brooks 610-565-2353 x 231
- ☆ 3rd Fri 1-3p Consumer Connection, Liberty Resources, 1341 N. Delaware Ave, 215-634-2000 x320

### **Saturdays**

- ☆ Every Sat Special Teens (13 and older) Bowling at Bristol Pike Lanes, Croydon, Ray Zibman, 215-671-0356
- ☆ 2nd Sat 1-4p Disabled In Action, American Friends Ctr., 1501 Cherry, 215-627-7255
- ☆ 2nd Sat 10-2:30p Super Saturdays, PDDC, 215-229-4550

## **New Support Groups at JFK**

JFK Community Mental Health/Mental Retardation Center asked Family Forum to publish contact information for two support groups that it is hosting. Both meetings are held at JFK, 112 North Broad Street.

**Incest Anonymous for Survivors** — Meets the first Sunday every month (next two meeting are January 6 and February 3) from 10 a.m. to Noon. Call Eric Lautzenheiser at 215-568-8250, ext. 284.

**Epilepsy Foundation of PA Adult Support Group** — Next meeting will be February 26 from 6 to 8 p.m. Call Michele Leahy, 215-629-5003 ext. 103 for future dates and information.

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

Philadelphia Transition Planning Project

### **Workshop Schedule**

Locations to be Announced













Session 2 (tentative dates): April 3 & 4, 2008, and May 23, 2008

















**See Networks Contact Info Below**

### **Contact Info for Networks' Training**

For full information about Networks' 2007 courses, call 215-546-4111. Also, the Course Guide and calendars are available at [www.networksfortraining.org](http://www.networksfortraining.org) > .

**Family Forum always wants to inform its readers about upcoming events. Be sure to get listed! See contact info on Page 2.**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
NATIONAL THANK YOU MONTH  		1 Mummers Parade Betsy's Birthday Bash Betsy Ross House \$3 11am-2pm 215-686-1252 Longwood Gardens Winter Fantasy thru Jan 6, 9am-9pm	2 *Partnership Family Advisory * Legal Advice-Liberty Resources Line Dancing Class 1pm Stiffel Senior Center, 215-468-3500— thru 2/6 Free	3 thru Jan 20, Art Ability, Bryn Mawr Rehab at City Hall, M-F, 9am-5pm—Free Nativity Exhibit, White Stone Gallery 4219 Main St in Manayunk 215-482-7700 -Free	4 *PDDC—Snowball Dance *Transportation Trng- *Easter Seals Teen Social Club "Amahl & The Night Visitors" - Roxborough HS 215-725-4171	5 * Special Teens Bowling  FRUIT CAKE TOSS DAY  
6 Friendship Club for Seniors, 12-2 pm Stiffel Senior Center, 604 W. Porter St. 215-468-3500  	7 *Quality Progressions *Speaking for Ourselves Student Recital Series, Curtis Institute of Music, Mon, Wed, Fri— 8pm 1726 Locust Street, 215-893-5261—Free	8 *Hall Mercer Parents *NW Family Support NATIONAL ENGLISH TOFFEE DAY  	9 *Legal Advice- Liberty Resources Sleeping Beauty, Arden Theater, 40 N. 2nd St. 215-922-8900 NETWORKS Training Person to Person 5:30- 8pm 215-546-4111	10 *SEPTA Adv. Com *School Distict Roundtable Elwyn Autism Network "Social Skills" 6-7pm 1 Winding Way Suite 104 215-570-3101 X101	11 *Transportation Training Liberty Resources  	12 * Special Teens Bowling *Disabled in Action *PDDC Super Saturday Healthy Kids Fest 1-5pm, Blue Cross RiverRink
13  HOME OFFICE SAFETY AND SECURITY WEEK  Fri, Sat, Sun thru March 31—Chinese New Year's Banquet at Joseph Poon, 1010 Cherry St. 215-500-9774 \$36.50	14  NATIONAL CLEAN OFF YOUR DESK DAY	15  	16 * Legal Advice- Liberty Resources  	17 *Phila RTE Task Force-The Arc of Phila NETWORKS Training Communication Mentors' Course 9:30a-4p 215-546-4111 BEN FRANKLIN'S BIRTHDAY	18 *Tansportation Trng Liberty Resources *Consumer Connection- Liberty Resources *Easter Seals Teen Social Club NETWORKS Training Communication Men- tors' Course 9:30a-4p	19 * Special Teens Bowling   Animal Heroes Weekend 11am-2:30pm Academy of Natural Sciences 215-299-1043
20  WORLD RELIGION DAY	21 BIRTHDAY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  	22 *Asperger Support Group	23 * Legal Advice- Liberty Resources  *West & SW Parents Parent Action Network	24 *There's a Place For Us Drexel Univ Winter Dance Concert thru Jan 26, 33rd & Chestnut, Mandell Theater 215-895-2787 \$5-8	25 *Transportation Trng Liberty Resources Temple Univ Institute on Disabilities Early Intervention Conf. Lewisburg, PA 570-524-5500 1-9 pm (also Sat.)	26 * Special Teens Bowling NATIONAL PEANUT BRITTLE DAY Early Intervention Conf. Lewisburg, PA 570-524-5500, 8:30a-3p
27  	28  CHRISTA MCAULIFFE DAY	29 NETWORKS Training "Dispelling the Myths: SSDI Work Incentives" 123 S Broad 23rd Fl, 9:30a-4p 215-546-4111	30 * Legal Advice- Liberty Resources  	31 MENTAL WELLNESS MONTH  	*See Repeatables  <b>January 2008</b>	NATIONAL BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION MONTH

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>February 2008</b>		 <p>IT'S LEAP YEAR!!</p> <p><b>HAPPY BIRTHDAY FEBRUARY 29ers!</b></p>	 <p><b>Black History Month</b></p>		1 *PDDC—Sweetheart Dance *Easter Seals Teen Social Club *Transportation Training Liberty Resources	2 * Special Teens Bowling Groundhog Weekend, 11a-2:30p, Academy of Natural Sciences 215-299-1000
3 NATIONAL BURN AWARENESS WEEK Sweet Treats Weekend at Blue Cross RiverRink 1-5pm SCOUT SUNDAY Phila Int'l Auto Show PA Conv Center 215-418-4700 thru Feb 10	4 *Quality Progressions *Speaking for Ourselves 	5 Register now for AAIDD Disability Policy Seminar March 2-4 202-783-2229  MARDI GRAS 	6 *Partnership Family Advisory *Legal Advice-Liberty Resources  ASH WEDNESDAY	7 CHINESE NEW YEAR 	8 * Transportation Training—Liberty Resources BOY SCOUT DAY 	9 *Disabled in Action *PDDC Super Saturday * Special Teens Bowling 
10 GRAMMY AWARDS DAY 	11 JELLO WEEK 	12 *Hall Mercer Parents *NW Family Support Elwyn Autism Network “Medication & Children with Autism” 6-7:30p 4025 Chestnut St 215-222-7344 LINCOLN’S BDAY	13 * Legal Advice-Liberty Resources NETWORKS Training “Person to Person: Developing Intimate Relationships” 5:30-8p 123 S Broad, 23rd Fl 215-546-4111	14 *SEPTA Adv. Com *School Dist Roundtable Sweetheart Skate, Blue Cross RiverRink, 6-9p, 215-825-RINK 	15 * Transportation Training—Liberty Resources *Easter Seals Teen Social Club *Consumer Connection—Liberty Resources	16 * Special Teens Bowling World Culture Family Day—Celebrate African Cultures, U of P Museum, 3260 South St 215-898-4000 \$8 adults, under 6 free
17 WORLD HUMAN SPIRIT DAY	18 PRESIDENTS DAY 	19 NETWORKS Training “Dispelling the Myths: SSDI Work Incentives” 123 S Broad 23rd Fl, 9:30a-4p 215-546-4111 CHOCOLATE MINT DAY	20 * Legal Advice-Liberty Resources 	21 *Phila RTE Task Force-The Arc of Phila  “Victims of Crime with Developmental Disabilities” 9a-4p PA Child Welfare Center, Mechanicsburg 717-795-9048	22 * Transportation Training Liberty Resources  WASHINGTON’S BIRTHDAY	23 * Special Teens Bowling 
24  Fri, Sat, Sun thru March 31—Chinese New Year’s Banquet at Joseph Poon, 1010 Cherry St. 215-500-9774 \$36.50	25 	26 *Asperger Support Group  Epilepsy Foundation Adult Support Group 6-8p, JFK Community Center, 112 N. Broad St. 215-629-5003 x103	27 * Legal Advice-Liberty Resources  *West & SW Parents Parent Action Network	28 *There’s a Place For Us  PCA Workshop “Beyond Cultural Competence” 9:15a-12:15p 215-765-9000 x5069	29 *Transportation Training—Liberty Resources Temple Univ Institute on Disabilities, Early Intervention Conference Lewisburg, PA 570-524-5500 8:30a-5p	NATIONAL AMERICAN HEART MONTH   *See Repeatables

PDDC  
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Philadelphia, PA 19140

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Provider Retreat  
at MRS to Discuss  
Employment

February 28  
Tentative Date



Networks Employment Symposium Coming

Hold the Dates

May 21 - 22 - 23, 2008