

PRESCHOOL PRESS



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

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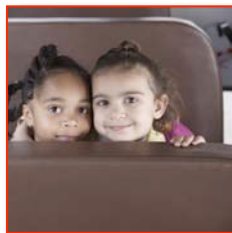
This publication is
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to subscribe contact:

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or call 742-3870.

Past copies of the
Preschool Press can be
found on:

[http://www.asdk12.org/
depts/step/](http://www.asdk12.org/depts/step/)

Readiness for Kindergarten



Many parents with a child in the Anchorage School District preschool program may have questions in the next few months as they prepare for their preschooler to enter Kindergarten. Here are some of the answers to questions you may have.

Q: I feel my child is not ready for kindergarten. Can my child stay in preschool for an extra year?

A: Preschool special education is a program for children ages 3-5 who are not yet eligible for kindergarten and who have disabilities requiring special education services. The preschool program offers activities, instruction and therapy designed to meet each child's goals and objectives on their IEP. Unless there is a unique special education reason that a child's educational program cannot be implemented in the elementary schools with special education and related services, then children who are 5 on or before September 1 enter the elementary education program.

Q: May I observe in the school my child will be attending in the fall?

A: Many schools have a kindergarten round-up (orientation) in the spring where parents and children are invited to visit the school and learn about the kindergarten program. You are encouraged to attend this event. Schools with alternative and optional programs often have a monthly visit date. For further information on kindergarten round-up, call the elementary school. Some schools announce their event in the newspaper.

Q: The elementary program will be new to us. If we have problems or questions, how can we get help?

A: Just like in the preschool program, it is usually best to share your concerns with your child's classroom teacher. If you need further help, you can always talk to the school principal. There are other people available who can help you with problems related to the special education aspect of your child's program:

- Early childhood & Elementary Special Education: 742-3886 (ask for the Special Education Teacher consultant for your school)
- Related Services: 742-6050,
- Student-Educator-Parent Center (STEP); 742-3872

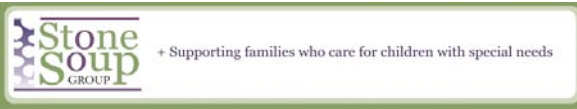
Q: Will my child still ride a bus to school?

Continued on page 4: Readiness for Kindergarten



Get Connected

Each month an agency from the community is being highlighted that may help you "Get Connected". Here is the one for this month:



Stone Soup Group is a statewide nonprofit agency based in Anchorage that provides assistance and support to families of children with special needs. They operate several programs, each with a specific focus on different ways to can help families support children with special needs to become informed, experienced, self-sufficient advocates for their children and themselves. There is no charge to families for the services provided.

Some of the services and programs are:

- * **Parent Navigation:** Experienced parents of children with special needs helping other parents "navigate" the system of resources, services, and education providing support along the way.
- * **Parent Training & Information (PTI) Center:** A resource for parents that coordinates training, information and resource distribution with other organizations across the state.
- * **Short Term Assistance & Referral (STAR):** Assistance for families of children in emergencies, rural families traveling for medical care, and support in crisis situations.
- * **Center for Training & Technical Assistance:** Education, training, and best practice advice for parents & professionals supporting children on a variety of topics. These topics may include IEP Development, Dispute Resolution, School-wide Positive Behavioral Support, and Building Collaborative Teams.
- * **FASD Family Support Project:** Resources, information, and support for parents raising children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.

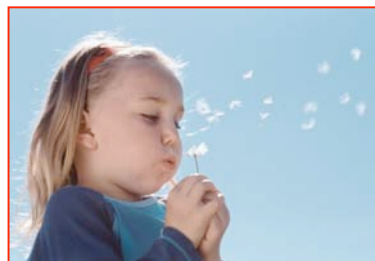
How to contact them:
 3350 Commercial Dr. #100
 Anchorage, AK 99501
 907-561-3701
 1-877-786-7327
www.stonesoupgroup.org

What Do You Mean, IEP?

Part 3 Over the last few months we have been writing about the IEP. This is another in that series.

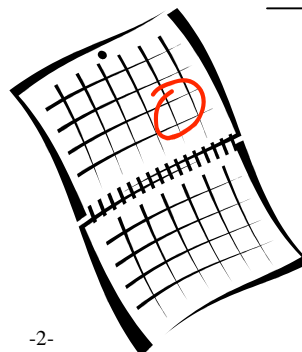
Measurable Goals and Objectives are written to meet the child's individual functional needs. They are based on the Alaska State Standards. Goals are what the team would like the child to achieve before the next Individual Education Plan (IEP) is written. They address what is important to the child's success. Objectives are the stepping-stones needed to have the goal achieved.

Other things may also be needed to help the child succeed. These "other things" are Program Modifications and Adaptations. They allow the child to participate more fully with their peers and demonstrate what he or she knows. In this section of the IEP you will find such things as if the child needs to work in a quiet environment or perhaps the print on the page needs to be larger. The list is not limited and really depends on the child's individual needs.



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.



Our last Preschool Press

will be in May. Look for information on summer programs and activities, important school dates, kindergarten registration and more.



Helping Kids Succeed Alaskan Style

Family Boundaries: Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the youth's whereabouts.

Parents and extended family can...



- Make sure you and your partner have the same rules for your kids and that you support each other in keeping them.
- Meet the parents of your children's friends before allowing your children to visit there.
- Put up with the chaos that can come from kids in your home, and make it a place that kids like to gather.

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

Time To fingerprint

Here is something you can do with your child while we thaw out from winter.

Fluffy Fingerprint

2/3 C soap flakes

1/3 C water coloring (food coloring or koolaid)

Whip with egg beater until fluffy.

Flour and Salt Fingerprint

1 C Flour

1½ tsp. salt

1 C water coloring

Combine flour and salt. Add water.

This paint has a grainy quality unlike the other finger paints providing a different sensory experience.

Goopy Fingerprint

½ C soap flakes

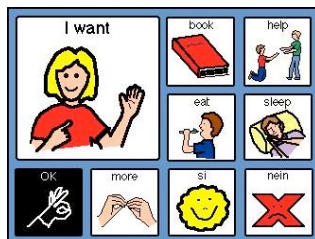
2 T. laundry starch

Coloring

Mix with water until thick and goopy.



BoardMaker for Parents



Boardmaker 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 has this program that parents can use if they want to create picture communication for home, community outings, vacations, etc. Please call Barb Loutrel at 742-3868 if you are interested.

Paper Trail Notebook

The Paper Trail Notebook is an organizational tool developed by Stone Soup Group that has helped thousands of families collect and maintain their children's medical records, resources they find, educational and therapy history, milestones, and more. It is currently available to families at no charge, and is recommended by hospitals, clinics, therapists, and providers across the state. They may also be purchased directly from Stone Soup Group.

Please call Stone Soup Group at 561-3701 or email them at: ssg@stonesoupgroup.org for more information.





Readiness for Kindergarten

Continued from page 1

Q: Will my child still ride a bus to school?

A: Many children who enter kindergarten will be in walking distance of their neighborhood school. Children who live within 1.5 miles from school ride the regular education bus. The bus stops at various locations in the neighborhood, but not in front of individual houses. Children will walk to and from the bus stop. In some cases, the district has identified hazardous routes, and a regular education bus may be provided in neighborhoods where the walking route has been determined as hazardous by the school district. Some children have physical, cognitive, or emotional problems that prohibit them from walking to school or riding the regular education bus. In these cases, the child's IEP team (teacher and related services staff) will document the problem that requires special education busing on the child's IEP (Individual Educational Plan) and then a special education bus will be provided. If your child will be walking to a regular education bus stop, or to and from school, you will want to spend some time with them this spring and summer teaching them the way to school and about traffic safety. You may want to walk with them the first couple of days. You might even consider getting together with your neighbors and arrange for other children to go to and from school with your child.

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.

1st and 3rd 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. For more information call 261-2945.

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, 2nd floor, 4201 Tutor Center Dr. This is sponsored by Southcentral Foundation, 729-2689.

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. 16th Ave. Need more information? Email trinitycrc@acsalaska.net or call 272-8431.

Every 2nd Wednesday, Monthly from 6:30 to 8:30 pm: **Autism Support Group**. Anchor Park United Methodist Church, 2300 Oak Drive. If you have any questions send an email to roark948@gci.net.

2nd and 4th Thursdays from 10:00 am to Noon: **MOPS International (Mothers of Preschoolers)**. For 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.

2nd 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 9th and Karluk. To obtain more information you may emails AYFN at ayfn@yafn.org or call 770-4979.

2nd and 4th 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 Karluk. To get more information contact Sandy at 770-4979.

April 12- May 17: **Adapted Aquatics Swim Lessons**. There will be 2 sections for preschoolers ages 3-5 at the East High School pool. The cost is \$24 for 6 lessons. For more information contact Amanda Beck Johnson at Parks and Rec by either calling her at 343-4247 or emailing her at BeckJohnsonAM@muni.org.

May 6 from 6-8:00 pm: **Early Childhood Transitions Presentation**. Stone Soup Group, 3350 Commercial Drive, Suite 100. For more information call 561-3701.