

# PRESCHOOL PRESS



A Publication of the Anchorage School District STeP Center and the Early Childhood and Elementary Special Education Department

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## In This Issue. .

In this issue of *Preschool Press* you will find articles for parents of preschool children on the following topics:

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## What's in a Name?

Have you ever wondered what the Anchorage School District's STeP Center is? STeP stands for "Student Teacher Parent" and it serves as a special education resource to ASD students, teachers, and parents.

The STeP Center has a library of books and media on a variety of disability topics that can be checked out. It also has two full time special educators to assist with questions, provide resources, and help with understanding the ASD Special Education Department. In addition to the library, the STeP Center hosts a wonderful website at: <http://www.asdk12.org/depts/step/> that includes an extensive disability topic section as well as links to the four newsletters that are published throughout the school year. Current issues as well as back issues of the publications are available for downloading and printing.

The STeP Center is located at the ASD Education Center at the corner of Northern Lights Blvd. and Boniface Parkway. It is open Monday through Thursday from 8:30 until 6pm (until 4:30pm on Friday). It is staffed after 4pm by one staff member so call ahead if you are coming by after 4pm (742-3868 or 742-3870).

### About The *Preschool Press*

This publication is designed for preschool families in the Anchorage School District. It is mailed each month. E-mail subscriptions are also sent out so if you wish to receive this mailing, contact: [loutrel\\_barbara@asdk12.org](mailto:loutrel_barbara@asdk12.org) or call 742-3868.

Past Copies of the *Preschool Press* can be found on [www.asdk12.org/dept/step](http://www.asdk12.org/dept/step)

*Anchorage School District  
Education Center*



## ***Parent Involvement in Schooling***

***Youth are more likely to grow up healthy when their parents are involved in their education and school.***



Parents can easily stay involved with their child's school in small ways that will make a big difference.

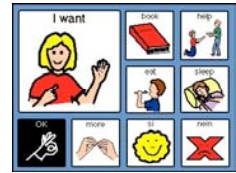
For example:

- o Maintain ongoing communication with your child's teacher(s). Ways to communicate can be in person, a phone call, email, or even a hand written note or journal that goes to and from school.
- o Join a parent-teacher organization. If you can't volunteer a lot of time, say so, but do try to support their events.
- o Volunteer to help out in small ways. Check with the teacher on ways you can help out.
- o Attend all conferences. If you can't make it on the designated date, arrange to meet at another time. ASD Parent Conferences are Nov. 8th & 9th. Mark your calendars. For parent tips on how to have a successful conference, go to this ASD webpage: <https://www.asdk12.org/parents/conferences.asp>
- o Talk with your child about school. If he/she brings home a project talk about it. Put it on the refrigerator.

This content was taken from "Helping Kids Succeed Alaskan Style" written by and for Alaskans. It is one of the forty Assets that children need to succeed. If you want more information on this topic, come by the STeP Center for a free book.

## Guess What's New at the STeP Center (Student-Teacher-Parent Center)!

Boardmaker has arrived! It is a graphics database with over 3,000 Picture Communication Symbols that allows you to print selected symbols for use with communication. The STeP Center is interested in finding how many parents would like to have access to this program for using the pictures at home, in the community, on trips, etc. Please call Barb Loutrel at 742-3868 if you are interested.



## *Parenting a Child with Special Needs: Taking Care of Yourself*

*Parents as Individuals and as Partners*

There are a number of vital factors within each family which will influence its ultimate well-being. One is the emotional and physical health of each parent individually. Because it is generally the parents who confront the issues associated with their child's disability (e.g., dealing with medical practitioners, caring for the child), while simultaneously trying to maintain the household (e.g., holding down jobs, shopping, cooking, cleaning up, taking care of other children), it is not surprising that many parents of children with disabilities report times of feeling overwhelmed. It is, thus, very important for you, as parents, to take some time to care for yourselves as individuals: getting enough sleep, eating regular meals, trying to exercise every day, even if it is just taking a short walk. Even 15 minutes with your feet up can rejuvenate you. (Callahan, 1990). This excerpt was taken from "The Exceptional Child website at:

<http://www.teachersandfamilites.com/sped/parents/psn2-parent.html>



## *Moving?*

### Bus Operations



Transporting over 20,000 students per day requires a tremendous amount of teamwork. The Anchorage School District Pupil Transportation Department provides 40% of the transportation employing over 140 bus drivers and attendants. This takes a great coordination effort by the dispatchers, safety officers and routing department to insure safe and efficient school bus service. If you move during the school year, it may take over a week to get the new route arranged for your child. So please be patient.

**Website of the Month:** NICHCY-A to Z Topics

[www.nichcy.org/resources/](http://www.nichcy.org/resources/)

NICHCY (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities) provides A-Z Topics, a series of Web resource pages on topics of high interest and concern. They're intended to connect you quickly with a range of resources, materials, and guidance on numerous topics.

**Anchorage Parenting Resources:**

**The Alaska Parent Line: 1-800-643-KIDS**

**Childcare Connection (Parenting Classes): 563-1966 or 1-800-278-3723**

**Catholic Social Services (Parent Support Groups/Home Visits): 276-5590**

**Alaska Regional Hospital: (Parenting Classes): 264-1773**

**Alaska Native Medical Center (Parenting Classes): 729-2689**

**Providence Alaska Medical Center (Parenting Classes): 261-3011**

**Parent's Anonymous (Parent Support Groups): 337-7678**

**FREE!**

**Special Education Community Forum**

Sponsored by The ASD STeP Center with collaboration from Stone Soup Group

**"Supporting the Special Needs Child in School and at Home"**

Come join us over a cup of coffee for our first Saturday disability information workshop this year. Learn about different disability topics, join discussions, and have the opportunity to earn credit for certification programs, salary advancement or training requirements.



Saturday, October 28, 2006

Wendler Middle School

8:30am to 1:00pm



Keynote: Advocacy & Collaboration: Opening More Doors for Your Child  
Breakout sessions will include topics on Autism, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Using Pictures to Enhance Your Child's Understanding and more. Visit our website to see the topics as they are updated (<http://www.asdk12.org/depts/step/>).