

School



Family  
as partners

# Middletown City Schools

## Parent Mentor Program

Fall 2011



**Linda McDowell, Parent Mentor**

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513-420-4620 or [lmcdowell@middletowncityschools.com](mailto:lmcdowell@middletowncityschools.com)  
Web site: [www.middletownparentmentor.com](http://www.middletownparentmentor.com)

### In This Issue

Pg. 1-- Parent Mentor Desk  
Important Notice

Pg.2--What's Happening

Pg. 3--Bully Proofing Your  
Child

Pg.4--10 Rules for Parents  
IEP in 6 easy steps  
IEP goals in 6 easy steps  
What the Parent Mentor  
can do for you

### Reasons To Call The Parent Mentor

- I am afraid to ask questions when I attend meetings.
- My child is not doing well in school and I don't know what to do.
- I just need someone to talk to that understands.
- I need help planning for my teenagers future.



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

Welcome back to the 2011-2012 school year! The Parent Mentor Program is pleased to be back for its 15th year of service to families who have children with special needs.



I am here to help families through the special education maze. Sometimes, just understanding the terms used can be difficult (Yes, it does seem like we are talking a foreign language!) Knowing how and when to get help is also important.

I have 2 children (now young adults!) with special needs and truly understand the questions and concerns parents may have. I am here to offer information and support to families preschool through high school. I am one of the few people in the district that can follow your child through their entire educational career. I provide information via newsletters, web page ([www.middletownparentmentor.com](http://www.middletownparentmentor.com)) and a Parent Mentor lending library. If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to call.

The Parent Mentor office also has planned some exciting activities for the new school year! At the high school, Family Information Nights will be held monthly. This gives middle and high school families a chance to talk and learn about what needs to happen to prepare our teenagers for life after high school. On November 17, a training will be held for families, " Individualized Education Program (IEP): What Parents Need To Know". Families attending will receive a free IEP storage and resource binder. See page 2 of this newsletter for details on the above trainings.

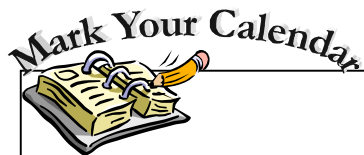
Again, if I can help in any way, please don't hesitate to call.

CALL  
420-4620



### **Important Notice**

This year, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) will be reviewing special education practices in our district. Parents will have an opportunity to talk about their child's special education experiences with ODE representatives. A meeting will be held on Dec. 6 to seek parent input. Letters with additional information (time, place, etc.) will be mailed out prior to the meeting.



## What's Happening In and Around Middletown

Sponsored by The Parent Mentor Office ★

★ **Family Information Nights** for Middle & High School families provide information about planning for your child's future. Each child's future is different. Some will move on to college, others to work and some to community based activities. What does your child's future include? Do you know what needs to happen at school and home so your child can realize their dreams? If not, help is available! Just plan to attend Family Information Night!

Family Information Night will be held from 6:00-8:00p.m. at the Media Center at MHS. Please note if school is closed due to weather, the meeting will be cancelled. Everyone is welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served. Here is a schedule of dates and topics:

- Thursday, Oct. 20- Project SEARCH, Project LIFE and other program options. Applications for programs will be available after Thanksgiving.
- Tuesday, Nov. 15- Agencies That Can Help with Work (Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation), Income (Social Security) and Independent Living (Butler County Developmental Disabilities).

★ On November 17, a training will be held for families, "**Individualized Education Program (IEP): What Parents Need To Know**". Families attending will receive a free IEP storage and resource binder. What a great way to keep track of all the important school documents! Learn IEP tips and what makes a good IEP plan. Training will be held for all Middletown district families at Amanda Elementary Library, 1300 Oxford State Rd. from 6:00 -8:00 p.m.

**School to Adult Transition Series** is an information session for students with special needs and their families. Students must register and be eligible for Butler County DD services to participate in the employment awareness and planning sessions. Sessions will be held at the Janet Clemmons Center, 282 Fair Ave. in Hamilton from 6 -7: 30 p.m. Parents can check online at [www.butlerdd.org](http://www.butlerdd.org) for topic sessions. Dates include Oct. 5 & 19 and Nov. 2 & 16. For more information or to register call Patty at 678-9195 or [patty@aol.com](mailto:patty@aol.com)

**Transition Training: Building Bridges To Your Future** will be held at the Vineyard Community Church, Tri County Campus, 11340 Century Circle East in Cincinnati. It will be held Nov. 10 from 1- 3:30 p.m. or 5:30 -8 p.m. Training will cover the key points of transition: timelines, assessments, goals and the transition page of the IEP. Everyone will leave with a transition plan in mind and real life activities to prepare students for education, work and life. To register call Terri at 513-674-4278 or email [terri.densford@hcesc.org](mailto:terri.densford@hcesc.org)

**The Kelly O'Leary Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder** presents an **Asperger Workshop** on Friday, Oct. 21 from 9 -3:30 p.m. at Children's Hospital, 3430 Burnet Ave, 5th floor. Workshop will include information on diagnosis, characteristics of Asperger Syndrome and intervention strategies. You must register to attend by calling 513-636-5340 or emailing [TKOClearn@cchmc.org](mailto:TKOClearn@cchmc.org)

**The Suburban Cincinnati Children/ Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder (CHADD)** presents **Advocating for Your Child: An Interactive Workshop** on Tuesday Oct. 25. Learn to be a better advocate for your child and make a notebook to organize your child's medical and school records. Material fee \$10 for CHADD members, \$15 for non-members. It will be held at the First Baptist Church of Mason, 735 Reading Rd. (Rt. 42) in Mason. Door open at 6:45 and meetings begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. Speaker presentations run about 75 minutes.

**2011 Fall Conference (Provider and Transition Fair)** sponsored by Butler County Developmental Disabilities Board will be held on October 6 at Miami University Hamilton Wilks Center, 1601 University Blvd. in Hamilton. The provider fair and information sessions will be held from 9 a.m. to noon. Topics include job interviewing skills, workplace expectations, self-advocacy and social opportunities. The evening session from 5 -8 p.m. will include provider presentation and a dance for students and individuals receiving services. This is a great opportunity for families to find out about the different services available in our county. For information call Mark at 513-867-5960, ext. 106.

**2011 College Fair** for middle and high school students with disabilities will be held on Thursday, Oct. 6 from 4 -8 p.m. at Vineyard Church, Tri County Campus, 11340 Century Circle E in Cincinnati. You will have the opportunity to talk with college reps and successful college students. Informational sessions will be held throughout the evening. Session topics include transition planning, success stories from currently enrolled college students and college disability services. For more information call Sue at 513-674-4261. Sponsored by State Support Team 13 and The Postsecondary Education Collaborative.

**Free Informational Parent Workshops** are held at the Houston Educational Service Center, 3310 Compton Rd. in Cincinnati from 6 -8 p.m. Free light dinner is provided and you must RSVP to Nancy Dragon at 513-522-6700 x 28 or email [ndragan@nwlsd.org](mailto:ndragan@nwlsd.org). Adults only please.

- Nov. 2 (RSVP 10/26) –Nurture, Foster and Support Resiliency in Your Child to Address Behavior/ Emotional Challenges
- Jan. 18 (RSVP 1/11) –A Positively “ Positive Approach” To Understanding ADHhD

# Bully Proofing Your Child

## What is Bullying?

- Bullying is using words or actions to hurt someone else.
- Bullying is gossiping about, putting down, or leaving out another child.
- Bullying is meant to hurt, humiliate, or put down the victim.
- Bullying happens every seven minutes on school playgrounds.
- Bullying happens to girls as often as boys.
- Bullying victims are more likely to be helped by another child than an adult, but most of the time, nobody helps.
- Bullying can be sexual harassment.

## Important Facts About Bullying:

- It will probably not go away by itself.
- Your child needs someone who can understand and help.
- Bullying hurts. It leaves physical and emotional scars. It is not normal or okay.
- Bullying is not the same as normal peer conflict.
- Bullying usually becomes more serious if it is ignored.
- Being bullied is scary and unfair, and it takes away all the fun of being with others.
- Fear of bullies stop children from asking for help.
- Being bullied interferes with a child's ability to learn.

## What You Can Do To Help Your Child

The skills and techniques below can provide a protective shield for your child.

**Assert Yourself:** means learning to stand up to a bully and when not to. It means looking the bully in the eye and saying, "I don't like you telling untrue stories about me. Stop doing it". This strategy should not be used in instances of severe bullying or if the victim could get hurt.

**Humor:** means turning a difficult situation into a funny one. This is a surprise tactic that usually catches the bully off guard. While effective, this strategy is difficult for a frightened child. Practice good comebacks with your child. This will make it easier to use humor.

**Avoid:** means knowing how and when to walk away. This is a strategy that most children use, but there is a difference between walking away with confidence and walking away with fear. Disengagement means walking away with an assertive message.

**Self Talk:** is a way to feel okay about yourself when someone else is putting you down. Children are encouraged to imagine a tape or CD that they put on during difficult times. It plays good thoughts and positive messages.

**Own It:** means agreeing with put-downs in order to make light of it. This is developing the capacity to laugh at oneself. This strategy is easy to use and works well when clothing or hairstyle is made fun of. This strategy is not good when a child's identity is being put down (such as religion, disability, etc.)

### Protective Shield

Help	Assert Yourself
Humor	Avoid
Self Talk	Own It

Easy To Remember!

Ha! Ha! So

**H**elp  
**A**ssert Yourself  
  
**H**umor  
**A**void  
  
**S**elf Talk  
**O**wn It

Information was taken from Bully Proofing Your Child, First Aid For Hurt Feelings. A limited number of booklets are available free by calling the Parent Mentor Office.

## Ten Rules For Parents of Children with Special Needs

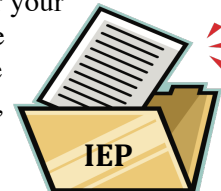
1. Take one day at a time. You don't have control over the future, over today or over any other day, and neither does anyone else. Other people just think they do!
2. Never underestimate your child's potential. Allow and encourage him to develop to the best of his abilities.
3. Find and allow positive mentors, parents and professionals who can share their experience, advise and support.
4. Provide and be involved with the most appropriate educational and learning environments for your child from infancy on.
5. Keep in mind the feelings and needs of your spouse and other children. Remind them this child does not get more of your love just because he gets more of your time.
6. Answer only to your conscience, and then you will be able to answer to your child. You need not justify your actions to your friends or the public.
7. Be honest with your feelings and needs. You can't be a super parent 24 hours a day. Allow yourself jealousy, anger, pity, frustration and depression in small amounts whenever necessary.
8. Be kind to yourself. Don't focus continually on what needs to be done. Remember to look at what you have accomplished.
9. Stop and smell the roses. Take advantage of the fact that you have gained a special appreciation for the little miracles in life that others take for granted.
10. Keep and use a sense of humor. Cracking up with laughter can keep you from cracking up from stress.

### What The Parent Mentor Can Do For You

- ✓She can attend IEP or other important meetings with you.
- ✓She can make referrals to other agencies.
- ✓She can meet privately to discuss problems or concerns.

## Individualized Education Program (IEP) in Six Easy Steps

Have you left an IEP (Individualized Education Program) meeting wondering what the plan was for your child? Did you know you can sum up the meeting in 6 easy questions? Just ask the 5 wh questions (who, what, where, when, why) and how.



1. **Who** is working with your child?
2. **What** are they working on and what help is needed?
3. **Where** are they working with your child? (small or large group, regular education classroom or separate classroom)
4. **When** are they working with your child? (everyday, once a week, how much time per goal)
5. **Why** are they working with your child? (Learning/educational goals and needs)
6. **How** will you know your child is making progress? (Quarterly notes, etc.)

A free booklet, "Individualized Education Program (IEP): What Parents Need To Know " is available FREE by calling the parent mentor office.

### IEP Measurable Goals in 6 Easy Steps

To make IEP goals measurable all you need to do is answer the following 6 questions.

- **Who?** This is the student.
- **Will do what?** This is expressed as an action verb. It describes what it will look like when the student has mastered the goal.
- **To what degree or level?** This looks at
  - Frequency (\_\_\_times weekly, number of attempts),
  - Duration (for\_\_\_minutes or repetitions),
  - Accuracy (\_\_\_%, \_\_\_out of\_\_\_ trials),
  - Speed (within\_\_\_minutes, with less than \_\_\_errors)
  - Intensity.
- **Under what conditions?** This describes the situation, setting and required materials.
- **In what length of time?**
- **How will progress be measured?**

Here is an example of a well-written goal. Using the color-coded text, you can see how each question is answered in the goal below. Don't forget to include how progress will be monitored on the IEP.

**Given sixth grade reading materials** and **using a one-minute probe**, **Johnny or Susie** will **orally read a passage and increase their reading fluency to 100 words per minute by the end of the school year.**