



# Kids Korner Connection

A newsletter from the Children's Division of ARC Broward, Inc.

Volume 1, Issue 2

## ARC Broward...Good to Great!

By Shawn Preston, Director of Children's Services

September, 2006

Did you know that ARC Broward is the county's oldest and largest provider of services and supports to children and adults with developmental and other disabilities and their families? This year we are thrilled to celebrate our fiftieth year! In the past few years, our children's division has grown leaps and bounds from a preschool with rehabilitation and education services for children ages birth to five to a large division made up of nine different programs providing an array of services and supports to about 800 children of all abilities, ages birth through 22 and their families.

Many of you know that the mission of ARC Broward is to **Enrich the Lives of People with disabilities**. We take great pride in how we do our jobs and so it is fitting that our Core Values use the letters in the acronym "PRIDE". We have a *passion* for what we do, *respect* for all of our stakeholders, *integrity* for how we do our jobs, a *drive* for excellence and an *entrepreneurial* spirit.

Recently we have launched an employee recognition program to reward team members for their fine work. Each employee has been given a core values "PRIDE" card. Whenever he/she is "caught" demonstrating one of the core values, he/she will earn the letter that corresponds with the value he/she displayed. When he/she has all of the letters spelling "PRIDE", he/she will receive a gift card and will be entered into our winner's circle for a chance to win our fabulous Grand Prize to take a complimentary cruise for two to a fantastic vacation destination. We are so proud to share that the first four employees to earn all of the letters spelling pride and receive gift cards of appreciation for demonstrating our core values in all that they do were ALL members of the Children's Division Team. Congratulations to Marcella Thomas, David DeHoff, Hugo Nevarez, and Sharon Richards for their outstanding commitment to a culture of caring and their fabulous performance!

Help us recognize the very well deserving team members who you see demonstrating passion, respect, integrity, drive and entrepreneurial spirit! When you catch them, tell us! We will proudly provide them with the praise and recognition that they deserve!

We are also proud of all of the hard work everyone at ARC Broward is doing toward the achievement our six strategic goals:

1. To become the Provider of Choice for people with disabilities, families, referral sources and the community at large
2. To develop financial stability so that we can be in control of our own destiny
3. To become the human service "Employer of Choice" in Broward County
4. To develop and increase awareness of ARC Broward within the community
5. To develop highly effective and efficient operating systems
6. To grow, maintain and practice great leadership

We believe that **GREATNESS** is not a destination, but a process; a journey that began fifty years ago in a storefront on Las Olas Boulevard, and one that we are thrilled to be a part of today and tomorrow! Help us continue on our path toward Greatness by continuing to share your ideas, recommendations, feedback and input! For us to become the provider of YOUR choice, we are committed to ongoing improvement of quality services and supports based on your measures of such!

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## Upcoming Special Events

☺ **September 18, 2006**  
ARC Broward - VISTA  
Community Drivers Golf  
Tournament pg 4

## Youth Links Proudly Announces...

By Blanca Onetto, Team Leader

ARC Broward's Youth Links program assists teens with developmental or other disabilities prepare for transition out of School into adulthood, provides active participation of "Transition Advocates" at IEP meetings for students; and mediation of certain grievances.

Students and Team Members from **ARC Broward's Youth Links** program appear on the show "**Teen Talk**" hosted by **Steven Goldstein** on **BECON** from **August 21, 2006 through September 20, 2006.**

Mondays 1:00 pm and 8:00 pm;  
Wednesdays 1:00 pm;  
Fridays 5:00 pm;  
Saturdays/Sundays 11:30 am and 9:00 pm.

### YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT!

Youth Links and ARC Broward also wish to congratulate all of our students who recently graduated from high school. They showed great perseverance and effort and, in doing so, achieved great successes! We also want to congratulate the following graduates who have recently started their first semester in college:

**Derrick Coleman** graduated from Nova High School and will attend the Computer Design Certificate program at Sheridan Technical Center.

**Allison Walters** graduated from Western High School and will attend the Associate of Arts program at Broward Community College.

**Ann Marie Bedard** graduated from Pembroke Pines Charter High School and will attend the Education BA degree program at Florida Atlantic University.

Congratulations also go to the following Youth Links program participants for successful participation in the **S.T.E.P.S.** pilot program sponsored by the Children's Services Council (CSC), which was a great success. This summer Workforce One, with funding and sponsorship by the CSC provided the opportunity to gain job skills and summer employment to 40 Broward teens with disabilities. Our students, Andrew Almeida, Karina Rodriguez, Lillian Rittberger and Raven Abdallah participated in this program and they had a great time working at different worksites including Memorial Regional Hospital, Broward School Board, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Broward Children's Center. What an invaluable experience!

**Youth Links** is funded by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners through its Children's Services Board/Administration and from private contributions.

For information about the Youth Links Program, please contact Blanca Onetto, Youth Links Team Leader at (954) 746-9400.

## IEP... by Jane Moreno, ESE Specialist

ARC/Broward is now using the Broward School Board's electronic management system-Easy IEP-for the preschool Individualized Education Plans. Because the Easy IEP is done on a laptop computer and projected onto a screen, parents are able to see their child's IEP as it is being developed instead of just getting a copy at the end of the meeting. Parents can follow along as the child's Present Level of Performance is being read and may add any additional skills or concerns as well. All parts of the IEP can be modified as the meeting progresses, making the document more meaningful and appropriate. If a child leaves ARC for another setting - for example, transitioning to kindergarten - the new school can access the IEP almost immediately. In addition, since therapists, administrators, social services, etc. can pull up the IEP, everyone who is on the child's team is able to access this document when needed.

What is the future of the electronic IEP? In the future, the State of Florida hopes to develop a statewide electronic IEP. If a family moves from one county in Florida to another, the new school system will be able to access the child's IEP immediately. What this will mean for our children will be consistent continuity of quality services.

## Did you Know

by Gretchen Clark, Coordinator of Education Services

### The Fun and Learning Never Ends Did you know...

- ✂ blowing bubbles strengthens the muscles used in speech
- ✂ playing Simon Says helps a child learn to pay attention to details and organize thoughts and movements to complete a task
- ✂ dressing oneself improves hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills (small muscle manipulation)
- ✂ making playdough ropes and cutting them into smaller pieces with scissors, strengthens hand muscles and scissor skills
- ✂ learning and practicing one's name, address, and telephone number works to improve memory
- ✂ completing dish and laundry chores reinforces sorting, matching and classification skills
- ✂ playing with jigsaw puzzles improves fine and visual motor skills
- ✂ playing "I spy" reinforces visual discrimination skills and listening skills

## Respite Services at ARC Broward

ARC Broward provides Respite Care services for children with Developmental Disabilities who have Autism or mild to moderate behavioral difficulties similar to those of children with Autism. Services are designed to provide brief, temporary care and supervision to children so that their parents or caregivers can take a much-needed break with the confidence that their children are safe and receiving the best care by trained professionals. Services are provided in both the family home and at the ARC Broward main campus. To be enrolled in this program, the child must be a client of Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) and be on the waiting list for Medicaid Wavier, and ARC Broward must receive a referral from APD (please ask them to send us one). When ARC Broward receives the referral, we will contact you right away to enroll. To become a client of APD, please call Gwen Reynolds, Intake Specialist at (954) 713-3263 or 713-3030 or go to Agency for Persons with Disabilities Office at 201 W. Broward Boulevard, Suite 306 (walk-ins are welcome).

At time of intake, bring:

- Child's psychological evaluation from school
- School reports
- Medical reports to document developmental disability
- Child's social security card
- Medicaid card
- Medicare card
- Birth Certificate
- Proof of Broward County Residency
- Guardianship papers, if applicable
- Other health insurance
- Voter's Registration Form

## Preschool Happenings by Gina Dupois

Welcome back to all of our children and families! Students have adjusted nicely to their new classrooms and teachers. Children have expressed their delight, through laughter and smiles, for their new positioning equipment. We have all enjoyed implementing the new *Play and Learn* curriculum. Each lesson includes ideas to help involve students at their level of capabilities. Our most recent activity, involving a parachute and a world beach ball, was a great success. Children, teachers and therapists sang together while enjoying a lesson of movement and fun. September's theme is "Welcome to School" and in October we will continue with the theme of "Fall Colors." Make sure to look out for a big yellow school bus made out of cardboard decorated by the children. Ask your child to sing the *Wheels on the Bus*, song. Throughout the year, we look forward to seeing parents involved in their child's education. We would like to be a resource for families in gaining information on parenting skills or other subjects in which you might be interested.

## Parent Corner

### My son's learning experience at ARC

by Elsie Garcia

As a full time mother putting my baby in Pre-K was extremely difficult. I really did not think that Randy, who was just 3 years and two months old at the time, needed to go to Pre-K. I figured that I was doing all the right things to help him reach his developmental milestones and that he did not need the social interaction with other kids and the structured learning that comes with attending a Pre-K classroom. I figured, he is with his cousins every weekend and that is enough for him to socially interact with other children. Well, I was in shock to see how wrong I was!

Randy started at ARC in January of this year and everyday he amazes me even more. Randy had been attending Occupational and Physical therapy since he was 4 months old and Speech Therapy since he was a year and a half. Even though he had been progressing and meeting the goals that were in place for him at the time, he was definitely lacking the benefits of social interaction. Since starting at ARC, Randy's vocabulary has increased dramatically. I sometimes hear him speaking in sentences and can't believe it. He sings songs to me, uses vocabulary in an appropriate manner; he has even learned to share! I remember one night we were driving home and when he got off the car, he looked up and said "look mommy, the moon". I had never taught him this so I knew he learned this from school. The following day I told his teacher and she showed me that she had a board up with "Our World" and there was a moon, sun, etc. Randy actually looks forward to attending school and has even learned the names of his classmates, teacher, teacher assistants and Nurse. He has also become much more independent as he has even learned to eat with a spoon. He has learned colors, he paints, and sits with me to read him a book. In conclusion, I am extremely thankful to everyone at ARC who participates in the well being, care and education of my son. I am very glad that I made this transition.





Parents As Teachers Program enjoys a fun day at the beach. For information about the Parents as Teachers Program contact Tonya Ricker at 954-577-4106

## Family Fun Day by Tonya Ricker

On August 26, Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, ARC Broward, and others sponsored a fun and informative day enjoyed by many Broward families! Parents learned about resources available for children with special needs and their families, while kids participated in a variety of exciting activities. ARC Broward's Parent As Teachers and Youth Links Programs provided many activities that were huge hits, including a sensory learning experience and fun with arts and crafts.

## Welcome Aboard!

Join us in welcoming our newest team members:

Blanca Bourgeois - Preschool Teacher Assistant

Catherine Chesla - Preschool Teacher

Mindy Chaimowitz - Preschool Teacher

Keya Lowe - ABLE Lead Instructor

Joan Mullings - ABLE Lead Instructor.

Angela Anderson - ABLE Behavior Assoc.

Hazel Williams - ABLE Behavior Assoc

Monica Frigoletto - Youth Links Transition Specialist

Andrea Davy- PAT Parent Educator

Beth Polsky - Mental Health Intern

Marc Rollenhagen - Mental Health Intern

### Children's Services

- Preschool
- After-School Program
- In-Home Services
- Respite Care
- Transition Support
- Behavioral Analysis
- Behavioral Assessment
- Summer 'Kamp Krayola'
- 'PAT' Parent Training
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech/Language Therapy
- Mental Health Counseling

### Adult Habilitation

- Supported Living
- Community Living
- Community Day program
- Center-Based Day Program
- Seniors Day Program
- Individualized Supports
- Transportation Services

### Workforce Development

- Community Employment
- Self-Employment
- Skills Development
- Culinary Arts
- Calypso Grill
- Electronics Recycling
- Landscaping Services
- Vehicle Washing

### Advocacy & Social Services

- Nursing Services
- Information and Referral
- Human Services Training Solutions



**ARC Broward**  
Achievement and Rehabilitation Centers, Inc.

**Enriching the Lives of People With disabilities since 1957**

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*At ARC Broward, we take **PRIDE** in all that we do...  
"We have a **Passion** for what we do, **Respect** for all of our stakeholders, **Integrity** for how we do our jobs, a **Drive** for excellence and an **Entrepreneurial** spirit."*

