

PICs -n- Pieces

Parent Information Center & Parent Education Network
 Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Inc.



Winter 2015

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EXPECTATIONS

PIC Parent Conference on disAbilities
 Jan 17-18, 2015 Casper

Think Ability!

This year's Parent Conference on disAbilities will be held January 17-18, 2015 in Casper at the Parkway Plaza beginning 8:30 - 5pm on Saturday and 8:30 - 1pm on Sunday. Register online at www.wpic.org or by calling PIC at (307) 684-2277.

Conference Topics Include: Dispute Resolution, Learning Disabilities, Sensory Disorder, Modifications and Accommodations in the Classroom; Transition to Employment and more! There are **no registration costs** for parents of children with disabilities, and PIC has parent stipends to defray travel expenses of \$50 - \$100 per family available on a first come / first serve basis— call PIC for details. Educators and service providers are \$50 per person. **STARS** and **PTSB** credit will be available.

Hotel reservations for rooms at \$65/night can be made by calling the Parkway Plaza at 307-235-1777 under the block "PIC Parent Conference."

The Parent Information Center also has tables/ booths available for vendors. There is no charge for Non-Profit Organizations, and only \$50 for other organizations/State Agencies.. Download the Vendor Registration Form at wpic.org or call PIC at 307-684-2277.

Sponsors for this years conference are the WY Department of Education; WY Department of Health— Behavior Health Division; and the Governors Council on Developmental Disabilities.

REGISTER TODAY @
WWW.WPIC.ORG

Conference Speakers

Mary Kay Savage, Former Director of MPACT - Missouri's Parent Training and Information Center.



Her keynote will on Saturday morning and is entitled "Beyond our Expectations: A Journey of Fear, Faith, and Letting Go." As the parent of a young adult with an

Intellectual Disability, Mary Kay will share her family's experiences in supporting their son's navigation of an independent life. She will also present a breakout session on how technology,

schedules, and communication can assist young adults in being successful in their transition to independent living and employment.



Philip Moses will be the keynote speaker for Sunday morning, Jan 18, 2015. Mr. Moses serves as Associate Director for CADRE, the National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education. Mr. Moses' keynote will be "The 18th Horse: Why Moving Dispute Resolution Upstream is a Better Match for High Expectations."

His presentation will discuss the benefits and limitations of dispute resolution options and look at the advantage of working through special education conflict before communication deteriorates and relationships are ruined.



David Flink, Chief Empowerment Officer / Co-Founder, Eye to Eye; Author of *Thinking Differently: Reframing Learning for a New Generation* (HarperCollins, 2013)

(continued page 5)

Supports, Modifications and Accommodations for Students

For many students with disabilities—and for many without—the key to success in the classroom lies in having appropriate adaptations, accommodations, and modifications made to the instruction and other classroom activities.

Some adaptations are as simple as moving a distractible student to the front of the class or away from the pencil sharpener or the window. Other modifications may involve changing the way that material is presented or the way that students respond to show their learning.

Adaptations, accommodations, and modifications need to be individualized for students, based upon their needs and their personal learning styles and interests. It is not always obvious what adaptations, accommodations, or modifications would be beneficial for a particular student, or how changes to the curriculum, its presentation, the classroom setting, or student evaluation might be made. This article is intended to help teachers and others find information that can guide them in making appropriate changes in the classroom based on what their students need.

A Quick Look at Terminology

You might wonder if the terms *supports*, *modifications*, and *adaptations* all mean the same thing. The simple answer is: No, not completely, but yes, for the most part. (Don't you love a clear answer?) People tend to use the terms interchangeably, to be sure, and we will do so here, for ease of reading, but distinctions can be made between the terms.



Sometimes people get confused about what it means to have a modification and what it means to have an accommodation. Usually a **modification** means a change in what is being taught to or expected from the student. Making an assignment easier so the student is not doing the same level of work as other students is an example of a modification.

An **accommodation** is a change that helps a student overcome or work around the disability. Allowing a student who has trouble writing to give his answers orally is an example of an accommodation. This student is still expected to know the same material and answer the same questions as fully as the other students, but he doesn't have to write his answers to show that he knows the information.

What is most important to know about modifications and accommodations is that both are meant to help a child to learn.

Special Education

By definition, special education is “specially designed instruction” (§300.39). And IDEA defines that term as follows:

- (3) *Specially designed instruction* means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction—(i) To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and (ii) To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.
- (4) Thus, special education involves adapting the “content, methodology, or delivery of instruction.”

In fact, the special education field can take pride in the knowledge base and expertise it's developed in the past 30-plus years of individualizing instruction to meet the needs of students with disabilities. It's a pleasure to share some of that knowledge with you here.

Adapting Instruction

Sometimes a student may need to have changes made in class work or routines because of his or her disability. Modifications can be made to:

what a child is taught, and/or

how a child works at school.

For example:

Jack is an 8th grade student who has learning disabilities in reading and writing. He is in a regular 8th grade class that is team-taught by a general education teacher and a special education teacher. Modifications and accommodations provided for Jack's daily school routine (and when he takes state or district-wide tests) include the following:

- Jack will have shorter reading and writing assignments.
- Jack's textbooks will be based upon the 8th grade curriculum but at his independent reading level (4th grade).
- Jack will have test questions read/explained to him, when he asks.
- Jack will give his answers to essay-type questions by speaking, rather than writing them down.

Modifications or accommodations are most often made in the following areas:

Scheduling, for example,

- giving the student extra time to complete assignments or tests
- breaking up testing over several days

Setting, for example,

- working in a small group
- working one-on-one with the teacher

Materials, for example,

- providing audiotaped lectures or books
- giving copies of teacher's lecture notes
- using large print books, Braille, or books on CD (digital text)

Instruction, for example,

- reducing the difficulty of assignments
- reducing the reading level
- using a student/peer tutor

Student Response, for example,

- allowing answers to be given orally or dictated
- using a word processor for written work
- using sign language, a communication device, Braille, or native language if it is not English.

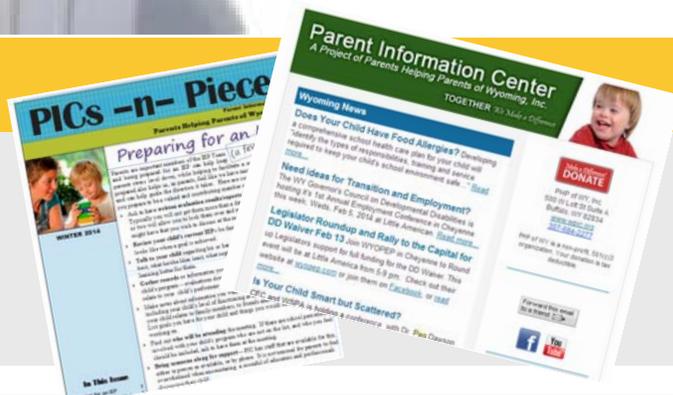
Because adapting the content, methodology, and/or delivery of instruction is an essential element in special education and an extremely valuable support for students, it's equally essential to know as much as possible about how instruction can be adapted to address the needs of an individual student with a disability. The special education teacher who serves on the IEP team can contribute his or her expertise in this area, which is the essence of special education.

A Legacy resource from NICHCY- Sept 2010



PIC Newsletters

Keep up-to-date on "What's Happening in Wyoming" and continue to read great and relevant articles by subscribing to our online E-News at www.wpic.org or by subscribing to PICs-N-Pieces newsletter (free to parents of children with disabilities/ \$20 professionals, any donations is appreciated)



Maximizing Memory

As exam time approaches students with (and without!) learning disabilities often find themselves overwhelmed with the amount of information they need to remember. Teachers wisely tell their students to review in each subject as they go along through the semester.

Research tells us that if we review information within 24 hours of learning it, we are much more likely to remember it in the long run. Well thought out homework is designed with this kind of review in mind. Each student should choose strategies for memorization that fit his or her own learning styles.

☑ **Sort information.** Help your retrieval system by putting new information into categories. You can group by dates, people, formulas, etc. It may help to make a chart as you study.

☑ **Frequent review.**

Studying new information the same day you heard or read it will improve memory significantly. A small review each day is essential if you have memory problems.



☑ **Use humor or exaggeration.** Information stays in memory longer if it is related to something novel and interesting. Make up something funny or exaggerated that ties in to what needs to be memorized.

☑ **Explore the senses.** Try learning the information visually, verbally, and kinesthetically (with movement) and find which sense works best for you. Some people need to combine two or more senses.

☑ **Color code.** By using colored pens, highlighters, post-it notes and flags, index cards, etc. you can make an impression on your memory. This is a way of sorting information for storage as you assign colors.

☑ **Make visual aids.** Draw pictures or cartoon characters, graphs, tables, charts, time lines, etc. to aid memory. Even simple stick figures and drawings are useful if you are a visual learner. Pay attention to pictures, charts, etc. in textbooks.

☑ **Rehearse aloud.** Verbal rehearsal is an effective memory tool. Study with someone or use a tape recorder to say aloud what needs to be memorized.



☑ **Make it physical.**

Adding a physical activity such as pacing, jumping, throwing a ball, or writing enhances the memory for many people. Typing or rewriting notes is a very effective memory device for people who need to learn kinesthetically.

☑ **Turn memory practice into a game.** Make cards to match words and definitions, math facts to answers, etc. and play a memory game by turning over two cards at a time. Time yourself to see how long it takes to match all the cards. The act of making the game also helps memory.

Taken from LD OnLine, available at http://www.ldonline.org/article/Memory_Tips_for_Students

TOGETHER We Make a Difference

Conference Speakers Continued...

pre-college education feeling hopeless and left out of education as a whole.

Although his parents and teachers frequently told him he would be able to go to college, David would have found that message more believable if it had come from a person with a learning disability (LD) who had finished college.

With that in mind, David co-founded Eye to Eye in 1998, while he was a student at Brown University. In addition to his ongoing work as executive director of Eye to Eye, from 2002 to 2004 David was an admissions officer at Brown University, serving as disabilities liaison for all Brown applicants with disabilities.

David holds a master's degree in disability studies in education from Columbia University and bachelor's degrees with honors in education and psychology from Brown University

He will present the keynote on Saturday afternoon January 17, 2015 on Project Eye to Eye with two Wyoming "Think Differently Diplomats."

More Conference Speakers:



Julie Yager, Riverton, retired from teaching after 30-years as an elementary teacher. She is a parent to two adults with disabilities, and will share her wisdom in a breakout session on supporting children's learning by weaving communication through memories and other creative methods.

Dr. Liz Simpson will be presenting a breakout session on Saturday, Jan 17 on *Accommodations and Modifications in The Classroom*. Dr. Simpson is a veteran educator who started her career twenty years ago as a special education teacher. That experience taught her that all students can learn if they are given the right learning environment. She returned to school to complete a doctorate in Educational Psychology and worked for years with teachers, trainers, and pre-service teachers to facilitate the design and engineering of accessible, motivating, and engaging learning environments. She is the past director of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center, the central clearinghouse for research, instructional design policy and administration of distance education for the State of Wyoming. Dr. Simpson was Associate Professor in the UW College of Education, Department of Educational Studies.

Shellie Szmyd from Sheridan will present Saturday, Jan 17. She is a pediatric occupational therapist and owner of Sensational Kids, with offices in Sheridan, Casper, and Cheyenne. Shellie has over 20-years of experience working with children in educational settings as well as outpatient therapy. Her specialty is treating kids with Sensory Processing Disorder.

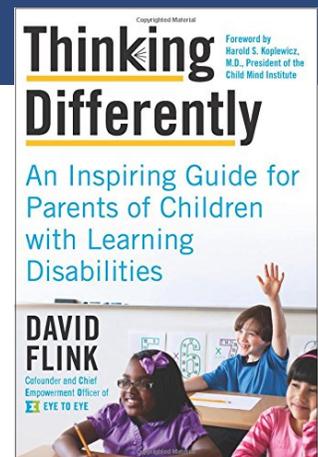
These, and other speakers will be highlighted at PIC's *Expectations: Think Ability!* Conference.

Register today at www.wpic.org or call PIC at 307-684-2277. Registration closes 5PM January 14, 2015.

PIC Lending Library

PIC has an extensive lending library of books, videos and audio tapes available to parents and professionals. Resources on specific disabilities, education, parenting, behavior management, siblings, transition and various other disability issues are available. The only cost to those borrowing materials from the library is the return postage.

Call PIC to check out *Thinking Differently: An Inspiring guide for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities* written by PIC Parent Conference Speaker David Flink!



What's Happening in Wyoming :

Individuals with
Disabilities Education Act

IEP Forms Training for Parents

Limited Enrollment
\$100.00 Stipend

Join WDE in a Parent Conference: Understanding the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Lenore Knudtson, Presenter

- Telling the story of your child through the IEP.
- Learning about the IEP page by page.
- Q & A

When & Where:

February 7, Saturday, Cheyenne - Comfort Inn

March 3, Tuesday, Riverton - Holiday Inn

March 5, Thursday, Gillette - Windham Hotel

April 14, Tuesday, Rock Springs - Hampton Inn

May 19, Thursday, Jackson (location TBA)

Time: 9:30—3:30

Working Lunch Provided

Contact: Nadia Vasquez

Wyoming Department of Education
Special Programs Division

Phone: 307-777-3530

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Wyoming Department of Education

AT for Early Childhood

Assistive technology (AT) can provide young children with the tools they need to grow, learn, and meet individual goals. There are age appropriate AT strategies for self-care, communication, pre-writing skills, fine motor skills, and countless other areas.

What are some examples of assistive technologies (AT) used with young children?

Assistive technologies are often used with young children to assist in communication, self-care, motor control, and social skills.

Some simple communication aids can include two laminated pictures attached with Velcro to a clipboard, allowing for simple choice or yes/no responses. Another low tech and portable solution could be a collection of pictures attached to a keyring that can be easily accessed by the child. More high tech communication devices could use switches attached to a child's wheelchair or a portable electronic communication device programed with many different symbols and a voice output that allows a child to "speak" in full sentences.

Common self-care AT includes modified grips on spoons or toothbrushes to make them easier to hold, the use of a visual timer to tell the child how long they need to brush their teeth or picture schedules prominently displayed or carried with the child.

Motor skills can be strengthened by the use of weighted markers or spoons, switch activated toys that are highly motivating for the child, and even through the use of a touch screen tablet, which encourages a child to isolate fingers. If a child's motor skills make it difficult to perform a given task, like using a mouse, there are assistive technologies that account for their level of motor skills and are specially designed for them to use.

Assistive technology can also improve a child's social skills. For example, a child's first visit to a dentist office can be a scary experience, which in turn can lead to some undesirable behaviors. To counteract a child's anxiety about such an event, parents and

teachers can create a "social story" using a word processor, presentation software or movie editing software. Social stories are pictures, comic books, stories or videos that tell children what to expect and what behaviors are expected from them during a given situation. Visit <http://simontechnologycenter.blogspot.com/2010/03/try-visual-social-supports-to-improve.html> for more information about social stories including how to make and use them.



Additionally, social skills such as sharing, waiting, and helping can be encouraged through the use of adapted toys or touch screen tablets. For children who need help recognizing and expressing emotions, there are many apps available designed to teach children to name and express emotions appropriately. A key ring of laminated pictures showing a variety of feelings can also be an effective low tech form of AT for a child with social and emotional needs or a child who is nonverbal. Even infants can use and benefit from AT. Adapted toys can be used to encourage an infant's gaze or encourage the click of a switch to promote motor use and control.

DIY Simple Adaptation

Early literacy is important for every child. However, many children face challenges in viewing, focusing on, or manipulating books. There are many easy do-it-yourself book adaptations that can be very useful in developing and supporting these early skills. Here are three DIY AT techniques to try with your child:

(continued on page 9)

How Can Parents Help with Transition?

There are many ways that parents can help to make sure that their child's transition to adulthood is as smooth as possible.

Set Realistic Goals - Include your child in setting goals for the future, and make sure that their school program prepares him/her to meet those goals. All students need to gain as many independent working and living skills as possible.

Encourage Gradual Independence - Parents are not always going to be around. Begin to encourage independent travel, self-care activities, money management, and decision making now. A person with disabilities may always need support, but each thing that he/she can do alone is a great gain.

Gather Information About Transition Issues - Decisions will have to be made about such matters as guardianship, sex education, sexual responsibility, driving, etc... based upon the person's level of independence and competency, family values, and resources available to help with each issue.

Familiarize Yourself With the Adult Service System - Parents need to become informed about the available programs and entrance criteria for each one. Getting a person's name on the appropriate waiting list is sometimes of critical importance.

Build Self-Esteem - Your child does have a future. Teach him/her skills that you would teach any child who is getting ready to go out in the world such as doing laundry, prepare simple meals, or sew on a button. Because you have confidence, he/she will have confidence too.

Encourage Social Integration - Everyone needs friends. Young people with disabilities cannot afford to be isolated from non-disabled persons their age. Call your local community resources for recreational opportunities.

Provide Real Experiences - Persons with disabilities need experience in work situations. This



Ted Dawson, 29, lives independently, works full time during the week and volunteers on the weekend. Ted will be sharing his successes and challenges at the PIC Parent Conference on disAbilities in January in Casper.

should be addressed and incorporated into the IEP. Parents should also look for ways to provide work experiences outside of school.

Encourage Good Grooming and Work Habits - Take time to emphasize the importance of appropriate dress, good grooming skills, punctuality, reliability, and hard work.

Foster the Acceptance of Criticism - Teenagers can be sensitive to the mildest criticism. Young people must learn to cope with the standards of the workplace and with unfair criticism. Practicing acceptable responses to criticism needs to begin early.

Provide Opportunities to Manage Money - Teenagers should be paid for their work. Gradually introduce money management. Encourage shopping using their own money. Those who are able should be doing their own budgeting as well.

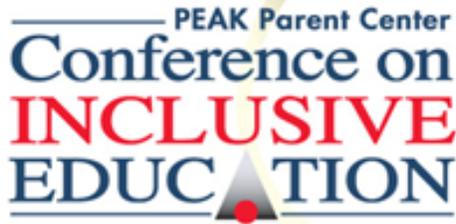
*From the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Inc.,
www.cpacinc.org*

EXPECT
Ability

PIC Parent Conference on disAbilities

Jan 17-18, 2015 Parkway Plaza, Casper

Register at www.wpic.org or call PIC at 307-684-2277



PEAK Parent Center
Conference on
INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION

**2015 Conference on
Inclusive Education**

February 12-13, 2015

**Hyatt Regency Denver Tech
Center**

Denver, CO



Keynote Speakers!



If you are passionate about launching or forwarding inclusive education in your classrooms, schools, and communities, PEAK's 2015 conference is for you. With keynote presentations from Paula Kluth, Lydia Brown, Hasan Davis, and Sue Swenson, plus an outstanding line up of featured presenters, 2015 is a year you won't want to miss!

Some topics to be presented : Ableism; Accommodations and modifications; Accessing general education curriculum; Alternate assessments; Behavior strategies; Co-teaching; Community supports; Differentiated instruction; Dispute resolution; Disability advocacy and disability rights; Inclusive practices and much, much more! Register Today at: <http://conference.peakparent.org/>

WYO Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

The Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities functions as an advisory agent to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on special education issues. This panel consists of stakeholders, business and professional entities, teachers, school administrators, state governmental agencies and parents from across Wyoming. Their responsibility on the panel is to be a liaison between their regions and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on issues and concerns of those involved with the education of students with disabilities. Dates of the next scheduled meetings are:

Jan 15-16, 2015	Cheyenne	1-5 pm on 15th and 8 am –noon on 16th
Feb 19, 2015	Virtual	3-5 pm (Legislative Update)
April 23, 2015	Virtual	3-5 pm
June 26, 2015	Riverton	8 am -4 pm with working lunch)

For additional information contact Barb Yates, WDE, [\(307\) 857-9253](tel:307-857-9253) or barb.yates@wyo.gov.

AT for Early Childhood Continued...

- **Tactile Illustrations Book:** Use fabric scraps, sandpaper, bubble wrap, yarn, or other tactile materials to heighten a child's engagement with a book. Cut materials to the size and shape of an illustration in a board book and attach the materials with hot glue. *This can enrich any child's reading experience, but is particularly useful with children who are blind, have low vision, or who need extra sensory input to focus on a book.*
- **Tactile Text Book:** Underline text in a board book with a line of colored school glue. *This allows children to locate and follow text with their sense of touch. For many children, adding tactile input*

makes text easier to track and supports early literacy skills. If a board book includes large letters, a line of colored school glue on the letters can also be used to help children trace letters with their pointer finger, an important pre-writing skill.

- **Glue Dot Page Separators:** Many children find it difficult to turn pages in a book. A small dot of hot glue placed in the bottom right corner of each page creates a space for little fingers, making pages easier to turn independently. *Remember to let the glue dry before moving on to the next page.*

*From the Simon Technology Center of PACER
STC@PACER.org*

ABOUT US:

Parent Information Center (PIC):

Outreach Parent Liaisons (OPL) provide information and support to families of children with disabilities, on their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). PIC can attend IEPs with families to help empower them to partner with schools effectively and/or provide workshops on IDEA, IEPs, and specific disabilities such as attention disorders and autism.

For more info check out our website at www.wpic.org or call PIC at (307) 684-2277:

Terri Dawson, Director, tdawson@wpic.org (307) 217-1321
Serves the entire state

Juanita Bybee, jbybee@wpic.org (307) 684-2277
Serves Buffalo & Sheridan

Janet Kinstetter, jkinstetter@wpic.org (307) 756-9605
Serves Moorcroft, Gillette, Sundance & Newcastle for phone support only. Janet no longer attends IEPs or provides workshops

Tammy Wilson, twilson@wpic.org (307) 217-2244
Serves Green River & Rock Springs

To help you get organized for the new year, check out the newly updated, Packaging Wisdom: A Family Centered Care Coordination Notebook



TOGETHER *We Make a Difference!*

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**PIC Parent Conference on disabilities
Jan 17-18, 2015 in Casper; Register Now!**



**No Registration Costs for Parents of Children with Disabilities!
Call PIC for a travel stipend to defray travel expenses**

****PTSB credit and STARS available****

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