

Fall 2005

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FALL NEWSLETTER

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T.G.I. FRIDAY'S SUPPORTS FAMILY ADVOCACY & COMMUNITY TRAINING

September 13th marked the Annual Bartender Championships at T.G.I. Friday's and once again Family Advocacy and Community Training was chosen as the beneficiary of this event. The evening featured Friday's bartenders showcasing their bottle flipping skills along with product knowledge. They presented a 10-12 minute routine in front of judges and a packed house. Sarah was the victor and will move on to compete in the regional championship competition. K.C. Adams, a local college student, gave a very moving speech. K.C. was born premature with Cerebral Palsy and he also has learning disabilities in reading and writing.

K.C.'s Mom, Jeanie Adams went to F.A.C.T. to learn how to advocate for K.C. He is now in his 4th year at Lindenwood University. K.C. says, "My college experiences have had their ups and downs, but I'm still here and I'm plugging away and I'm proud of my accomplishments." A big thanks to the employees, volunteers and a special thanks to Jennifer Zink-Cornell for making this event a huge success. With everyone's hard work we were able to raise more awareness about F.A.C.T. and the great ability of what people are able to do with community support. Look for more fundraisers coming soon on our website at www.factmo.org.





Focus on Asperger's Syndrome

Asperger's Syndrome is a term heard more and more often these days. It is sometimes called high-functioning autism because these kids show symptoms of Autism, but have more typical language and intelligence. A term many professionals use now is called "Spectrum Disorder". This refers to the "Autism Spectrum" from full blown Autism, to high-functioning Autism, to Asperger's Syndrome, to Pervasive Development Disorder, not otherwise specified (PDD, NOS).

What describes a child with Asperger's? Many of these kids have an obsessive interest in a single object or topic of interest. They want to know everything about their topic of interest and they talk about little else. Other characteristics include repetitive routines or rituals, peculiarities in the way they talk and an inability to interact successfully with others. They are often awkward and uncoordinated.

Some strategies used to help children with Asperger's cope with their disability focus on social and communication skills, teaching tasks as a series of simple steps and providing a highly structured predictable environment, with a positive reinforcement for behavior. With effective interventions, children with Asperger's Syndrome are able to live an independent life in mainstream society.

Karen Cooper-Advocate

Workshop Schedule

IEP Process-Oct. 27th
6:30-8:30 at the F.A.C.T. office

Communications Workshop
November 10th
6:30-8:30 at the F.A.C.T. office

Support Group Schedule

Parents of Children with
Developmental Disabilities
1st Wednesday of each month
7:00-8:30 PM at F.A.C.T.
This group will focus on family &
educational issues.

Parents of Children with ADHD
1st Thursday of each month
7:00-8:30 PM at F.A.C.T.
Parents of Children in the
Partnership with Families Program
(must receive PWF services)
3rd Tuesday of each month
6:00-8:00 PM at Crider Center

RSVP to 636.949.2425 ext. 14

Addressing Mental Health in Early Childhood Setting: The Role of Mental Health Consultation

This workshop explored concerns about children being expelled from preschool and successful strategies for the early childhood setting.

The role of a mental health consultant is to address factors that contribute to a child's difficulties functioning in an early childhood setting. They will observe the child's interactions with peers and teachers; then the consultant will meet parents and teachers to develop a plan to address the behavior. This plan is similar to an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for school age children.

When an effective plan is put into action it improves the child's social skills and behavior, which eliminates expulsions. It also reduces stress on parents and teachers and reduces staff turnover. St. Charles County has a similar program implemented by the Day Care Association.

Laura Bickford
Parent Partner



Special Needs Trust



Arranging for the financial security of a child is a critical issue faced by families of individuals with disabilities. Families often struggle to figure out the best method to assure that their son or daughter has sufficient financial resources to live a comfortable life. Of special concern to parents is how to arrange for financial security after the parents' death. Parents realize that it is important both to protect SSI and Medicaid and to have funds set aside to supplement income from benefits. In many situations, a special needs trust is the best solution. The purpose of a special needs trust is to enable assets (cash, property or securities) to be held for a person with a disability. SSI recipients are allowed to have such assets. With a properly structured special needs trust, SSI eligibility is not affected so long as the recipient has no control over distributions from the trust and so long as the funds are used in accordance with SSI regulations. Special needs trusts were first created in the early 1970's by families trying to figure out the best method to assure that their son/daughter had sufficient financial resources to live a comfortable life. Shortly thereafter, the Social Security Administration (SSA) established regulations for special needs trusts. By definition, a special needs trust is a trust established for the benefit of a person with a disability. Special needs trusts are important for persons with disabilities because trusts which meet SSA regulations are not counted as a resource for determination of eligibility for SSI or Medicaid. Funds from the trust can be used to supplement income from SSI and Medicaid. Funds can be used to meet medical and personal needs not covered by benefits. A trust can be established during the donor's lifetime (Living Trust) or may be established at the death of the donor by his or her will (Testamentary Trust). For more information visit the Missouri Family Trust website at: www.missourifamilytrust.org or call toll free 888.671.1069.

2006 Dinner Auction

April 29th, 2006 marks the 11th Annual F.A.C.T. Dinner Auction. The event will be held at Stegton Regency Banquet Center. Last year's event was a huge success and the community support was overwhelming. This event will sell out, so make sure you save the date. We look forward to seeing new faces in 2006!!



"Music of Our Hearts"

Have you always wanted to sing on stage? Well, on November 5th, 2005 will be your chance to feel like a star. Come out to Brewskeez in O'Fallon off of Hwy. K. The event will begin at 6:00 p.m. and will include a performance contest, raffle, pot of gold and silent auction. For more information please call Jennifer Brooks at 636.949.2425 ext. 13





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St. Charles, MO 63301

The mission of Family Advocacy & Community Training is to enhance the opportunities and quality of life for children and youth with disabilities.

Consider making a difference in the life of a child with disabilities by making your tax deductible contribution to:

F.A.C.T.
2260 Bluestone Drive
St. Charles, MO 63303

F.A.C.T. is funded by the Developmental Disabilities Resource Board and The Children and Family Services Authority Board of St. Charles County



Executive Director's Corner

There are a special group of people who volunteer as board members of F.A.C.T. They give very generously of their time, talents and expertise. As the agency has grown over the last several years, so has our Board of Directors. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to and tell you a bit about each one of them. Frank Conard is our Board President; he is an attorney in private practice here in St. Charles County and he and his wife Kathy have had a major impact on successful fundraising for the agency. Susan Leonard joined the Board of Directors this year; she is the Director of Marketing for CenturyTel. Susan's expertise in marketing has been a much needed strength. She is also a big part of the success of the Annual Dinner. Larry Bagsby is also an attorney in St. Charles County; Larry is very passionate about human and civil rights and we are lucky to have his talents. Joan Bates has been on the Board of Directors for many years and provides a much needed perspective on history for the board. She is also the co-owner of a business-Learning Consultants and has very natural skills and a vast amount of experience in the field of disabilities. Karen Bynum is a parent of a child with disabilities and her balance and insight is extremely important. Lynne Schroeder, is in Organizational Development at SSM Information Center. Lynne is the parent of a child with disabilities as well. Her expertise in change management has been and will continue to be vitally important as the agency continues to grow and change. Midge Smith was a teacher and has recently retired from helping in the family business to take a well deserved break to be the wedding planner for her two daughters. Jen Zink-Cornell is a bartender at T.G.I. Friday's and has been a big supporter of the agency and its mission for years. The last two years she has facilitated F.A.C.T. receiving ALL of the fundraising dollars from the local-annual T.G.I. Friday's Bar Championship event. Robin Kohler is a Sr. Decision Support Analyst for SSM-St. Joseph's Health Center and also a parent of a child with disabilities. She has a very strong financial background that is very valuable to us. I just want to thank each one of the Board of Directors for their committment, passion and gift of time and talent. We couldn't do it without you!

Denise Gould