



# SPIN NEWS

Special Edition  
2008-09 School Year

**SPIN** is co-sponsored by the Disability & Communication Access Board and the Special Education Section of the Department of Education. Services include a phone line for information referral and support, a quarterly newsletter, an annual conference and community workshops. **SPIN** is guided by an Advisory Committee made up of parents, teachers and people with disabilities.

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## Why E.S.Y.?

**E**xtended School Year (ESY) is special education and related services that are provided beyond the normal school year. The purpose of providing ESY for a student with a disability is to make sure that his or her progress in school is not put at risk by long breaks in instruction. These breaks could include time off in the summer or intercessions during the school year.

Not every student receiving special education and related services qualifies to receive ESY. There are several factors used to determine if ESY is needed:

- ☛ The nature of the disability or condition
- ☛ The severity of the disabling condition
- ☛ Areas of learning that are critical to helping the student be self-sufficient and independent
- ☛ Extent of regression
- ☛ Rate of recoupment.

*Regression* means the loss of knowledge or skills when education is interrupted. Most children will lose some skills over the summer, but the IEP Team must look at the extent of the loss. *Rate of recoupment* refers to how long it

takes for the student to regain lost skills and knowledge, and whether time spent relearning skills will take away from educational progress.

If a student is just beginning to learn a skill that has the potential for increasing his/her independence, the IEP team may feel it necessary to reinforce this skill over breaks. Other students may need highly structured programming throughout the year to attain and maintain behavior goals.

### Extended School Year:

- ☑ Is determined by the student's IEP team,
- ☑ Addresses the IEP, and
- ☑ Must ensure that the student receives a free and appropriate education (FAPE).

The discussion about eligibility for ESY occurs in the IEP meeting, but you may approach your child's special education teacher if you have additional questions.

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# TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL NEW SCHOOL YEAR



**B**eyond the carpooling schedule and back-to-school shopping, parents need to make sure that they've done their homework in preparation for the new school year. Here are a few tips that may help you get off to a successful start:

## Help Your Child Deal With Transitions



Whether your child is making a transition from preschool to kindergarten or from an elementary school to a middle school, make sure to take him/her to visit the new school or classroom before the first day of school.

## Review Your Child's Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Reread your child's IEP and make sure you are clear about what the school has agreed to provide. Does your child's teacher understand, as well? Check to see if your IEP is measurable, realistic, and time-specific.



## Resolve Old Issues

If concerns arose during the IEP in the last school year that were not resolved, arrange to meet with your child's teacher to discuss whether changes to the IEP are needed.

## List Important Things About Your Child

Prepare a list of at least 5 important things that the teacher(s) would find helpful to know about your child. Let them know why these things are essential for your child to be successful. Don't forget to leave a copy of the list with each teacher.



## Attend Your School's Open House



Your school's Open House is another opportunity to get to meet your child's teacher and to learn about classroom rules. You'll have a chance to find out if your child understands the teacher's rules and be in a better position to explain them to your child.

## Create a "Contact Log"

Use a notebook to send messages to the teachers. Write a few sentences everyday to the teacher(s) but don't make your child the bearer of messages about problems at school. It might be a good idea to make an extra copy of your log just in case the notebook gets lost.



*Adapted from an article by Pat Howey from Wrightslaw*

Alone we can do so little.  
Together we can do so much.

*Helen Keller, American writer and  
advocate for persons who are deaf and blind*

# EFFECTIVE PARENT ADVOCACY...

## THE FOUR P's

### **P**OSITIVE ATTITUDE

Parenting a child with special needs is a challenging task, and everyone handles it differently. There are many emotions involved and talking about your feelings at a support group meeting or with a professional counselor can help you move beyond the tears and onto a positive approach to your situation. When you're feeling positive about your child and you have a positive approach to service providers, you're more likely to get the positive support you need.

### **P**ARTNERSHIP

Partnership with professionals is an important part of the successful advocacy formula. Although a roomful of professionals at an IEP meeting can be intimidating, you need to remember that YOU are the expert on your child. You live with him and see him/her in many different settings, so your input is essential to any decision that will be made. Consider yourself an important member of the team.

### **P**ATIENCE

Patience is a real challenge, especially when you're dealing with agencies that seem to have only one speed: "slow". Try to be understanding. Professionals who work in human services probably got into the work because they like helping people. However, they are frequently restricted by regulations, inadequate budgets and their reliance on other people for delivery of services or equipment. Communicate your frustration with their system (remember your positive attitude!). They may just agree with you and you may inspire them to make some changes.

### **P**ERSISTENCE

Persistence is the last "P" because being patient doesn't mean giving up! Parents need to follow-up on getting things their children need. Don't always expect that someone will do things for you. The reality is, you are your child's case manager. Make follow-up calls to "see how things are moving along" and to remind people that you are still out there waiting. Don't give up!

## HUGGING

Hugging is healthy: It helps our body's immune system, it keeps you healthier, it reduces stress, it induces sleep, it's invigorating, it's rejuvenating, it has no unpleasant side effects, and hugging is nothing less than a miracle drug.

Hugging is all natural: It is organic, naturally sweet, no pesticides, no preservatives, no artificial ingredients and 100 % wholesome.

Hugging is practically perfect: There are no moveable parts, no batteries to wear out, no periodic checkups, low energy consumption, high energy yield, inflation-proof, non-fattening, no monthly payments, no insurance requirements, theft-proof, non-taxable, non-polluting, and of course, fully returnable.



*From an Ann Landers column*



# MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

## 2008

- 10/3-4 **'08 Hawaii Early Childhood Conference -  
"Putting Our Keiki First: Getting on Board!"**  
Hawaii Convention Center  
Call 942-4708 or e-mail to  
conference@hawaiiayc.org
- 10/17 **Neurotrauma Conference:**  
& 18 **Hope Blooms Through the Night**  
For info, call Mary at 791-6942 or  
www.regonline.com/nt08
- 11/8 **Hawaii Down Syndrome Congress  
"Buddy Walk"**  
For details call Cheryl at 672-6444 or e-mail  
yamanec@hawaii.rr.com
- 11/21 **Future Horizons presents  
Autism & Aspergers' Syndrome 2008**  
1-800-489-0727 or www.futurehorizons-  
autism.com/conferences.htm

## 2009

- 3/7 **Hawaii Families As Allies Family  
& Youth Conference**  
Dole Cannery Ballroom.  
Limited airfare scholarships  
To register, call HFAA at 487-8785.
- Spring **2009 Pac Rim Conference**  
Check the website at www.pacrim.  
hawaii.edu/ in August for dates & location  
or call 956-7539.
- 4/4 **Hawaii Branch of the International  
Dyslexia Association (HIDA) Spring  
Conference "Literacy Issues in Early  
Childhood"**  
HIDA@dyslexia-hawaii.org or call 538-7007
- 4/25 **23rd Annual SPIN Conference  
"IN SPIN WE TRUST"**  
UH Campus Center  
Limited airfare scholarships  
Call or e-mail SPIN



**Special Parent Information Network**  
919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101  
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