

# Middletown City Schools

## Parent Mentor Program



**Linda McDowell, Parent Mentor**

Office Location: Amanda School

1300 Oxford State Rd., Middletown, Oh. 45044

513-420-4620 or [lmcdowell@middletowncityschools.com](mailto:lmcdowell@middletowncityschools.com)

### Reasons to call the Parent Mentor:

I'm afraid to ask questions at the IEP or MFE meeting.

My child is not doing well at school and I don't know what to do.

I have a school problem but don't know whom to call.

I just need someone to talk with that understands.

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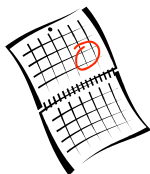
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### **Don't forget no school on**

January 18 due to inservice day

January 21 Martin Luther King Day

February 18 President's Day



### **From The Parent Mentor Desk**

Your Voice Is Important! A parent survey about special education services is enclosed with this newsletter. Please take the time to fill it out and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope. If you have problems filling it out or have any questions please give me a call. The survey information will be used to help Middletown Schools Special Education department evaluate the job they are doing and make any needed changes.

The new state rules and forms for special education will be available in late January. Individual Education Program forms (IEP's) will not change for this school year but will for next. I will be sharing more information in the next newsletter about the changes. The Special Education Regional Resource Centers also have changed. SWOSERRC is now known as State Support Team 13. Please take advantage of the parent trainings series that is now being offered (see pg. 2), as this may not continue for next year. The only thing that stays the same in special education is that it is always changing!

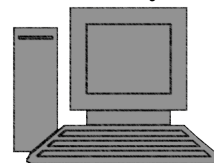
We will soon be halfway through the school year. This is a good time to review your child's progress. Check the report cards and comments that will be coming home soon. Be sure and follow up with your child's teacher if there are any questions or concerns. Also it is a good idea to talk with your child. Even children as young as five or six can give you valuable information, especially if they are having difficulty.

As always, I'm here to help answer questions and concerns you may have. Please feel free to call me anytime.



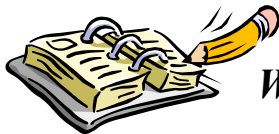
**Call 420-4620**

**Email: [lmcdowell@middletowncityschools.com](mailto:lmcdowell@middletowncityschools.com)**



Please check out the monthly updated Parent Mentor web page at:

**[www.middletownparentmentor.com](http://www.middletownparentmentor.com)**



## What's Happening In and Around Middletown?

### Trainings by the Parent Mentor Program

The following trainings will be held at Amanda School Parent Center, 1300 Oxford State Rd. Please enter the parking lot (look for Amanda School sign). Use the sidewalk next to the driveway on the far side of the building and enter through door O. Just look for the signs. Childcare is NOT available but training materials can be mailed to parents who are unable to attend.

**How To Get What Your Child Needs will be held on** Thursday, Feb. 7 from 6 -8 p.m. Learn how to talk about the important stuff by using some new skills and tricks that make it easy. There will also be time for questions and answers.

**Controlling The Paperwork Monster will be held on** Thursday, March 6 from 6 -8 p.m. Come find out how to manage all the school paperwork (IEP, MFE, etc.) in one easy to use system. Wouldn't it be nice to have your child's school documents at your fingertips? Find out what is important to keep and create a recording keeping system to take with you. Materials are FREE.

**CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention / Hyperactivity Disorder)** meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month at First Baptist Church of Mason (735 Reading Rd.) from 7 -10 p.m. Speakers talk for 75 minutes followed by discussion and support. A \$3.00 donation is requested for non-CHADD members. Upcoming topics include

- Jan. 22nd, Organization, Time Management and Study Skills To Improve Your Child's Academic Performance, Joshua Langberg, PhD.
- Feb. 26th, Bully Prevention - What Every Parent Needs to Know, Eva Pearl & Anita Hurst
- March 25th, Ohio New Rules for Special Education-IDEA 2004, Sue Bitsko, SWOSERRC

**The School to Adult Transition Series** meetings are held on various Wednesdays at Janet Clemmons Center, located at 282 N. Fair Avenue in Hamilton, 6 - 7:30. Future meeting dates include Jan. 23, Feb. 13 & 27, March 12 & 16 and April 9 & 23. All parents are welcome but children must be eligible for MRDD services and register with Patty at 738-5332 or email patty039@aol.com.

**State Support Team 13** (formally Southwest SERRC), 1301 Bonnel, 3rd floor, Cincinnati, 513-563-0045 or [www.swoserrc.org](http://www.swoserrc.org)) sponsors the **Family Leadership Training** from 6 - 8:30 p.m. the second Thursday of each month, February through May. Families can attend any or all sessions. I will be attending these sessions and can offer transportation if needed (call Linda at 420-4620 to make arrangements). Trainings include

- IEP Development, February 14
- Behavior Planning, March 13
- Transition, birth to "world of work", April 10
- Communication (the HARD stuff), May 8

### **Secondary Transition Series**

- Session I – The “Spirit” of the law- planning, Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>, 11 -3 pm or 5 -9 p.m.
- Session II – The “Letter” of the law- reviewed Feb. 12, 11 -3 pm or 5 -9 p.m.
- Session III – The “Spirit” & “Letter” of law – applied, Feb. 26, 5 -9 p.m. only

**On April 14, Chantal Sicile-Kira** will present the following FREE workshops at Redeemer Church, 3431 Hamilton-Middletown Rd. Hamilton.

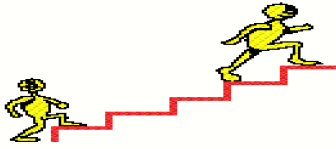
- **Autism Forum**--Creating Positive Outcomes for People on the Autism Spectrum from 1-4 p.m.
- **Autism Forum**--More Than Just Coping: Empowerment Strategies for Parents, 6 -9 p.m.

**The Kelly O'Leary Center Staff** will present the following trainings at Maderia Middle School, 6612 Miami Ave. in Cincinnati from 6:30 -8:30 p.m. Cost is \$5. Call Mark at 636-5352 to register.

- Understanding Sensory Issues in ASD, Feb. 4
- Enhancing Communication for Young Children with ASD, March 3
- Understanding Behavior in ASD, April 7
- Medical Intervention for ASD, May 5

Want to know more about autism from the comfort of your home? OCALI is offering FREE online training. Autism training modules include characteristics, diagnosis, intervention, supports, transition and employment. Go to [www.ocali.org/AIM](http://www.ocali.org/AIM)

**Please check the website for the latest training information: [www.middletownparentmentor.com](http://www.middletownparentmentor.com)**



## Moving On! What You Need To Know

### Preparing for Life After High School

It's hard sometimes to know what to do to get your teenager ready for adult life. It takes a team, (both school and home) and a plan to provide the direction. But where do you start? You can start by planning to attend the three evening series, "Preparing for Life After High School." It will be held at the Middletown High School Media Center (library) from 6:30 -8:00 on the following Tuesdays:

- **February 5 –Developing a Plan.** By playing a fun card game, you can find out what your child needs to learn to be successful as an adult. You will leave with a plan for your child and a copy of the card game.
- **February 19- Planning for College.** Everything you need to know about college selection, disability services and college success. Parents will leave with a folder of information.
- **March 11 –Community Resources.** Who are the agencies and support people that may be helpful? Names and contact information for Butler County will be shared.

The Parent Mentor Program sponsors the above trainings and all parents and high school students are welcome to attend. If you cannot attend but would like the free folders or information please call Linda at 420-4620.

### Project Search Open House

Project Search is a combined education and work experience for students who have completed graduation requirements but deferred their diploma. Students must be eligible for services through the Rehabilitation Services Commission and the county MRDD. An Open House will be held on January 24th, from 6 P.M.- 8 P.M. at Atrium Medical Center (new Middletown Hospital), Professional Building 5th floor Auditorium. Parents and students will have a chance to talk with current student interns about the program. For more information about Project Search contact your child's case manager at MHS or call the parent mentor office. An informational flyer on Project Search and Project Life (another education/work program) is available at [www.middletownparentmentor.com](http://www.middletownparentmentor.com) (click on disability information).

### **Successful Transition: Moving From The School World To The Adult World**

will be presented at Butler Technology Education Resource Center, 3603 Hamilton-Middletown Rd (Rt. 4), Fairfield Township, Ohio 45011 from 6:30 -8:30 on February 25.

Successful transitions occur when families, schools and the community think about the future, plan ahead and work together. Do you have your plan together? If not, this training will provide parents and students with valuable information and tools to develop a plan for the future. Topics that will be discussed include

- Transition timelines (what happens, when)
- Assessment and evaluation of transition needs
- Agency involvement and additional resources
- Transition and the IEP

The first 50 families registered will be given a FREE transition recordkeeping binder to store their important documents and information in. To register, call Linda McDowell 420-4620.



### Preschool Transition Information

Moving from preschool to kindergarten can be an exciting and scary time for families. Transition planning meetings will begin soon. Because the "rules" change from preschool to school age, your child will need to be evaluated again. In preschool, your child qualified for special education services as a "preschooler with a disability". In kindergarten, they can qualify under 13 different categories. At the transition meeting that you will be invited to attend, the preschool team will talk about your child's progress, educational needs and begin planning for the evaluation if needed.

If you would like for me to attend those meetings with you, just give me a call. You will also be receiving a folder of information from the Parent Mentor program that will be helpful. If for some reason, you do not receive it or if you have questions, just give me a call.



## The IEP (Individual Education Program) in Six Easy Steps

The Individual Education Program in easy terms is a plan for success. It documents what needs to happen for your child to be successful learning like other children in school. The IEP form has 6 different steps that are actually written on the plan. Lets look at these different steps.



### Step 1 Discuss Vision: Future Planning

The IEP team will discuss and develop a vision for the child in his or her school/home community that will assist in planning the child's future. Everyone has dreams for the future, which guide actions, thought, and plans. Family and student likes and interests are an essential part of the visioning process. **TIP: Remember if you don't know where you are going, any old place will do!**



### Step 2 Discuss Present Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

The IEP team will review and document relevant data on the child (e.g., progress on current IEP, evaluation team report, family and student input, interventions, assessments, observations and special factors). This information provides a "picture" of the child, including strengths and needs. **TIP: Make sure for every goal listed on the IEP, that you have a present academic or functional level listed so you can measure progress.**



### Step 3 Identify Specialized Needs for this IEP

The IEP team will determine the areas of the child's specialized needs using the vision and present levels of academic achievement and functional performance. **TIP: This step answers the questions, "What does Johnny need to learn how to do?"**



### Step 4 Identify Measurable Goals, Objectives and Statement of Student Progress

The IEP team will develop yearly measurable goals and objectives or benchmarks, with similar assessment procedures. These will allow the child, to the extent appropriate, involvement with and progress in the general curriculum (i.e. what other kids are learning). Needed services will also be chosen to meet the child's needs. **TIP: Think SMART goals that include specific, measurable, active, realistic and timely statements.**



### Step 5 Identify Needed Services

The IEP team decides what special education and related services, as well as the amount of services that will be necessary to complete the goal(s). This statement also includes the supplementary (extra) aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child. Accommodations/ modifications/ assistive devices and statement of program modifications or supports for school personnel needed for the child to progress within the general curriculum and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities must also be included. **Tip: This includes what service (instruction, related, consultation, etc.), frequency (daily, weekly, monthly) and amount of time.**



### Step 6 Determine Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Each child's placement is presumed first to be the general education environment. If the team determines that a different setting is needed for any service delivery, for each instance, the IEP team will provide an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child is not participating with nondisabled children. **TIP: LRE must be listed for each goal.**

**This is just a few of the tips and questions you may want to consider for your child's IEP. An easy to understand "cheat sheet" gives you additional questions and shows you where these steps are written on the IEP. Just call the Parent Mentor office for your copy.**