

# PARENT MENTOR NEWS

Volume 1, Issue 1  
November 1, 2010

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## Special points of interest:

- *Initial newsletter! Let us know what you think.*
- *Contest! Name that Newsletter! (page 2)*
- *Training Schedule (page 2)*
- *Great resource available from the IL State Board of Education (page 2)*
- *Get involved in SEDOL's Parent Advisory Board (page 2)*

## Inaugural Issue of Parent Newsletter!

Welcome to the first issue of the Parent Mentor Project newsletter. This is being distributed to families of children receiving special education services within SEDOL building and sector programs. Our goal is to initially publish this on a quarterly basis.

Our project began 6 years ago and we have worked with hundreds of families over that time to support and educate them about the special education process. Parents play an important role in this process but don't always feel comfortable doing so. Because of the many responsibilities we must juggle, it's not always easy to find time to seek out the information we need to effectively meet those responsibilities.

Hopefully this newsletter will provide you with new information and suggestions related to special education and the challenges of raising a child with special needs. We want to help you help your child through knowledge, support, and the understanding that you are not alone.

Our desire is that this newsletter be beneficial to you. If you have suggestions for topics you'd like covered or changes you'd like considered, please call or email one of us.

Enjoy! We look forward to your comments.

– Joy Bux and Priscilla Cuba



## The Parent Mentor Project

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## Parent Involvement – Let's Do It Together

The challenges that our students face today cannot be solved by educators alone; nor can they be solved by parents alone. Collaboration between school and home is the key. We need to focus on dealing with these situations together as partners. This is not something new. Studies show that parent involvement significantly contributes, in a variety of ways, not only to improved student outcomes but also to schools and communities.

According to Rebecca Crawford, "when schools and families work together, a partnership of support for children develops." This means that we have something in common to work for—our children.

As parents, we want to get involved to work effectively with our children's education. We want to contribute to improve our children's outcomes. We need guidance and assistance.

Educators would like to involve parents too. School staff must be trained on working with families to promote effective parent involvement in children's education. Schools must provide a variety of opportunities for teachers, families, and communities to work together.

*Let's do it together—  
as partners!*

## Help us Name our Newsletter!

OK—here’s a chance to showcase your creativity! Our newsletter needs a name but we haven’t been able to come up with something we like. We want parents to recognize and look forward to receiving future issues so put on your thinking caps and send us your suggestions!

Email your suggestion to Joy Bux (jbux@sedol.us) or mail to:

The Parent Mentor Project  
 SEDOL  
 18160 Gages Lake Road  
 Gages Lake, IL 60084

Deadline for submission is November 30. The winner will be recognized in the next issue and will receive a copy of the book “All About IEPs” by Peter and Pam Wright.

## Did You Know . . . ?

The Illinois State Board of Education has a wonderful resource for parents on their website. It was updated in 2009 and is very user friendly. The guide is called:

“Educational Rights and Responsibilities: Understanding Special Education in Illinois.”

It includes information on eligibility, evaluations, IEPs, discipline, and many other areas of special education. It also has sample letters for parents to use, sample forms, and a glossary of terms. It is available in English and Spanish.

You can find it online at:  
[www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/parent\\_rights.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/parent_rights.htm)



*Great changes may not happen right away, but with effort even the difficult may become easy.*

- Bill Blackman



## Professional Development for Parents

One of the best ways to become more involved in your child’s education is by *educating yourself*. After all, you are a “Professional Parent” with the need for knowledge in several areas. There are many ways of doing this including books, parent groups, professionals, the internet, and trainings. The Parent Mentor Project offers monthly parent trainings on a variety of topics related to special education and other topics of interest to families, such as guardianship, behavior support, and self-determination.

Each session typically lasts for about 2 hours and allows time for parents to network with each other. It’s a very relaxed setting with an opportunity for discussion and questions.

Parents who attend tell us they leave with a wealth of knowledge, new resource, and even some new friends!

Whether you’re joining us for the first time or coming back for more, we hope to see you soon! Upcoming events are shown on the right. Registration forms are available online at SEDOL’s website ([www.sedol.us](http://www.sedol.us)) or call 847-548-2577 x35 to reserve your space.

Certain trainings can also be held in your home school district. Or, do you participate in a parent support group that might benefit from training. Call one of the Parent Mentors (847-548-2577) and we’ll be happy to work together to schedule something!

## 2010–2011 Workshop Topics

11/19	Sensory Processing
12/8	Mindfulness Meditation
1/19	The IEP Process
1/20	The IEP Process
Feb.	Social Emotional Learning
3/15	Positive Behavior Supports
4/11-12	CPI Training for Parents
4/13	Guardianship
April	Post-Secondary Transition
May	Self-Determination

## Parent Advisory Board

Are you aware that SEDOL has a Parent Advisory Board? This group is open to all parents and educators of children receiving special education services from SEDOL or any of its 35 member school districts. Some of their goals/activities include:

- Promoting effective communication systems among parents, districts, and SEDOL
- Creating networking opportunities

- Encouraging best practices and recognizing exceptional staff
- Partnering with the Parent Mentor Project

Please visit their website at [www.sedolparents.org](http://www.sedolparents.org) to find out more and to join their mailing list.

There are currently several opportunities available to become involved in the Parent Advisory Board. If interested, we encourage you to contact them.



[www.sedolparents.org](http://www.sedolparents.org)

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