



Family Support Project

- For Families Raising Preschoolers with Special Needs -

NEWS YOU CAN USE July 2010

Support for Families Raising Preschoolers with Special Needs

The Family Support Project of Family Connections (formerly Shaker Family Center) provides FREE services to families raising preschoolers with special needs including playgroups for parents and children, support groups for parents, parent workshops, and individual assistance in securing appropriate and effective IEP services. For more information call Holly Palda at 921-2023 or visit the Family Connections website at www.familyconnections1.org.

FACILITATED PLAYGROUP: every Friday, 1-3, at the Shaker library on Lee and Van Aken

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP: every 4th Friday from 1:30 to 2:30 at the library

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT: every 2nd and 3rd Friday from 1:30 to 2:00 at the library.

DAD AND ME PLAYGROUP: two Saturdays per month from 10 to noon at the Shaker Family Center located at 19824 Sussex Road. Sessions in July will be on Saturday, July 10th and Saturday, July 24th.

Arts for Us Concert July 25

The Music Settlement offers individuals with special needs and their families the opportunity to enjoy the highest quality musical performance in a comfortable and welcoming setting. This month's concert, on Sunday, July 25, at 4 PM, features Carlos Jones and the Plus Band, who will delight your family with fun upbeat rhythms and sounds of reggae. Bring a blanket or chair and enjoy an afternoon of fun music at the Outdoor Stage at the Music Settlement located in University Circle. FREE ADMISSION BUT RESERVATIONS REQUIRED! RSVP to Callista Koh at 216-421-5806, ext 728 or ckoh@themusicsettlement.org.

New Toy Store at Legacy Village

The Toy Tank, a 4,200 square foot toy store with a special section of toys for kids with special needs, is located a few doors down from Starbucks at Legacy Village. For additional info, contact the store at 382-4080.

Special Needs Toy Guide

Finding good toys for a special needs child can be challenging. This illustrated guide can help you identify the best toys to fit your child's interests and skill level. All the toys in the guide have been tested and approved by more than 100 toy "experts" — the kids themselves. Learn more at <http://www.brainline.org/content/2009/01/lets-play-guide-toys-children-special-needs.html>.

Literacy Websites

Looking for ways to keep your young children engaged with early literacy activities over the summer. Check out these child-friendly, interactive websites below. List prepared by the Shaker Heights School District pre K special education teachers:

www.kizclub.com: stories to print, variety of stories read to child on computer, printable props to use with popular stories and nursery rhymes

www.starfall.com: letter and letter/sound activities, simple stories read to child on computer

www.makinglearningfun.com: printable activities to use with popular literature, nursery rhyme activities
www.preschoolexpress.com: unique printable stories, finger-plays, and songs, alphabet activities
www.lil-fingers.com/storybooks: simple stories read to child on computer
www.mightybook.com: stories read to child on computer, simple songs and pictures

Online Getting Ready to Read Screening Tool

Are you wondering if your preschooler is on track for learning to read? Reading Rockets has developed a fast, free, research-based, and easy-to-use screening tool called "Get Ready to Read." It consists of 20 questions that parents and caregivers can ask a four-year-old to see if he or she is on track for learning how to read. To try the online reading screening tool, click on this link:

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/32376>.

Digital Library

<http://www.storyplace.org/storyplace.asp>: Chosen by the American Library Association as a best website for children; offers both a preschool and elementary school digital library.

Dental Toolkit

Autism Speaks has released a new **Dental Tool Kit** to help parents promote good, life-long oral health care habits for their kids with autism. The free kit, which includes both a video and a downloadable printed guide, features tips for improving oral hygiene at home, as well as information about how parents and dental professionals can make a visit to the dentist's office less stressful and more productive. **This guide is very well done!** To access the guide and the video, click on this link:

http://www.autismspeaks.org/community/family_services/dental.php.

Kids Fly Safe

Safe and easy flying with kids without the hassle of carrying a 20# car seat. CARES is the only harness type child aviation safety restraint ever certified for airplane travel by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for children 22 to 44 pounds. Weighs 6 pounds and fits into a 6" stuff pack. Recommended by one of our parents with a Kindergartner with cerebral palsy. For details about the harness, see: <http://www.kidsflysafe.com/>

Special Needs Amusement Park

A possible family vacation spot: Morgan's World, a special needs amusement park opens in San Antonio, Texas. For details, click on this link: <http://www.morganswonderland.com/index.html>

Private Health Insurance: Understanding Your Contract

This July 28th workshop, sponsored by Tools for Today, is designed to provide information to help you get the best from private health insurance. Terri Young, Consumer Affairs Analyst, from the Ohio Department of Insurance will speak and answer questions about:

- Laws that protect consumers, and their application (e.g., HIPAA, COBRA, state law)
- The importance of understanding your policy/contractual issues (formularies, pre-authorization, medical necessity, and the internal and external appeals process)
- Health Care Reform
- New dependent age law for dependents up to age 28--criteria and when they can be added
- Ohio High Risk Insurance Pool—what it is, who will administer it, when it will be available, eligibility, benefits and cost

Workshop takes place, Wednesday July 28, 6:15 to 8:30, at the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center located at 8001 Brecksville Road, Brecksville. Cost \$10. Advance registration required. Call Linda Kresnye at 216-229-5757.

Disability Fact Sheets from the National Information Center for Children With Disabilities (NICHY)

- **Autism:** <http://www.nichcy.org/Disabilities/Specific/Pages/autism.aspx>
- **Cerebral Palsy:** <http://www.nichcy.org/Disabilities/Specific/Pages/CerebralPalsy.aspx>
- **Deafness and Hearing Loss:**
<http://www.nichcy.org/Disabilities/Specific/Pages/DeafnessandHearingLoss.aspx>
- **Emotional Disturbance:** <http://www.nichcy.org/Disabilities/Specific/Pages/EmotionalDisturbance.aspx>

Info on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) has a new website:
<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/>

Estate Planning for Children with Special Needs

- **If you're considering estate planning for your child with special needs, here's an excellent guide** outlining what every family needs to know:
<http://www.specialneedsalliance.com/common/files/Western%20NY%20Parenting%20SNT%20Article.pdf>
- **10 tips on estate planning for children with special needs** from Forbes.com:
<http://www.specialneedsalliance.com/common/files/10-tips.pdf>