

70 P2P Impact Award, FOCUS EDU Conf., IDEA needs your help, DSAA Fundraiser at Chili's

Dearest Advocates:

Below is information regarding Parent to Parent of Georgia's recognition and awards program. FOCUS (Families of Children Under Stress) will be having its upcoming educational conference. I will be speaking this year on the NOW/COMP Disability Waivers. The Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta (DSAA) will be having a Down syndrome Awareness Night and Fundraiser at the Northpoint Chili's Restaurant in Alpharetta on Feb. 17, 2009.

See below for more information on the above events. Additional information and flyers regarding the above topics/events can be found on my website at www.heidijmoore.com under "Events".

In addition, funding for our children that receive special education services in the school system needs your help. There is opposition regarding this IDEA funding. If this happens, systems could lose dollars that are necessary for the programs for our kids. There is some thought that IDEA funding could be taken out of stimulus package presented by President Obama. Please see below what you can do to make a difference for funding of IDEA by the Council for Exceptional Children!

Below is also information on the proposed legislation from the Governors office on the restructuring of the Dept. of Human Resources.

Have a great day,

"UNITED - WE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!"

Sincerely,

Heidi

(Proud Mother to Jacob - 9 yrs old with Down syndrome and Jared - 7 yrs old)

"Help the Children Now, So They Can Help Themselves Later!"

www.heidijmoore.com

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From Parent to Parent of Georgia- Impact Awards:

Parent to Parent of Georgia is excited to announce a new virtual awards and recognition program designed to recognize individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in supporting families and including children and young adults with disabilities in their communities. Winners will receive a small grant to support his or her work as well as other gifts and prizes.

Community Impact Award – This award recognizes an individual who volunteers in their community to enhance or develop inclusive programs and services available to families of children and youth with disabilities. May also work in the field of disabilities, but nomination should be based upon volunteer work. They individual should demonstrate exceptional collaboration with families to promote improved outcomes for children with disabilities.

Education Impact Award – This award recognizes a professional working with individuals with disabilities in schools, Babies Can't Wait, other early care and education settings, and/or post-secondary programs who demonstrates exceptional collaboration with families to promote inclusion and inclusive practices. May have developed or implemented a program or practice which helps build the capacity of families to promote improved outcomes for children and youth with disabilities.

Six regional winners for each category will be selected by committee and one statewide winner will be selected by public on-line voting.

Nominations may be completed on-line at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=xWHm_2bAz7v9jXbchCZjAnmA_3d_3d. You may also download a hard copy of the nomination form at www.parenttoparentofga.org and mail to Parent to Parent of Georgia, 3805 Presidential Parkway Suite 207, Atlanta, GA 30340 or fax 770-458-4091.

NOMINATION DUE DATE: March 13, 2009

For more information, visit www.parenttoparentofga.org, email Jennifer@parenttoparentofga.org or call 800-229-2038 or 770-451-5484.

For the official flyer, please go to www.heidijmoore.com under "events".

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FOCUS Education Conference, February 21 at Dunwoody United Methodist Church. Topics include NOW / Comp Waivers, siblings, wills & trusts, guardianship and more!! See the attached brochure or go to www.focus-ga.org. This is a great day - a lot of information and a little fun!

For the official flyer, please go to www.heidijmoore.com under "events".

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We need your help! Congress is currently considering the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*, which includes \$140 billion for education programs—including \$13 billion for IDEA Part B and \$600 million for IDEA Part C over two years. These are unprecedented increases for both programs.

This much-needed funding comes at a time when states are struggling. In an economic crisis, programs serving children and youth with disabilities are often cut, further straining systems that have been stretched thin for years.

But opposition to the plan has been steadily increasing. Several members of Congress have expressed their concern that the stimulus money will not provide enough aid soon enough to help the economy and some have specifically targeted the education funding outlined in the bill as unnecessary.

However, we know that this infusion of resources for IDEA will help deflect job layoffs, help ensure program continuation, and free up resources for other critical initiatives.

What You Can Do . . .

CEC cannot stress enough how historic this proposal is and how critical it is to urge your members of Congress to support this legislation now, as **the Senate and House are expected to vote early this week.**

- Visit CEC's [Legislative Action Center](#).
- Review the sample letter. Are there any personal stories or experiences you want your congressperson to know about? These stories provide valuable insight to legislators.
- Press "Send Message."
- Please **forward this message** to other supporters of education—the more people involved, the bigger impact we can make!

Take action today! Contact your senators and representative using CEC's [Legislative Action Center](#).

Sincerely,
The CEC Policy & Advocacy Team

Additional information:

[CEC's Coverage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#)

[Bill summary from the office of Rep. David Obey of Wisconsin](#)

[See how much money your school district will receive from IDEA Part B if this legislation is enacted](#)

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Governor Perdue Introduces Legislation to Restructure the Department of Human Resources

Legislation will create stand-alone agency for mental health, addictive disease programs

ATLANTA – Governor Sonny Perdue announced today that Rep. Mark Butler has introduced HB 228, the Governor’s legislation to restructure the Department of Human Resources (DHR).

“This legislation reorients our approach to healthcare from inputs to results,” Governor Perdue said. “Georgia spends \$3.8 billion within DHR every year – an agency that hasn’t undergone major change since it was formed over three decades ago.”

The legislation would form a new Department of Behavioral Health to oversee the mental health and addictive disease programs currently housed in DHR. The new department would report directly to the Governor and increase fiscal transparency.

The reorganization plan would also merge the Department of Community Health with the public health and health regulation programs of DHR to create the Department of Health. Current DCH Commissioner Dr. Rhonda Medows would lead the new Department of Health. Merging the two departments will streamline the health related activities currently residing in two separate departments and establish a lead agency to focus on improving Georgians’ health.

The remaining social services under DHR would become the Department of Human Services. Programs included in this department include Developmental Disabilities, Aging, Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and Child Support.

Current DHR Commissioner B.J. Walker would lead the new Department of Human Services.

The legislation is based on recommendations by the Health and Human Service Task Force. Governor Perdue appointed five members of the task force who were joined by Senators Jack Hill and Renee Unterman, and Representatives Ben Harbin and Mark Butler. If the legislation is adopted, the transition to the new agencies would begin on July 1, 2009.

“This is a move in the right direction toward correcting our mental and public health systems,” Rep. Butler said. “It is a huge step for this administration to pull these fragile lives out of this larger mix to get them the help and attention they need and deserve. I truly believe that this reorganization will lead to greater efficiencies and more accountability to the taxpayers of this state.”

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