

Happy 2009!

Upcoming Events and Resources

Jan. 24th - Feb. 8th “You Can’t Take it With You”: Presented by Dionysus Theatre. Using actors with disabilities along side those who are able-bodied, Dionysus Theatre is a catalyst in breaking down barriers, changing lives and attitudes toward those with disabilities. For more information, call 713-728-0041 or go to www.dionysustheatre.org.

Jan. 29th, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. 3rd Annual Financial Empowerment Forum for People with Disabilities: Free event presented by the Houston Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray, Houston, TX 77019. You will receive valuable information on free Income Tax Preparation Services, Earned Income Child tax Credits, Housing and Employment Resources, Credit Management and Repair, Identity Theft Prevention, and so much more!! The Metropolitan Multi-Service Center is wheelchair-accessible. This event will be captioned and ASL sign language will be provided. If alternate reasonable accommodation is required, please contact us by noon, Jan. 21st, at 713-837-9041.

Jan. 31st, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Shadow Training Workshop: Presented by The Shape of Behavior at Graceview Baptist Church, 25510 Tomball Parkway, Tomball, TX. Domonique Randall, Ph.D., BCBA & Robin Wishkoski, M.Ed., BCBA will cover strategies to increase the success of children with disabilities in inclusive settings. How to know your child is ready for inclusion, preparation for inclusion, critical skills to focus on for better inclusive outcome, the way in which to teach in an inclusive setting, how to reinforce independence and fade the shadow/aide. Pre-registration by Jan 30th is required. \$25 if register by Jan. 23rd; \$35 if register after the 23rd. For more information, contact workshops@shapeofbehavior.com.

Feb. 5th, 7 - 9 p.m. Northwest Houston Chapter of the Autism Society of America monthly meeting: Michelle Garcia will speak to mom’s on Caring for the Caregiver. New diagnosis and parent Q & A. Special speaker for dad’s in a separate area. Meeting for adults on the spectrum in a separate area. JOY-care for children and siblings provided with reservations-only (at least 1 week prior to meeting by contacting Tonya Magagh at respite4all@yahoo.com). Held at Graceview Baptist Church, 25510 Tomball Parkway, Tomball, TX. For more information, contact NorthwestHoustonChapterASA@yahoo.com or 281-686-0103.

Feb. 9th, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. “Interpreting School and Medical Evaluations: Basics of Tests and Measurement”: Presented by The Arc of Greater Houston at MHMRA’s Conference Center, 7033 SW Frwy., Houston, 77074. Training is free. RSVP is required. For more information, contact ksnead@thearcofgreaterhouston.com or 713-957-1600 ext. 15.

Feb. 11th, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. 2nd Annual Housing, Employment and Resources Expo for People with Disabilities: Hosted by the City of Houston at the George R. Brown Convention Center, Exhibit Hall E. For more information or to register, go to <http://www.houstontx.gov/here/>.

Feb. 11th, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. “Special Education 101”: Presented by The Arc of Greater Houston at 3737 Dacoma, Suite E., Houston, 77092. Special Education 101 is an overview of federal and state law governing public school special education procedures. Child and parent rights are discussed along with referral processes and practical tips for securing an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. Cost is \$25 and includes handouts, resource guide and *It’s A New Idea* manual. (Some individuals may qualify for 50% scholarship.) RSVP required 3 days in advance. For more information, contact ksnead@thearcogreaterhouston.com or 713-957-1600 ext. 15.

Feb. 14th, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Autism Playgroup of Fort Bend County: For children with a diagnosis on the Autism Spectrum, ages 1-12. Siblings of all ages are also welcome. This month’s location is Lost Creek Park, 3703 Lost Creek Blvd., Sugar Land. Group meets the 2nd Saturday of the month. Locations vary. RSVP required. For more information or to rsvp, contact Susan Garczynski at susan@susangar.com or 281-726-2665.

Feb. 14th, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Relatives as Parents Conference: Free conference for grandparents and other relatives who are raising kin children. Held at The University of Houston, Student Services Bldg. 1. (Easy access, wheelchair accessible, free parking.) Topics include: Self-care, Legal Issues, Impact of Substance Abuse on Families, Parenting Teens & Teen Issues, Dealing Effectively with Schools, Finance for RAPs, Planning & Resources and more. Register now, seating is limited! For more information or to register, email Angie Grindon at agrindon@uh.edu or call (713)743-0608 or (713)743-5491.

Feb. 17th - 18th “Art of Negotiation for Special Ed. Teams”: Two-day training presented by the DARS-Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services at Harris County Community College – SE Campus, 6815 Rustic Ave., Houston, 77078. Participants will learn about the various communication roles team members may utilize, the 7 types of conflict that occur in our communications and interactions, and how to match their negotiating and communication styles and strategies to the problem conflict to be resolved. Presenter, Janie Ruppmann, has more than 30 years experience in the development and implementation of effective practices particularly in the areas of inclusive schools, effective workplace solutions for individuals with significant disabilities, and in preparing parent and educators to work together collaboratively. For more information, contact 512-407-3250 or dhhstraining@dars.state.tx.us. (Training will also be offered in Austin on **Feb. 14th-15th**.)

Feb. 20th, 9 a.m. - noon “Fitting the Puzzle Pieces Together: How to Decide What is Needed... Accommodation, Modification, and Explicit Instruction”: Presented by Neuhaus Education Center at 4433 Bissonnet, Bellaire, TX. Topic: Connecting sources and strategies to find solutions for students who struggle with learning to read. Price: \$35. Scholarships are available for tuition only. Online registration available at www.neuhaus.org. For more information, call 713-664-7676.

Feb. 23rd - 25th Texas Transition Conference 2009: Annual three-day conference that equips individuals with transition information in the hopes of improving outcomes for postsecondary opportunities for youth with disabilities. To be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Austin. Pre-registration deadline (to avoid higher onsite/late fee) is **Jan. 23rd**. For more information, go to <http://tfc.tamu.edu/index.htm>.

Feb. 24th, 7 p.m. “In Our Own Voice”: Presented by Family to Family Network-Katy and NAMI-Houston at Kingsland Baptist Church in Katy. “In Our Own Voice” is a unique public education program developed by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), in which two trained adult consumer speakers share compelling personal stories about living with mental illness and achieving recovery. Audience members will have the opportunity to offer feedback and ask questions. For more information, call 713-466-6304.

Feb. 25th - 28th Inclusion Works Conference 2009: Join the festivities at the 16th Annual IW Conference, where you will work with the best of the best researchers, authors, presenters and practitioners in the field of educational practices to support inclusive education. To be held at the Renaissance Hotel in Austin. Register early! Registration is limited, and the conference usually sells out before the deadline of **Feb. 13th**. For more information, go to www.thearcoftexas.org.

Feb. 26th - 27th "Reaching My Own Greatness": A two day "Train the Trainer" workshop hosted by the Brazoria County Center for Independent Living (BCCIL) at the Danbury Medical Professional Center in Angleton. The trainees will be youth with disabilities, ages 14 to 26. Participating youth will experience fun, hands-on activities. They will explore issues of self-esteem and learn: 1) how to communicate their dreams and plan to reach those dreams; 2) about dealing with life's "road blocks" when they occur; and 3) how to give back to their community. At the end of the training, each youth will get materials/curriculum to offer the training to their peers and groups in the community. Participants can bring a support person to the workshop to help as needed. For more information or to sign up for the workshop, contact Chamane Barrow at BCCIL at 979-849-7060. Space will be limited to the first 30 participants who sign up.

Feb. 27th 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. "Learning Disabilities and Special Education Needs": Presented by The Arc of Greater Houston at MHMRA's Conference Center, 7033 SW Frwy., Houston, 77074. Training is free. RSVP is required. For more information, contact ksnead@thearcofgreaterhouston.com or 713-957-1600 ext. 15.

Mar. 7th, 8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. 4th Annual Special Education Parent Conference and Resource Fair: "Making a Difference Together" Presented by Family to Family Network and Katy ISD's Special Education Dept. at Morton Ranch High School, 21000 Franz Rd., Katy 77449. This free conference is open to family members of children from age birth to adult with any type of learning or developmental disability. Parents will be provided information on a wide variety of topics throughout the day. Pre-registration is required. For more information, go to <http://www.familytofamilynetwork.org/SpecialEvents.html> or call 713-466-6304.

Mar. 9th - 10th 2009 Texas Statewide Independent Living Conference: "Relay Independence: No Challenge Too Great!" Presented by the Texas State Independent Living Council; the Dept. of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS); and the Austin Resource Center for Independent Living. To be held at the Courtyard Marriott (Downtown), Austin. Registration fee is \$50 and deadline is **Feb. 6th**. Stipends are available. For more information and registration form, go to www.txsilc.org.

2nd Thursday of each month, 7 - 8:30 p.m. Visions for Tomorrow Evening Support Group: Sponsored by NAMI West Houston. For parents and caregivers of children and adolescents with a brain disorder (ADHD, PDD/Autism, Depression, Bipolar Disorder, or any other emotional or behavioral concern). You are not alone! Location: The Well, Grace Presbyterian Church (Seagler and Westheimer), 10234-A Westheimer, Houston. For more information, contact Diane Goyette at diane@goyette.info or 713-896-1153.

Last Wednesday of each month, 10 - 11:30 a.m. Visions for Tomorrow Daytime Support Group: Sponsored by NAMI West Houston. For parents and caregivers of children and adolescents with a brain disorder (ADHD, PDD/Autism, Depression, Bipolar Disorder, or any other emotional or behavioral concern). You are not alone! Location: The Catholic Community of St. Cecelia, 11720 Joan of Arc Dr. in the Community Center, room 202. Future meetings will be held the last

Wednesday of the month. For more information, call Debby Brown at 281-493-9854 or Diane Goyette at 713-896-1153.

3rd Saturday of each month, North Houston Autism Play Group: This group will provide social opportunities for children with Autism (ages 1-12) and their families while building a support network in Harris and Montgomery County. For more information, contact Janet at nhautismplaygroup@sbcglobal.net or 713-962-0474.

Sign Up for Legislative Issue Reports: Prior to each State Legislative Session, the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities invites Texas citizens and disability organizations to sign up to receive Legislative Issue Reports that will be sent each Friday until the Session ends. January 13th will begin the 81st Session. To receive reports, send an email to Angela English at aenglish@governor.state.tx.us listing which issue areas you are interested in. Issue Area Options are: Access, Communications, Education, Emergency Management, Health, Housing, Recreation, Transportation, Veterans, Workforce. Or you can request All Issue Areas.

Spring Arts Classes: The River Performing and Visual Arts Center located at 1475 West Gray, Houston 77019, kicks off the spring semester of Saturday arts classes for students with special needs on Saturday, **Jan. 24th** between the hours of 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Hourly classes are offered in drama, dance, art, and music for special children, ages 3 - 19, who have disabilities, chronic illnesses, or are economically disadvantaged. Siblings are welcome to participate also. Classes are \$100 each for the semester, but financial assistance is available. For a registration packet, go to http://www.theriver.org/upload/spring2009registration_67702.pdf. For a scholarship application, go to http://www.theriver.org/upload/2008summercampscholarshiprequirements_43658.pdf. For more information, call 713-520-1220 or go to www.theriver.org.

Policy and Disclaimer:

It is the desire of Family to Family Network to share information and items that may be of interest to our email list subscribers. These items are not necessarily endorsed by Family to Family Network or our funders.

*Organizations wishing to publicize events in the monthly digest may submit a brief description and contact information to info@familytofamilynetwork.org by the **15th** of the month prior to the month that the event will take place (i.e. by January 15th for a February event, etc.). If you would like to be removed from this email list, please reply to info@familytofamilynetwork.org.*

*For more information about **Family to Family Network**, go to www.familytofamilynetwork.org.*