

winter 2018

SSD

parent CONNECTION

A publication of SSD's Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program

Parent Connection is a publication of the Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program of Special School District of St. Louis County.

Learn About Disaster Preparedness

Executive Director of Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council to Speak

Vicky Davidson has over thirty years of experience as a service provider, working toward statewide systems change and policy development that impacts individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. More importantly, she is a mother and family member to individuals with disabilities.

Vicky is a former manager of the Emergency Operations Coordination Unit with the Department of Health and Senior Services/Center for Emergency Response and Terrorism. She is a trainer for the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and continues to be a leader in the State of Missouri committed to assisting individuals, providers, state officials and others in the implementation of the principles of emergency preparedness.

Vicky will present two sessions: Monday, April 2, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Tuesday, April 3, from 9-11:30 a.m. **(See inside for registration details and locations.)** All families, teachers, administrators and community members are welcome to attend these FREE presentations.

SSD Parent Leadership Institute Fall 2018

Saturday Sessions Scheduled for Sept. 8, Oct. 6 and Nov. 3

Since 2007, SSD has been committed to promoting parent education and leadership through the Parent Leadership Institute (PLI). "Life-changing" is how parents describe the experience of the three Saturdays in the fall.

Parents hear from national speakers who help them develop a vision for their children's future and confidence to make it happen. They gain tools to make a positive change not only in their child's life but the climate of their child's school.

The institute is presented by the SSD Parent Education & Diversity Awareness Program. Download the application at <http://bit.ly/pliapplication> or call 314.989.8108.

WE PROVIDE:

- Advice and consultation about your child's IEP
- Free parent workshops
- Free lending library
- Help in finding community resources and supports
- Ability awareness resources



MICHELLE LEVI PEREZ

314.989.8438 | mleviperez@ssdmo.org

West Region: Parkway, Pattonville, Ritenour, Rockwood, Litzsinger and Neuwoehner schools, JDC, Lakeside

DEBRA FIASCO

314.989.8108 | dmfiasco@ssdmo.org

South and Central Regions: Affton, Bayless, Brentwood, Hancock Place, Kirkwood, Ladue, Lindbergh, Maplewood-Richmond Heights, Mehlville, Valley Park, Webster Groves, Southview School, South Technical High School, Vocational Skills Program

PAM RUSSELL

314.989.8194 | pjrussell@ssdmo.org

North and Central Regions: Clayton, Ferguson-Florissant, Hazelwood, Jennings, Normandy, Riverview Gardens, University City, Northview and Ackerman schools, North Technical High School

RACHEL MYERS – 314.989.8431 | rdmyers@ssdmo.org Family & Community Resource Center

SARAH GEER – Program Assistant



Back row (left to right): Debra Fiasco, Michelle Levi Perez, Pam Russell. Front row (left to right): Sarah Geer, Rachel Myers

Transition Workshop Series

Transition is the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another. Students are continually transitioning in the education process and families need to plan for these transitions.

The SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program, along with the SSD Transition Department, is focusing on this topic with a series of workshops that will address transition.



Look for this symbol throughout the newsletter for workshops about transition-related topics.

IEP Survey Results Are In!

Families that receive services from SSD and have provided SSD with their email address have been receiving an electronic request to complete an Individualized Education Program (IEP) survey. The surveys are sent out after a student's annual or initial IEP. SSD received **2,458** completed surveys during the 2016-2017 school year – a 17.5% return rate.

Responses have been providing us with valuable feedback. While the overwhelming majority of the responses have been positive, the area of greatest opportunity based on family feedback has been related to communication.

Areas noted specifically have been prior to an IEP, reporting progress and sharing concerns in advance of an IEP. The District is working with our professional development department and administrators to support training and information sharing related to communication strategies and expectations.

Thank you for your feedback and please continue to share your experiences so we can continuously improve our practices. If you do not wish to share your email address or do not have email, you can access the survey by visiting <http://www.ssdmo.org/YourVoiceCounts.html> or requesting a hard copy of the survey.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact SSD's Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program at 314.989.8460 or email ssdpeda@ssdmo.org.

Workshop Information

All workshops are provided free of charge and open to all parents, families and community members.

Register by calling 314.989.7807 or 711 (Deaf/HOH), or register online at www.solutionwhere.com/ssd (call the registration number for assistance with setting up an account).

Please be sure to register for workshops as they are sometimes canceled due to unexpected circumstances or weather conditions – we need to be able to contact you!

If you need more information, or if you have special needs and require an alternative format as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act, contact Debra Fiasco, Administrator, Parent Education, dmfiasco@ssdmo.org 314.989.8108 or 711 (Deaf/HOH).



Unless otherwise noted with this symbol, all workshops are held on the lower level at SSD's Central Administrative Offices, 12110 Clayton Road, Town & Country (just east of Ballas Road, next to Neuwoehner High School). **Childcare is not provided.**

Note: Workshops presented by MPACT refers to Missouri's statewide Parent Training and Information Center that serves all disabilities and all ages.



**Register by phone or online at:
314.989.7807 (or 711, Deaf/HOH)
www.solutionwhere.com/ssd**



What to Do This Summer?

If this is the question that you begin to think about in April or May, don't delay. Many programs fill up quickly.

“What to Do This Summer” Recreation Fair

Thursday, Feb. 15, 6:30-8 p.m., SSD Central Office, Lower Level, 12110 Clayton Road, Town & Country, MO 63131

The Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis will present information on funding and recreation vouchers from 6:30-6:50 p.m. The fair will begin at 6:50 p.m. and providers of summer camps and programs will be available to discuss their offerings. SSD Extended School Year (ESY) staff will also be present for questions.

➤ **The SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Summer Resource Packet** will be available in February. To request a copy, please call 314.989.8460 or email rdmyers@ssdmo.org.

Extended School Year (ESY) 2018

ESY services are offered during the summer for students receiving special education services who have been found eligible to receive the services by the IEP team. ESY is not the same as summer school, which school districts may or may not offer to all district students.

ESY services generally run from June 4-July 29, either Monday through Thursday or Monday through Friday. Most programs run three to four hours in the morning. SSD attempts to match the timing of special education ESY services to regular summer school/enrichment programming in a student's home district.

Student enrollment forms for ESY will be mailed to qualified families on Feb. 15, 2018. Forms should be signed and returned to the student's case manager by March 1, 2018. Information regarding ESY can be found on the Special Considerations page of the student's IEP, as well as on Form B.

If you have questions about ESY and/or your child's eligibility, contact his or her IEP case manager/chairperson. You may also contact your child's SSD area coordinator or SSD principal with further questions. To learn more about ESY, contact the SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program at 314.989.8460.

WINTER 2018 SSD PARENT WORKSHOPS

JANUARY



SSD Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Wednesday, Jan. 10, 7-9 p.m.

SSD Central Office, Board Room

This meeting is open to all parents and families.

Behavior 101: Understanding Behavior and What to Do to Support Your Child's Positive Behavior Development

Thursday, Jan. 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: SSD PBIS facilitator
SSD Central Office, Room 61

Does your child have meltdowns over

having to stop a preferred activity? Are meals, chores, bedtime or getting ready for school difficult times at your house? Learn some strategies to make your home more peaceful and new ways to understand your child's behavior at home and school.



College Preparation for Students with Disabilities

Tuesday, Jan. 23, 6.30-8.30 p.m.

Presenter: St. Louis Community College Access Office
SSD Central Office, Room 61

For parents, students, high school counselors and SSD teachers. Workshop addresses college and other post-secondary education options primarily for students who have two-year or

four-year college or technical school as their graduation plan. Information will be presented about the planning and research process, services available, ACT/SAT testing accommodations and more.



Planning for Your Child's Future: LifeCourse Family Workshop

Thursday, Jan. 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenters: SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness and SSD Transition staff
SSD Central Office, Room 61

Charting the LifeCourse is a tool that was developed to help individuals with disabilities and families at any age or stage of life think about what they need

to know, identify how to find or develop supports and discover what it takes to have a more self-determined life. Learn how to apply this tool to your family situation.



Solving the Employment Puzzle

Tuesday, Jan. 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenters: MPACT staff and Vocational Rehabilitation
SSD Central Office, Room 61

This workshop will include presenters from Vocational Rehabilitation and MPACT. Content centers on employment for youth with disabilities by presenting two distinct strands: self-determination and “do-it-yourself” strategies for parents and concrete information about employment and how to access adult services for teens/young adults.

FEBRUARY

Behavioral Strategies in the Home and Community

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: SSD applied behavior analysis department coordinators
SSD Central Office, Room 61

Strategies such as token economies and task analysis are commonly used in the school environment to assist with student behavior problems. Those same strategies that help students in school can also be helpful in the home and community settings. This workshop will cover several behavioral-based strategies to use across settings and give parents a starting point to making home and community times interactive and fun for the family.



SSD Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 14, 7-9 p.m.

SSD Central Office, Board Room

This meeting is open to all parents and families.

“What to Do This Summer”

Recreation Fair

Thursday, Feb. 15, 6:30-8 p.m.

Presenters: Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis and recreation providers
SSD Central Office, Rooms 60-61

During this recreation fair, families will be able to visit with providers of summer programs and camps that include all children. Recreation voucher and funding information will be presented from 6:30-6:50 p.m.



Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy Skills for Students and Families

Tuesday, Feb. 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness staff
SSD Central Office, Room 61

This workshop is designed for students and their families to empower them to advocate for themselves in school and the community. Topics will include helping students understand their strengths and challenges, learn effective communication and problem solving skills, and have a basic understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

Making Meaning: Helping Kids Understand What They Read

Thursday, Feb. 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: SSD literacy coach
SSD Central Office, Room 61

If your child seems to read words well but has difficulty with comprehension, this workshop will provide strategies

that help children understand new vocabulary, connect new learning to prior knowledge, create images, determine main idea, summarize and more.

Bullying Prevention: What Parents Can Do

Tuesday, Feb. 27, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: MPACT staff
SSD Central Office, Room 61

This training contains an overview of the dynamics of bullying, including what bullying is, what the types of bullying are, who is bullied, and why children are bullied. Other topics include steps to intervene in bullying behavior, how to encourage students who witness bullying to take action, the role of the school, and laws and policies.

MARCH

Supporting your Child with Emotional Disabilities at Home and School

Tuesday, March 6, 6-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: NAMI St. Louis
SSD Central Office, Room 61

Learn how to communicate more effectively with your child’s therapist or psychiatrist and work with school when negative behaviors, withdrawal or anxiety are escalating. Learn how to plan supports, as well as strategies that decrease anxiety at home and school (what to do when you can’t get your child to go to school, etc.). Participants will gain a greater understanding of community supports for children with emotional disabilities and mental illness.



Supported Decision Making: An Alternative to Guardianship



Thursday, March 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Presenters: Director of Family Support, St. Louis Arc, and

SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness staff

St. Louis ARC, 1177 North Warson Road, St. Louis, MO 63132

When an individual with a disability becomes 18, they are legally an adult. This workshop is designed to help families understand the options they have to assist their loved one in making good decisions without removing their rights through guardianship. We will learn how to assess the decision-making skills your family members have and the supports they already use to assist them in making decisions. Legally binding tools that can be created with the person and their family without seeking guardianship will be shared and discussed.

APRIL

Emergency Preparedness Begins With You

Presenter: Vicky Davidson, Executive Director, Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council

This workshop will be offered twice – see dates, times and locations below.

➤ Monday, April 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
SSD Central Office, Room 61



➤ Tuesday, April 3
9:30-11:30 a.m.
SSD Learning Center
11969 Westline Industrial Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146

In the last year, we have seen catastrophic disasters impact so many individuals, including those who have disabilities. Missouri experiences a

number of disasters, several which rise to the level of a presidential disaster declaration, each year. For those who experience disabilities, extra steps need to be considered to be prepared for all hazards. Attend this training and learn what you can do to be ready for disasters such as tornadoes, severe storms, ice storms, flooding, earthquakes and other emergency events.



Signs for Families and Friends – 4 Sessions

Wednesdays, April 4, 11, 18

and 25, 6-7:30 p.m.

Presenters: Greg Peterson and Mickey Schuchardt

Hazelwood School District Central Office Multipurpose Room, 15955 New Halls Ferry Road, Florissant, MO 63031

Participants will demonstrate sign language vocabulary, sign sentence structure, conceptual accuracy, facial expressions, and body language. Focus is on families. Children 10 and older are welcome if accompanied/supervised by an adult.

Helping Children Develop Friendships & Social Skills

Tuesday, April 10, 9-11:30 a.m.

Presenters: SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness and SSD staff
SSD Central Office, Room 61

Workshop will offer strategies for parents to help children develop friendships, school strategies for building friendships through programs such as peer support and strategies that help children with language and learning differences, including autism, develop social skills.

Executive Functioning for Elementary Students

Tuesday, April 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: SSD facilitator
SSD Central Office, Room 61

After reviewing the basics of executive functioning skills, participants will take a closer look at strategies for elementary-age children and spend time problem solving through group discussion.

Families will receive information on strategies to implement at home to teach skills and/or to modify environments to support student success.



SSD Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Wednesday, April 11, 7-9 p.m.

SSD Central Office, Board Room

This meeting is open to all parents and families.

Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders (Autism, Asperger Syndrome, PDD) – 2-Part Class

Thursdays, April 12 & 19, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenters: SSD autism effective practice specialists
SSD Central Office, Room 61

Identify and understand the characteristics of autism spectrum disorders and learn effective, practical strategies that will support your child in being more successful at home and school. The second session will focus more on strategies, with time for discussion and questions, and may break out into sessions based on your child's intervention needs.

Executive Functioning for Secondary Students (Middle School and High School)

Tuesday, April 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: SSD facilitator
SSD Central Office, Room 61

After learning the basics of executive functioning skills, participants will take a closer look at strategies for students at the middle school/high school levels and spend time problem solving through group discussion. Families will receive information on strategies to implement at home to teach skills and/or to modify environments to support student success.

Supports for Your Family from the St. Louis Regional Office for Developmental Disabilities

Thursday, April 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: St Louis Regional Office staff
SSD Central Office, Room 61

If your child has a qualifying developmental disability (such as intellectual disability, autism, cerebral

palsy, traumatic brain injury, multiple disabilities, epilepsy, certain learning disabilities), learn how your support coordinator can make sure you have access to resources such as respite care, summer programs, and state, county and not-for-profit funding for essential services for your child. The support coordinator can help you plan for your child's future and provide support for your child's IEP meeting if needed.

Disagreement Resolution Process

Monday, April 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: MPACT staff
SSD Central Office, Room 61

Learn strategies to prevent problems through documentation and letter writing. Also covered are the resolution process in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

MAY

Picky Eating and Beyond: Exploring Food Selectivity, Food Allergies and Other Eating Problems

Wednesday, May 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Presenter: SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness staff
SSD Central Office, Room 61

Aversion to certain foods, overeating, under eating and eating too fast are just a few of the issues with which many parents struggle with their child. This session looks at a variety of topics, such as food allergies and meeting nutritional needs both in the school and home settings. Families will leave with tools and strategies they can use to support their child's healthy eating habits.



SSD Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Wednesday, May 9, 7-9 p.m.

SSD Central Office, Board Room

This meeting is open to all parents and families.

SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program Email List



Would you like to receive email updates and notices about our workshops and other events?

Let us know by sending your email address to ssdpeda@ssdmo.org or call 314.989.8460 and we will add you to our email distribution list.

SSD has launched **Let's Talk!**, an online tool that will allow you to submit feedback at your convenience directly to the SSD staff member who can help.



Just visit the SSD website at www.ssdmo.org and look for the **Let's Talk!** button on the homepage.

Let us know what's going well, offer suggestions, ask a question, submit a concern or make a general comment.

SSD Family & Community Resource Center

The Family & Community Resource Center – or FCRC as it's better known – provides just what its name promises: A vast array of special education and disability-related tools and resources for SSD families and the community at large. The FCRC's collection includes thousands of books, DVDs, resource packets and more.



View the online library of materials at [http://www.ssdmo.org/cool tools/fcrc books.html](http://www.ssdmo.org/cool%20tools/fcrc%20books.html)

Call 314.989.8460 or email rdmyers@ssdmo.org to have books and DVDs sent home through school mail (via your child's backpack). We need your name, address, phone number, email address, child's name, teacher and school.

RESOURCE PACKETS FROM SSD'S FAMILY & COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

Resource packets contain great articles on the topics below plus a list of books and videos available to check out from the Family & Community Resource Center. You may order up to **THREE** packets. We prefer to send them through school mail to come home with your child whenever possible. We cannot mail packets outside of St. Louis County/City.

Go to www.ssdmo.org/cool_tools/fcrc_resource_packet.html to order packets online or complete the form below.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Ability Awareness | 29. Oppositional Defiant Disorder |
| 2. Anxiety Disorders | 30. Orthopedic Impairment |
| 3. Assistive Technology | 31. Parenting a Child with a Disability |
| 4. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder | 32. SSD Parent Handbook: Overview of SSD, Laws & Parental Rights |
| 5. Autism Spectrum Disorder | 33. SSD Parent Handbook: Evaluation Process |
| 6. Awareness for Grandparents & Extended Family | 34. SSD Parent Handbook: The IEP Process |
| 7. Behavior Strategies | 35. SSD Parent Handbook: The Transition Process |
| 8. Benefits and Estate Planning | 36. SSD Parent Handbook: Resources |
| 9. Bipolar Disorder | 37. SSD Parent Handbook: Glossary & Acronyms |
| 10. Blind/Visually Impaired | 38. Positive Behavioral Support |
| 11. Bullying | 39. Post-Secondary Education |
| 12. Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 40. Reading Strategies & Resources |
| 13. Depression | 41. Self-Esteem |
| 14. Divorce & Children with Special Needs | 42. Sensory Integration |
| 15. Down Syndrome | 43. Sexuality |
| 16. Dyslexia | 44. Siblings |
| 17. Early Childhood Special Education | 45. Speech & Language |
| 18. Encouraging Independence | 46. Stress |
| 19. Executive Functioning | 47. Summer Education & Recreation Resources |
| 20. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) | 48. Supported Decision Making/Guardianship |
| 21. Friendship & Social Skills Strategies | 49. Supported Employment |
| 22. Gifted & Disability | 50. Supported Living |
| 23. Homework Strategies | 51. Talking to Your Child about Their Disability |
| 24. Inclusion Matters | 52. Toilet Training Strategies |
| 25. Intellectual Disabilities | 53. Transition Planning |
| 26. Learning Disabilities | 54. Traumatic Brain Injury |
| 27. Math/Numeracy | 55. Writing Strategies |
| 28. Multiple Disabilities | |

To send information through your child's school, we need the following information:

Your Name: _____ Child's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Child's Age: _____ Child's Grade Level: _____

Email Address: _____ Child's Special Education Teacher or Therapist: _____

Child's School: _____ School District: _____

Please complete and return this form by mail, phone, email, fax or through your child's SSD teacher to:

SSD Parent Education & Diversity Awareness
12110 Clayton Road
St. Louis, MO 63131

Phone: 314.989.8460 **Deaf/HOH:** 711 **Fax:** 314.989.8449
Email: rdmyers@ssdmo.org

Parent Connection is a publication of the Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program of Special School District of St. Louis County.

SSD MISSION: In collaboration with partner districts, we provide technical education and a wide variety of individualized educational and support services designed for each student's successful contribution to our community.

SSD VISION: Partners for every student's success

SSD CORE VALUES:

Student Success • Collaboration
• Integrity • Stewardship
• Continuous Improvement • Equity



facebook.com/SSDStLCo



[@SSDStLCo](https://twitter.com/SSDStLCo)



www.ssdmo.org

Special School District Notice of Non-Discrimination and Accommodation: Special School District does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation against an individual based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, ancestry, disability, veteran status, age, or activity protected by federal or state law in its programs, activities and employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Direct inquiries and complaints under this policy to Special School District's Director – Compliance Liaison, 12110 Clayton Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63131, telephone (314) 989-8100 or to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, Missouri 64106, telephone (816) 268-0550, fax (816) 268-0599, TDD (800) 877-8339, email OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov. Information about the existence and location of services, activities, and facilities accessible to impaired persons can be obtained from the Special School District's Director – Compliance Liaison at the phone number and address listed above.



Special School District
of St. Louis County
12110 Clayton Road
Town & Country, MO 63131

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

ST. LOUIS, MO
PERMIT NO. 1282

What is SSD's Parent Advisory Council?

SSD's **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)** is looking for new members to assist other parents in SSD or other local school districts to network, advocate and share information.

To learn more about the PAC, become a representative for your child's school and/or district, or to reach your district's elected representative, contact your SSD area coordinator or school principal, or contact Debra Fiasco at dmfiasco@ssdmo.org or 314.989.8108.



The PAC typically meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at SSD Central Office, 12110 Clayton Road in Town & Country.

Meetings for the winter semester are scheduled for Jan. 10, Feb. 14, April 11 and May 9.