

# PRESCHOOL PRESS



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

Jan/Feb 2008  
Volume 6, Issue 3

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you will find articles for  
parents of preschool children  
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## Winter Fun!

It may seem cold and dark outside  
but that doesn't mean that the  
winter can't be filled with warmth,  
enlightenment and fun! Here are  
some ideas of what's available to  
spice up this wonderful time of year.



- Ⓢ Alaska Zoo: Family Fun Days, Adventure Camps, Family Programs, Storytime at the Zoo. Located at 4731 O'Malley Road. Open from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm daily. Telephone 346-2133 or go to their website at [www.alaskazoo.org](http://www.alaskazoo.org).
- Ⓢ Anchorage Parks and Recreation: Offers a variety of activities including sledding and ice-skating. To find the location nearest your home go to: [www.muni.org/parks/parksntrails.cfm](http://www.muni.org/parks/parksntrails.cfm).
- Ⓢ Alaska Museum of Natural History: Kid's Park with slides and mazes as well as other activities specifically for preschoolers. Located at 201 N. Bragaw St. Open Tuesdays to Saturdays from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Telephone 274-2400 or go to their webpage at [www.alaskamuseum.org](http://www.alaskamuseum.org).
- Ⓢ The Imaginarium: "I Wonder" Preschool Science Hour for children ages 2-5. Located at 737 W. Fifth Ave. Call about their hours. Telephone 276-3179 or go to their website at [www.imaginarium.org](http://www.imaginarium.org).
- Ⓢ Eagle River Nature Center: Knee-High Naturalists targets preschoolers. Located at the end of Eagle River Road. October to April they are open Fridays and Weekends from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Telephone 694-2108 or go to their website at [www.ernc.org](http://www.ernc.org).
- Ⓢ Story Times: A variety of places in town offer weekly story time opportunities. Call for times and locations. Some of the places are: Anchorage Public Library System ([www.anchoragelibrary.org](http://www.anchoragelibrary.org)), Title Wave Books ([www.wavebooks.com](http://www.wavebooks.com) or 278-9283), Borders Books and Music ([www.borderstores.com](http://www.borderstores.com) or 344-4099) and Barnes and Noble Booksellers ([www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) or 279-7323).

## About Preschool Press

This publication is designed  
for preschool families in the  
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/step/](http://www.asdk12.org/depts/step/)



## Get Connected

In an attempt to meet your needs it was decided to begin another new series. This series will tell you about different agencies in the community that might be of service to you. Each article will describe what the agency does and how to contact them. For our first month Child Care Connection was chosen. Hopefully this series will enable you to "Get Connected" to the community and the resources available to you.

### Child Care Connection

Child Care Connection's Mission is: To advance the quality of early education and child development by empowering parents, educating child care professionals and collaborating with our community. To meet this mission they provide a variety of services that include:

- ☉ Referral Services: customized child care options.
- ☉ Positive Parenting Support Classes: weekly parenting classes.
- ☉ Alaska IN!: provides referrals, outreach, education as well as additional child care funding for eligible families who have a child with a disability.
- ☉ Warm-Line: provides support on a variety of issues. They can link parents with community resources, health and behavioral health information. In addition they answer parent's questions regarding child development or the process of finding an early childhood education program.

You may contact them by calling them at 563-1966 or by going to their website which is [www.childcareconnection.org](http://www.childcareconnection.org).

## Training Opportunity for Parents



The Stone Soup Group is pleased to be offering free trainings to parents and any other interested people to help them understand FASD (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder). The trainings are free of charge but they do ask that you sign up 2 weeks prior to the training you wish to attend. FASD 101 is an introductory training whereas 201 gives advanced information. All trainings are scheduled for Mondays.

Stone Soup Group is located at 3350 Commercial Drive, Suite 100. Their telephone number is 561-3701. Please contact Cheri Scott if you would like more information.

Here is the schedule for 2008:

- 2/11, 12-4 pm - FASD 101
- 3/24 and 3/31, 6-8 pm - FASD 101, parts 1 and 2 (need to attend both days)
- 5/12 and 5/19, 6-8 pm - FASD 201, parts 1 and 2 (need to attend both days)
- 6/9, 12-4 pm - FASD 101
- 8/11, 12-4 pm - FASD 101
- 9/8, 12-4 pm - FASD 201
- 10/6 and 10/13 - FASD 101, parts 1 and 2 (need to attend both days)
- 11/10, 12-4 pm - FASD 101



## Toddlers Need Playtime

"A child's job is to play" according to a University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh early childhood researcher. With recent mandates such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) parents may worry that their child is not spending enough time doing learning activities. "Swinging in the park, making cookies and building with blocks all promote learning in young children."

"Playing with children helps them stay interested in activities longer and gain a better understanding of their environment" according to Lenore Pechin Wineberg a professor in the college of Education and Human Resources.

In an international study of play and learning it was discovered that parents are not spending enough time playing with their children. "Due to the strong emphasis on academics at school, teachers have little time to play with the children."

Play based learning increases the child's ability to generalize skills and is meaningful and functional for the child. When children play they:



- Ⓢ increase their self-confidence
- Ⓢ expand their physical skills
- Ⓢ develop self-motivation and self-direction
- Ⓢ use language to express their own ideas
- Ⓢ learn cooperation and group values.

Here are some specific examples:

- Ⓢ Physical Play: develops positive attitudes towards exercise, physically challenges the child, achieves performance targets and develops healthy attitudes.
- Ⓢ Matching, Classifying and Measuring: believing in numbers, learning mathematical symbols, finding solutions, calculating risk, making predictions, and evaluating.
- Ⓢ Building with Blocks: explores alternative configurations, exploration, problem solving, investigation, and experimentation.

Children can be supported in play by:



- Ⓢ being provided with safe household items to play with.
- Ⓢ having the physical space for the play activity.
- Ⓢ being given enough time to remain in their play activity.
- Ⓢ role-modeling to encourage and extend ideas.

**Playing takes little time or money but can make difference in learning and development.**

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### REFERENCES

*University of WI-Oshkosh Magazine, Fall 2007, Vol. 5, No. 2*

*"The importance of play-based learning" from the Northern Territorial Government at [www.deet.nt.gov.au](http://www.deet.nt.gov.au)*

*"Play - - for Development and for Achieving Learning Outcomes" by Dale Shipley, [www.cfc-efc.ca/does/cccf/00005\\_en.htm](http://www.cfc-efc.ca/does/cccf/00005_en.htm)*

*"A Play based learning environment" by Mary Pye, [www.hants.gov.uk/childcare/fsj6aplaybasedlearningenvironment.html](http://www.hants.gov.uk/childcare/fsj6aplaybasedlearningenvironment.html)*



## What do you mean, IEP?

### PART 2

Last month we began a series to aid in the understanding of some of the forms and acronyms of special education. We began with the IEP and explained what is it, the parts of it and how it differs from the IFSP. This month we are continuing with that topic.

As you may recall the main parts of the IEP are the: Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, Measurable Goals and Objectives, Program Modifications and Adoptions, Special Education and Related Services, and Supports for School Personnel.

The Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance is commonly called either the PLAAFP or PLEP (Present Levels of Educational Performance). It describes the child's strengths, needs, concerns and overall functioning. This section sets up the rest of the document because it briefly describes the child. Here you will find such things as what he or she is good at, behavioral information and how he or she is doing in school. If this is your child's annual IEP you may see the results of their progress.

You may see scores from the progress report, what people have observed and the child's current level of functioning.

For preschoolers this section would include how the child participates in activities or socializes in the classroom. How does his or her disability impact the child's ability to learn, interact with others and access their educational environment?

Again, please understand that this article was intended to only give a brief understanding of what an IEP is as of how the law is written today. Special education has evolved over the years and continues to do so. Our hope is to make this journey easier for you.





## Blanket of Support



This year's special education conference will take place from February 18-20, 2008 at the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel. The theme is "Blanket of Support". Two strands that may be of particular interest to parents are an Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program and one on Autism. The Autism Strand is open to 100 seats. Another strand is Assistive Technology. This strand will provide information on a variety of hardware and software choices to improve learning.

Other sessions include:

- Top 10 Steps to Effective IEP Meetings: A Parent's Perspective
- Introduction to Down's Syndrome
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Silencing the Naysayers: Building a Blanket of Support Around People with ADHD
- A Parent's Guide to Positive Behavioral Support
- Collaborating with School Professionals to Support Your Child
- Can You Hear Me Now? Effective, Real-life Conflict Resolution Skills for Schools and Families

If you register by January 18, 2008 the cost is \$195 for the full conference. To attend for one day, excluding lunch will cost \$70. For more information or if you would like to register online you may do so by going to: [www.assec.org](http://www.assec.org)



## Helping Kids Succeed Alaskan Style: *Safety*

Parents and extended family can...

- Practice with your children what needs to be done in an emergency.
- Be an "askable parent" so your children learn they can tell you about things that concern them, especially issues of personal safety.

Have clear expectations for safe behavior (and consequences if they are not safe). Adjust expectations as children get older and show trustworthiness. Make sure your kids understand the connection between rules, their safety, and your love.



From:

*Alaska Ice: Initiative for Community Engagement*  
*Helping Kids Succeed – Alaskan Style*  
<http://www.alaskaice.org/>



## Activity Calendar

- Ⓢ **Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 12 noon to 1:00 pm:** Cuddlers Group. Sponsored by the Parenting with Providence program this group is designed for new parents to help them adjust to their role of being a parent and other topics. It takes place at the Providence Maternity Center. For more information contact Jennifer Aist at 261-3062.
- Ⓢ
- Ⓢ **1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays from 1:30 – 2:30 pm.:** Double Cuddles Group. This is for parents of multiples ages birth to 18 months. They talk about topics related to raising more than one baby at a time. No pre-registration or fees are required. Located at Providence Medical Center, Maternity Center Ed Room.
- Ⓢ
- Ⓢ **Wednesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 pm:** Becoming a Love and Logic Parent. The class is for parents of children of all ages. Located at the Health, Education and Wellness Center, Neon Bldg, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 4201 Tutor Center Dr.
- Ⓢ
- Ⓢ **The Last Wednesday of every month from 9:30 to 11:15 am.:** Mother's of Preschoolers. Mothers meet for encouragement, friendship and nurturing. Trinity Christian Reformed Church, 3000 E. 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. Need more information? Email [trinitycrc@acsalaska.net](mailto:trinitycrc@acsalaska.net) or call 272-8431.
- Ⓢ **Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, Monthly from 6:30 to 8:30 pm:** Autism Support Group. Anchor Park United Methodist Church, 2300 Oak Drive.
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- Ⓢ **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays from 10:00 am to Noon:** MOPS International (Mothers of Preschoolers). For all mothers of infants and children through age 5 (including moms to be) to come for education and support). Located at the Cornerstone Church of God, Women's Ministries. Contact Beth Hadsall at 753-3232 for more information.
- Ⓢ
- Ⓢ **2<sup>nd</sup> Fridays from 6-8:30 pm:** Autism and Asperger's Support Group. Sponsored by AYFN the meeting takes place at the AHFC Gateway Learning Center at the corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Karluk. To obtain more information you may emails AYFN at [ayfn@yafn.org](mailto:ayfn@yafn.org) or call 770-4979.
- Ⓢ
- Ⓢ **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays from 6-8:30 pm.:** AYFN Support Group for Parents and Youth. Discuss issues of children's behavioral health with other parents. Located at the Gateway Learning Center, 801 Karluck. To get more information contact Sandy at 770-4979.