

LINKS Mat-Su Parent Resource Center

How to keep the monsters away!

October 2011

VOL. #1 ISSUE #1



LINKS Mat-Su Parent Resource Center is presenting 4 classes in October. Please review the Instructor's profiles and sign up. These classes are free and open to the public. Please RSVP 373-3632



Keeping Away the Homework Monster

After midterm grades come out, many parents are shell shocked. Suddenly we begin to stare ominously over our kids shoulders in the evening and do not like what we are seeing. Others are opening backpacks with dread and are shocked by loads of crumpled finished homework which has never seen the light of day. A common complaint from parents is that their child finishes the homework and never turns it in. The first culprit is anxiety. It is understandable: no one likes to have their work criticized especially after having spent hours on it. Some hints?

1. Mark the homework with a sticker so it doesn't get mixed with other paperwork and is easier to find.
2. For younger children ask the teacher not to use a red pen because it causes embarrassment in front of peers.
3. Have a discussion with your child explaining that marked up papers mean the teacher really cares about how the student is doing and wants the student to ask for help.

4.

On Hallowe'en the thing you must do is pretend that nothing can frighten you
An' if somethin' scares you and you want to run Jus' let on like it's Hallowe'en
fun.

- - - from an Early Nineteenth Century Halloween Postcard

Keeping the IEP Monster Away!

Preparing for your IEP Meeting

1. When you get your IEP meeting invitation don't be afraid, you are not alone.
2. Look at the people attending the meeting and see if there is anyone else you feel should attend. Let the person organizing the meeting know as soon as possible.
3. Read over your IEP or 504 plan and see if there are any changes that need to be made. Write down suggestions.
4. Contact an advocate, it could be LINKS, a relative or someone in your church, even if they are there just to take notes, moral support always helps.
5. Don't be afraid to ask to have things explained. Teachers and staff get so comfortable with acronyms it can sound like they are speaking gooblygook.
6. If the meeting is getting long and you are uncomfortable, reschedule. Don't be upset later if there were things you missed. You can always call another meeting or contact the teacher.
7. Encourage input from all members of the team.
8. Base discussions on data and facts rather than opinions and emotions.

When in doubt,
Call LINKS Mat-Su Parent Resource Center our services are
free and we have literature available.



Classes

All classes are free!

October 5th 10-12pm Wednesday

Attorney Amrit Kaur Khalsa will be presenting on Guardianship as kids turn 18. Learn what will be expected of the parent and how to prepare for this new adventure in your child's life.

Please call to RSVP 373-3632

October 18th 10-12pm Tuesday

Children's Outreach Advocate, Ashley Pelletier is presenting on helping parents teach their children how not to be a victim of bullying.

Please RSVP 373-3632

October 20th 6-7:30pm Thursday

AARC Call in, Seattle Children's Hospital & UW is presenting Autism- Challenging Behavior at Home, teleconference at LINKS Please RSVP 373-3632

October 26th 10-2:30pm Wednesday

Krista James of Alaska Autism Resource Center is teaching a class on Teaching and Supporting Social Interaction in Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Please RSVP 373-3632



How To Enjoy Halloween with Your Autistic Child

By [Lisa Jo Rudy](#), About.com Guide

Updated October 25, 2006

Many children on the autism spectrum look forward to Halloween. It's a time when they can dress up as their favorite character and (at least in some homes) eat piles of candy. But Halloween can be stressful and demanding for kids on the spectrum. Follow these tips to prepare for a pleasant, positive Halloween experience.

Difficulty: Average

Time Required: About a month

Here's How:

1. Use videos and books to prepare your child for Halloween expectations. There are many Halloween options out there, so choose the ones that are most like your own real-life situation.
2. Together, decide what costume your child will choose. Take into account not only his or her preferences, but also sensory concerns. For example, a Spiderman costume may include a full mask - which can become overwhelming. Some children love face paint, but others can't take the sticky sensation.
3. Make a plan that you can stick to. Choose a time to leave the house, plan a path, and know what will happen when you come home (can he dump the candy on the floor? What may he or she eat? If the candy is not a good choice, what substitute treat will she get?).
4. Keep it simple. Knowing your child, what's reasonable to expect? If he can handle just one house, that's fine. Know that, even when you see other kids running up and down the street, it may not be the right choice for your child.
5. Create a social picture story. Use digital photos, images from the web, or other sources to show and tell exactly what your child will do. Include all the steps, not forgetting that he must knock at the door, say "Trick or Treat!" and "Thank You!"
6. Read the social story together, not once but as often as possible. From time to time, toss in a clinker: ask - "what if no one is home?" Help her understand that it's ok to skip a house, to take a piece of candy from a basket (if that's ok with you), and so forth.
7. Practice, practice, practice! Put on the costume many times before the Big Night, and work out any kinks. Role play the entire trick or treat scenario as often as you can.
8. Act out a number of scenarios so your child has a small repertoire of possible responses. For example, what should she say when someone says "You look beautiful (or scary or creepy)!" What if you don't like the treat that's offered? What if you meet kids you know?
9. Scope out the neighborhood ahead of time. Do you see any decorations that might upset your child? Flashing lights that might trigger sensory reactions? If so, consider skipping that house (or visiting ahead of time) to avoid melt-downs.
10. Consider recruiting peer support. If your child with autism has no siblings (or his siblings have other plans), consider recruiting another typical peer to go house-to-house with you. Explain to that child and his parents that he will be helping your child to understand Halloween a little better. You may be surprised at how helpful another child can be!
11. On the big night, remember to be flexible. If your well-prepared child suddenly rebels against his costume, consider letting him go in just a silly hat. Remember that Halloween is for fun - and it really doesn't matter what he wears or how many homes he visits.
12. Take pictures. Get excited. Have fun! Even if you're only going to one house, make it an event. When you're done, put together a memory book that can help you prepare for next year.

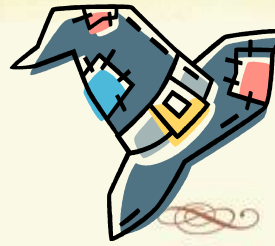


Presenters

***Krista James, Alaska Autism Resource Center
Teaching and Supporting Social Interaction
in Individuals with ASD***

- Participants will be able to identify evidence-based practice as it pertains to social skills instruction for individuals with Autism and related disabilities.
- Participants will be able to identify common social skill deficit areas in individuals with ASD.
- Participants will understand and be able to implement the process of teaching social interaction skills in a systematic way that begins and ends with assessment.
- Participants will be able to identify and implement strategies to teach and support social interaction, including: Power Cards, Social Stories, Scripting, Video Modeling, and Video Self-Modeling.

Krista James
Program Coordinator
Autism Resource Specialist
Alaska Autism Resource Center
Special Education Service Agency
3501 Denali St. Suite 101
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-334-1331



***Ashley Pelletier, Alaska Family Services
Children's Outreach Advocate***

Helping parents teach their children how to not become a victim of bullying. The Alaska Family Services was established in 1979 to respond to the needs of women and children in the Mat-Su Borough. The agency began with a small core of basic services and has now grown to provide a number of services for women, children and their families. All programs are designed to strengthen and support individuals and families.

Alaska Family Services
Wasilla Location
899 Commercial Drive
(in the Westside Center)
Wasilla, Alaska 99654
(907) 376-4080

Guardianship Class for Parents

Amrit Kaur Khalsa is the owner of the Law Office of Amrit Kaur Khalsa. Since 1986, she has concentrated her practice in the areas of estate planning and administration of trusts and estates, including guardianship, conservatorship, and elder law issues. A resident of Anchorage since 1967, Ms. Khalsa received her law degree from Gonzaga University (J.D., 1984) and was admitted to the Alaska Bar Association in 1984. Ms. Khalsa is a member of the Anchorage Estate Planning Council, the Estate Planning and Probate Section and the Elder Law Section of the Alaska Bar Association, and the American Bar Association Real Property, Probate, and Trusts Law Section.



Events

Partners in Policy Making Alaska

Starts October 19th, 2011

If you would like to know more about advocacy, how to make a real difference in your community or around the state, consider applying for the Partners in Policymaking Internship program! The internship programs are blended 6-week non-credit courses, which include weekly online sessions and one three day face to face seminar in Anchorage.

Interns receive support for project activities, as well as funding for travel expenses to participate in project activities. On-going technical assistance from program staff is provided to all present and past interns

Contact:

Kathy Fitzgerald

(907) 264-6242

kathyf@alaskachd.org

Tammy Peria

(907) 264-6253

tammyp@alaskachd.org

The Alaska Branch of the International Dyslexia Association Conference and Pre-Conference Training 2011

October 22nd, 2011

[http://www.ak-](http://www.ak-dyslexia.org/alaskanconferences.html)

[dyslexia.org/alaskanconferences.html](http://www.ak-dyslexia.org/alaskanconferences.html)

Halloween Hollow,

October 31st Monday

3:00 to 8:15

Alaska State Fairgrounds

Raven Hall

LEARNING LUNCH SERIES

Special Education

Monday, October 17, 2011. Noon-1 p.m.

#1 The Basics of Special Education

Participants will learn the Ten Steps in Special Education, Terminology and Special Education Time-line of Alaska

Monday, November 14, 2011. Noon-1 p.m.

#2 Evaluation & Eligibility

Participants will learn Early Intervention Services & Response to Intervention, Evaluation and Eligibility for Special Education

Monday, December 12, 2011. Noon-1 p.m.

#3 The IEP (Individual Education Plan)

Participants will learn who the members of the team are, what an IEP is and what to expect at IEP meetings.

To register for any of these events or for more information, email acrpsc@nwresource.org or call 907- 279-1799 or toll free 1-866-478-7307

HAPPY HALLOWEEN