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IEPS

- The IEP is your way to get services from the school system

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security, in one form or another, is your ticket to many services. Be it cash or medical insurance, it is very important to your disabled child and you need to understand how the overall system works.

One important thing that you can do is get your child to work where they start paying into social security. This way,

Cont. Next column bottom

GETTING SERVICES WHILE YOUR CHILD IS STILL IN SCHOOL

Did you know that whether you are on or off the Med-waiver waitlist or registered or not with APD, your child is entitled to services to help them learn. The key is to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that addresses their barriers to learning.

The trick, however, is developing a good one, and one that advocates for your child.

Keep in mind, that as good as the school systems are, the pressure is on them to stay within their budget. This means that you must be the ultimate advocate for your child. This creates a "natural" tension between the parents and the school system that, if done correctly, results in the proper

balance between effective education and good budget concerns. If not done correctly, or you are not diligent in your representation of your child, your child may be "short-changed" in their educational services.

See our inside story on page 2 by Irene Gallo for the first installment about writing a good IEP.

DISABILITY MENTORING DAY SUBMITTED BY KELLY JOHANESSON, VP-UCP/WORC

Florida Disability Mentoring Day is a part of a national, broad-based effort to promote career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through hands-on career exploration, job shadowing and internship or employment opportunities. It is hosted nationally by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and organized in Florida by a collaborative partnership of The Able Trust, Florida High School/High Tech, the Division of Vocational Rehabilita-

they will qualify for SSDI earlier which will enable them to qualify for Medicare sooner.

See the inside article on page 2 by Joan Mannix for more info.

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Disability Mentoring Day

GET THE FACTS!

A surprising amount of misinformation is being distributed about the proposed changes in APD services. Our clients and their families have enough to worry about without having to contend with misleading rumors and falsehoods. APD is providing this document so that you can get the facts.

Support Coordination

- APD has not proposed to eliminate support coordination. Support coordination will continue to be available to consumers and families.
- APD has proposed to transition waiver support coordination from contracted services to state operations, which will save \$3.8 million in General Revenue.
- This proposal represents a rare opportunity to save taxpayer dollars while actually improving the level of services to clients. State employees will provide the same or better level of service as current WSCs and will be on call 24 hours a day. Caseloads will

Cont. on pg. 3—Facts

IEP'S BY IRENE GALLO

The primary vehicle for communicating the school district's commitment to addressing the unique educational needs of the student with a disability is the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or the Transition Individual Educational Plan (TIEP).

It is the responsibility of the school district to develop procedures consistent with the requirement that all students with disabilities have available a **free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment**. Although the rules and regulations related to this requirement are complex, the purpose is straightforward and clear.

The federal law, IDEA 1977, requires the following:

- Students with disabilities must have an IEP in place at the beginning of the school year.
- The IEP team must review the student's IEP periodically, but not less than every 12 months, to determine whether the annual goals for the student are being achieved.
- The IEP team must revise the IEP as appropriate to address any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals, the results of any reevaluation, and the student's anticipated needs or other matters.
- Procedural safeguards must be guaranteed.
- Records must be confidential.
- Parents must be invited to the IEP meeting.
- Student evaluation procedures must be nondiscriminatory.

The IEP document must include:

- Documentation of consideration of general and special factors
- A statement of the student's present level of educational performance, including how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum
- A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives
- A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aides and services to be provided to the student
- A statement of program modifications or supports for school

personnel that will be provided for the student

An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with non-disabled children in the regular class or other activities

A statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the student to participate in such assessment and, if the IEP team determines that the student will not participate in a particular state or district-wide assessment, a statement of why that assessment is not appropriate for the student and how the student will be assessed.

The projected date for initiation, anticipated frequency, location and duration of the services and modification

Beginning the year the student turns 14 and updated annually, a statement of the transition service needs focusing on the student's courses of study

Beginning the year the student turns 16, a statement of needed transition services for the student including a statement of interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages

Beginning at least one year before the student reaches the age of maturity (18 in Florida), a statement that the student has been informed of his or her rights that will transfer when the student reaches the age of maturity

A statement of how progress toward annual goals will be met and how the student's parents will be regularly informed of this progress

The IEP process has several objectives. The first is to document the student's present level of educational performance. This includes addressing how the student's disability affects his or her involvement and progress in the general curriculum or age appropriate activities, his or her strengths, and his or her priority educational needs. The second objective is to identify those goals and objectives that will allow the student to be successful in an appropriate curriculum. The final objective of the IEP is the identification of the special education and related services and supplementary aides

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SOCIAL SECURITY ETC.

BY JOAN MANNIX, THE ARC OF VOLUSIA

SSI and SSDI

The Social Security Administration manages 2 major programs that provide public benefits based on disability or blindness.

SSDI

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) provides benefits to disabled or blind individuals who are "insured" by workers' contri-

butions to the Social Security trust fund. These contributions are required by the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) which created the Social Security taxes that are paid based on your earnings or those of your spouse or parents. Title II of the Social Security Act authorizes SSDI benefits. Those who are eligible for **SSDI** will receive **MEDICARE** coverage.

SSI

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program makes cash assistance payments to the aged, blind and disabled individuals (including children under age 18) who have limited income and resources. The Federal Government funds

Cont on page 3—Social Security

Those who are eligible for **SSDI** will receive **MEDICARE** coverage.

IEP'S CONT.

and services that are needed for the individual student.

The IEP development is a collaborative effort involving the parents, representatives of the school district and other providers of services, and the student, where appropriate. Each team member is responsible for bringing information to the IEP meeting that will be helpful in determining the student's abilities and educational needs.

Taken from

Developing Quality Individual Educational Plans

A Guide for Instructional Personnel and Families

Get the Facts Cont.

increase from 1 coordinator per 36 enrollees up to a 1:50 ratio.

- This change will not cause anyone to be placed into an institutional setting.
- This proposal was submitted to the legislature prior to the conclusion of a recent APD Inspector General report finding WSCs were not adequately fulfilling their customers' needs.

See the rest of this article on the FCC website,

Your FCC

Again, we need your help on the Family Care Council. Strength comes through numbers.

One thing that we need is your input on where to focus our efforts. Please see the website, www.fcc12.org, for a list of priorities in our plan and contact me with any suggestions.

We also need suggestions for content for this newsletter.

ter.

Remember, we are given about \$10,000 by the legislature every year to advocate for our folks.

Contact me at

ppearson1@mindspring.com

Or 386-445-1288

SOCIAL SECURITY ETC. CONT.

SSI from general tax revenues. Most states pay a supplemental benefit to individuals in addition to their Federal benefits. Florida combines the supplementary payment into one monthly check. Title XVI of the Social Security Act authorizes SSI benefits.

In the state of Florida, those who are eligible for **SSI** are also eligible for **MEDICAID**.

The following Website provides the 2006 Red Book, a summary guide to employment support for individuals with disabilities under the SSI and SSDI programs.

<http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/main.htm>

The Brevard Achievement Center provides technical assistance and benefits planning to recipients of the SSI and SSDI programs. The Community Works Incentives Coordinator for Volusia, Flagler and Putnam counties is:

Tari Cox

Phone: (386) 416-9490

Fax: (386) 236-0539

E-Mail: tcox@bacbrevard.com

Area 12 APD will work in conjunction with other providers (such as The Brevard Achievement Center) to provide successful SSI and SSDI technical assistance. For information or referrals, contact:

Shae Porter

Phone: (386) 226-0221

Fax: (386) 238-4753

E-Mail: Lora_Porter@dcf.state.fl.us

DISABILITY MENTORING DAY—CONTINUED

tion and other statewide partners. It is observed every year on the third Wednesday of October, in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

Disability Mentoring Day helps students and job seekers with disabilities explore possible career paths, build confidence about their own employability, learn about firsthand job experiences from employers in their desired career field, develop lasting mentor relationships, understand the vital connection between school and work and target career skills for improvement.

As a Community Liaison for Disability Mentoring Day, United Cerebral Palsy of East Central Florida/WORC, will

work closely to match mentors (businesses who agree to sponsor an individual with a disability to job shadow in their business for the day) and mentees (individuals with disabilities that want to learn more about the typical day on the job in that particular type of work).

Those interested in being a mentor or mentee can go to the Disability Mentoring Day website for an application www.floridadmd.org or email Micky Beauregard our Director of Vocational Services. All completed applications should be sent to Micky either via email or fax. Micky's email address is mbeauregard@ucpecf.org and her fax # is 386-274-0117