Is this the Community We Want to Live In?

By: Karen Taycher

We are Nevadans, we live here for many different reasons, and we have chosen to work and to raise our families here. As Nevada faces the most challenging financial times, we must work together to build the community we want to live in.

This next legislative session will be a turning point in Nevada’s history. Do we sit by and watch as the funding for the education of our children is drastically cut? Do we simply stand back and allow hundreds of children lose early intervention services? Do we deny children with mental health needs the opportunity to be emotionally stable? Do we tolerate a cut in home based services leading to institutionalization of people with disabilities? Do we declare that children with autism do not deserve the treatment that will allow them to be full and active members of our community?

During the recent political season, we were told that we need to diversify our economy, bring new business into our state. The reality is as businesses consider relocating to Nevada, they study the quality of life indicators. Good business leaders know that they need an educated workforce and a healthy community for their employees to raise their families.

Unfortunately, Nevada has long been on the top of every bad list and on the bottom of every good list related to education and social services. These are the very things that ensure quality of life. Additional budget cuts in education and social services will be devastating to the well being of all Nevadans. The safety net will have gaping holes in it; children and families will fall through!

There is no getting around the fact that you and your family will be impacted by the proposed budget cuts. We have already seen families in desperate need after the most recent budget cuts during last year’s special session.

All is not lost yet. We have time and opportunity to stand up and say “This is not the community we want to live in!” We have a new Governor who will have to put forth his recommended budget to the Legislature. There are many seasoned legislators and several brand new legislators who will make up the 2011 session. The Governor-elect and your legislators need to hear from you. They need to understand how these drastic cuts will impact real families. They need to know that they have your support to make decisions in the 2011 session that will save education and social services.

I am reminded of the quote from Margaret Mead, “A small group of thoughtful people can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” We are that group in this critical time for Nevada families. Together we can ensure that this is the community we want to live in.

Continued on page two (2).
Under the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA), States are required to have in place a performance plan that evaluates the State’s efforts to implement the purposes of Part B/Part C and describe how the State will improve such implementation. The State also must report annually to the US Department of Education on the performance of the State under the State’s performance plan.

The IDEA further requires that the Secretary of Education makes an annual determination as to whether each State is meeting the requirements of the IDEA based on the data submitted in the Annual Performance Report (APR) and other available information.

States were rated through this process as (1) meets requirements; (2) needs assistance; (3) needs intervention; or (4) needs substantial intervention.

Nevada Early Intervention, birth to 3 years, Part C was determined to fall within the category of “needs assistance.”

Nevada Special Education for K-12 Part B was determined to fall in the category of “meets requirements”.

To learn more about early intervention and special education, contact:

- Nevada Department of Education: www.doe.nv.gov/SpecialEdReports/APR_for_Students_with_Disabilities_April_2010.pdf

Volunteer Corner

What can you do?

- Tell your story to your Nevada Assemblyperson and Senator. Let them know how the budget cuts impact your family.
- Stay informed. Know who are in legislative leadership roles and share your story with them.
- Use email, telephone and attend public hearings to share your story. Contact the media, write letters to editors and use the internet, blog, Facebook and Twitter.
- Get your extended family involved. Call on your neighbors and co-workers. They are all a part of your life and the community you live in. They can provide help and support with your efforts.
- Join groups that are organizing to save critical services and education funding. Stay up to date with developing information.

To find out who your legislative representatives are. You can go to http://www.nvpep.org or you can also call the Research Library at 775-684-8827.

State Determinations

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For dates, times and locations of Nevada PEP Trainings; or to request a workshop in your community:

Southern Nevada – (702) 388-8899
Northern Nevada – (775) 448-9950
Rural Nevada – (800) 216-5188.

You may also view dates, times, locations and register for trainings online at www.nvpep.org.

5 Part IDEA Training Series
Learn about Starting the Process to Obtain Help for a Child, Writing Individualized Education Programs, Rights and Procedural Safeguards, Behavior and Discipline in School and Getting Ready for Change.

Families Are Important
An early childhood workshop for families of infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities.

Helping Our Youth Reach for Tomorrow
Gives parents and students information on transition from high school to post secondary.

How is My Child Reading?
A workshop of valuable information on how students learn to read.

IEP Clinic
Clinics include a brief overview of the IEP process and a Q & A session.

Is Your Child a Target for Bullying?
Strategies to help families cope with and prevent bullying.

Journey to Adulthood: What Parents Need to Know (Sexuality)
Provides information to help a child with a disability understand the physical, emotional, and social changes of puberty and adolescence.

Positive Behavioral Interventions/ Supports
Helps you to focus on the “Whys” of behavior and provides an overview of functional assessment and positive interventions.

Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy
Learn the importance of advocacy and effective strategies to help children with disabilities.

Solving the Employment Puzzle
Encourages youth and families to consider what can be done to help prepare youth with disabilities for employment.

Understanding ADHD
Learn strategies that can help a child become successful in home, school and community environments.

You Can Do It
Helps families and high school students with disabilities prepare for a successful transition into college.

Entrenamientos del IEP
Este entrenamiento incluye una breve descripción del proceso del IEP y una sesión de preguntas y respuestas.

Entendiendo ADHD
Aprenda estrategias que pueden ayudarle a su niño a ser exitoso en el hogar, en la escuela y en la comunidad.

Parent Support Groups in English
Learn about various topics of interest such as insurance coverage, behavioral health services, respite, discipline, disability and school, summer time activities, and transition, amongst others.

Grupos de apoyo para los padres en Español
Aprenda acerca de varios temas de interés tales como la cobertura del seguro de salud, servicios de salud del comportamiento, respiro, disciplina, discapacidades y la escuela, actividades de tiempo de verano y transición.

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Do you know a student who needs an accessible version of a textbook to succeed in school? Many students with print disabilities do. With accessible textbooks, students can listen to their textbook information, read words on a computer screen, look up definitions of words they don’t understand and receive the same educational opportunities as their peers. Getting accessible textbooks can be a challenging process so the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) established a way to provide accessible textbooks to qualified members with IEP’s.

Thanks to an award from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Bookshare® was created for students with disabilities who have difficulties reading a printed book. Bookshare® is simple and easy to use. It offers approximately 90,000 digital books, textbooks, teacher-recommended reading, periodicals and assistive technology tools. Plus, with a Bookshare® membership, you can download accessible titles onto your computer and read them at your convenience.

To learn more about this amazing accessible textbook database, visit http://www.bookshare.org/ online for additional information. Membership is available to most individuals with verifiable print disabilities and for qualifying students with IEP’s. It’s free.
Parents, family members, and educators had an opportunity to collaborate and learn together new information at the 2010 Results, Rules and Relationships Conference. The conference started with a valuable presentation by Ann Alexander about the efforts in Nevada to improve post-school outcomes. Special emphasis was made on the importance of engaging youth and families in transition planning to help students set their goals in areas of self advocacy, self determination, employment, and post secondary school.

An inspiring example of this is Hector Tinajero, a Nevada high school student who shared his love of learning. Hector, his family, and educators are the prime example of successful collaboration to achieve positive results. He shared pictures and experiences that reflected his daily efforts and the support he gets from his family, peers, and teachers. He gave examples of his self advocacy skills, such as asking peers to be his tutor and communicating with teachers his needs. Hector uses colorful art as a form of expression and motivation in life.

Art Cernosia talked about rules and their connection with relationships and results. He emphasized the importance of high expectations and access to the general education curriculum to the maximum extent possible to effectively educate children with disabilities. Eric Hartwig wrapped up the conference by talking about the importance of building and sustaining quality relationships. Everybody learns best when value is added to relationships. Dr. Hartwig wrapped up the end of the conference encouraging everyone to remember the importance of valuing each child as an individual with unique strengths, needs, skills and interests in order to reinforce collaboration and improve relationships.

Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce- Small Business Excellence Awards  By: Stephanie Vrsnik

Nevada PEP is proud to announce that we have been recognized as a finalist for the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce's annual Small Business Excellence Awards. Sponsored exclusively by Nevada State Bank since its inception in 2006, the Awards program salutes the best of Southern Nevada's small businesses. The Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce recognizes finalists and winners in five categories for their contributions and dedication to excellence in small business. This year Nevada PEP earned recognition as a finalist in the Non-Profit of the Year category.

We would like to extend our appreciation to the following sponsors for supporting Nevada PEP's nomination. Thank you for sponsoring tables for the staff and special guests attending this exciting event.

Dr. Julie Beasley
Senator Steven Horsford
Andy Leavitt, Esq. & Family
Spring Mountain Treatment Center
Universal Design for Learning A New Approach to Teaching Diverse Learners

Teaching students who may learn differently are among the many challenges that schools are facing today. A different approach to teaching and learning called Universal Design for Learning provides a blueprint that gives all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL is not just a new curriculum presentation; it addresses ways to provide access for all students. It is a concept or philosophy for designing and delivering instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities.

Universal Design for Learning is an educational approach with three primary principles:

- Multiple means of representation, to give diverse learners options for acquiring information and knowledge,—(“what” of learning)
- Multiple means of action and expression, to provide learners options for demonstrating what they know,—(the “how” of learning).
- Multiple means of engagement, to tap into learners’ interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation—(the “why” of learning).

The curriculum should serve the learners. When UDL principals are successfully applied in educational settings from preschool to high school to lifelong learning, individual learners are challenged but always have lots of support so they can learn in ways that work best for them. For additional information visit http://www.udlcenter.org/

Examples adapted from Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST)

Nevada PEP –Reaching Out to Military Families

Nevada PEP recognizes that families in the military who have children with special needs face some unique challenges while trying to access services. Strengthening all families in the community means understanding and addressing those needs and embracing those families who are always on the move or have a loved one deployed overseas. Community outreach and public awareness events have recently provided opportunities for military parents to receive helpful resource information and network with others in similar situations at Nellis Air Force Base and elsewhere throughout the state.

The Exceptional Family Newsletter dedicated to families of Nellis and Creech Air base featured an article highlighting Nevada PEP Services statewide in its summer issue. Countless calls and emails resulted and have been answered in rendering assistance and support. Nevada PEP remains committed and is proud to continue these efforts to assist families who protect and serve our country.

Families are encouraged to contact us for information and support; you can also access our web site to learn more about Nevada PEP. www.nvpep.org
My Family Story  By: Cyndy Gustafon

One of the biggest goals I have for my son who is severely disabled, besides having a love filled, productive, healthy life, is to be a part of the community he lives in. For me, this has always meant that he would be able to attend his neighborhood school successfully, with services and supports that are designed for him to be included and to achieve at his own level. For the last four years my son has been able to do just that and we are thrilled! I don’t believe I would have been able to advocate so successfully for my son through all these years, even with my skills as a mother of a child with disabilities and my own job as a researcher and advocate, without PEP. Nevada PEP gave me actionable information, advice, support, and strategies to access the education system that all children are entitled to. They helped me build a strong, positive relationship with our neighborhood school which has benefited my son and our family for the last four years. Nevada PEP has literally helped to change the trajectory of my son’s life by giving us the tools to keep him in the least restrictive environment possible, therefore, by definition, giving him all the more room to grow. Thank you Nevada PEP!

Behavior Basics: Working Together  By: Flo LaRoy

Addressing the needs of a child whose challenging behavior interferes with learning, academically or socially, requires teamwork. The support team will involve individuals working with the child (parents, teachers, direct staff) from all environments (home, school, community). Each team member brings unique information about the child, including strengths and weaknesses, target behaviors, observation data, positive reinforcers and effective strategies. Together the team will design and implement an individualized positive behavior intervention plan that should become part of an IEP or 504 plan. The plan should clearly state the desired / alternative skills to be taught, how the skills will be taught, what environmental modifications/accommodations are needed, the types of reinforcers and consequences strategies to be used, and, if needed, a crisis plan for safety. Remember the behavior plan will change as the child grows and learns.

Positive Behavior Tip:

Catch your child or student being good! Strive for a ratio of 4 positive statements to 1 negative statement. Make sure your praise clearly states what the child has done correctly. Negative statements should be followed by opportunities to correct errors.

Resources:

Visit the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports website (www.pbis.org) to get information about helping children with challenging behavior at home, in school and out in the community.
The Association for Positive Behavior Support website has PBS information for families and examples of PBS plans. (http://www.apbs.org/new_apbs/familyLinks.aspx)

Congratulations PEP Staff Anniversaries

Nevada PEP has a wonderful team. Their dedication and longevity to Nevada PEP is truly admired and recognized. The following staff members have made their anniversaries in the past months: Robin Renshaw-11, TJ Rosenberg-11, Natalie Filipic-6, Dorena Ash-5, Kathy Treants-4, Sally Reeves-2, and Monica Zapata-2.
My son is having difficulty with communicating his thoughts independently, and I heard that assistive technology would benefit him. What is assistive technology?

Assistive technology services are a wide range of tools and equipment used to increase, maintain, or improve the life functions of a child with a disability. Assistive technology, also known as “AT”, provides children with the opportunity to be more independent within their environment. Some examples of assistive technology devices include: augmentative communication system, a computer with a touch screen or even a spell-checker. According to Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA), an assessment must be done to determine whether there is a need for assistive devices and/or services in order to achieve educational goals. As parents, you are the first and best teacher of your child. Work with the team of educators, ask questions, share your concerns, and ensure that the agreed upon assistive technology device or services are documented on the IEP.
Las nuevas expectativas adoptadas por el Estado De Nevada asegurarán que los estudiantes estén preparados para la educación postsecundaria y la fuerza laboral. Las normas se aplicarán en las materias de inglés, lenguaje y matemáticas en los grados K-12, ya que estas son componentes básicos y necesarios para otras materias. El maestro puede utilizar estas normas comunes básicas para que el estudiante sea exitoso y tenga un claro entendimiento de las expectativas al igual que permitirle al estudiante ser competitivo en el mercado global.

Estas expectativas fueron diseñadas a través del país por un grupo diverso de profesores, expertos, padres y estudiantes usando los estándares más altos del estado y prácticas basadas en la evidencia. Las decisiones sobre el plan de estudios todavía estarán en manos de los maestros, directores, superintendentes y juntas escolares. Los objetivos de aprendizaje pueden variar ampliamente de un estado a otro.

Es importante que los padres que tienen hijos con discapacidades se familiaricen con las normas comunes básicas para saber cómo se aplican a la educación de sus hijos. Para más información usted puede visitar la página de internet http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards

System of Care is a collaboration of child serving agencies working together to help families get what they need in the best way. In this collaboration the agencies such as Division of Child and Family Services (State Children’s Mental Health), Department of Family Services (Child Welfare), Juvenile Justice and Nevada PEP, just to name a few, have agreed to System of Care Principles in serving families. In the System of Care, agency partners and family members work together to develop policies and procedures. Then those policies and procedures can reflect what families need when they receive and use services.

One of the principles is that families can get needed services and supports in one place as much as possible, and in their own community. When the System of Care is working well, families will have one plan instead of several and a team of people, called a Child and Family Team, which will help the family prioritize goals.

This team should have people that support the family from the agencies that are collaborating with each other as well as members that the family has invited to be there. This is System of Care at each level to provide individualized services to families that need mental health and behavior supports. System of Care should be making things easier for families.
What’s Ahead after High School? *Becoming a Life-Long Learner*

By: Kathy Treants

Youth with disabilities who are leaving high school are at a great point in their lives. They have their whole lives in front of them. Young adults have many options when it comes to life after high school.

I have a new saying in my office that states “The best way to predict your future is to create it.” This really hits home because none of us, whether parent, student, or educator knows exactly what the future holds for our children. We do know that for young adults with disabilities one of the major turning points in their lives will be leaving the high school environment.

Depending on their skills and interests, some of the possibilities are:

- Moving directly into full-time employment
- Setting up a household, marrying, and starting a family
- Going to a trade school or pursuing other training to learn specialized skills
- Attending a community college
- Continuing on to a four-year college or university
- Combination of part time employment/academic learning

To prepare for the transition process, here are some of the questions families might be asking:

**High Expectations**

By: Robin Renshaw

One of the best ways families can help youth with disabilities to prepare for their future is to set high expectations while keeping their individual needs in mind. When students are in an environment with individuals who have high expectations it creates opportunities for role modeling and mentoring. Youth have a tendency to have higher expectations for themselves when parents can encourage conversations about attending college, employment opportunities and joining in community activities. Some strategies that families can use to promote high expectations are:

- Provide opportunities to participate with their child in school & community activities. This is a great way for parents to network with other parents who are working through the same issues. By talking about similar issues, parents can become effective advocates for their children and may learn of new opportunities for their youth.
- Seek professionals who provide family-centered services. This is where the family is more involved in the decision-making of their child’s progress. Family center services not only encourage families to be more involved but promote full participation among everyone and strengthen collaboration.
- Help youth participate in youth development and leadership activities. Involvement in community groups such as People First, theater clubs, music organizations, and adult gyms or athletic groups can help young adults develop additional life skills.

As a person with a disability, I know that having high expectations is very important. My parents encouraged and supported me to attend college and get involved in the community. I have become someone who approaches each day with a positive attitude resulting in new opportunities to learn and experience life.
Increasing Access to Employment for Students with Disabilities

By: Samantha King

There are approximately 54 million Americans living with a disability many of whom are currently working or would like to work. As the nation’s largest employer, the federal government is leading by example to ensure that all people with disabilities have equal access and opportunities for inclusive workplaces and communities. For example, the Office of Personnel (OPM) and the Department of Labor’s Office of Employment Policy (ODEP) will work together to put on a day-long Federal Government-wide job fair for individuals with disabilities as well as providing workshops focusing on exploring reasonable accommodations and information on assistive technology.

The government is also making a concerted effort to increase disability awareness for employers by promoting inclusive workplaces, supporting the integration of assistive technology in the workplace and creating an environment of respect for coworkers with disabilities.

Hopefully, through a collaborative effort, this ideology will trickle down into the states to help ensure that individuals with disabilities can obtain and maintain competitive employment. Competitive employment consists of wages that are equal to or greater than those of other businesses in the same industry and assuring that the individual will have the same responsibilities and regular supervision with no extensive individualized supports. Examples of competitive employment could be working in the mall as a sales associate, as an employee at the local movie theatre, or achieving your goal of becoming a teacher. This will afford persons with disabilities them the same opportunities for advancement as those without disabilities.

When we as a community raise the level of expectations for students with disabilities and foster their strengths, preferences and interests, we can help pave the way for them to achieve their full employment potential. If we expect great things from our students, great things will happen.

Information obtained from the following sources:
http://ezinearticles.com/?President-Obama-Executive-Order-For-Disability-Employment&id=4829717

Today, through the services of the vocational rehabilitation state grants program, nearly 200,000 people with disabilities reach employment goals each year. Over 350 centers for independent living (CILs) provide vital direct services to children and adults with disabilities to help them with important living and employment supports such as housing, transportation, personal attendant services, and technology, and the CILs help local officials make their communities welcoming and accessible to people with all disabilities. The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) administers the vocational rehabilitation state grants program and independent living program and several research, training, and demonstration projects authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

OSERS believes that building on a strong education foundation is the key to launching the future success of young people with disabilities. The array of programs and services authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 seamlessly support individuals with disabilities as they work towards realizing their career and life goals.

To learn more about OSERS, the vocational rehabilitation and the independent living programs authorized by the Rehabilitation Act go to http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/index.html?src=oc.
Welcome to our newest edition of the Hand in Hand Together We Can Appreciation Program! This program honors and recognizes the extraordinary people who have made a difference in our lives and in the lives of our children with special needs. We have wonderful and truly devoted people throughout the state of Nevada who have given that extra hand to help our children. So sit back and enjoy these heartfelt stories!

hand in hand
together we can!

Luz A. Alvarenga  
Relative/Familiar
Le doy gracias a dios y a mi mamá por tenerla conmigo porque es la única que tiene la paciencia con mi hijo Emanuel. Ella le da mucho amor, lo entiende, y lo apoya en todas las frustraciones que él tiene. Ella se preocupa mucho por él y por mí y quisiera decirle que gracias por su dedicación diaria que tiene con nosotros.

I would like to thank God and my mother for having her with me because she is the only person that has patience with my son Emmanuel. She is very loving, understanding, and supportive during all of the frustrations that he comes across. She is always worried about my son and me. I would like to thank her for the daily dedication she has with us.

Alba H. Barrillas  
Parent

Ana Bracomonte  
Guidance Counselor
Ana has worked with my son these last 9 months. She has been a great counselor and mentor. My son has ADHD and is not on any medicine, and Ana has all the patience in the world for him. It is her job to help him but she doesn’t have to treat him as lovingly as she does. He loves her & looks forward to seeing her every chance he gets. I just want to have her recognized for all her hard work.

Johnnah Chacon  
Parent

Patricia Chinen  
Relative
My mom, Patricia, is the guardian of my son. She is amazing and wonderful. She takes care of him when I’m working. She is there 100% and I just want to thank her for everything.

Michelle Chinen  
Parent

Eri Cronin  
Tutor
Eri always has a big smile for our son; she is not only his tutor but a great friend. She is always there to make him happy and no matter how tired she gets she still has the energy to play with him. Eri knows how to get into his world and little by little she is bringing him to our world. We thank God for putting her in our lives. THANK YOU ERI!

Luis & Olivia Villalobos  
Parents

Edith Hallmark  
Relative
I would be in a lot of trouble if it weren’t for my mother, Edith Hallmark. She has been my rock in helping me with all of my son’s problems. Her understanding has been the key in letting me know that I am strong enough to take care of any problem that is thrown my way. She has been there for me, when other people turned their back on my son and me because he does have problems. I thank God every day that he gave me the gift of such a wonderful mom! Thanks mom we love you!

Robin (Nikki) Bryant  
Parent

Cheri Day  
Nevada PEP
I would like to give a special thanks to Cheri with Nevada PEP for her tremendous efforts, listening ear, and having empathy and compassion for a parent who was really frustrated with my Son’s School, Teacher, and the lack of concern for my son’s non-implementation of IEP.

I did not start out with having Cheri on our Team, but I am sure glad that we ended up getting her. At first I was skeptical with starting with a new team member and I asked many questions to see if she knew much about what was needed for my son to receive FAPE and in regards to non-implementation of his IEP. I felt at the beginning I was going to have to get her up to speed in everything that had happened and how much participation I was going to need because I kept hitting road blocks.
Cheri did not take long to figure out that we had some serious issues going on and that this was going to be a lengthy process. She helped me to figure out how we needed to navigate and to move in a positive and respectful manner. I am truly glad that I was able to lean on her for morale support at a time I did not see daylight. It was comforting that she was able to relate to my needs and the needs of my Son by her own experiences. Cheri is truly an asset to Nevada PEP and the parents of children with special needs.

Thea Westin
Parent

Rosenda Hernandez
Wife

Yo le doy los honores a mi esposa porque es una mujer muy batalladora. Ella ha sabido tener todo el tiempo disponible para mis hijos. Ella ha sacado adelante a otros tres niños que ahora tenemos en custodia y que posiblemente nos den en adopción. Ahora van a ser seis niños con los cuales ella va a compartir todos sus triunfos y todas sus dificultades. Ella ha podido sacarlos adelante y llevarlos por un buen camino. También ha podido saber qué es lo que quieren llevar a cabo con sus metas y ella siempre tendrá mi apoyo. Todos los honores y méritos para mi esposa por ser luchona y aguantar los momentos difíciles con los niños y por darles fortaleza y las ganas de seguir adelante.

I would like to give this honor to my wife because she is a fighter. She has been able to spend all the time that is available on our kids. She has also helped three other children which are currently under our custody and that we will possibly adopt. Now there will be six children with whom she will be able to share her triumphs and also the difficult situations. She has been able to help them move forward and lead them in the right direction. She knows what my children want and their goals and she will always have my support. Every honor and merit goes to my wife for being a fighter and dealing with the difficult moments with our children and for giving them the strength and the will to move forward.

Víctor Vasquez
Husband

Amy Janoff
Special Ed Teacher

Ms. Janoff is excellent in helping children with disabilities, in particular my son. She was his Special Ed Teacher and she went above and beyond to make accommodations for him. Ms. Janoff was always interested in his progress as a student and his well being as a human. There’s no one more deserving of the recognition.

Jamika White
Parent

Mr. Jeff Kepner
School Psychologist

In many ways my family and I are in debt for our lives & future strides. If it weren’t for Mr. Kepner’s educated love of child psychology and having such a kind, opening-loving heart. I’d hate to imagine where my learning disabled child would have gone in the public school system. Unknowledgeable of the age limitations and restrictions for State Assistance, my son would never have had the chance and opportunity to have the appropriate attention needed for his behavioral developmental delays.

Melissa Gray
Parent

Carolyn McIntosh
Lyon County School District Superintendent

Since the second year that Mrs. McIntosh has been the Superintendent of Lyon County School District. I have seen positive change in the way that parents are perceived as partners in their children’s’ education.

We recently had a “Parent Summit” that was an outstanding collaboration of community and school services, presented in a positive setting at a centrally located school. The information that I obtained has been very valuable and has already headed me in the right direction towards transitioning my son from post high school.

I have felt Mrs. McIntosh’s support in the challenge of educating my son. As a result of medical condition it has taken a large effort between me and the school district to provide a meaningful school experience for him. He has many issues and disabilities to cope with, but together with Lyon county school district under the direct supervision of Mrs. McIntosh he continues to thrive educationally, surpassing all expectations of him! Thank you Mrs. McIntosh and Lyon County School Board

Alyce Volberding
Parent

Nancy Radford
Board Member

We would like to nominate Nancy Radford for the Nevada PEP “Hand in Hand “Together We Can award. Nancy has graciously served the State as a Nevada PEP Governing Board Member and volunteer for over 10 years. As past Chairperson for Nevada PEP, Nancy was a strong leader guiding the organization though our growth, always keeping the family at the center of PEP’s principles. Her
long term dedication to the families of Nevada was evident in everything she was involved in. Nancy has spent countless hours promoting awareness of children’s mental health. She has a special way of putting people at ease with her loving and supporting nature.

Nancy has advocated with passion at all levels in the county and state. She has supported both the Central and Satellite Offices by attending planning meetings for fundraising and program development. It is because of Nancy’s expertise that the Satellite Office has an up to date telephone system. From donated reams of paper, making public PEP presentations to tutorials on phone systems, we knew Nancy was always just a phone call away.

As Nancy moves from the PEP Governing Board to the Alumni Board, we on behalf of the families Nevada PEP serves want to thank her for the years of service and support to families. Nancy came to PEP as a parent looking for support with her son’s IEP and has paid it forward tenfold. What a great example for all of us!

With Our Sincere Appreciation, Nevada PEP Governing Board Members
Karen Taycher, Executive Director
Retta Dermody, Director of Programs and Services

Ms. Rosas
Teacher

Ms. Rosas has shown true compassion for me and my daughter. A long day of dealing with my daughter’s behavior has never stopped her relentless effort to teach my daughter and give her, her best. I am truly grateful for having her as my daughter’s 1st grade teacher.

Malia Kekahuna
Parent

Shannon Ward
Area Administrator

I would like to give a special thanks to Shannon Ward with the WCSD because of her tremendous efforts on the issues of my son’s IEP and implementation.

By the time Shannon started coming to my son’s IEP meetings I was frustrated by the lack of concern for my son’s education and had little confidence with the School. It had been an uphill battle and little by little with the help of Shannon chipping away at the issues, I started feeling more comfortable that she was truly there to benefit my son’s best interest. Shannon was able to give support where needed, she was able to give advice when needed, and she was able to deal with the issues when needed. To her, I give my most heartfelt “Thanks” and hope she will always be able to remind everyone that we are a team and were here to help the students.

Thea Westin
Parent

Patty Cake
CORNER

MIXED-UP WORDS
By: Eskinder Belete

This activity is a great fun opportunity to spend enjoyable time with your children while they learn words, animal names, country names, human names and other interesting topics. You and your child start by gathering interesting words that you would like to use for this game. Here is an example of some mixed-up animal names. Unscramble the letters to match words that are shown in the box at the bottom of the page.

1. lraimloda Armadillo
2. ecmal Gopher
3. perhog Koala
4. laoka Chipmunk
5. anpad Jaguar
6. agajru Hedgehog
7. kuhicnmp Llama
8. dohhegeg Porcupine
9. malal Panda
10. porpuenci Armadillo

Nevada PEP
E-Post
By: Pat Warnke

Nevada PEP has started a new monthly electronic newsletter. The Nevada PEP E-Post is delivered to your email and features current and up to date news. To sign up for the E-Post go to www.nvpep.org and enter your email in the sign up box on the left hand side.
Hand in Hand Sponsors

Life is not measured by the amount of breaths we take, but by those that take our breath away.

Thank you to all of our amazing Hand in Hand Sponsors for their generous support. Their contribution continues to make it possible to honor and recognize the extraordinary people who support Nevada’s children and families. For more information on becoming a Hand in Hand sponsor contact Nevada PEP or go to www.nvpep.org.
The “Hand in Hand, Together We Can” appreciation program recognizes those individuals who have made a positive difference in the lives of children with disabilities. Nevada PEP would like to help you give recognition to a special person for their outstanding efforts. You may nominate a teacher, professional, therapist, family member or someone whose efforts have had a positive impact on a child’s life. All nominees will be honored with a uniquely designed lapel pin and a certificate of recognition. Their “story” will be featured in our quarterly newsletter, as well as appear in Nevada PEP’s Annual “Hand in Hand” Yearbook. Please limit your entries to ONE nominee per form and no more than three nominations a year, per family. Please limit each story to one hundred words or less.

Your Name: _________________________________________________________
Your Address: ________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip Code: _________________________________________________
Your Phone, Email, Fax (optional) ______________________________________

Your permission to use your name and print your story: □ yes □ no

Name of Honoree: ____________________________________________________
Honoree’s Address: ___________________________________________________
City, State, Zip Code: _________________________________________________
Honoree’s Phone Number: ____________________________________________

Please write your story about this special person here:

2101 South Jones Blvd Suite 120, Las Vegas, NV 89146
Fax: (702) 388-2966 / Email: pepinfo@nvpep.org
Annual Membership Information
Annual membership dues are $25.00 per family, organization or professional.

Please provide the following information

| NAME |
| PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION |
| ADDRESS |
| CITY |
| STATE    ZIP |
| PHONE    email |
| CHILD’S NAME |
| DATE OF BIRTH |

☐ I am a parent/caregiver.
☐ I am a professional working with children.
☐ I am a concerned member of the community.
☐ Enclosed is a tax deductible donation in the amount of $_________ to help support the efforts of Nevada PEP.
☐ I would like to be a member of Nevada PEP, please waive the annual dues.
☐ I would like to volunteer.
☐ I would like to receive E-POST updates.

Nevada PEP, Inc. is an independent non-profit tax exempt organization. #88-0301113

Please make checks payable to: Nevada PEP

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Nevada PEP Social Networks

VISIT US ONLINE AT www.nvpep.org

“Challenges are opportunities to find out who we really are”

~ Anonymous

Nevada PEP is a participating agency for:

United Way of So. Nevada Designated gift # 2192
United Way of No. Nevada & the Sierra Designated gift #27052
MGM Mirage Voice Foundation Designated gift #120885
Combined Federal Campaign #29441

Mission Statement
To increase the opportunities for home, community, and school success for children with disabilities, including those who are at risk or who have serious emotional disturbances, their families and their service providers, through education, encouragement and empowerment activities.