

## **# 72 Advocacy for Nurses, Views and Other Important Information!**

Dearest Advocates:

Below is information regarding how you can get involved to make a difference regarding the proposal to eliminate school nurses from the State Budget starting next school year. The petition only takes a minute!

In addition, the AJC newspaper is looking for YOUR views regarding this legislative session. Please take a moment and rank what is important to you. Only through continuous vocalization and expressing our concerns are we going to educate those that don't understand the issues surrounding children and adults with disabilities (which includes healthcare (cutting of waiver slots, funding of providers, access to providers, etc), education (need for nurses in the schools and appropriate funding to teach our students), and community).

It was very exciting this week when Vice President Joe Biden announced at the Special Olympic World Games that a Special Assistant was announced to help President Obama with disability issues! See below for more information.

The NBC Today show last week did a great news segment on a young man with Down syndrome that played basketball. See below the clip. Great media attention!

In addition, I do have below a link to apply for the State Advisory Panel for Special Education (SAP). I strongly recommend for those families wanting to get involved in making change and giving your opinion to how special education needs to be done for children with disabilities – to get involved. It is a three year commitment. I have been a member for three years and it has been a fantastic experience. Please go to the website for more information.

I've also included in this newsletter information on a new social skills group, Mental Health day at the Capitol, and Kiddo's Club House Foundation bowling event.

Reminder: FOCUS (Families of Children Under Stress) is having their annual educational conference on Saturday, February 21th. I will be presenting on the NOW/COMP waivers for those interested. More information, go to <http://www.focus-ga.org/>.

Happy Valentines 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](http://www.heidijmoore.com)

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**Petition for Keeping School Nurses:**

**THE 2010 GOVERNOR'S STATE BUDGET PROPOSAL  
ELIMINATES SCHOOL NURSE FUNDING**

Sign please! It takes less than a minute to fill out. We need all the help we can get!

Subject: School Nurse Funding

<http://www.gasn.org/petitions/>

Go to this website and sign your name to the petition for the state to keep the funding for school nurses. Send it to your co-workers, too. We definitely need to keep our nurses in the schools!!!

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**AJC Newspaper looking for OUR Views:**

<http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/legissurvey.html>

Atlanta Journal-Constitution reporters want your views for the 2009 legislative session. NOTE: All fields marked with an asterisk (\*) are required. Which issues are most important to you this year? Please rank the following items from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important).

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**NEW Social Skills Group Annoucement:**

Perspectives Psychological and Behavioral Services will be starting new **social skills groups** on Saturdays beginning March 14 and running through May 16. We will take off the dates of April 4<sup>th</sup> and April 11<sup>th</sup> due to Spring Break schedules. Each session will last two hours and include not only basic social skills training but also the development of coping skills to enable children to better manage their own behaviors and emotions through therapeutic and behavioral interventions. Please visit the website at [www.PerspectivesPBS.com](http://www.PerspectivesPBS.com) and complete the Children's Social Interaction Checklist along with your contact information. You will be contacted by a therapist with more details. If you prefer, you can call Perspectives directly at (770) 634-3285 to inquire or register. The groups will be conducted jointly by a Licensed Psychotherapist and a Behavior Specialist. This should be a time of growth and fun for all children involved.

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**Special Assistant Announced: Regarding disability issues to President Obama!**

<http://www.idahostatesman.com/newsupdates/story/666947.html>

“This Is A Movement” Vice President Joe Biden Says At World Winter Games  
Idaho Statesman February 12, 2009

Vice President Joe Biden brought fresh energy to the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games Thursday with word of a new White House post aimed to advance the cause of persons with disabilities.

Biden chose his visit to the Games to announce the appointment of Kareem Dale as special assistant to the president for disability policy.

“He is going to have absolutely direct access to the president,” Biden said, adding later: “There’s a lot of barriers. We’ve broken down barriers before. We’re going to break down more barriers.”

Dale, who traveled with Biden from Washington, D.C., on Air Force 2, said, “I’m just humbled and honored for the faith the president and vice president have shown in me and I look forward to working with them.”

Biden said President Obama would have attended the Games, but for the debate on stimulus legislation. “Had we had a few things settled back in Washington, he’d have been here today,” Biden told athletes and volunteers at Boise State University for a “Healthy Athletes” event.

...After announcing Dale’s appointment, Biden said, “Look, this is a movement. What started off as an avenue and an outlet and a recognition for athletes has turned into a worldwide movement. This is about to change the attitude, change the attitude of governments, change the attitude of individuals.

“It’s a big deal. I started off in the civil rights movement. This is a civil rights movement. This is a movement to make sure that we guarantee that all peoples in the world have the opportunity to succeed to the degree they are capable.....”

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**Mental Health Day at the Capitol:**

**Mental Health America of Georgia would like to announce Mental Health Day at the Capitol.**

This event is sponsored by the Mental Health Services Coalition, and will take place on Tuesday, February 17, 2009 from 9:00am until 1:00 pm at The Freight Depot.

*Come and enjoy a hot lunch with your legislators and constituents! We are also pleased to announce a consumer art show and singers [for your entertainment!](#)*

**Our three legislative priorities for 2009 are:**

- To increase [the](#) Mental Health Budget
- The creation of a new department for Mental Health and Addictive Diseases
- To [delay](#) and study the closure and privatizing of the state's Mental Health hospitals

To pre-register, please email Rheba Smith at [rheba.smith@gpsn.org](mailto:rheba.smith@gpsn.org) to let her know you will be attending. You will then be required to have your payment ready when you check in on the day of the event.

To register and send payment now, please make checks payable to GEORGIA PARENT SUPPORT NETWORK and send to: Rheba Smith, GPSN, 1381 Metropolitan Pkwy., Atlanta, GA 30310. If you would like to pay by credit card, please send Rheba the following information:

- A daytime phone number.
- Organization name, address, city, state, zip
- Phone & email
- Check/credit card number with expiration date, name on card, and the 3-digit v-code on back
- Total amount to be charged

**REGISTRATION FEES:**

\$25 per person

\$20 if you are to attend as a consumer or family member

If you would like to apply for a family or consumer scholarship, which would make the event free of cost, please contact Rheba.

If you would simply like to donate to support Mental Health Day at the Capitol, please send your donation to Rheba.

Thank you for your support of mental health in Georgia, and we look forward to seeing you at the Capitol!

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**State Advisory Panel (SAP) for Special Education Application:**

The SAP application is posted on our website now  
(<http://www.gadoe.org/DMGetDocument.aspx/SAP%202009%20application.pdf?p=6CC6799F8C1371F65B08AA222B16642E7185506892827613672E063CF2752603&Type=D>)

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**Kiddos Clubhouse Foundation – Bowling Annoucement for Therapy Scholarships!**

**FAMILY FUN DAY is only TWO WEEKS AWAY!**

Come Score a Strike For Scholarships!!!

Kiddos' Clubhouse Foundation invites you to a

FAMILY FUN DAY @ STARS & STRIKES

**When:** February 21, 2009, 10:00 – 12:00

**Where:** Stars & Strikes  
133 Merchants Square  
Cumming, GA 30040

**Who:** Your family & friends!

Admission is \$15 per person  
(bowling, shoes, soft drink & pizza included)

\$5 of each ticket purchased is a tax-deductible donation which will benefit the Kiddos' Clubhouse Foundation Scholarship Fund (receipts will gladly be provided for your tax records!)

Advance tickets are available at Kiddos' Clubhouse.

Contact Nell DeVore or Kristin Heinz to purchase your tickets

(678) 527-3224

[ndevore@kiddosclubhouse.com](mailto:ndevore@kiddosclubhouse.com) OR [kheinz@kiddosclubhouse.com](mailto:kheinz@kiddosclubhouse.com)

For more information about the Kiddos' Clubhouse Foundation, please visit the website, [www.kiddosclubhousefoundation.org](http://www.kiddosclubhousefoundation.org) .

Kiddos' Clubhouse Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization

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**NBC Today Show: Player with Down syndrome wows fans:**

Feb. 5: Patrick Thibodeau, a high school senior with Down syndrome, gets his chance on the court at his school's final basketball game. WCSH's Jason Wheeler reports.

<http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/26184891/vp/29030653#29030653>