



LET'S CHAT NEWSLETTER

November/ December 2009



Information for Parents, Students, and Educators from The Arc of Indiana County, ARIN IU 28 Local Task Force On The Right To Education and the Armstrong and Indiana County School Districts.

THE EDITOR CHATS...I hope you will find the information helpful. If you have any information, helpful hints or comments, please contact me, Barbara Telthorster, at btelth@arcindiana.org or at The Arc of Indiana office at Regency Mall in Indiana at 724-349-8230.

Let's chat about..... Assistive Technology



As defined by IDEA 2004, Assistive Technology, or AT, refers to “any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability.” In other words, AT is any tool or device that the student with a disability uses to complete tasks more easily, faster, or in a better way. Although AT may not be necessary for everyone, it should be *considered* for all students identified as having a disability in the school setting. AT can be used for many things including communication, computer access, writing access, sensory needs, and to control his/her environment. AT comes in a variety of forms, from no or low-tech tools to very high-tech devices. By figuring out your child's strengths and needs, parents and the educational team can identify what kind of AT might work best, by matching that information to the features of a device.

For more information on AT, please visit PaTTAN at www.pattan.net and click on Assistive Technology, or Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology at <http://www.disabilities.temple.edu/programs/assistive/piat/>. Both organizations also have lending libraries to try various AT devices and equipment, before making a purchase. **Jayna McIntyre, ARIN IU 28, will be at the Right To Education Local Task Force meeting on Friday, Feb. 26, 10-12 at ARIN if you would like more information about Assistive Technology.**

Let's Chat About.....Upcoming Workshop for parents/families, educators, agencies, and all interested community members.

- **“Supplemental Needs Trusts” Dec. 3, 9:30am-12 with lunch**
Learn about the different trusts for people with disabilities
The Arc office 1570 Oakland Ave, Indiana
To register call The Arc office 724-349-8230 or email btelth@arcindiana.org
No cost but registration is required!

Let's Chat About..... Upcoming Meetings

PARENTS, STUDENTS, AGENCIES, AND EDUCATORS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND



PARENT TRANSITION GROUP (PTG): A group of community members including the schools, ARIN IU 28, agencies and parents meet monthly to discuss how to successfully transition youth/young adults with disabilities from high school to adult living.

PTG meets 10am – 12 with lunch on Monday

Nov. 2, Dec 7, Jan. 4. Feb. 1, March 1, April 14, May 3.

The Arc of Indiana office at Regency Mall , 1570 Oakland Ave., Indiana, PA 15701

Let's Chat About..... Joining other parents at meetings



LOCAL & STATE TASK FORCE ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION:

A local and state advocacy group for students with disabilities that works to strengthen, improve, expand, and monitor programs and services that meet individual educational needs.

All meetings are located at ARIN IU 28, 2895 West Pike, Indiana, PA 15701 Phone 724-463-5300

LOCAL TASK FORCE MEETINGS: Meetings are on Fridays 10am-12 noon
Dec. 18, Feb. 26, April 23, May 21

STATE TASK FORCE MEETINGS: Down linked to ARIN IU 28

Meetings are on Wednesdays 10am – 12:30pm on Nov. 18, Jan. 13, March 10, May 12

ARIN IU 28 TRANSITION COUNCIL MEETING

Student transition issues and information are shared at the meetings. Meetings are:

Armstrong County at Lenape from 10-12 on Nov. 19, Feb. 17, March 13
Lenape, 2215 Chaplin Ave., Ford City

Indiana County at ARIN IU 28 from 10-12 on Nov. 18, Feb. 17, March 12
ARIN IU 28, 2895 W. Pike, Indiana 724-463-5300

Let's Chat About...Information and Resources Websites



www.iu28.org – for information about special education, workshops, Armstrong & Indiana school closings

www.pattan.net – for information on statewide special education issues, annotated special education forms, workshops, and conferences

www.arcindiana.org – for information about programs at The Arc of Indiana County with links to The Arc in PA and The Arc in US

Let's Chat About.....

Using Effective Communication to Ensure Your Child's Success in School

(Excerpts from the PA Dept. of Education Bureau of Special Education brochure)

Contact ARIN IU 28 at 724-463-5300 if you would like a copy of this brochure.

What is the first step to effective communication?

Start at the School level with your child's teacher, school counselor or principal.

- Be prepared to provide documentation
- To ask questions
- To offer solutions
- To compromise
- To give the changes time to work

Explain your concerns regarding your child

Begin with written notes for school level meeting(s).

Keep your focus on your child's needs, without placing blame or making accusations.

Remain positive and try to minimize thoughts of past problems, worst fears, and other negatives.

Thought For the Day.... Smile, you might be surprised at how contagious a smile can be!