



Middletown City Schools

Parent Mentor Program



Linda McDowell, Parent Mentor

Office Location: Amanda School
1300 Oxford State Rd., Middletown, Oh. 45044
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Fall 2007

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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From The Parent Mentor Desk

I know this year has been difficult for families with all the changes that have taken place. With the recent passage of the renewal levy, I'm sure parents are looking forward to a longer school day and bussing. I know I am looking forward to more time in my office to get things done!

The new times for the buildings have been set. Beginning on Nov. 26th elementary buildings grades 1-5 will begin school at 9:00 and end at 3:45. Central Academy will begin at 8:00 and end at 2:45. Because of schedules and hiring issues the middle and high school will not change until Jan 22. On Jan. 22, Middletown High School will begin at 7:15 and end at 2:15, and both middle schools will begin at 8:00 and end at 3:00. Bussing will begin on Nov. 26. Preschool through grade 8 who live one mile from school will have transportation. High school students who live two miles from school will be bussed. Bussing returns to what it used to be prior to the levy defeat.

We have also added a new member to our special education staff, Kate Wallace is an itinerant autism teacher. Her job is to help teachers and families meet the needs of students with autism at school. Her office is located at Wildwood Elementary but she serves the entire district (preschool through high school).

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

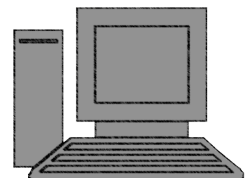


Call 420-4620

Email lmcdowell@middletowncityschools.com

Please check out the new updated web page at:

www.middletownparentmentor.com





What's Happening In and Around Middletown?

The Parent Mentor office will offer the following trainings and activities:

On Saturday, January 12, from 9:00-1:00, Sue Deny from Social Security office will talk about **SSI and work benefits for students 18 and over** (moving from child/family benefits to adult benefits). Even if your child was not eligible in the past they may be now as an adult. From 9 -10:30 Sue will talk about SSI and answer questions. From 10:30 – 1:00 p.m. she will be available to take applications. A location has not been finalized but information will be mailed to parents in December. Included will be times/dates for additional trainings for students preparing for life after high school.

The following trainings will be held at Amanda School Parent Center (1300 Oxford State Rd.) from 6 - 8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8, **How To Get What Your Child Needs** Thursday, March 6, **Controlling The Paperwork Monster**.

Forum on Families and Children 2007-08 sponsored by the Butler County Commissioners presents the following FREE (for Butler County residents) workshop opportunities for families and educators. A complete workshop listing can be found at www.bcesc.org

- **It's More Than Just Medication: Psychopharmacology with Children and Adolescents**, Government Services Center 1st Floor, 315 High St., Hamilton on Friday, Jan. 11, 2008 from 9 -noon, speaker Dr. Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D, LISW. This workshop will provide insight and information about the use, benefits, risks, myths and realities of psychotropic medication.
- Two conferences will be presented at Redeemer Church, 3431 Hamilton-Middletown Rd. Hamilton on Monday, April 14, 2008 by Chantel Sicilie-Kira. From 1 - 4 p.m. the **Autism Forum--Creating Positive Outcomes for People on the Autism Spectrum** will be offered. This presentation will address life-long services and supports for individuals with ASD. From 6 -9 p.m. the **Autism Forum--More Than Just Coping: Empowerment Strategies for Parents** will be offered. This presentation will discuss how to develop positive relationships with providers and school district.

Southwest Ohio SERRC (1301 Bonnel, 3rd floor, Cincinnati, 513-563-0045 or www.swoserrc.org) sponsors the **Family Leadership Training** from 6 - 8:30 p.m. the second Thursday of each month, December through May. Families can attend any or all sessions. A \$20 gift card, to help defray expenses, will be provided to parents and family members at each session (one gift card per family). Sessions include

December 13, 2007	Special Education Basics
January 10, 2008	Intervention and Evaluation
February 14, 2008	IEP Development
March 13, 2008	Behavior Planning
April 10, 2008	Transition, birth to "world of work"
May 8, 2008	Communication (the HARD stuff)

Beginning in late January, SWOSERRC will also have a series of transition trainings. Please check their web site (www.swoserrc.org) for times/dates.

Miami Valley SERRC 4801 Springfield St., Dayton, 937-236-9965 (www.mvserrc.k12.oh.us) has the following available trainings:

- Tues., Dec. 13, 9 – 12:00 p.m. Writing Social Stories for Students with Autism and Other Social Limitations.

Cincinnati Children's Hospital in collaboration with other agencies offers the following trainings:

December 3, 2007, *Educational Interventions for Autism Spectrum Disorders*, Madeira Middle School Cafeteria, 6612 Miami Ave., Cincinnati from 6:30-8:30 p.m., cost \$5.00, *Registration*: Mark Brasington 636- 5352.

December 3, 2007, *Using Emotions Effectively with the School System*, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, 3333 Burnet Ave., Location D, Room D2-22 from 11:30-1:00p.m, free *Registration*: Kimberly Rotundo, 513-636-6740.

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 Nov. 14, 2007, Jan. 9, Jan. 23, Feb. 13 and Feb. 27, 2008. All parents are welcome but children must be eligible for MRDD services and register with Patty at 738-5332 or email patty039@aol.com.

Please call the Parent Mentor Office (420-4620) for additional information on any of the above trainings or check the web site: www.middletownparentmentor.com

Other Helpful Information For Families

Support Group Information:



Kinship Club provides support and help with resources if you are raising a child other than your own. The support group meets at Janet Clemmons Center, 282 Fair Ave., Hamilton on the last Thursday of each month 6:30 -8:00. For more information or help call Mary Gressle, Butler Co. Kinship Navigator at 1-867-5920 Ext. 268.

Epilepsy Support Group of Butler County meets the 4th Thursday of the month at Janet Clemmons Center, 282 Fair Ave. in Hamilton from 6:00 -7:30.

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:

Nov. 27th, Recent Developments in Diagnosis and Treatment of ADHD, Jeff Epstein, PhD.

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

Parents Anonymous helps parents or caregivers deal with the stress of raising children. The meetings are co- led by parents and a professionally trained facilitator and welcome anyone involved in parenting a child. The group meets every Tuesday from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the YMCA, 244 Dayton St., Hamilton. For more information call 863-6129.

Interactive Autism Network (IAN) is a web based project of Kennedy Krieger Institute and sponsored by Autism Speaks. It links the autism community and researchers. The IAN community provides a comprehensive online library and the latest information. The IAN families help provide critical information and knowledge about their affected child's history, behavior and treatments without sharing your identity. The IAN brochure is available in the parent mentor office or visit www.IAMproject.org for more information.

A Visit With a Sensitive Santa for Children with Physical and Cognitive Disabilities



Have you ever wished for a "Santa-at-the-mall" experience for your child? Have you ever wished for a Santa who felt at ease talking and interacting with your child? We have created a special holiday event, complete with a Winter Wonderland and Santa Claus with your child in mind.

Come join us on Saturday, Dec. 1 from noon- 4 p.m. at Cincinnati Children's Medical Center, 3333 Burnet Ave, Location D (Fifth Third Bank Auditorium). Free photo of your child with Santa, snacks and entertainment provided.

The Ohio Coalition for the Education Of Children With Disabilities (OCECD) offers the following publications for \$.50 by calling 1-800-374-2806 or www.ocecd.org (**Spanish version available).

- Building Communication Through Letter Writing
- Building Parent/Professional Partnership Through Communication***
- Behavior Focused IEPs
- Follow The Yellow Brick Road To Transition (Early Intervention to Kindergarten)***
- Parents' Rights in the Special Education Process***
- Understanding AD/HD***
- Transition Drives the IEP***
- What Is An IEP?***
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- American with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Communicating With & Educating Children Who Have Deafness or Hearing Impairment
- Nutrition Goals In The IEP

Changes will be taking place in special education. The Ohio Department of Education is currently revising the special education rules and procedures to line up with the Federal law. We should know what the changes are sometime in late January. The new forms (IEP, etc.) do not have to be used until July 2008. I will keep you informed of any changes.

Help and referral information in Butler County is just a phone call away. The Butler County Helpline



Call 211

5-Point Scale

The 5-point scale is a great way for kids to learn and talk about their feelings. Parents and teachers can use it to teach new behavior in a quick and easy way. Kids can rate how they feel (I'm a 3!) and parents and teachers can then show the child what they can do to make things better. The scale is also a great way for parents or teachers to give feedback on behavior quickly (Susie, you are a 3. Do you need some quiet time?)

On the scale, one is the lowest and five is the highest. Here's what it looks like:

Rating	Looks Like	Feels Like	I Can Try To
5	Kicking Or Hitting	My head will probably explode. Get me out of here.	Call my mom, go home.
4	Screaming at people <u>Almost</u> hitting	I feel sick, hot and nervous.	Go to see the principal.
3	Quiet, walking around room, not able to sit still	Stomach feels upset.	Go to quiet space.
2	Okay	A few kids are getting on my nerves.	Ignore what is bothering me.
1	Great	Smiling, getting along with others	Enjoy it!

The 5-point scale can also be used to teach new behaviors. Here is an example for a child that talks too loud:

5	Screaming, Emergencies Only
4	Recess, outside voice
3	Classroom voice, talking
2	Soft voice or whisper (in the library)
1	No talking at all

Blank Scale To Use

HIGH



LOW

Taken from: *The Incredible 5-Point Scale* available through the Parent Mentor office.

Key Questions to Ask at Your Child's Conference



- What information and skills will my child be learning this year?
- How do you handle different learning abilities and styles?
- What seems to be my child's favorite subjects? His strengths and weaknesses?
- Does my child participate in class? Does he try hard?
- How are classes structured? Is she assigned to a group?
- Does he receive help by a special education teacher? If so, when?
- What are grades based on (class work, homework, attendance, etc.)? If he has two teachers (Special education teacher and regular education teacher) who gives the grade?
- How does my child get along with other students?
- What kind of help should I give her at home? How can I learn about homework assignments?
- Have you noticed any difficult behavior?
- What is the best way to communicate with teachers (phone, email, notes, etc.)?

School Talk: What Does It Really Mean



Have you ever noticed that schools talk a different language, especially when you talk about special education? What do all those letters really mean? Let's take a look at the words we hear the most.

Letters	What Do The Letter Stand For?	What Does It Really Mean At School?
IEP	Individualized Education Program	A written plan for school success. It looks at what and how they will teach your child based on their special needs.
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment	A place that gives your child the biggest chance for success and independence. The regular education classroom should be looked at first.
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan	A written plan that looks at why behavior happens and what can be done to change it.
MFE	Multifactor Evaluation	A way to gather information about your child. It includes information about your child's development, what he knows and how he learns. This information is used to make a decision about whether your child is a child with a disability. If so, they may receive special education services.

20 Ways To Show Kids You Care



1. Listen to their stories.
2. Look in their eyes when you talk to them.
3. Set boundaries that keeps them safe.
4. Give them space when they need it (especially teenagers).
5. Point out what you like about them.
6. Keep the promises you make.
7. Apologize when you have done something wrong.
8. Show up at their concerts, games and events.
9. Answer their questions.
10. Help them learn from their mistakes.
11. Expect their best, don't expect perfection.
12. Forget your worries sometimes and concentrate only on them.
13. Suggest better behaviors when they act out.
14. Tell them their feelings are okay.
15. Do things together (read a book, play a game, watch TV).
16. Share their excitement.
17. Laugh at their jokes.
18. Praise more, criticize less.
19. Display their artwork in your house.
20. Hug them and tell them you love them.

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