

Introduction

The Family SupportNet Project provides Internet training for accessing resources to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities and families of diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic communities. This includes:

- ◆ Teaching basic computer skills in Microsoft Word, Internet and Email use and offer technical assistance by pointing people to Family Support sites so that resource information is easy to find and use for individuals with disabilities and families of diverse cultural communities and community based minority organizations staff in a supportive, accessible environment.
- ◆ Maintaining a "User Friendly" website and newsletter developed from the input of individuals with disabilities and families of diverse cultural communities and community based minority organizations staff.
- ◆ Creating and distributing a database of accessible community computer centers so that acquired skills can be used and strengthened in local settings by the computer students.
- ◆ Disseminating Curriculum and Training materials and methods to individuals, families and their communities so that the project can be continued and replicated. All services are provided free of charge.

—Meredith Aalto, Project Coordinator

Three Students Graduate

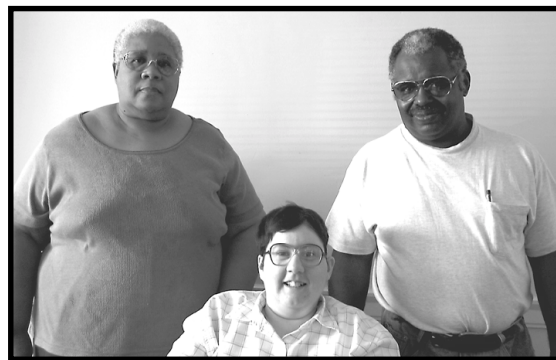
Three people from The Evergreen Center in Mattapan have completed fundamental computer classes through their participation in the Family SupportNet Project. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson and, Maryjo Chaisson learned basic Microsoft Word, email and Internet skills enabling them to get Family Support resources and communicate via email with professionals and others concerned with disability issues.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson are the parents of Micah, an Evergreen Center participant who signed up with Best Buddies' e-pal program. Ms. Chaisson is an Evergreen Center participant who enjoys writing to friends and finding activities in the Boston area that she and her mother can do together.

Several other Evergreen Center participants are signed up to begin lessons in the near future.

Best Buddies e-pal coordinator, Tracie Levine, set up a free AOL account for the participants taking part in the Family SupportNet Project who also want a Best Buddies e-pal.

Mr. Johnson is buying a computer as a family gift for Christmas. Prior to the computer lessons, Mrs. Johnson did not know how to use email. Now she is a frequent email user and regularly helps her son, Micah,



access his email and get news from his e-pal. "We are thankful to the Evergreen staff, John Cuetera and Kathleen Conrad for helping us get these lessons from the Family SupportNet Program. It has changed our lives."

Roxbury Comprehensive Health Center Begins FSN Lessons

Teens participating in Roxbury Comp's After School Program took part in Family SupportNet computer lessons. A great community enthusiasm and spirit greeted the teacher, Meredith Aalto on the first day of lessons October 11.

Several peer counselors are learning how to teach basic computer skills so that they can help After School participants increase their skills or even help teach parents who haven't any computer skills.

The staff, Arnold Chamanlal and Davadra Huffman are looking forward to the peer counselors gaining more computer skills and even helping the senior level staff become more computer proficient.

Latino Health Institute students sign up for Fall classes

About twenty parents referred from the Latino Health Institute (LHI) in Boston have signed up for Family SupportNet Project classes. The staff set aside a computer that the teacher can use for beginning students. Initial Microsoft Word training is held at the LHI offices. After Word lessons are completed, students schedule lessons in their neighborhood libraries with teacher, Meredith Aalto. All Boston libraries are equipped with PC's that have Internet access and can be used for an hour per session. Students who have no prior computer experience can usually complete the entire basic lessons in about twelve hours.

Mr. and Mrs. Santos, parents of a teenage daughter who is deaf and receives DMR services, take lessons together at the Washington Village library branch in South Boston. Both have been a tremendous support for each other.

Half of the parents have already started lessons and the other half will begin to schedule classes in the next two weeks.

More CBMO's Signing up...

HAPHI, the Somali Development Center (both of Jamaica Plain) and Universal Human Rights International (Roxbury) are scheduled to initiate trainings in the next few weeks. The Dunbar Center of Springfield has also expressed an interest in classes. A centrally located community computer center is being sought to accommodate the many students who have expressed interest in the free computer instruction in Springfield.



Visit the Family SupportNet Website at:
www.ici.umb.edu/family

Resources include information and links about Disability Resources, Global Communities, ESL, Healthcare, Family Activities, FSN Newsletter, List serves, Searches and MUCH MORE!!



Call or email Meredith Aalto for more information about upcoming basic computer classes!

meredith.aalto@tch.harvard.edu
(617) 355-3059 (V)
(617) 355-6956 (TTY)

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A - B - C'S OF INTERNET DEFINITIONS

ATTACHMENT

A file which is 'attached' and sent as part of a standard text email message.

BOOKMARK/FAVORITE

A website you use often, or one you've just found and want to return to, can be made a 'bookmark' or a 'favorite'. Go back to that page, you can go there in one click instead of trying to remember where it was that you got there from. Most browsers allow you to organize bookmarks by creating different folders for those relating to a specific subject.

CHAT

This is communication which occurs in real time over the Internet, via a chat room on a website.

From: www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/glossary/

These are just some of the common Internet terms students learn in the Family SupportNet basic computer class!!



Family SupportNet, Capacity Building Project
Institute for Community Inclusion
300 Longwood Ave.
Boston, MA 02115