

Leominster Family SupportNet Project Class Graduates Four People!

Four individuals from Work, Inc. in Leominster, MA graduated after participating for six weeks in Family SupportNet classes. David, Mercy, Janet, and Matthew all learned how to compose a letter in Microsoft Word and make flyers, as well as use email and do searches on the Internet. Janet and Mathew are a mother and son student team who received a computer through the SHARE Foundation at UMass Dartmouth. Mercy received a donated computer from a private party. David already owned a computer and needed to learn more Internet, email, and word processing skills so he could use the computer more independently at his home.



In early December, Work Inc. held an open house for consumers, family members, and guests to celebrate the new computer lab and the

completion of the first Family SupportNet Project classes. The computer lab was funded through the Department of Mental Retardation. The president of Work, Inc., James Cassetta, passed out certificates of completion to the



successful graduates. Michelle Dunn, a staff member of Work, Inc. Leominster, is the newly trained computer teacher who will teach future basic computer classes.

Mercy will take her new skills and volunteer to teach her peers computer basics at a community clubhouse. "I will be able to help teach these computer lessons at the clubhouse to people who don't know computers," said Mercy.



Family SupportNet Project Is Welcomed to the Citywide Parent's Council at Latin Academy

Mayn Wontan of Youth Opportunity Boston and Dorothy Garrison of Universal Human Rights International, Inc. invited the Family SupportNet Project to teach a group of students about basic Microsoft Word, email, and Internet skills. The class is made up of eight students ranging from age 6 to 60-plus. Everyone is having fun and helping each other out. In addition to the software applications, Mr. Wontan is teaching the students how to repair and maintain a personal computer. When the course ends, the students will know about computers inside and out!

Article on Adolescence and Employment

To read about issues on employment and adolescence, visit the Family SupportNet website for the following article at www.ici.umb.edu/family/newsletter/spring03.html

Self-Determination and Struggle in the Lives of Adolescents

As students of all ability levels move into adulthood, they seek to define themselves and develop goals for the future. This study examined the relationship between the difficulties students encountered and the degree to which they had developed a sense of self. The report identifies four categories of students and offers targeted suggestions for support.

Stories of Success: Using Networking and Mentoring Relationships in Career Planning for Students with Disabilities and Their Families (Feb. 2001). This brief includes examples of how students and families have successfully used networking and mentoring relationships to learn about jobs and find employment, and explains how students and their families can learn to build and use their personal networks throughout the career planning process.

Cora Is Cooking Up Another Recipe Book—Her Third!

Readers never tire of hearing about Cora Johnson and her creative recipes. She has completed her third cookbook. This cookbook highlights country cooking. Cora is raising funds again for the Spring Craft Sale at the Evergreen Center in Mattapan, MA. This cookbook includes some special spice information as well as some "Martha Stewart Do's and Don'ts." Turtle Soup and Rabbit Stew are some country vittles Cora can teach you to love.

Get Ready for Summer Fun 2003!

Check out the listing of day and residential summer camp programs prepared by the *Federation for Children with Special Needs* (FCSN). The guide includes these tips:

Selecting a Camp: What to Look for in Camp Programs

If you are considering sending your child to a camp program, you will need to make some decisions concerning the type of camp that is most appropriate and then gather some basic information about camps offering this type of experience. Your first decision is whether a day camp or a residential (sleep-away) camp would be the most beneficial experience for your child.

DAY CAMPS

Day camps usually offer a variety of recreational activities designed to promote your child's physical and mental well-being. A program may run all-day or half-day, five days a week or two to three days a week, all summer or only a few weeks. Advance registration and a physical exam with complete medical history are usually required.

Day camp activities ordinarily include music, swimming, a variety of sports, arts and crafts, hobby clubs, trips, etc. The ages of the children are usually five years and older.

If the program is offered by your local community or municipal recreation department, chances are a minimal fee will be required. Most private agencies charge a higher fee, although they may be willing to reduce the fee based on financial need.

RESIDENTIAL CAMPS

Residential (sleep-away) camps are those in which your child may spend from two days to two weeks to an entire summer away from home. This type of program can provide a unique living experience for a child with a disability. In addition to some of the same activities available to day camps, sleep-away camps enable children to live together in cabins under the supervision of qualified staff. A major emphasis of these programs is to increase the independence and self-help skills of each child. Ages tend to range from 5 to 16; most camps do not accept teenagers over 17 or 18.

Advance registration and a complete physical examination are usually required; a formal interview may be necessary. Fees are generally charged; however, a scholarship program may be available to those with financial needs.

"SPECIAL" VS. INTEGRATED

There are day and residential camps only for children with disabilities and camps where a child with a disability is included with children who are non-disabled. Which experience is best for your child depends on your child's abilities and interests, social skills, and what you perceive the maximum benefit will be from each situation.

GENERAL INFORMATION

General information can be obtained by either contacting the camp directly through mail, email, or telephone, or by accessing the camp's website.

See the entire FCSN Summer Camp Guide at www.fcsn.org/camps/2003/camp2003.htm

Family SupportNet Project Lessons are Now Online!

For access to beginning lessons in Microsoft Word, email, and the Internet, go to the Family SupportNet Project website at www.ici.umb.edu/family/internet.html#cie



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

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(617) 287-4331 (V)
(617) 287-4350 (TTY)

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, Listservs and more!

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