



“La Fiesta”

South Orange County’s 1st Mini-Conference



On March 23, 2007, South Orange County launched their first “Mini-conference” which was held at The Mission Parish in the city of San Juan Capistrano.

This event was coordinated by Mrs. Cecilia Mercado (Parent Leader of Fiesta Educativa) in collaboration with and

sponsored with TASK (Team of Advocates for Special Kids), Orange County Regional Center, and The Mission Parish.

The idea for this event resulted from the need for information that was experienced by families living in South Orange County.

The response to this event was successful. Approximately 60 parents participated.

This event featured two informative workshops: Behavior Modification and IDEA.

Parents also had the opportunity to make valuable contact with professionals as well as other parents that have children with disabilities, all while they enjoyed a continental breakfast.

At the end an informational resource fair with exhibitors was held.

Twelve organizations participated and provided information on their services.

Through these exhibitors, families were able to learn of valuable resources that provided services to disabled children in their own communities.

Understanding Asthma

Asthma is a chronic disease that has to do with air in the lungs, when it gets irritated and inflamed. It is very common that children with disabilities have asthma because they are specially sensitive to cigarette smoke, cold air, chemicals, dust, animals, pollen and scents.

The inflammation of the lungs causes: cough, chest pain, and trouble breathing. Some persons need medication on a daily basis, while others only need it sometimes. It is very important that prevents know how to manage asthma, so they can prevent and treat it, reducing asthma attacks. Being prepared is the first step to:

- ◆ Reduce and prevent symptoms
- ◆ Recognize the first stage
- ◆ Giving treatment at home
- ◆ What to do in case of emergency

The American Academy of Pediatrics has more information at: www.aap.org



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Who is TASK



TASK is a non-profit corporation that provides services to children with disabilities.

T A S K was founded by a group of parents to give families of children with disabilities the knowledge to make positive decisions concerning their child's development and education.

They provide assistance and support in seeking and obtaining needed early intervention, educational, medical, or therapy services for their children.

TASK encourages parental participation to partner with educational system and other systems affecting their child. TASK believes that parents are entitled to be equal partners in their child's educational process and promotes the idea that a well informed parent is the best advocate for their child.

What services does TASK offer?

TASK is a central information resource center. The available services include literature, legislative information, and educational materials.

Services include:

- ◆ Individual telephone assistance
- ◆ Workshops on special education
- ◆ Community presentations
- ◆ Parent advocacy training
- ◆ Peer counseling
- ◆ Legal rights
- ◆ Early intervention information
- ◆ Vocational education information
- ◆ Assistive technology
- ◆ Lending library
- ◆ Quarterly newsletter



What is TEACH?

TASK operates TEACH Centers in our Anaheim and Los Angeles offices. It is open to individuals of all ages and offers hands-on access to computer hardware, software, and adaptive technology.

TEACH services include:

- ◆ Technology workshops
- ◆ TEACH labs
- ◆ Individual consultations
- ◆ Software lending library
- ◆ Switches and adapted toys
- ◆ Homework support through technology after-school program
- ◆ Camp TEACHIE summer program
- ◆ Information and referrals

All services are by appointment only!

*TASK is located at:
100 W. Cerritos Ave.
Anaheim, CA 92805
(714) 533-TASK*

SSI (Supplemental Security Income)

The SSI program provides monthly income to people who are age 65 or older, or are blind or disabled, and have limited income and financial resources.

Effective January 2007 the SSI payment for an eligible individual is \$623 per month and \$934 per month for an eligible couple. If you

are married, and only one person is eligible, a portion of your spouse's income may be counted. In addition, your financial resources (savings and assets you own) cannot exceed \$2,000 (\$3,000 if married). You can be eligible for SSI even if you have never worked in employment covered under Social Security.

Generally, to be eligible for SSI, an individual also must be a resident of the United States and must be a citizen or a non-citizen lawfully admitted for permanent residence. Also, some non-citizens granted a special status by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may be eligible. For more information: www.socialsecurity.gov



The Success of a Mother



Hello, my name is Rosalinda Garcia; I was born in Cotija De La Paz, Mexico. I come from a family of 10 children with a mother and father.

I fell in Love and married at age 19 and had 6 children: Araceli of 21 years old, Benjamin 19, Alex 12 , Rafael 8, and twin girls Melani and Melissa age 3 (Melissa was born with Down Syndrome) In addition, I have a 4 year old grandson named Anthony.

In 1989, I moved to this country to reunite with my husband and begin a new life with my loved ones. It was at this time that my life became filled with despair and experienced both physical and mental abuse by my alcoholic husband. I then became pregnant with the twins and had a difficult pregnancy. The twins were born through an emergency cesarean section. Through this surgery, I had decided for tubaligation, which resulted in complications that almost cost me my life.

After the twin's birth, my life changed. I felt that God had given me the opportunity to be with my children and needed to find the strength and courage to move forward. I began by thinking positively and always try to help my children succeed. I thank God for sending me Melissa because it was through Melissa (my daughter with Down syndrome) that gave me the strength to make decisions that perhaps I would have never made. For the first time in my life, I put my foot down and decided that my children did not deserve to live in a dysfunctional home where they experienced the trauma of domestic violence.



In February 2007, my suffering ended when I divorced my husband.

Melissa was my light and my greatest gift. Together we experienced frustration and enjoyed our achievements. Melissa is an independent, so-

cialable, and intelligent child- the love of this family! We see Melissa as a normal child with the same opportunities as her siblings and we have allowed her to grow to be her own person.



As a mother I feel satisfied that I have been able to move forward, but as an individual and a woman I still have many dreams that need fulfillment. I would like to obtain my GED diploma and study towards a certificate career. These dreams are so that I can give to my children a better life.

The advise that I give parents of a child with disability, is to accept them as they are and do not remove them from society because they too... have rights! Also, become involved with organization like Fiesta Educativa so that you can learn about your Childs rights and resources and be a part of their educational program to help them succeed. *As parents, we are qualified to guide our children towards success.*

The Importance of Legislative Action

Parents of children with developmental disabilities should be informed of legislative activities. We are often unaware of how many bills are introduced that can have a negative impact in the manner in which services are provided to persons with disabilities. The truth is that all rights, and services are directly impacted by legislative activities.



As citizens we approve changes through our vote or through our elected officials (congressmen and senators), thus it is essential that we are informed.

Parents have a large influence in how services are provided to persons with disabilities. The

Lanterman Act is an example of parent's strength.

The Lanterman Act is a California Law that gives an entitlement to provide support and services to persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

Early in the 1960's, a small group of parents, professionals, and legislators came together to challenge the state over its treatment of persons with mental retardation and to improve the quality of life. In those days 13,500 persons with mental retardation lived in overcrowded State Hospitals. Their living conditions were unbearable.

The actions of these parents gave birth to the regional center system and its services.



As parents we have the responsibility to be involved so that the legacy that the parents of the 1960's continue in the right path.

Just as this came about through legislative action, through legislative action it can change, and potentially harm our children's services.

At this time you can join your regional center to help implement "Senate Bill 1270".

SB 1270 is a law that was passed by the state Legislature. It asks the State Council on Developmental Disability (SCDD) to bring different people together in a work group and think about different ways people with developmental disabilities spend their time in paid work and other activities. *For more information on legislative activities visit www.acklink.org*

Fiesta Educativa's newest program- APIP



Fiesta Educativa, Inc. is proud to present the **Autism Parent Intervention Program (APIP)**. This newly developed program was just vendored by ELARC. Although it is only available in ELARC's service area we can work with other regional centers to bring this program to your community.

The Mission of APIP

To empower parents of children with Autism by giving a voice, hope, education, and awareness of their strengths and advocacy skill; thus becoming the catalyst for a better outcome for that person with Autism;

Providing education of fundamental rights and responsibilities to understand available resources;

Increase a Parent's confidence to speak up and bring awareness to their own family and community on the needs of persons with autism;

Expand a universal understanding of autism, a parent at a time.

Goals Of APIP

- To empower parents through education.
- Encourage collaboration with their regional center and existing support organizations.
- Promote proactive advocacy to obtain appropriate and realistic services.
- Understand the Autism Spectrum
- Understand behavioral challenges and the different interventions available.
- Understand communication challenges and used interventions.
- Understand why socialization is affected, what can a parent do at home to assist, and the variety of interventions available.
- A service assessment tool will be the end result for parents and service provider to develop a realistic and successful service plan.

For more information call: Fiesta Educativa, Inc. (323) 221-6696 and ask to speak to Laura Ruesga.

ADD / ADHD



Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD) is a condition that can make it hard for a person to be still, control behavior, and pay attention. These difficulties usually begin before the person is 7 years old. However, these behaviors may not be noticed until the child is older.

Doctors do not know just what causes ADD/ADHD. However, researchers who study the brain are coming closer to understanding what may cause ADD/ADHD. They believe that some people with ADD/ADHD do not have enough of certain chemicals help the brain control behavior.



As many as 5 out of every 100 children may have ADD/ADHD. Boys are three times more likely than girls to have ADD/ADHD.

There are three main signs, or symptoms, of ADD/ADHD. These are:

- ◆ Problem with paying attention.
- ◆ Being very active(called hyperactivity).
- ◆ Acting before thinking (called impulsivity).

Based on these symptoms, three types of ADHD have been found:

- ◆ Inattentive Type, where the person can't seem to get focused or stay focused on a task or activity.

- ◆ Hyperactive-impulsive type, where the person is very active and often acts without thinking.



- ◆ Combined type, where the person is inattentive, impulsive and too active.

When a child shows signs of ADD/ADHD, he or she needs to be evaluated by a trained professional. This person may work for the school system or may be a professional in private practice.

A complete evaluation is the only way to know for sure if the child has ADD/ADHD. It is also important to:

- ◆ Rule out other reasons for the child's behavior.
- ◆ Find out if the child has other disabilities along with ADD/ADHD.

There is no quick treatment for ADD/ADHD. However, the symptoms can be managed. It's important that the child's family and teachers:

- ◆ Find out more about ADD/ADHD
- ◆ Learn how to help the child manage his or her behavior.
- ◆ Create an educational program that fits the child's individual needs
- ◆ Provide medication, if parents and doctor feel this would help the child.

School can be hard for children with ADD/ADHD. Success in school often means being able to pay attention and control behavior impulse. These are the areas where

There are many ways the school can help students with ADD/ADHD. Some students may be eligible to receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, (IDEA). Under the newest amendments to IDEA, passed in 1997, ADD/ADHD is specifically mentioned under the category of "Other Impairment" (OI)

We have included the IDEA's definition of "OI" below. Other students will not be eligible for services under IDEA.

However, they may be eligible for services under a different law, section 504 of rehabilitation Act of 1973. In both cases the school and the child's parents need to meet and talk about what special help the student needs. Most students with ADD/ADHD are helped by supports or changes in the classroom (called adaptations).

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- ◆ Learn about ADHD
- ◆ Praise your child
- ◆ Be clear and positive
- ◆ Consult a doctor
- ◆ Meet with other parents
- ◆ Keep your child's records

Resources

www.chadd.org

www.speres.com

www.nichcy.org

www.woodbinehouse.com

www.kensingtonbooks.com

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“Celebrando Veintinueve Años de Unidad y Diversidad”

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A two day bilingual educational conference for parents of individuals with disabilities, consumers and the professionals who work with them.

Una conferencia educacional bilingüe de dos días para padres de Hijos con discapacidades, consumidores y para los profesionales que trabajan con ellos

June 29-30, 2007

University of Southern California

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