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**IN THIS ISSUE:**

<i>EPICS receives FIT and SP ED Grant</i>	front
<i>Prepare for your child's success in school</i>	2
<i>Three-Step Plan to Stop Bullying</i>	3
<i>Communicating with People with Disabilities</i>	4
<i>Profiles in Resources in New Mexico</i>	5
<i>Fall 2006 Calendar of Events</i>	6

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**Points of Interests:**

- EPICS to provide parent training to Indian parents who are eligible for FIT services and school-aged children with disabilities.
- Homework Tips for parents—Watch for your child's signs of failure and frustrations.
- Bullying—Ask and Listen. If your child is being bullied you can take action.
- Etiquette in helping a person with a disability—what is appropriate and what is not.

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## **Abrazos Family Support Services/EPICS Project receives State FIT and Special Education Grant**

EPICS received from the NM Department of Health, DDS, Family Infant, Toddler Program (FIT) Grant.



abilities to increase their knowledge and skills so that they may become more actively involved in the decision-making and education of their children.

EPICS will provide training to parents who are eligible for the FIT services and who are receiving early intervention supports and services. Our objective for the families is to help parents to feel connected and empowered through support, education, and information.

And, to help the parents to understand their rights and better advocate for their child.

**EPICS** also received a grant from the Department of Public Education—Special Education Bureau to provide parent training to select New Mexico Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and to administer parent surveys in the 2006-2007 school year.

EPICS is available to provide workshops and training to Indian parents with school-aged children with dis-

EPICS project can provide for the parents the following training topics:

- ◆ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004
- ◆ IFSP Process
- ◆ IEP Process
- ◆ Transition
- ◆ Advocacy Skill Building
- ◆ Record Keeping
- ◆ Mediation/Due Process
- ◆ Bullying

FIT Programs and school districts can contact us at **505.867.3396** for more information and/or setting up training for their parents in the communities and/or in the schools.

*Be an informed parent. Check in with your child's teacher and ask what you can do to help.*

*"The attitude you express about school will be the attitude your child will acquire"*

*Reward progress—praises, hugs always works!*

## Prepare for your child's success in the new school year ...

### Homework Tips for Parent:

- **Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to homework.** Avoid having your child do homework with the TV on or in places with other distractions, such as people coming/going.
- **Make sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary, are available.** Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.
- **Help your child with time management.** Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until it is completed. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects.
- **Be positive about homework.** Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
- **When your child does homework, you do homework.** Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too.
- **When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers.** Giving answers means your child will not learn the materials. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for him or her.
- **When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do it.** Cooperate with the teacher. It shows your child that the school and home are a team.
- **If homework is meant to be done by your child alone, stay away.** Too much parent involvement can prevent homework from having some positive effects. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills.
- **Stay informed.** Talk with your child's teacher. Make sure you know the purpose of homework and what your child's class rules are.
- **Help your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework.** Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean he will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy materials will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.
- **Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration.** Let your child take a short break if he/she is having trouble keeping his/her mind on an assignment.
- **Reward progress in homework.** If your child has been successful in homework completion and is working hard, celebrate that success with a special event (e.g., a movie, a trip to the park) to reinforce the positive effort.

## Parents Your Three-Step Plan to Stop Bullying

To discover that your child is being bullied can be devastating. You may feel bewildered, scared, sad, guilty, angry, or helpless. You may even feel like a target yourself.

It is important to recognize and acknowledge all those emotions, but remember feelings alone will not change the situation. The most effective thing you can do is focus on the issue and develop a plan.

Listed below are some strategies that can help you to develop a successful short-term and longer-term plans for protecting your child from bullying.

### 1. First, make sure that the issue is bullying and not routine childhood conflict.

It's bullying if the action is hurtful, intentional, and repetitive, and there is a power imbalance between the children. Sometimes children are afraid or embarrassed to talk about bullying. If you suspect your child may be a target of bullying, you may wish to try these approaches to find out for sure.

Ask and Listen:

- ◆ Did someone hurt you on purpose?
- ◆ Is the other person bigger than you or scary to you?

Watch for signs, such as:

- ◆ Suddenly wanting to be driven to school instead of taking the bus
- ◆ Unexplained stomachaches or headaches
- ◆ Changes in sleep routines or temperament

### 2. If your child is being bullied,

**you can take action at home to help your child learn how to respond more effectively.**

Teach direct and indirect techniques for dealing with bullies. You may want to encourage your child to:

- ◆ Avoid situations where bullying occurs
- ◆ Hang out with classmates, friends, peers, or siblings
- ◆ Tell the child who is bullying to stop
- ◆ Do something the bully does not expect or want: yell, blow a whistle, laugh.

Encourage group involvement. Children who interact with peers are less likely to be bullied. You may want to help your child:

- ◆ Join an after-school program or activity
- ◆ Develop a hobby that allows interaction with others

### 3. If your child is being bullied at school, you can work with teachers and administrators to create a safe environment.

Talk with teachers and administrators.

- ◆ Notify them of the situation in writing. Schools are obligated to respond to bullying.
- ◆ Discuss ways the school can help such as by developing a bullying awareness program.

Be part of your child's school.

- ◆ Join the PTA and raise awareness of bullying as an issue.
- ◆ Offer to speak to the school board and be the "bullying expert."
- ◆ If your child has disabilities, you can build bullying prevention goals into your child's individualized Education Program (IEP).

*Is your child a target of bullying?*

*"Bullying contributes to a negative school climate that is not conducive to healthy social relationship or learning"*

*EPICS project offers "Bullying" training for the parents. Schedule now...*

# Outreach Ideas—Communicating with People with Disabilities

Not only professionals but people in general often ask for guidance to increase their skills in working with people with disabilities or just plain how to communicate with them. Listed below are general tips for your information:

- ◆ Use people-centered language. For example say “people with disabilities” rather than “disabled people.”
- ◆ If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions.
- ◆ Don’t be afraid to ask when you’re unsure of what to do.
- ◆ Listen to the individual.
- ◆ Relax.

## Blind or Visually Impaired

- ◆ Speak to the individual when you approach.
- ◆ State clearly who you are; speak in normal tone of voice.
- ◆ When conversing in a group, remember to identify yourself and the person to whom you are speaking. When leaving state you are leaving.
- ◆ Never touch or distract a service dog without first asking the owner.
- ◆ Do not attempt to lead the individual without first asking. Allow the person to hold your arm and control her or his own movements.
- ◆ Be descriptive when giving directions. For example, if you are approaching steps, mention how many steps.

## Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- ◆ Gain the person’s attention before starting a conversation. A light tap on the shoulder works.
- ◆ Look directly at the individual, face the light, speak clearly, in a normal tone of voice, and keep your hands away from your face.

- ◆ Use short, simple sentences. Avoid smoking or chewing gum.
- ◆ If using a sign language interpreter, speak directly to the person, not the interpreter.
- ◆ If you do not have TEXT Telephone (TTY), dial 711 to reach the national telecommunications relay service, which facilitates the call between you and an individual who uses a TTY.

## Mobility Impairments

- ◆ If possible, put yourself at the wheelchair user’s eye level.
- ◆ Do not lean on a wheelchair.
- ◆ Never patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder.
- ◆ Do not assume the individual wants to be pushed—ask first.
- ◆ Offer assistance if the individual appears to be having difficulty opening a door.

## Speech Impairments

- ◆ If you do not understand something the individual says, ask the individual to repeat what he or she said and then repeat it back.
- ◆ Be patient. Take as much time as necessary.
- ◆ Try to ask questions that required only short answers or a nod of the head.
- ◆ Do not speak for the individual or attempt to finish her or his sentences.
- ◆ If you are having difficulty understanding the individual, consider writing as an alternative means of communicating, but first ask the individual if this is acceptable.

## Cognitive Disabilities

- ◆ Be prepared to repeat what you say, orally or in writing.
- ◆ Offer assistance completing forms or understanding written instructions and provide extra time for decision making.
- ◆ Be patient, flexible and supportive. Take time to understand the individual and make sure the individual understands you.

## Profiles in Resources—What is available in New Mexico?

**Abrazos Family Support Services/Education for Parent of Indian Children with Special Needs.** EPICS is a parent training and resource center for American Indian families who live in New Mexico and who have children with disabilities and special needs.

788 Camino Don Tomas  
Bernalillo, NM 87004

(505) 867-3396

(505) 867-3398 Fax

Email: [epicsproj@abrazosnm.org](mailto:epicsproj@abrazosnm.org)



**Parents Reaching Out (PRO)** is a statewide parent training and information center.

1920 B Columbia Dr. SE  
Albuquerque, NM 87106

(800) 524-5176

(505) 247-1345

**New Mexico Protection & Advocacy System (P&A)**

(800) 432-4682

(505) 256-3100

**Parents for Behaviorally Different Children (PBDC)**

1101 Cardenas NE, Ste, 202

Albuquerque, NM 87110

(800) 273-7232

(505) 265-0430

**Family Voices**

2340 Alamo SE, Ste, 102

Albuquerque, NM 87106

(888) 835-5669

(505) 872-4774

**Pegasus Legal Services**

4916 4th Street, NW

Albuquerque, NM 87107

(505) 244-1101

**Voices for Children**

2340 Alamo SE

Albuquerque, NM 87106

(505) 244-9505

**New Vistas—Native American Liaison Program—NMDVR** serves the 21 Indian tribes in New Mexico to eligible American Indians with disabilities to access services.

*Winonah Stover*, Rehab Technician for Pueblos of Cochiti, Santo Domingo and San Felipe (505) 228-5434

*Andrea Shije*, Rehab Technician for Pueblos of Santa Ana, Sandia, Zia and Jemez (505) 249-6572.

**Native American Professional Parent Resources, Inc. (NAPPR)** provides services to Indian family, infants and toddlers who are developmentally delay and at risk (birth to three).

8330 Washington Place NE

Albuquerque, NM 87113

(505) 345-6289

(505) 345-6478 Fax

*“Knowledge is Power”*

*One never notices what has been done; one can only see what remains to be done*

*-Marie Currie*

*A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.*

*-John C. Maxwell*



Abrazos Family Support Services  
EPICS Project

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Phone: 505-867-3396  
Fax: 505-867-3398  
Email: [epicsproj@abrazosnm.org](mailto:epicsproj@abrazosnm.org).

**We're on the Web**  
**[www.abrazosnm.org](http://www.abrazosnm.org)**

*Education for Parents of Indian  
Children with Special Needs  
(EPICS)*

*The EPICS Project is a community  
parent resource center for  
American Indian families who live  
in New Mexico and who have  
children with special needs.*

**EPICS Project**

**Jeanette Trancosa**  
Project Director

**Vacant**

Parent Training Specialist

**EPICS LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL**

**Ruchanda Largo**, Jemez Parent  
Chairperson

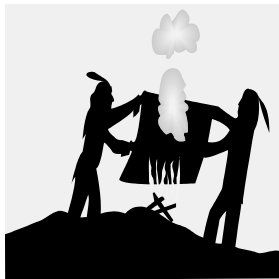
**Elizabeth Thomson**, Parent  
Secretary

**Cecilia Riley**, Member  
Laguna Parent

**Luana Lorenzo Gaco**, Member  
Laguna Parent

**Andrea Shije**, Member  
Zia Parent

**Vacant**,  
Member



## ***2006 Calendar of Events***

**August 9**—"IDEA 2004 & IEP Process" Santo Domingo Head Start Center. Open to all parents and interested persons who work with children with disabilities.

**August 18**—"Record Keeping & Advocacy" for Mescalero FIT families.

**August 24**—"IDEA" Mescalero Head Start Program Parents/staff

**September 12-14**—Early Childhood Institute in Atlanta, GA—to be attended by the EPICS Project Director

**September 20**—IDEA / IEP Process, Central Consolidated Public Schools for Shiprock, Kirtland, and Naschitty.

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