



Parents as Partners

St. Johns Technical High School News

St. Johns Technical High students participated in a year of experiences during the 2012-2013 school year to better prepare them for the workforce. Students started the year interning (volunteering) at Southern Horticulture. They were able to spend every Wednesday morning for 12 weeks learning how to work at a plant nursery. Their duties included weeding, watering, organization, general care and upkeep for the very busy property.

Following the plant nursery, the next venture was at Publix. Publix allowed students to utilize their current training videos in helping them better understand

what it looks like and feels like to work at a grocery store. They practiced bagging groceries, managing the register, and also learned where items were located throughout the store.

Many employers look for community-experience for new hires. With this in mind, students ended their last 9 weeks volunteering at the St. Francis House. This was a great time to not only give back, but to learn organizational skills such as stocking both food and clothes for the homeless of St. Johns County.

Students also had the opportunity to job shadow. The goal of the class was to

expose students to a wide variety of potential jobs while learning from local business owners what it takes to be successful in the workforce. Other job sites visited were: Chick-Fil-A, The Fountain of Youth, Atlantic Automotive, Flagler Hospital, Longhorn Steakhouse, and Barnes Farms.

The year was a true success. Students were able to go into the local community and connect with real people that hire for real jobs. The highlight of the St. Johns Technical High School CBVI program enabled one student to be hired part-time at Publix. Great Job!

Contributed by: Cynthia Williams,
Assistant Principal, SJTHS

St. Johns County School
District—ESE Dept.

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September, 2013



The Jan LaBelle Scholarship Program

The Jan La Belle Scholarship Program was established in 2009 to provide a financial resource to individuals with disabilities who desire to pursue their personal and career goals through attendance at a postsecondary institution.

The 2014 application process begins September 15 and continues until November 15, 2013. One or more Jan La Belle Scholarship winners are selected annually for a total possible non-renewable award of up to \$15,000.

Visit www.fndusa.org/scholarship for more information.

Applicant must be an individual with a disability, be a Florida resident and be 16-24 years of age who is entering as a first time student at any institution of higher learning.

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Ketterlinus Elementary School News

At Ketterlinus Elementary School, our ESE students have the opportunity to participate in a wide-range of settings. Our gifted students are served in gifted-blended classes with teachers skilled in meeting their special needs. Our students with disabilities are included in general education classrooms and our ESE teachers provide the special instruction they need either in the regular classroom or in small groups based on their individual needs. We are especially proud of our behavior unit. Students in this program are often extremely intelligent yet need self-monitoring skills to help them in control their emotions. These students follow a very comprehensive leveled point system that increases their self-regulation and responsibility. As students progress from the most restrictive to the least restrictive levels, they gain a sense of self-confidence to manage more responsibilities and expectations. It is a delight to see students become more self-confident and effectively manage peer and authority interactions. As students become more independent, they increase their presence throughout our school to include enrollment in regular classrooms.

Contributed by: Jim Roberts,
Assistant Principal, Ketterlinus



IEP Coach

Theresa Crowe is an IEP Coach for Central Florida Parent Center. Theresa's goal is to work with families to help them understand and navigate the IEP process, enabling them to become successful participants in their child's Individualized Education Plan. Contact Theresa at Theresa@cflparents.org for more information!

Central Florida Parent Center is a nonprofit organization that provides assistance to parents of children with disabilities or special education needs. Our Center receives funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs for its AWARE project, a Parent Training and Information Center (PTI).

The AWARE project serves 30 counties in central and northeast Florida. AWARE's purpose is to ensure that parents of children with disabilities and young adults with disabilities will receive training and information on their rights, responsibilities, and protections under IDEA in order to develop the skills necessary to cooperatively and effectively participate in planning and decision-making relating to early intervention, educational, and transitional services.

The Aware Project provides interactive presentations, one-on-one assistance and support, opportunities for peer-to-peer support, information and resources, and a user friendly website, www.CFLparents.org.

Disability History and Awareness Weeks

The first two weeks of October are Disability History and Awareness Weeks! [Section 1003.4205](#), Florida Statutes, entitled *Disability History and Awareness Instruction*, was signed into law in 2008. It requires school districts to designate the first two weeks of October as Disability History and Awareness Weeks and also promotes providing instruction for students in all public schools to expand student knowledge, understanding, and awareness of individuals with disabilities, disability history and the disability rights movement.

Florida started the first special education class in 1926 in Jacksonville. Since 1926, specially designed instruction and related services have expanded throughout Florida. Now, approximately 352,000 students identified with disabilities are participating in Florida's public education system and are graduating and going on to postsecondary education or employment. St. Johns County School District serves approximately 4,400 students with disabilities.

We are proud to participate in promoting awareness of disability history and the contributions of individuals with disabilities and to designate the first two weeks in October of every year as Disability History and Awareness. We invite you to attend our October 8 Board meeting to view artwork created by our students with disabilities.

Florida Department of Education-Exceptional Education and Student Services. *Disability History and Awareness: A Resource Guide*. Retrieved from <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/history.asp>



David Beckham (1975-)—David suffers from OCD and it manifests itself through constant cleanliness and perfection of all that is around him. Anything out of order is enough to cause a conflict and must be attended to immediately.

Examples of this complete order is that everything must be in pairs, if there are three books on a table one must be added, or one must be removed. Only 2% of the population suffer from this strong OCD.

http://www.disabled-world.com/artman/publish/article_0060.shtml

ESE Parent Advisory Committee Meeting

40 Orange Street—3rd Floor Auditorium

October 17, 2013

February 27, 2014

6:00 pm—8:00 pm

The purpose of the Parent Advisory Committee is to identify barriers experienced by exceptional students and their families. This information is then shared with those who can effect changes (administration at schools and Exceptional Student Education staff at the district level). A copy is also provided to those who attend the meeting. If you need special accommodations, please contact Nancy Morrison (547-7672) one week prior to the meeting. The District contact for the Parent Advisory Committee is George Freeman (547-7704).

Parent Resources

- St. Johns County School District—ESE Dept.—
www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/depts/ease
- Central Florida Parent Center—www.cflparents.org
 - FDLRS/NEFEC—www.fdlrs.com
 - Family Network on Disabilities—www.fndfl.org
 - Exceptional Parent Magazine—www.eparent.com
 - Family Café—www.familycafe.net

The Florida Atlantic University CARD has a variety of excellent tutorials available for online viewing. Topics range from *Toilet Training, Behavior Basics*, and *Using Visual Supports in the Home* to *Developing Leisure Skills* and *Enhancing Engagement in Science*. You can access the full list of tutorials from the CARD FAU website at <http://www.coe.fau.edu/centersandprograms/card/tutorials.aspx>.

The Exceptional Advocate is a newsletter for military families with special needs. Visit <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp/news> for more information.

The UnitedHealthcare Children's Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity dedicated to facilitating access to medical-related services that have the potential to significantly enhance either the clinical condition or the quality of life of a child and that is not fully covered by an available commercial health benefit plan. This "support" is in the form of a medical grant to be used for medical services not covered or not completely covered by commercial health benefit plans. Visit <https://www.uhccf.org/aboutus.html> for more information.



Family Retreat Weekends

Through creative programming in retreat venues set in beautiful natural surroundings, Deliver the Dream's Retreat Program offers families the therapeutic benefits that come from respite, relaxation, recreation, and the opportunity to bond with others experiencing similar challenges.

Families get the chance to:

- * Reconnect with themselves and their families, enjoy fun, recreational activities that create and nurture a spirit of family and togetherness. Depending on the venue, activities you might participate in may include canoeing, fishing, swimming, beading, and many other recreational activities. For those seeking solitude, free time is provided to enjoy the peace and quiet surrounding our venues.
- * Participate in imaginative exercises intended to strengthen individual and family coping skills. Workshops include music, art, role playing, live performance arts, separate discussion groups for mothers, fathers, and siblings, and a variety of other sessions tailored to meet the specific needs of those attending the retreat. Many of these workshops incorporate components that help participants learn new ways to understand and express their feelings.
- * Draw from common experiences of other families coping with similar challenges. There's no pressure and no lecturing ...just an opportunity to relax, reconnect, and reflect on life's little treasures.

Upcoming Retreats:

September 20-22, 2013

"Families who have a child with Down syndrome"

The Fountains - Orlando, FL

October 11-13, 2013

"Families who have a child with cerebral palsy"

The Florida FFA Leadership Training Center - Haines City, FL

November 15-17, 2013

"Families who have a parent with multiple sclerosis"

The Florida FFA Leadership Training Center - Haines City, FL

Visit www.deliverthedream.org for more information!

FACT SHEET



Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Specialized Instructional Services Educational Program



Overview

Florida's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Specialized Instructional Services (VPK SIS) educational program is a new option for parents of four-year-old children with disabilities that is available outside the traditional VPK classroom setting. If your child has a current Individual Education Plan (IEP) from your local school district that calls for specialized instructional services, you can choose VPK SIS instead of traditional VPK school-year or summer programs.

Program

VPK specialized instructional services are offered in individual or small group settings with a certified or licensed professional trained to provide specific instruction. Students enrolled in VPK SIS may use services identified on their IEP:

- Applied behavior analysis.
- Speech language pathology.
- Occupational therapy.
- Physical therapy.
- Listening and spoken language instruction.
- Other specialized instructional services consistent with the child's IEP.

Parents can choose one or more services and select from providers the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has approved. Funding for each student is the same as for traditional VPK, but based on the rates these specialists charge for their services. So students in VPK SIS may receive fewer hours of service than students in traditional VPK.

Eligibility

If your children are eligible for VPK, you must first enroll them through the local early learning coalition office. Your child must meet three basic eligibility requirements for VPK SIS:

- Your child must live in Florida.
- Your child will be four years old on or before September 1 of the current year.
- Your child must have a current IEP from your local school district.

Providers

The FDOE has approved the following professionals to be VPK SIS providers:

- Individuals certified or licensed for applied behavior analysis services.
- Licensed speech-language pathologists.
- Licensed occupational therapists.
- Licensed physical therapists.
- Licensed clinical social workers.
- Licensed psychologists.
- Other licensed professionals who have applied to and been approved by FDOE.

The local early learning coalition pays VPK SIS providers directly for services delivered to children in the program based on the schedule of services form. Parents and providers work together to complete required forms.

Other Parent Resources

- [Early Learning Coalitions Map](#)
- [More About VPK SIS](#)

Florida Office of Early Learning

250 Marriott Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Telephone: 850-717-8550 Fax: 850-921-0026 Toll-Free: 1-866-FL-Ready (357-3239)

www.FloridaEarlyLearning.com

REV 2013

Rick Scott

Governor

Shan Goff

Executive Director

Join Us For a **FREE** Webinar

Successful transition from school to community life is an ongoing process of planning for the future. This easy to understand workshop will de-mystify the Transition process for fathers, enabling them to become active participants in their child's educational planning.

**Transition for DADS
August 30th
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

Presented by: Wilbur Hawke

" I am the father of two sons (one with a disability) and was a stay at home dad after my youngest became sick at six months. I successfully navigated hospitals, pediatricians, the early intervention system, and the public school system. I was responsible for the IEP and participated in all the meetings until my son was old enough to make his own decisions. I have taught parents how to access the special education process based on this personal experience for the past twenty years. My goal during this workshop is to help you understand how to do non-emotional, clearly documented, collaborative business with a focus on outcomes. Not personal just business."

Space is limited.
Reserve your Webinar seat now at:
[Transition for Dads](#)

Central Florida Parent Center
1021 Delaware Avenue
Palm Harbor, FL 34683
www.cflparents.org

Visit <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/782165209> to register today!

Tip of the Month:

Want to promote friendships between your child with a disability and his or her peers? Two keys to promoting friendships include ensuring close proximity to peers and creating frequent opportunities for the children to interact (Eason & Whitbread, 2006). See more tips below!

According to Eason and Kinney (2006), there are several ways parents and educators can promote friendships among children with disabilities and their peers. Here are some more tips:

- Enroll your child in typical community activities—this increases proximity to non-disabled peers.
- Encourage teachers to be strong role models for children by valuing all students' learning differences and treating all students with respect.
- Ask teachers to highlight your child's strengths and interests. Finding common interests and talents among students can increase the chance of friendships forming.
- Request teachers to regularly include the topic of disability awareness into the curriculum. Parents can provide lists of accomplishments of persons with disabilities to be shared.
- Ask teachers what students seem to be friendly toward your child, and invite these students to after-school activities with your child.
- If your child has difficulty using words to communicate, make sure your child has some type of assistive technology to help them communicate with their peers. It's also a good idea to train their non-disabled peers in the assistive technology as well.
- Sometimes adults can be barriers to friendships. If a teaching assistant is with your child most or all of the school day, encourage the assistant to facilitate your child's friendship with peers, rather than focusing on a friendship between the assistant and your child.
- Social interactions can be particularly difficult if your child has difficulty demonstrating social skills. Ask your child's educational team what social skills they see your child is missing, and ask when and how those specific social skills can be taught (e.g., smiling, complimenting, turn-taking).
- Ensure your house has fun toys to attract kids over for fun-filled play dates. It's okay to ask other children about preferences in toys.
- Keep your child's fashion appropriate. Although it's not fair to judge someone by the way they look, some kids may think that someone who 'looks cool' is cool.

Reference: Eason & Whitbread (2006). IEP and inclusion TIPS for parents and teachers. T. Kinney (Ed.). Verona, Wisconsin: Attainment Publications.

Mark your calendars. Registration is now open!



STATEWIDE FAMILY CONFERENCE
FAMILY NETWORK ON DISABILITIES

Saturday, September 7th 2013

**Dunedin Highland Middle School
70 Patricia Avenue
Dunedin, Florida 34698**

- ♥ Free Conference Admission and Materials
- ♥ Free Child Care
- ♥ Free Lunch
- ♥ Free Door Prizes & Giveaways
- ♥ IEP One-on-One Clinics
- ♥ Hall of Exhibitors
- ♥ Interactive Workshops and Digital Learning Opportunities
- ♥ Special Kids Dance Performance

**Featuring Renowned Keynote Speaker
“Ari Ne’eman”**

American autism rights activist and cofounder of
The Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)

Workshop Tracks Include:

- ♥ All Special Education Services
- ♥ Transition and Independent Living
- ♥ Healthcare Options
- ♥ Future Planning
- ♥ Differentiated Learning

**All conference information will
be available in:**

- ♥ English
- ♥ Spanish
- ♥ Creole



For conference information, or if you require special accommodations, please call: 800-825-573 Tel: 727-523-1130
Fax: 727-523-8687 Website: www.fndusa.org

Upcoming Events

September 2—**Great Ponte Vedra Paddle Benefiting HEAL!** Stand-Up Paddle Board Race and a Family fun “If It Floats You’re In” themed water parade. Grab your Paddle Board and pick your distance. Prizes will be awarded for the top three male and female finishers in the 3 mile race and the 1 mile race, and to the best costumes and winners of the “If it Floats You’re In” event. Registration is \$35. Come join the fun at the Family Fun Zone with Bouncy Houses, Music and More! Proceeds benefit the HEAL Foundation. Visit www.firstgiving.com/HEAL to register today!

September 12-13—**HEAL’s Valley of Dreams at the TPC Sawgrass!** Save the date for our annual Fundraising event. Join HEAL Thursday night at the TPC and Friday morning for golf on the famed Dye’s Valley Course. Visit www.healautismnow.org/events for more information.

September 21—**North Coast Surfers for Autism Beach Festival!** Be sure to register in advance for this great day-long event at Jacksonville Beach. At a SFA event, surfers are provided a safe environment where two to four highly skilled and trained surf instructors carefully guide them into waves. The surfers and their families are treated like rock stars and enjoy a day filled with a range of activities including stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, live music, face-painting, games, bounce houses, fire engine tours and much more. A catered lunch is also provided, all at no cost. This is a very special day where children with ASD interact with typical peers and wow families with their capabilities. These events are examples of inclusion at the highest level. Visit www.surfersforautism.org for more information.

Country Music Recording Artist Jack Ingram Concert Benefitting the HEAL Foundation

Thursday, September 12, 2013

- Seven-time Top 40 Artist
- "Wherever You Are" Number One Song on Billboard Country Charts



- Academy of Country Music 2008 Best New Male Vocalist
- CMT Music Awards 2007 Wide Open Video of the Year

Sponsor Reception with Jack Ingram 🦋 6:00-6:45pm

Concert & Cocktails 🦋 6:30-9:00pm

Concert 🦋 Cocktails 🦋 Hors d'Oeuvres 🦋 Charity Auction

Fun & Festive Attire • LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE

DON'T MISS!

Bobby Weed & Jack Ingram Charity Golf Classic

Friday, September 13, 2013

8:00 am
Golf Clinic
and Breakfast

8:30 am
Shotgun Start – Dye's Valley Course
Lunch & Awards Following Golf in Clubhouse

Location
TPC Sawgrass
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL



1 in 50 US children have Autism ~ 1 in 140 cannot speak...

iPads have become a revolutionary tool in teaching children with Autism.
This technology helps students communicate, finally giving them a "voice."

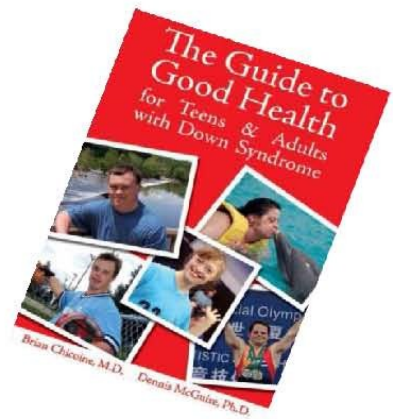
Proceeds from this event will go towards purchasing iPads for
Special Needs Classrooms across Northeast Florida.



For Information: 904.716.4905
events@HealAutismNow.org or visit HealAutismNow.org



Understanding Healthy Boundaries Across The Lifespan



ATTENTION PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND PROFESSIONALS

WHAT: Understanding Healthy Boundaries is a one-day seminar focused on creating and maintaining the physical, mental, and emotional well being of your individual with Down syndrome. Boundaries establish a system of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in our lives and in the lives of those around us. Rather than merely separate, boundaries PROTECT what we possess and value, including our own life and body. By design, boundaries set the course for mutual respect, consideration, protection and safety in all forms of relationships.

DSAJ is hosting leading industry experts for this exciting day of learning:

Adult Down Syndrome Center in Chicago, Illinois

- Dr. Brian Chicoine, M.D., Medical Director
- Dr. Dennis McGuire, Ph. D., Director of Psychosocial Services

Peace of Mind Jax, LLC

- Michelle Castanos, MEd
- Tara Rowe, MEd

WHEN: Saturday, September 14, 2013, 9AM – 1PM (Lunch will be provided)

WHERE: St. Vincent's Medical Center
1 Shircliff Way, Jacksonville, FL 3224

RSVP: Friday, August 30th. You must visit www.dsaj.org to register online or print attached forms and mail to our office along with \$15.00 registration fee. There is no fee for the individual with Down syndrome. Receipt of your registration and payment confirms your attendance. *Scholarships available.

Topics Covered: Fitness and longevity, holistic and mental health, improving emotional well-being, ABA/Social Behavior, and Safety

Childcare is available for **Lil' Stars**, Crafts and Entertainment available for **Shining Stars**, and an Interactive Session on Social Skills and Etiquette for **the Teen and Adult Group**

SPACE IS LIMITED!



**Thank you for your interest in our
2013 Camporee
October 19 & 20, 2013**

We all look forward to a Day filled with Activities, Food and **LOTS OF FUN!!!**

QUESTION?	ANSWER!
What Is A Camporee?	A fun-filled weekend event ... Students may come for a few hours or spend the night, it is up to you! This is an (optional) overnight camping experience especially designed for the special needs student.
What Activities will there be? What Time will it begin?	It all begins on Saturday, October 20th... Volunteers from all over NE Florida come and set up Carnival-style Activity Booths & offer fun activities for all exceptionalities! Crafts, Games, Leatherworking, Field Games, Fishing, Displays of Fire Trucks, Military Displays, and much more! Evening events include a Campfire Program with Native American dancing, stories, and skits. Fun for all ages!!! 12:00 – 1:00 PM - Registration & Tent set-up (<i>lunch is not provided</i>) 1:00 – 4:30 PM - Activity Booths Open 5:00 PM - Dinner will be served After Dinner – Fellowship Time & Games At Dark – Camp Fire Program 10:00 PM – Lights Out! You may choose to attend just for Saturday activities or spend the night and leave Sunday at 9:00AM
How Much will it Cost?	Students & Family Members = FREE!!!
Where will it take Place?	Camp Echockotee located on Doctors Lake Dr. in Orange Park, FL. I- 295 to US 17 South go to Kingsley Ave and turn Right. Go to Doctor's Lake Drive (3 rd Light) then turn left. Camp Echockotee is 1.9 miles on left.
What Is Provided?	LOTS of CARING, Volunteers! Saturday Evening Dinner, Campfire snacks and Sunday morning Continental Breakfast Tents upon request Medical Staff on premises at all times
What Do I Need To Bring?	A tent (if you have one), a flashlight, a sleeping bag, personal items, soap, toothpaste, etc. Snacks and drinks. Completed Medical Form and photo release form for ALL PARTICIPANTS along with any medication needed, if not mailed previously.
How Do I Sign Up?	Call 904-388-0591 X 156 or email ashley.freisen@scouting.org FAX 904- 387-4148 Learning for Life Special Needs Camporee 521 S. Edgewood Ave Jacksonville, FL. 32205

St. John's County School District
Exceptional Student Education Department

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belll@stjohns.k12.fl.us

<u>Tina Kennon, ESE Coordinator</u> 504, Hospital Homebound OHI/OI, TBI, OT/PT (904) 547-7546 kennont@stjohns.k12.fl.us	<u>Carole Taylor, Program Specialist</u> SLD, Transition Services (904) 547-7678 taylorc@stjohns.k12.fl.us	<u>George Freeman, Program Specialist</u> EBD, MHC (904) 547-7704 george.freeman@stjohns.k12.fl.us	<u>Nancy Elliott, Program Specialist</u> Pre-K (904) 547-4886 elliottn@stjohns.k12.fl.us
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Mission Statement: To identify and meet the unique educational needs of exceptional students and to provide support and resources to enhance educational opportunities so they may become productive citizens.

ESE programs and services address the unique needs of students who are gifted in kindergarten through 12th grade and those with mild, moderate and severe disabilities from age three until they graduate with a regular diploma or until their 22nd birthday. ESE programs and services are designed to assist students in reaching their educational goals through the use of instructional and behavioral approaches which are research-based and exemplify best practices. Technology is used in many creative ways to meet student needs as well.

ESE services are available at all district schools for gifted students and students who have mild to moderate disabilities. Students with more significant disabilities are served in cluster programs at selected sites. Program support is provided to students, parents and school personnel by program specialists based at the district office. Students with disabilities who are not eligible for services through the ESE program, may be eligible for an accommodations plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER ELECTRONICALLY?

We hope that you find this newsletter informative and useful. The next issue of the Parents as Partners Newsletter will be posted to the St. Johns County School District web site at www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/depts/ese.

If you would like to receive a copy via email, please email your email address to jill.bullard@stjohns.k12.fl.us and we will gladly add you to our Parent Newsletter Email List.