



Winter Newsletter

F.A.C.T. Staff & Board

Putting Kids First, Proposition One PASSED!

A huge thank you to all of you. With your support Proposition One "Putting Kids First" passed. This revenue (1/8 cent sales tax) will support the ongoing efforts of many agencies in the county who are providing services. Services include: a comprehensive school based prevention initiative that teaches life skills and promotes healthy lifestyles; wrap around family support, temporary shelter for the abused/neglected, homeless or mentally ill; alcohol and drug abuse treatment, counseling services, psychiatric treatment and crisis intervention. The funds will be managed and audited by a volunteer board—The Children and Family Services Authority Board of St. Charles County. St. Charles County is vastly outgrowing the services that were available to the children in our area as confirmed by a 2004 study of the needs of children and youth in the county. The percentage of dollars the State allocates to the Department of Mental Health has dropped in the last 14 years while our population has grown. This important money will help to fill those gaps in service and protect our children in St. Charles County. Thank you again for all you do.

Welcome to F.A.C.T., Brenda



As the newest kid on the block, I came to F.A.C.T. in awe of the services provided to the community. I am the mother of 4 beautiful blessings. All of them special but two of which have special needs. My oldest son was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder when he was in 4th grade. While, my middle son was undergoing an evaluation which determined he is dyslexic. My journey with them through the school system and societal understanding taught me my greatest life lessons. Through all of my children, I found my passion for working with and for children. After obtaining my degree in Early Childhood Development, I was employed by the Special School District of St. Louis County for 7 1/2 years. I accepted a position with the Internal Revenue Service and gave my best to acclimate to the corporate world. After "9-11", I re-assessed my values and returned to my passion of working with children. Gaining employment with the Head Start Program as a Lead Teacher then promoted to Site Coordinator the next year. Seeing the need for funding in programs for youth I ventured out with the support of family and close friends and started FOI (Family Oriented Industries) a company that coordinated fundraising events. Due to a faltering economy and overwhelming need for funding sources the demand for services far exceeded expectations. Overworked and burning out I opened a job search engine on the internet and there was an ad for an advocate at an organization called F.A.C.T. The rest is obvious and I am exactly where I belong, where my passion lies; working with and for our future by advocating for today's youth.

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Admin. Assistants

Jeannie Adams

Jennifer Brooks

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F.A.C.T.'s Fundraisers

T.G.I. Friday's Bar Olympics

F.A.C.T. would like to thank everyone at T.G.I. Friday's for all of their hard work! K.C. Adams did a wonderful job speaking to the crowd about his disability and how F.A.C.T. has helped him to advocate for himself. Jeannie and Jennifer worked tirelessly to sell raffle tickets to the very packed restaurant. With everyone's hard work and dedication we raised nearly \$4,000! A big thanks again to everyone involved in the event. Also, a huge thanks to Jen Zink-Cornell for heading up this event and ensuring its success.

"Music of Our Hearts" Karaoke Event

If you missed this event, make sure you don't miss it next year! The evening was a huge success and everyone in attendance had a such a great time! We had several live auction items that created excitement in the crowd and also helped to raise extra dollars for the agency. We hope to make this event successful again next year on a much larger scale. F.A.C.T. would like to thank Andy and Donna Garrett for volunteering their talents for the evening. Andy lent his voice to make the live auction a huge success! Donna worked the crowd with her outgoing personality. Also, a big thanks to Rudge Gilman, Kokomo's owner, for helping this event to be a success.

Dinner Auction

F.A.C.T.'s 10th Annual Dinner Auction will take place on April 16, from 7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m., at Stegton Banquet Center in St. Charles. The theme for the event this year is the "Roaring 20's". Tickets will be sold for \$75.00 per person or \$600.00 per table of 10. However, if you purchase tickets before April 1, 2005 you will receive a discount; \$60.00 per person or \$500.00 per table. There are various sponsorship levels, if you would like more information, please call Jennifer Brooks @ 636.949.2425 ext. 13.

NO HUNGER HOLIDAY

F.A.C.T.'s board president, Frank Conard, is also a member of Harvester Knights of Columbus. Frank and his wife, Kathy, started the No Hunger Holiday event several years ago. This season he and several hundred volunteers helped to assemble 1,301 Thanksgiving dinners for families in St. Charles County. Of those families, 32 of them are in the PWF program here at F.A.C.T. We would like to send out a special thank you to Frank, Kathy and all of those who helped this event to be successful. This effort allows families in need the opportunity to make Thanksgiving dinner in their homes with their families. If you would like to volunteer or donate a turkey next year, please call Jeannie Adams @ 636.949.2425 ext. 14.

ADOPT-A-FAMILY

Sts. Joachim and Ann Care Services hosts "Adopt-A-Family Program for the holidays. Hundreds of volunteers receive wish lists from families in need and they try to make all of their wishes come true. This program allowed 38 of our Partnership with Families to receive wonderful gifts for their families to open on the holiday. For families who do not meet the deadline or become a customer after the deadline is past; F.A.C.T. attempts to find other community supports to fill that need. If you would like to adopt a family or participate in other ways, please call F.A.C.T. @ 636.949.2425 ext. 14 and speak to Jeannie Adams to be added to the call list for next year.

F.A.C.T. Workshop Schedule

Day Workshops

IEP PROCESS-Thursday, January 13
9:00-11:00 a.m.

Evening Workshops

Basic Rights-Tuesday, January 11
6:30-8:30 p.m.

IEP PROCESS-Wednesday, January 19
6:30-8:30

Communications-Thursday, January 27
6:30-8:30 p.m.

ALL WORKSHOPS ARE AT THE F.A.C.T. OFFICE (UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE) MORE WORKSHOPS WILL BE SCHEDULED SOON; CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES.

WWW.FACTMO.ORG

To sign up for workshops please call 636.949.2425 ext. 14

FOCUS: Developmental Disabilities Support Group-1st Wednesday of the month at the F.A.C.T. office.

FOCUS: ADD/ADHD Support Group-7:00-8:30; 1st Thursday of the month at St. Joseph's Health Center

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN-A Basic Overview

Schools are halfway through the 2004-2005 school year and those of you who have a school-age child with a developmental disability may be anxious about how successful the school year will be for your child. Having a sound IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) can minimize your anxieties and set the stage for measurable progress of your child. Understanding the law surrounding the IEP can be confusing, but let's look at the basics of what you need to accomplish when developing an IEP **that provides accountability.**

IEP TEAM

The IEP team meets at least once a year to develop a new plan. The team should consist of the following individuals:

- You, the parent or guardian. You are the expert on your child. You know your child best. Therefore, your contributions to discussions about your child's education are vital.
- A representative of the public agency who: (a) is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities; (b) is knowledgeable about the general curriculum; and (c) is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency and has **the authority to commit the district resources needed to implement the IEP.**
- At least one of your child's regular education teachers (if your child is, or may be participating in the regular education environment).
- At least one of your child's special education teachers, or, if appropriate, at least one of your child's special education providers.
- At the discretion of the parent or agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding your child.

Present Levels of Performance

If it is an initial IEP, the meeting begins with your child's present levels of performance. If not, it should begin by reviewing and discussing the previous goals and objectives, progress or lack of progress obtained. This should give you a baseline or basis for writing the new IEP. The Present Level of Performance (PLP) is a narrative summary of the child's current functioning in the areas of cognitive skills, language, social/emotional, vision/hearing, mobility, academic skills and adaptive behavior. This information may come from a variety of sources. It may come from observations by people who know your child well especially the parents, test results, formal and/or informal. It should include a summary of the most recent evaluation/re-evaluation results as well as a summary of the results of the child's performance on any general state and district-wide assessments. Also included are the child's strengths and the concerns that the parent has for enhancing the education of the child. There should be an explanation of how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum. The PLP should indicate any changes in current functioning since the child's initial or previous IEP.

GOALS

The areas of need identified by the present level should be the baseline for developing measurable annual goals (outcomes). The goals should be a reasonable expectation of what the team believes the child can accomplish by the end date of the IEP.

The parent should clearly understand how the goals will be objectively measured.

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES

A short-term objective is a measurable intermediate step towards meeting the annual goal. They specify logically ordered intermediate skills that will help the student move from his/her current level of skill in this area to reach the annual goal. It should include the criteria that will be used to determine if that short-term objective has been met.

BENCHMARKS

The difference between objectives and benchmarks can be confusing for parents and other team members. Benchmarks are measurable milestones that describe the amount of progress the child is expected to make within specified segments of the year. Generally, benchmarks establish expected performance levels that allow for regular checks of progress that coincide with the reporting periods for informing parents of their child's progress toward achieving the annual goals. IEP teams are allowed to use either short-term objectives or benchmarks or a combination of the two depending on the nature of the annual goals and the needs of the child.

In addition to the above, an IEP that meets state and local education agency standards must also indicate any needs in the following areas:

- Post-secondary transition statement (for students 14 years and older)
- Visual Impairments
- Hearing Impairments
- Any behaviors that impede his/her learning or that of others
- English proficiency
- Any communication needs
- Assistive technology device (s)/services
- Extended School Year
- Participation in regular education
- Participation in physical education
- Participation in program options-non-academics and extra-curricular activities
- Transfer of rights (one year before student turns 18)
- State Assessments
- District wide assessments
- Supplementary Aids/Services
- Type and frequency of Special Education Services
- Related Services
- Modifications and Accommodations
- Supports for school personnel
- Transportation
- How progress will be reported
- Placement considerations and decision

**To enhance the opportunities
and quality of life for
children and youth with
disabilities.**

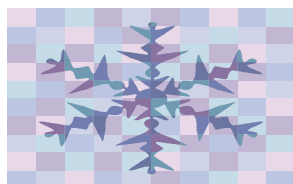


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Executive Director's Corner

The Holidays are here; that means the New Year is right around the corner. The agency is also getting ready to start a "new" plan cycle. Our 3 year strategic plan process will begin again this year. We will be calling on our customers to get feedback from you on how we are doing and what we can do better. I encourage you to participate in this exciting and important process. As in many things in life, it is important to reflect on what has gone well and what challenges we haven't met yet. This will be critical when we consider what we will need in terms of resources to meet any upcoming changes. Along with our customers we will be inviting other key stakeholders to share their input with us. We will utilize several methods of gathering information but one of them will be through our website, so be sure to check it often. We are also making our newsletter available on line—www.factmo.org.

I am excited that we will be able to explore new opportunities together for the agency in the year ahead. Happy Holidays!

Denise Gould
Executive Director