

# Parent Center, Ink

Fall 08 ♦

Volume 2, Issue 1



Long Island Parent Center



## Parent Center News

Welcome to the year of change! In this our Fall/Winter newsletter, the activities of the LIPC echo those of our country with change and new beginnings. The summer brought some time to reflect, catch up and plan for our staff, but also for changes within. Keri Larsen, our Bilingual Technical Assistant, has left to pursue her career as a teacher in a neighboring district. We have created a new position at the LIPC, the Parent Support Liaison, and it has been filled with Mrs. Yvonne Sinisgalli, a former teacher for the New York City Public Schools. Yvonne is bilingual as well, and understands the demands of educators in challenging systems, as well as what it means to be a parent of a child with special needs on Long Island. Yvonne will be assisting the parents who call us for information and support on a part-time basis. We welcomed her with open arms in the early fall.

In an Administrative Assistant position, we are thrilled to have Ms. Claudia Parker with us on a full time basis. Claudia has extensive experience in customer service in the banking industry and will be staffing our office and handling our budgetary concerns, information database and office management.

Janice Anderson-Small maintains her position as Outreach Coordinator, and we couldn't do without her. She travels far and wide to attend community events, organizes our newsletter, press releases, and mailing lists and attends district meetings to broaden our scope to all of Long Island. We have a full

calendar of community events lined up through early winter.

Helene Fallon continues as our Training/Networking Coordinator and travels extensively to provide training, information and support to districts, families and professionals on a wide variety of issues. She wears many hats and has now developed further opportunities for services and links through other agencies, sorely needed for families and children with special needs, on the east end of Long Island. Our training program is packed with interesting workshops in both our Lindenhurst and Freeport offices.

Change is happening at the state level, with the new mandated forms, letters and IEP documents being released for comment and feedback. These new forms are available for review on the NYSED website though public comment has now closed as of November 24<sup>th</sup>.

As always, do not hesitate to contact the LIPC with your own ideas of how we can evolve and develop our training program to meet your needs, whether for families and/or professionals.



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### Upcoming Events

- ♦ 12/2/2008 The Next Steps: Transition Services
- ♦ 12/4/08 Special Ed. 101-12/9/2008-Freeport
- ♦ 12/16/08 Next LIPC Advisory Board Meeting
- ♦ 3/28/2008 2nd Annual Camp and Recreational Activities Fair



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We're on the  
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[Liparentcenter.com](http://Liparentcenter.com)  
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*"... To enhance  
the ability of  
parents to  
collaborate with  
school districts  
and ensure access  
to appropriate  
services."*

We are members of  
the NASET website  
[www.naset.org](http://www.naset.org)

## From the Desk of...

Helene Fallon, Networking/ Training Coordinator

### East Endless Summer Event

The Long Island Parent Center actively participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Surfers Healing event this past September on the beautiful beaches of Montauk, NY. The day was windy and the waves brought 120 surfers bundled in wet suits, 70 volunteers and another 150 spectators on the beach. Surfers Healing is an organization that brings children with autism and developmental disabilities together to safely feel the power of the surf and the healing that comes with it. Later on that evening LIFT (Long Island Families Together) and LICoP (Long Island Communities of Practice) helped a committee of local residents host a fund raising event featuring Jimmy Buffet. Although it was very wet; the evening came with many

smiles and much success; a great time was had by all. The funds raised by this event will make it possible for us to maintain year round, inclusive, recreational, art and music programs for children on the eastern end of Long Island. For future events and programs you may visit [www.LICoP.org](http://www.LICoP.org)



### Yvonne Sinisgalli, Parent Support Liasion

I would like to take this opportunity to say how excited I am to be a part of the LIPC team. Before coming to the Long Island Parent Center, I was an educator with the NYC Board of Education. For the last several years I have been actively involved within the Special Needs Community. Having a child with special needs has offered me the unique opportunities to participate and organize community activities. I currently facilitate a discussion group for parents of special needs children and am on a Special Needs Ministry for our local church. It can be a challenging experience raising a child with special needs and finding creative ways to integrate community

and recreational opportunities for our families. Through this ministry we have created a special needs mass and respite program using a "best buddies" approach. I have been inspired and motivated by other parents through their positive examples and will to help their children.

I am here to answer and resolve a wide variety of issues related to the educational process. My aim is to provide parents with the information they need to effectively communicate with their school. Please feel free to call or email me directly at [ysinisgalli@optonline.net](mailto:ysinisgalli@optonline.net). I look forward to hearing you.

## Featured Agency

### Down Syndrome Advocacy Foundation

The Down Syndrome Advocacy Foundation is a non-profit organization founded by a group of families who were concerned regarding the lack of options offered to their children with Down syndrome. Only 8 short years ago, with few exceptions, children with Down syndrome who resided in Nassau and Suffolk Counties were immediately placed in segregated classes at the age of three and remained in segregated educational placement until they were 21 years of age. These families would not accept a life of segregation for their children and that's when the Down Syndrome Advocacy foundation was formed.

Since its inception in 2003, the Down Syndrome Advocacy Foundation has changed the course of lives for children with Down syndrome on Long Island. Not only does DSAF empower families, but they also extend an enormous amount of resources educating early interventionists, school personnel, and the community at large. DSAF has monthly meetings, an

annual conference co-sponsored with Long Island University, as well as a grant project that provides free training to families and professionals. DSAF is also the recipients of a grant that supports preschoolers with developmental disabilities in community preschools.

Because of DSAF, the future of a child with Down syndrome who resides on Long Island is vastly different than it was only 5 years ago. No longer are children with Down syndrome routinely sent to separate classes in schools other than the one their siblings and neighbors attend. No longer are they routinely placed on a bus early in the morning, taken out of their community and then returned in the late afternoon. Instead, they are living the lives they would have led had then not had a disability. A life in the community, with natural supports, and relationships that will last through adulthood.

For more information contact DSAF  
<http://www.dsafonline.org/>

## Upcoming Events

The LIPC staff provides trainings on a number of topics and issues regarding children and special education. Past trainings have focused on reading tips, special education and navigating through the world of special needs.

Upcoming trainings are scheduled for

**The Next Steps: Transition Services**  
 12/2/08 9:30am-12:30pm

**Transition 101-12/4/08 10am-12pm**

**Special Ed. 101-12/9/2008-Freeport**

**LIPC Advisory Board Meeting- 12/16/08**  
 Speaker, Donna Morrison, from Just Kids Autism Program.

Interested in being on the LIPC Advisory Board? Call for more info.

Please call for more information

regarding the content of these trainings.

Our staff will also be in your community for local events.

Check our website for further updates as we are continuously adding events to our community outreach calendar!

In addition to the above listed dates, there is much training that we offer at many and various locations and on different topics. Most are open to the public.

Please contact us if you would like to attend one of our offsite trainings or would like to schedule one of your own. In addition if you contact us @ [lipc1@optonline.net](mailto:lipc1@optonline.net) and send a request to be added to our e-mail list you will receive notices of our trainings and electronic copies of our newsletter.

### YOU ARE INVITED!

**National Community of Practice on Schools and Mental Health - Family Partnerships**; this is an U.S. Office of Special Education initiative facilitated by the IDEA Partnership. As you all know parent/family involvement is key to our children's success in schools.

Learn more by visiting the website [www.sharedwork.org](http://www.sharedwork.org) and clicking on Schools and Mental Health and then Family Partnerships. Or contact us @ [hafallon@optonline.net](mailto:hafallon@optonline.net)

**NYS Learning Community on Family and School Collaboration.** This Community of Practice is funded through the IDEA Partnership, an OSEP initiative. The group focuses on best practices and policies concerning parent involvement in our schools.

Learn more about this group on the website [www.systemschange.syr.edu/forums](http://www.systemschange.syr.edu/forums) and clicking on Learning Communities. Or contact us @ [hafallon@optonline.net](mailto:hafallon@optonline.net)

**GET INVOLVED ON BOTH STATE AND NATIONAL LEVELS...MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!**



*...to help  
parents and  
professionals get  
services that meet  
the needs of their  
children with  
disabilities...*

## 8 Frequently Used Acronyms

### English

AIS- Academic Intervention Services  
 BOCES-Board of Cooperative Educational Services  
 BETAC-Bilingual Education and Technical Assistance Centers  
 ESL-English as a Second Language  
 LEP-Limited English Proficiency  
 OHI-Other Health Impaired  
 RTI-Response to Intervention  
 SWD-Student with Disability

### Spanish

AIS- Servicios de intervención académica  
 BOCES-Borde de Servicios Educativos Cooperativa  
 BETAC-Centro de Asistencia Técnica Educación bilingüe  
 ESL-Inglés como segundo idioma  
 LEP- Proficiencia limitada en ingles  
 OHI- Otros problemas de salud  
 RTI-Respuesta a la intervención  
 SWD- Estudiante con discapacidad

## Response to Intervention (RTI)

Simply, "Response to Intervention" refers to a process that emphasizes how well students respond to changes in instruction. The essential elements of an RTI approach are: the provision of scientific, research-based instruction and interventions in general education; monitoring and measurement of student progress in response to the instruction and interventions; and use of these measures of student progress to shape instruction and make educational decisions. A number of leading national organizations and coalition groups, including the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities and the 14 organizations forming the 2004 Learning Disabilities (LD) Roundtable coalition, have outlined the core features of an RTI process as follows:

- ❖ High quality, research-based instruction and behavioral support in general education.
- ❖ Universal (school-wide or district-wide) screening of academics and behavior in order to determine which students need closer monitoring or additional interventions.
- ❖ Multiple tiers of increasingly intense scientific, research-based interventions that are matched to student need.
- ❖ Use of a collaborative approach by school staff for development, implementation, and monitoring of the intervention process.
- ❖ Continuous monitoring of student progress during the interventions, using objective information to determine if students are meeting goals.
- ❖ Follow-up measures providing information that the intervention was implemented as intended and with appropriate consistency.
- ❖ Documentation of parent involvement throughout the process.
- ❖ Documentation that the special education evaluation timelines specified in IDEA 2004 and in the state regulations are followed unless both the parents and the school team agree to an extension.

Excerpted from Mary Beth Klotz, PhD, NCSP, and Andrea Canter, PhD, NCSP  
 National Association of School Psychologists  
 To read this article in full, please go to [www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org)