

S.P.E.A.K.S. Express!!




Bullying Prevention Training Increases Bullying Concern

May 16th and 17th, SPEAKS and Michigan Alliance for Families collaborated together to bring Kelly Orginski to the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Here, Kelly presented a bullying prevention training for teens, parents, educators and community members. Between the 2 trainings, there were 25 attendees. There was a wide assortment of community departments including the Diane Resource Center, Department of Human Resources, Great Lakes Recovery, parents, school educators and counselors.

Kelly's presentation covered the signs of bullying, coping skills, how to react, some of the laws, school's responsibilities, for teens how to approach adults, and how to input bullying prevention goals in the IEP. Within 48 hours of these trainings taking place, SPEAKS had numerous phone calls regarding bullying and recent occurrences.

This is a perfect time to remind parents, educators, students, and community members that bullying is still a major issue— and as each day passes, gets more severe. Bullying is not a joke; and regardless if there is not any physical injury seen, there still is psychological and emotional injury. The last two are the worst, and have the most impact on a person.

There are great resources available to learn about bullying, the effects, the laws and rights available to those who are targeted. Some of those resources can be found at-

- <http://bullyingprevention.org/>
- <http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html>

If at any point you or someone you know are having issues with bullying, please feel free to give SPEAKS a call. We have great resources that can help!

SPEAKS To Present "Self Determination" Award

SPEAKS Education will begin awarding seniors with special needs annually starting with graduates of 2011. With the Self Determination award, SPEAKS will highlight the outstanding achievements of this senior, as well as achievements that the graduate may have achieved throughout their school career. This year, our first award will be handed out to Newberry Graduate Melissa Johnson. Melissa will be graduating with a high school diploma, and in her last year of high school, she took more than required math courses to assure she would have enough credits to graduate with a diploma rather than a certificate of completion. We want to recognize Melissa for her self-determination to achieve not only a high school diploma, but do it with grades that were not just base line passing but passing with flying colors. Melissa also is an avid volunteer at her local teen center, and takes part in school programs We are so proud of her hard work. Melissa's next goals are to begin school in the Fall at Michigan Career Technical Institute.



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West UP Update



The Central and Western U.P. is very excited to have S.P.E.A.K.S. now available to us! When I became a member of the S.P.E.A.K.S. family mid- March I began telling everyone about S.P.E.A.K.S. and the response was excitement and relief! There is a real need in this region for families to be educated about special education laws and their rights within them. Everybody I talk to can cite the challenges with special education and community resources for families with special needs but few know where to look for solutions, or even what questions to ask. As I send out posters for upcoming trainings I hear from educators and agencies that work with local families. They want to collaborate with S.P.E.A.K.S. to help them help families. It's exciting to be a part of the solution to my region's longstanding challenges helping families meet the needs of their special children.

We have two trainings scheduled for my area; IEP's on May 25th and Transition on May 26th. We've had requests from parent support groups and agencies that work with families to come share S.P.E.A.K.S. with their members and employees. They want to be ready to advocate for their students this fall.

I spoke to a local casino about the possibility of charity bingo to help S.P.E.A.K.S. and other local nonprofits with fundraising and the managers were very receptive. The response of our Tribal Chairman on the Potawatomi Reservation where I live has been welcoming. It was my local school's administrators who put me in touch with S.P.E.A.K.S.. S.P.E.A.K.S. is receiving a warm welcome in our region and everybody is excited and hopeful S.P.E.A.K.S. will fill a very BIG need in our communities.

-Shannon Philemon
Western UP Parent Mentor



Graduation Is Here!

Do you or someone you know have a graduate this year? Are they going off to college? Here are a few things that make great gifts for those college freshman.

- A laundry Basket made into a gift basket filled with towels, laundry soap, dryer sheets
- Shower bucket filled with bath and body goods
- Gift cards to gas and local grocery stores, fast food restaurants
- Gift cards to local book stores, and if accessible, the bookstore of the college that the graduate will be attending
- Photo frames, desk organizers, pens, pencils, highlighters, and whiteout
- Closet organizers– hanging shoe organizers, hangers, under the bed compartments, standing organizers
- Blankets or throws
- Slippers
- Double functionality items– ex. Pencil boxes that hold photos
- Cork board
- Voice recorder



These are just a few of the countless items a new grad can use when going off to college. If you are parent– especially a mom– of a graduate, home-made items are always the best! And don't forget to send items throughout the year too- grads love goodie boxes from home! Go class of 2011!

Recent Awards Given to SPEAKS

May 18th, 2011 SPEAKS was awarded with a major contribution from Microsoft. In this contribution Microsoft awarded SPEAKS with software including Microsoft Expression Studio, Microsoft Office Pro Plus, Microsoft Office Sharepoint, and Microsoft Project 2010. This contribution totals over \$16,000.00 in software licensing. Major changes to our website, file handling, and outreach will occur, only making our job easier, and our services better. Thank you Microsoft!

The second award received was through the state level of the United Way– granting more funds to be passed through to allow staff to travel, an increase in outreach materials, and increase our availability to reach higher numbers during trainings through webinars and Go To Meeting. Thank you United Way!



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Great Training Available!!



Asperger Syndrome : Rethinking the Glass House Theory

June 15 & 16, 2011~ 8:30am to 3:30pm

Location: Bay De Noc Community College - Escanaba

Registration Details: <http://www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter/start-events-4.htm>

This presentation will offer a new way of thinking about students with Asperger Syndrome (AS). The information presented will go beyond specific characteristics of students with AS and instead consider how those characteristics impact the way adults interact with students with AS. The significant emotional, and often negative, reactions of adults may be due to a misattribution of the behaviors of AS. These reactions may impede relationships and social and academic performance, resulting in less positive outcomes for students with AS.

This presentation will provide a review of attribution theory through the lens of AS, allowing adults working with students with AS to better understand their role in the response to and education of these students. This presentation is open to educators, and ancillary staff ONLY.

Hot off the Executive Director's Desk!

Hi everyone, welcome to SPRING still... Summer is coming, just slowly. In the last month I have been to Lansing with staff and we have learned that the cuts coming are not pretty. There are going to be cuts anyway we look at it, to the degree no one (and I mean no one) knows what they will be. I do know in talking with OSEP in D.C. after the last Directors meeting in January, they have accepted our new ideas and changes for 0-3 age regulations and they will give us a draft in late July. In the beginning of August when I go to OSEP'S mega- conference I will get the final document to be able to share with all of you. SPEAKS, MAF, (Michigan Alliance for Families) and F2F (Family to Family) have been working together in collaborating trainings for next year; we just finished up the end of May for the UP trainings for this year.

I have planned trainings for the summer which will come out in the newsletter in June. I will be going to Milwaukee in June (14-17) , Lansing in July for MAF SDC Meetings, and in August (1-5) Washington D.C. for the mega Directors meeting. The rest of the summer is working on training presentations for Fall 2012. I will also be working on our website with Shannon. Our staff will also be getting training for 2 days in June with me and then a retreat with MAF sometime this summer in the UP.

The summer can't come quick enough, and I am hoping that it doesn't go by fast as it usually does. I would like everyone to know if you have questions during the summer time to call or email us or stop in and visit. I also will be asking for parents to sign up with the office for the support group that will be starting in the fall in Rudyard and in Newberry. I have made contact with one in Marquette and one in Escanaba to start in the Fall already. If you want a training with just you or a small group call us we can accommodate you.

As always, have a wonderful time with your children over the summer and enjoy all the insights they bring to you. My little one is 10 and growing up too fast. I look at some of the clients and my friend's children and remember when they were little. Time seems to win in the growth category, what we do for our children and what we accomplish. Pat yourself on the back and enjoy your time with them.

Have a wonderful summer!
Dorie France



Autism Training

"Seeing the World from a
Different Angle"

This training will provide participants with strategies that build upon the characteristics and strengths of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and lead to improved independent and socialization skills. This session will also address supports that increase successful learning opportunities in integrated environments.

June 24th
EUPISD
Sault Ste Marie, Mi
10-3

Lunch provided
Please call or email to register!
mwhite@speakseducation.org
906-293-8984

Brought to you through
collaboration by SPEAKS
Education and the EUPISD PAC.
Presenter is Kelly Dunlap, who is
an Autism Education and
Intervention Specialist.