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Providing support and information for families of children with disabilities, chronic illness and other special health care needs

UPCOMING EVENTS

Central Texas Walk-n-Roll April 26, 2008

2008 TxP2P Annual Parent Conference June 27-28, 2008

Wrightslaws 2-Day Special Ed Law and Advocacy Boot Camp August 1-2, 2008

More information on Page 7

Adopt-a-Legislator

A collaboration of Texas Parent Advocates Consortium (TxPacs) & Texas Parent to Parent (TxP2P)

n our fall 2007 newsletter, Colleen Horton asked the question: "What will it take to make us Fighting Mad?" She highlighted the long interest lists for the Medicaid Waiver programs (8 to 10 years) and the people (over 80,000) waiting for these services. She suggested that parents "begin to have the courage to stand up, make noise, and challenge the system" AND to contact your state senator and representative and let them know that people with disabilities are waiting far too long on the Medicaid waiver interest lists to get the services and supports they need.

So, Texas Parent Advocates Consortium (TxPacs) and TxP2P decided it was time to help parents stand up and be heard. You've heard of "Adopt a Family" for the holidays, right? Well, this is "Adopt a Legislator!" It's a legislative advocacy campaign patterned after another statewide parent to parent program's successful campaign several years ago. We need parents and self-advocates

from all parts of Texas (this includes your kids) who are willing to help, to "adopt" their local senator and state representative. Ideally, each legislator in the Texas House and Senate will be adopted by several parents and self-advocates and they will hear from parents before the session starts and as we progress through it.

Many of us feel overwhelmed by the legislative system or even feel that our voices don't count. Our goal in creating "Adopt a Legislator" is to make it very easy for every parent and self-advocate participating in the process and contributing to making positive change for people with disabilities in Texas. Interested? Here's how it works:

1. Join the TxPacs Listsery (to join, email: txpacs-subscribe @yahoogroups.com and explain who you are & why you wish to join. Texas Parent Advocates Consortium (TxPacs) is a "virtual" group of parents and self-advocates committed to advocacy for children with dis-

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Spring 2008

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Help TxP2P by using our Randall's Good Neighbor Remarkable Card Number 10043!

abilities. The group communicates via email, has an annual rally during the legislative session, and has about 100 members across Texas, parents of children ages birth through 30, cross disability. If you don't have email, call TxP2P (866-896-6001 or 512-458-8600) and we'll put you on a mailing list for the program – it will be exactly the same, just with mailed reminders, etc.

- 2. Each month, starting in June, we will ask you to contact your legislator via email, letter, phone call, and/or visit. At least once, between June and January, we want you to visit your legislator in person at their local office with your child. We can help you find out who and where your legislators are.
- 3. We'll send you ideas for the contacts, such as sending an invitation to your child's birthday party, graduation or a family outing, sending copies of report cards, photos of your child doing typical kid

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Adopt-a-Legislator

activities, and a couple reminders to do it. If you'd rather make an appointment to talk about a specific issue, we can help with that too.

That's all there is to it! By doing these simple things, we will let the legislators know that we want the best possible future for our children and that they shouldn't have to wait until they are teenagers or young adults to get services in Texas! By adopting our legislators, we will help them to see our kids for who they are - just kids or young self-advocates and future voting mem-

bers of society who will one day cast a ballot in Texas elections. As parents, we will make it "personal" for our legislators by keeping our kids in front of them until they know who our kids are and why we must

fight so hard for their futures. Texas is 50th in the country for the amount spent on health and human services – that's shameful and it's time that we as par-

ents and self-advocates speak up! Through our collaboration with TxPacs and other groups, we have Continued from Page 1

the ability to mobilize an army of Texas parents and self-advocates for the 2009 legislative session. By uniting in our efforts to make life better for our children and letting

our legislators know what our children need, we will change the way Texas does business. Stand and be counted - make sure that your voice and that of your children are

heard all the way to the Texas state Capitol!

An Opportunity for Input & You Don't Have to Be In Austin!

Colleen Horton, Texas Center for Disability Studies, The University of Texas at Austin

And you thought that the next legislative session wasn't scheduled to begin until January, 2009. Guess again! It's actually starting this month!

Well, the session itself isn't starting, but the process certainly is. It takes the full year before the session for the agencies and the Legislative Budget Board to formulate the budget proposals that they will offer to the legislature next January. *Right now* is YOUR first chance to have a say in how that money will be allocated.

The Department on Aging and Disability Services (DADS) has requested that stakeholders (that means you!), submit ideas on how they should spend their money to best serve the needs of Texans with disabilities and families. their DADS has made it quite easy to provide input - you can fill out an on-line form or send an email with a Word document. All the information you need to submit ideas can be found at http://www.dads.state.tx.us/ feedback/LAR/index.cfm

Now, multi-billion dollar agency

budgets can be intimidating and you might be thinking that this will be far too complex. It's really not. You don't have to figure out the dollar amounts that may be needed. DADS is simply asking you to:

1. Identify critical needs that you feel should be addressed (e.g. community services for youth transitioning to adult programs, increased wages for direct care workers, improved supported employment opportunities for people with disabilities, money-follows-the-person for individuals want-

ing to leave ICFsMR and state schools, consolidating waivers or standardizing the services across the different waivers, and the list goes on....)

2. State your recommended course of action (what do you think needs to happen)!

DADS will then look at your recommendation, estimate the cost, and consider it for inclusion in their funding requests. The more people that suggest the same or similar recommendations, the more likely

the chances of having those recommendations included.

Remember, DADS is part of the health and human services system which is separate and apart from the Texas Education Agency. So don't send recommendations to improve special education services to DADS...they can't help with that.

Also, while the waiver programs are administered through DADS, the funding to reduce the waiting lists is requested in the Health and Human Service Commission legislative appro-

priations requests, not in the DADS requests. Keep an eye out for email notices announcing additional opportunities to provide suggestions to the Commission and the other agencies. Get on the TxP2P Advocacy Listserv to stay informed and take the time to respond!

Remember, if you're not part of the solution, then stop the complaining. If you have questions or need some help, please feel free to contact me at colleen.horton@mail.utexas.edu

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Texas Provides Help to Find Medicaid Providers and Information on Child Care Providers

o you ever dread finding a new doctor or service because they might not take Medicaid? There's a new resource to help: Online Provider Look-Up is now available to locate providers participating in Traditional Medicaid, PCCM, Star or Star+PLUS. Go to the Texas Medicaid & Healthcare Partnership's (TMHP) at website www.tmhp.com and select "Looking for a Provider?" on the left side of the page with a photograph of a doctor on it or the words "Look for a Provider" on the right side. I suggest using the Advanced Search because it allows you to put in more information about what you are looking for.

Another dreaded topic - child care! Earlier this fall, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) set out to increase awareness of the dangers of unregulated childcare by kicking off the "Don't be in the Dark about Child Care" campaign. DFPS staff

have developed several resources for parents and family members to use in selecting the safest option for young Texans. All information can be found at the following Internet address: http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/dontbeinthe dark/promo.asp.

5 Steps to Child Care Solutions

1. Search online for day care providers, 24-hour residential facilities, and adoption agencies and foster care at www.txchildcaresearch.org
2. Enter your requirements. The search will return a list of providers who report services meeting your specifications, including their locations and phone numbers.

- 3. Select specific providers you'd like to research. www.txchildcare search.org reveals each provider's licensing history and compliance with minimum health and safety standards.
- 4. Call 1-866-TX-CHILD toll-free or use www.txchildcaresearch.org to

locate the child care resource and referral agency nearest you. These local resource and referral agencies can provide additional information on the programs, costs, availability, and accessibility of the individual providers.

5. Visit the day care or residential facilities you are considering. Interview the caregivers and watch



the interaction between the staff and the children. Talk to parents whose children attend. Make sure the provider's care meets your standards. Once

your child is in care, stay involved and keep asking questions.

Assistive Technology: Device Reutilization Program

roject Mend

The first part of the new device reutilization program is a collaboration with Project Mend, Inc., an organization with a medical equipment reutilization program operating in San Antonio, Texas. Project Mend, Inc. provides refurbished equipment through long-term loans to persons with disabilities who can demonstrate financial need. The loan period is set for a period as long as the individual continues to need the equipment.

Items normally available include regular and quad canes, Hoyer lifts, regular and rolling walkers, shower chairs, trapeze bars, forearm crutches, scooters, transfer boards, bedside commodes, electric hospital beds, elevated toilet seats and manual and electric wheelchairs.

All items are evaluated, sanitized, refurbished and repaired before being loaned and reutilized.

To contact Project Mend: toll free: 888-903-6363; 210-223-6363; Toll Free FAX 866-514-0876; FAX 866-514-0876; 1201 Austin Street, San Antonio, Texas 78208; Website http://www.projectmend.org

AT-Match Auction Site

The second part of the new device reutilization program will be an Internet "auction" site for reutilization of assistive technology devices. The Internet site, called AT-MATCH.com, is an "auction" site that serves as a comprehensive Internet access point for obtaining assistive technology devices and services - a marketplace where donors and sellers can locate buyers

for a wide range of assistive technology and durable medical products. The site provides users with links to regional and national resources in a variety of related fields. Users will find specific as-

sistive technology devices at reasonable prices, post equipment for sale and locate assistive technology resources in Texas and be-



yond. Assistive technology providers may advertise equipment at the "AT Store" link on the ATMATCH site. All of these activities will be possible from one Webpage. ATM atch Web Site http://www.atmatch.com/



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ur daughter, Brenna, is 16 yrs. old now. She is very excited with life, music, dance and just people as are a lot of children with Down syndrome that we have met along the way. We've always been amazed that Brenna will sometimes swing mentally and emotionally from 8 yrs. to 16 yrs. and sometimes just completely blow us away by saying or doing something beyond those year ranges.

I've always wondered if she indeed did have this special entry way into the next world by some of the things she's done and said. At least I've enjoyed the possibility anyway. For example, both her grandmothers have been dead for some 6-10 years now. She knew them fleetingly, maybe my wife's mother most of the two. But she will, out of the blue, and almost invariably when we least expect it ask, "Do you miss your mom - I do!" In and of itself, that's probably not too intuitive yet I'll get goose bumps when she asks. Almost as if mom wants us to know not to forget them!

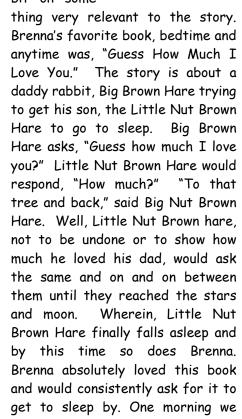
But perhaps the series of events that occurred about 3 years ago has always stuck with me as absolute pure "heavenly" connection and still I own my own business, a small cabinet shop/renovation company with me as the only employee. Summers have always been a challenge for us, mostly my wife. Long before school lets out and summer arrives, she's very busy trying to line up camps, session, sitters and events that will occupy, teach and otherwise keep Brenna active throughout the summer months while we can still be free to work, as we both do. Invariably, there would be long periods of a week or two when we couldn't find anything or couldn't afford anything for Brenna to do.

This particular summer was no dif-

ferent and Sue, my wife, couldn't take off to be there for Brenna as sometimes she could. As for me. well, when I don't work, I don't get paid. But, I was renovating a house, where the owners' would be gone, and having met Brenna were okay with her being with me while I worked Brenna is actually quite easy to keep entertained - her music to sing and dance with, her guitar to make up her own music and drawing paraphernalia to create masterpieces along with plenty of snack and orange juice. However, during this particular summer I was doing two jobs at the same time and had some subcontractors dealing with the other job so I could consistently be on this one. In addition, I was dealing with some anxieties over a pet project I wanted to put on the market myself - there was a

lot on my plate at the time.

Now, I want to back up a bit on some-



were headed down the crowded. rush hour highway toward this particular job. I had been very preoccupied with how badly some things on both jobs had been going, not at all what I had been hoping for. I was very quiet and into my thoughts as we crawled up IH35 through town and out of the blue Brenna asks, "Dad?" Not pulling myself away from my more "important" thoughts, I blankly returned, "Yes, Brenna what do you want?" Wherein, she replied, "See those clouds over there?" pointing over to my left above some high rise buildings. I looked half thinking and said I did. Her reply, "that's how much I love you - from that cloud to here!" Immediately my thoughts vanished and looking over at her smiling face, I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. So I did both! The rest of the day was my best ever.

Somehow, from somewhere spiritual, she knew what I needed that day. And not just that day either. Not soon after, summer had ended, school had started and was weeks into it by this time. My task in the morning was to drive her to school, and then I would head off to work. Well, unfortunately again, I had been steeped into my business/financial thoughts again and had been very quiet. When all of the sudden I felt this little hand on my shoulder. Turning toward Brenna, her head was tilted and a smile on her face. Not a word did she say, just lightly patted my shoulder as before, the rest of the day/week was great.

Happenstance? Maybe. Tuned in most definitely! We still believe she, as well as all children in their innocence are a special link to the spiritual world. Wouldn't it be a great world if we were truly like children!

<u>UnitedHealthcare Children's Fund - Help for Families Who have</u> <u>Children with Disabilities without Federal or State-Funded Health-</u>

Care Funding

Sara Coulter, TxP2P Volunteer, Austin

he UnitedHealthcare Children's Fund (UHCCF) is for families who need financial help to cover an item, therapy, insurance co-payments, etc., that their traditional commercial insurance plan will

not cover or the benefit amount has been maximized. UHCCF operates separately from the insurance company. The foundation help is not limited to only its healthcare groups. UHCCF is a non-profit Sec-

tion 501(c) (3) charity funded by contributions from UnitedHealth Group, UnitedHealthcare and its employees, as well as private and corporate donations.

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UnitedHealthcare Children's Fund

This foundation was set up to fill some of the financial gaps in commercial healthcare coverage.

The foundation helps families who DO NOT qualify for any federal or state funded health care programs. This foundation DOES NOT help families whose child has Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP or other low income programs. The foundation DOES NOT fund grants for families of children on Medicaid waiver programs. The child must be younger than 17 years of age or application date is prior to child's 17^{th} birthday. The foundation will help more than one child in a single household. I don't know if the foundation will cover the expense of a child who is covered by insurance, if another child with fed/state programs resides in the home who is not covered by the commercial insurance plan. Each application is reviewed carefully and each family's situation is different and considerations may be allowed at the discretion of the Regional Board. I was not able to directly interview a family in my region who has received a grant from UHCCF.

UHCCF has extensive criteria for grant consideration. However, don't be scared away. The foundation has an excellent website. The site is easy to navigate and quite informative. You will not be able to talk to a human voice right away. Leave a message and a representative will contact you within 5 business days.

Plus, they have a groovy video explaining everything with family testimonials. The FAQ page covers a lot of ground, too.

Here is an overview of the grant process: First, go to the website and review the criteria for grant application. You have to listen to a short video explaining the process. Next, you start the criteria application process online. The foundation has set up the application process so that you can only continue if your family continues to meet their criteria. It will boot you out quickly if you do not qualify. Once making it through the criteria process the foundation requires the submission of an online application. The foundation will also require documentation of financial status (last year's tax return 1040), medical needs, and various other documents depending on each application. UHCCF allows for a family's income limit to be \$20,000/person. If you are a family of 5, then your family's AGI limit is \$100,000. Not too shabby!

Next the Regional Board meets to consider the applications. The schedule of the Board meetings is monthly and varies according to region. Once an application goes before the regional board, it may take 1-2 months before the foundation contacts you with an answer. The foundation will notify you via U.S. mail if the grant was approved or denied. If denied, your family must wait 12 months before applying for

Continued from Page 4

the same service. If the condition of child worsens or a new item or service is needed, a family may apply for that new service or condition before the 12 month waiting period is over.

The financial grant amount is limited to \$7,500.00 lifetime maximum. Grants awarded to an individual for a 12-month period are limited to \$5,000.00 or 85% of the fund balance (whichever is less). The foundation will not cover any medical expenses incurred prior to grant approval. Families are responsible for submitting all documentation to UHCCF for payment. UHCCF will pay providers directly once proof of service has been provided. Some amounts will be paid to the family depending on individual grant provisions.

The UnitedHealthcare Children's Foundation sounds like it could potentially help a lot of middle-income insurance restricted families get some financial relief for needed intervention therapies, equipment, orthotics, and some insurance copay relief. Co-pays can burden a family when a service is approved. The family is unable to access the service due to high co-pays and sometimes deductibles.

Good Luck to all those who apply. Please contact TxP2P if your family receives help from UHCCF and you would like to share your family's experience.

TxP2P Family Story

T've been connected to TxP2P for about two years - from the time right after our 2-1/2 year old son was diagnosed with autism.

I don't remember how I found out about TxP2P. I may have found it on a general Google search or on a Yahoo group devoted to autism - I don't really remember, but I will tell you that it was a real stroke of luck! By attending the conferences and connecting with other families, I have learned more than I could ever learn from a book or by using the library or Internet - not only information specifically about my son's disability, but information about how the disability "game" works! I've been able to "cut to the chase" on issues such as Medicaid Waivers, the legislative process, advocacy, differ-

By Angela Weber, TxP2P Volunteer, Dallas

ent types of therapies available - so many things I can't even remember them all. All in all, TxP2P has been a tremendous blessing to our family. I always say - there's nothing like another "Mom" to get the information that really MATTERS!

I've been able to connect with other families in my city and in the state through parent matching, have connected informally with other families through meeting them at the conference or on the regional Internet listservs. TxP2P has provided me a stipend to attend the conference both years that I have attended. While TxP2P is not in my city (Dallas), I have had the great fortune to have been able to attend some workshops that have been presented here in Dallas.

All in all, TxP2P has been a godsend to me, my child and our family. I can't say enough about how wonderful the organization is, and how very much we appreciate having them in our court, and in our state!

Note from Editor: We added this to the newsletter as an example of the kind of "family story" we need from you to use in our grant writing and reporting. Although it's always nice to get a "pat on the back", we aren't trying to just make ourselves look good here! These stories are invaluable in our never-ending quest for funding for TxP2P. We also need stories from grandparents, siblings, and our young selfadvocates! Please email your story to Laura@txp2p.orq or mail to Laura Warren (address on page 8).

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What's all the Fuss about Medical Home?

Laura J. Warren, TxP2P

aybe you don't hear it as often as I do, but *"Medical* Home" is mentioned everywhere! Texas Dept. of Family and Child Protective Services will provide a Medical Home for all the kids in foster care. Managed Care Health Plans will provide Medical Waiver Programs through a Medical Home. The Dept. of State Health Services' Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) received funding to work with pediatric clinics to become Medical Homes and is now offering grants to physicians/clinics to enhance their practices to become Medical Homes.

So, what's the deal with Medical Home? I can give you the definition and the 7 components, but they've been in this newsletter before. The real question is, "What does it mean to you and your child?"

A true Medical Home can help your child get the medical care they need in a fashion that makes it easier for you. Yes, I said easier for YOU! Do you have your pediatrician's or primary doctor's home phone number? I know some parents who do. Why? Because their children are so fragile that when they need help, they can't wait for the ER doctor to get caught up to

speed on their child - they need their primary doctor to meet them at the ER. Does your child's physician's office prepare ahead of time for your child's visit? I know some parents who also have this - there is one person in charge of preparing everyone at the office for the visit so it will go smoothly for the child. Does your child's physician or staff ask for your input on how they can make their services better? Okay, I don't know anyone that gets this but I do know that the clinics that worked with CSHCN did this when working toward providing a Medical Home.

Other examples of a true | Medical Home are:

- Specific arrangements for contacting you about test results are included in your child's file and the doctor or staff use them
- You are treated as a partner in making decisions for your child's treatment
- Your child has a written care plan that is reviewed at every visit
- Your child's doctor is willing to meet with specialists and you to address your child's needs
- Your child's doctor provides resources to you on parent to parent

support or provides family support programs on a routine basis

- Your child's doctor offers to help your child move to an adult care doctor as well as with other transition issues
- Your child's doctor has a board that includes family members that reviews needs and makes suggestions for change - and this input is taken seriously
- Your child's doctor serves on boards for community agencies or school committees for children with disabilities or other health care needs
- You are offered a place to review your child's medical records with a staff member who can answer your questions

Learn more about Medical Home and Family Centered Care at our upcoming conference and watch for more information in this newsletter. If you have a Medical Home, we'd really love to hear from you email Laura at Laura@txp2p.org or call 866-896-6001 or 512-458-8600. By sharing our stories about Medical Home, we can help other families develop one for themselves. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

TxP2P and Texas Hands & Voices: Parents Working Together To Help Families of Infants with Hearing Loss

Erika Goyer, TxP2P

A t least one of every thousand newborns in the nation is born with hearing loss. In the past, many children were not diagnosed until well into their second and third years of childhood. In an effort to

detect hearing loss early and provide positive interventions, Texas recently implemented a hearing test as part of the state's newborn screening program.

For a year now Texas Parent to Parent has been working with DARS Early Childhood Intervention Program to train Supporting Parent Volunteers to assist the parents of

newly-identified infants in the difficult task of making informed medical and communication choices for their children. The response from families has been tremendous! So far we have trained more than

thirty new volunteers.

Texas Parent to Parent is excited to announce that our next Parent Volunteer Training for families of children with hear-

ing loss will be held in San Antonio on Saturday, March 29th. The day of parent training with TxP2P will be followed by a kick-off celebration for the newly-formed chapter

of Texas Hands & Voices. Texas Parent to Parent supports Texas Hands and Voices in the belief that

What Works for Your Child is What Makes the Choice Right!

Please join us in supporting Texas Parents! If you are interested in attending contact Erika Goyer (erika@txp2p.org) or Laura Davis (laura.davis@txp2p.org) or call at 866-896-6001 or 512-458-8600 for more information.

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Central Texas Walk-n-Roll

Debbie Wiederhold, TxP2P



ome join us for the 1st Central Texas Walk-n-Roll to be held on April 26th, 2008 at Old Settler's Park in Round Rock, Texas. It's more than a Fundraiser! Texas Parent to Parent (TxP2P) and the Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation (OIF) are partnering to raise awareness and critically needed funds to support programs and activities benefiting the individuals and fami-

lies we serve. The proceeds will be divided equally between our two organizations. Come join walkers and wheelchair users to help support the mission of TxP2P and people with Osteogenesis Imperfecta.

How did I get involved in this you ask? I have a son with Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI - also known as brittle bone disorder) and also work for Texas Parent to Parent. I pon-

dered how I could help both organizations with awareness and funding - the Central Texas Walk-n-Roll will do just that! Please consider supporting this wonderful event! For more information contact Debbie Wiederhold at Debbie@txp2p.org or (512) 458-8600 or visit www.oif.org/oiwalk to sign up for the event or make a pledge.

We're All in this Together! TxP2P 4th Annual Parent Conference June 27-28, 2008

e're not kidding—we really are all in this together and we're working hard to get the word out about our 2008 conference.

What's happening at the 2008 TxP2P Conference? For starters, the fabulous Teen Transition Expo is back! The 2007 Teen Transition Expo was such a success that we've moved it to a much larger room, allowing for more self-advocates and activities.

Our Friday Night Family Gathering will top off Friday's activities with a marvelous children's entertainer and a terrific dinner (in response to your evaluation comments, this year's menu will be a little more "down home" than 2007).

Our conference wouldn't be the ties again this year, courtesy of the same without our terrific Sibling Texas Council for Developmental Support Groups, and we're thrilled Disabilities. As always, stipends are

to let you know that sibs of kids with disabilities will once again have the opportunity to participate in this amazing group. What's new at this year's conference? Well, this year, we will offer one Sibling Support Group for kids with mild disabilities who have siblings with more significant disabilities.

Registration fees have increased just a tiny bit, and we're offering 3 options for registration, with the Early Bird registrants getting the largest benefit. We really hate having to increase fees, even by a tiny bit, and would offer free registration to everyone if we could. We are excited to be able to offer stipends to parents of children with disabilities again this year, courtesy of the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities. As always stipends are

a hot item and will go fast, so don't wait to register!

We need volunteers to help at the conference! Here are a few of the volunteer positions available: registration, session facilitators, & audio-visual technicians. Let us know on your registration form if you are willing to help.

Lodging will be at the Omni Austin Hotel at SouthPark, where the conference is being held. A limited number of rooms are available at the special conference rate of \$109. Rooms will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The registration packet will be mailed and will be available online on our website in mid-March www.txp2p.org.

TxP2P's 3rd Annual Wrightslaw 2-DAY Special Ed Law & Advocacy BOOT CAMP-You Asked for More & We Listened!

Wrightslaw seminar this year? Well, TxP2P's 2008 Wrightslaw seminar is free-standing, separate from our annual state conference, and, obviously, it's two days with Pete and Pam Wright. That equates to more time to ask questions but also more time to cover all the information that went by so fast last year. The two-day (12 hours) seminar is more intensive and personalized, and participants will have additional opportunities to network.

TxP2P's 2008 Wrightslaw 2-Day Boot Camp will take place at Region XIII Education Service Center (in Austin) on Friday and Saturday, August 1st & 2nd. 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We'll provide a continental breakfast and lunch each day and child care will be available for those who need it (sign up soon - space is limited!). Check our website early and often! The Registration Packet will be available online at www.txp2p.org around mid-March and will be mailed at the same time.

<u>Participants will learn about changes</u> in **IDEA 2004**, including:

- New requirements for initial evaluations, reevaluations & parental consent
- New requirements for IEPs, IEP goals, IEP teams, IEP meetings
- New eligibility issues for students with specific learning disabilities
- New procedural requirements

and timelines, including the "Due Process Complaint Notice" and "Resolution (IEP) Session."

Participants will learn about requirements in No Child Left Behind, including:

- Reading and research-based instruction
- Highly qualified teachers
- Parental rights and options
- High stakes testing

Participants will also learn how to:

- Use tests and measurements to measure progress
- · Write SMART IEPs
- Use advocacy strategies to negotiate for appropriate special education programs
 Hope to see you there!

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Texas Parent to Parent is committed to improving the lives of Texas children who have disabilities, chronic conditions, and/or special health care needs. We accomplish this by empowering families to be strong advocates through parent to parent support, resource referral and education, and by educating professionals about the unique needs of these children.

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ATTENTION PLEASE!! We have found a new way to get our email newsletter out to you without using Yahoo Groups! Starting with this newsletter, we will use a new service to email our newsletter. If you are currently getting this by mail but would prefer to receive it via email, please contact Susan Prior (512-458-8600 or 866-896-6001 or susan.prior@txp2p.org) and ask to receive the TxP2P Newsletter via email. If you leave a voice mail, please remember to give us your email address. Thanks!!

Conference Schedule

Date	Conference Title	Location	Registration Information
Friday, June 27 to Saturday, June 28, 2008	We're All in this Together! TxP2P 4th Annual Parent Conference	The Omni Hotel at Southpark Austin, TX	For more information: TxP2P 3710 Cedar St. Box 12 Austin, TX 78705 512-458-8600; 866-896-6001 www.txp2p.org
Tuesday, July 24 to Friday, July 27, 2008	Knowledge, Support & EmpowermentThe Dawning of a New Day AAIDD (formerly TX Association on Mental Retardation) - TX Chapter 32nd Annual Convention	The San Luis Resort Galveston, TX	For more information: Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities - Texas Chapter P. O. Box 28076 Austin, Texas 78755 Fax: 512-349-2117 http://aaiddtx.org/32nd_Annual_Convention_files/2007_tamr_reg_brochure.pdf For general questions contact Pat Holder, Convention Manager at 512-349-7470 or email pat.holder@tamr-web.com