

Family Connections Center

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Remember to Vote Don't take your rights for granted!

Persons with disabilities often don't exercise the right to vote. This means that they don't get to play a role in how our country is governed. We're fortunate to have a strong democracy in the United States, but it can only stay that way with citizen participation. Not voting slowly wears away at the foundation of our democracy. **Go to** "We've Got the Power" site to learn more. <http://www.thearc.org/page.aspx?pid=3536>

Although voting should not be a matter of self-interest alone, many important services are funded through federal and state budgets offering another reason to vote.



Tuesday, November 6 is the date for our Presidential election along with other important federal, state and local officials. All our congressional officers, state senators and house members are up for election. And if you haven't noticed, Senator Scott Brown will face Elizabeth Warren as he runs for re-election.



There still IS TIME to register for the election with the deadline on October 17.

Don't take your right for granted!

Family Connections Staff

Sandy Kinney,
Program Director / Associate Executive Director

Jorge Pagan,
Family Advisor

Sherry Amaral-Lopez,
Family Advisor

Emily M. Nisenbaum,
Sr. Associate Executive Director

Jennifer Newcomer,
Family Advisor

Kathleen Amaral,
Family Advisor

Dustin Green,
Executive Director

The Nemasket Group's 11th Annual Charity Golf

On August 27th **The Nemasket Group** held the *11th Annual Charity Golf Tournament* at the Allendale County Club in Dartmouth. This year's tournament was held in memory of Louis Nisenbaum. Lou was the founder of **The Nemasket Group** back in 1984 and the *Executive Director* of the organization until his passing in October of 2011. Lou's presence at golf tournament was greatly missed. However, his commitment to the organization's Mission lives on and his spirit was with us.



On behalf of the **The Nemasket Group** and the *Golf Tournament Committee* I would like to thank all of those that golfed in the tournament this year, our volunteers, as well as those that supported the tournament with various donations. Without the support of community members and local businesses this charity event would not have been such a successful fundraiser.

Major Sponsors

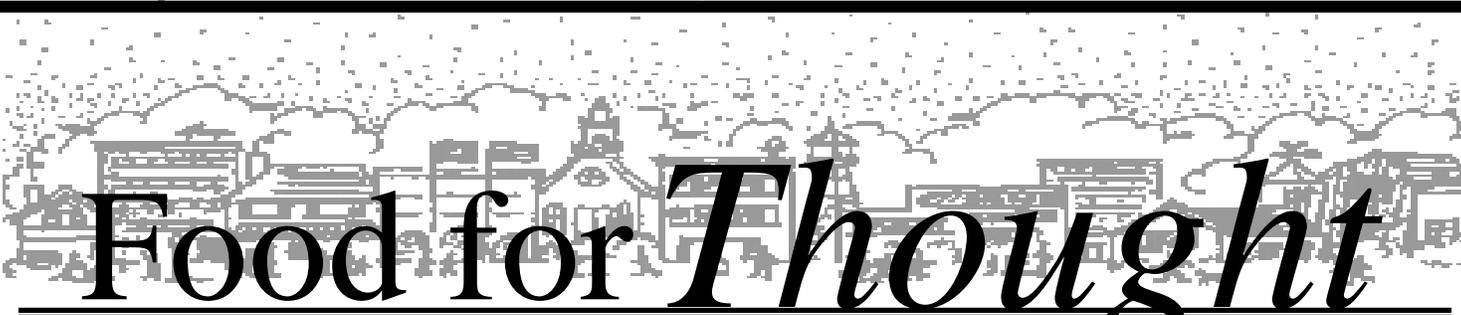
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Food for *Thought*

Inclusion: The Natural State

Revolutionary Common Sense by Kathie Snow

In the United States and many other democracies, *every person is born included!* This is not a time or place of European serfs, American slaves, or a caste system where your position in the social hierarchy—including whether you’re included or segregated, is preordained. In our society, inclusion is not a right that must be earned; it *is* the natural state.

That’s the ideal we operate from. But it’s not the *reality* for many children and adults with disabilities who are subjected to an archaic paradigm: at the moment a disability condition is diagnosed, they’re consigned to segregation and second-class citizenship! Like serfs, slaves, or “untouchables” in other times or cultures, they’re placed at the bottom of the social hierarchy, controlled by others, and segregated in “special” places with their “own kind.” Opportunities for an ordinary life, education and employment are limited (a substandard education automatically limits employment). It can be nearly impossible to climb out of the gutter of special, segregated programs.

Unlike other times or cultures where segregation was automatic, in our society *we have to do an extraordinary amount of work to ensure segregation and second-class citizenship.* And our efforts take place at both systemic and individual levels.

Systematically, we’ve created special programs/services which are often located in special places, and staffed by specialized experts: early intervention, special education, special sports, special church programs, special college programs, special habilitation services, special vocational assistance, and more!

Historically, however, these ordinary services and activities were not thought to be appropriate for people with disabilities. For the last

200 years or so, we’ve operated from the paradigm that people who happen to have conditions we call disabilities needed to be cured/treated *and* protected from a cruel society, while simultaneously protecting society from the “menace” of the “defectives,” so institutions (the ultimate in special, segregated places) were created.

Fast-forward to the deinstitutionalization efforts begun in the 1960s: if the “inmates” of institutions were to be released, “community-based” services must be created to meet their “special needs.” The special services mindset was entrenched (along with a burgeoning new industry which employs millions). But think about it: at the time – and even today – which is easier, better, and more cost-effective: to *modify* the existing services in a community to meet the needs of *all*, or to create a new and separate set of services (which result in segregation)?

Beyond the moral and ethical issues involved, how can we continue to fund segregated programs with government funds (tax dollars), when federal and state laws (ADA, IDEA, Rehab Act, and more) *mandate* non-discrimination, least restrictive environment, and other basic tenets which promote inclusion, equal access, and more? (There is a huge disconnect between what our laws say and how government funds are spent, which needs further examination in another article.) So, systematically, we’ve worked very hard and spent billions of dollars on programs and services that (intentionally or unintentionally) promote segregation and erase the natural state of inclusion.

At the level of the individual, we also expend great amounts of energy. We diagnose, assess, observe and test, often using multi-disciplinary teams of experts. Then we study, quantify, and qualify the data; write reports; share

those reports; and assess some more, to determine the prognosis, treatment, intervention, etc. Then we have *meetings* (IFSPs, IEP, IPPs, I-cetera) to formalize, sanctions, and justify our decision to segregate, such as placing a child in a life-skills class or an adult in a group home or day program. Then we treat, intervene, therapize, supervise, manage, and more. *Oh, how much work it all takes!* And everyone-teachers, providers, parents, and others- complains: too much work, too much time, too much stress, and too many rules and regulations to follow.

Of course, throughout all these systemic and individual processes, no one ever utters the words: “Let’s figure out how to segregate this person and consign him to a second-class citizenship.” Instead, we talk in terms of “helping.” Regardless of our words or our intent, the outcome is the same: the loss of the natural state of inclusion, and with it, the loss of opportunities: to live a real life; to grow up like your brothers and sisters; to be a friend, neighbor, lover, spouse, softball player, bookworm, exuberant child, determined student, enthusiastic employee, selfless volunteer, or whatever you want to be. The loss of inclusion is like a living death: the devastating loss of the ordinary, but precious, hopes and dreams.

But what can happen when we embrace, internalize, and base our actions on the fact that every person is *born included*, and that *no one has the right to impose segregation and second-class citizenship on another*? No one has the right to deliver the unspoken and soul-crushing message of today’s conventional wisdom: “Because you have a disability, you are not-okay the way you are. But we will try to make you ‘better’ with treatments and interventions and services. And if you work hard enough, you may – one day – *earn* your way out of segregation.” Substitute “Because you have been found guilty of a crime...” and it’s easy to see that many people with disabilities and treated as if they’re convicted criminals.

No parent, therapist, or service provider has the right to replace the joyous freedom of childhood with a regiment of treatments; no teacher has the right to exclude a child with a disability and rob him of the opportunities to learn and grow from ordinary classroom and social experiences; no human services system has the right to incarcerate an adult with a disability in a congregate setting.

Inclusion is the natural state; anything else is an artificial environment. What could happen if our highest guiding principle was to ensure the natural state of inclusion continues throughout a person’s life? This would require us to hold inclusion as a higher value than services and interventions geared to “help” the person. In many quarters today, inclusion isn’t even on the radar screen; we focus on services – and segregation continues.

Yes, many people with disabilities may need more or different assistance, than those without disabilities, but as previously mentioned, our communities are rich with generic (and *inclusive*) services. So why can’t a person with a disability be helped to access the “regular” employment services offered in his state? Why can’t an adult with a disability be helped to live in the place of her choice, with roommates of her choice, and with the supports she needs (natural and/or system supports)? Why can’t a child with a disability be in general ed classrooms? Why can’t a child take a ballet or karate class or do other fun activities (with consultation from a therapist, if necessary), instead of receiving therapy for years? Why don’t we ensure people with disabilities have the accommodations, supports, and assistive technology they may need to be successful in inclusive environments?

Those who have chosen to *stay* on the path of inclusion have learned that it can be done – this is not pie-in-the-sky thinking! And, yes, it can sometimes take a little more work or time or negotiation, but the effort is worth it, and it’s much *less* effort, in total, than the extraordinary amount of work to segregate!

We may think our actions are driven by, and can be justified by, the type or level of disability. But it’s never about a person’s disability; it’s always about our attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs – *our values*. And where does inclusion fit in our hierarchy of values?

Look into the face of a person with a disability and acknowledge that he or she was *born included*, then question how the segregation and second-class citizenship of that person – along with the unmitigated and tragic loss of inclusion, opportunities, and hopes and dreams – can be justified. Keep looking, and imagine the awesome possibilities when inclusion is your highest operating principle.

Available *Resources*



New England

Disability Awareness

Essay Contest

In an effort to encourage disability awareness among students, Social Security Disability Help, is hosting our first ever New England Disability Awareness Essay

Contest.

Who are we?

Social Security Disability Help is an informational website on the Social Security Disability (SSD) program. We strive to make people aware of the SSD benefits that are available to them and help them get the benefits by offering free evaluations of their disability claim.

Rules and Prizes

- To participate, students in grades two through six can write an essay, no longer than 500 words, describing how someone with a disability has inspired them.
- Then, submit the essay along with the child's age, city, state, and a parent or guardian's preferred method of contact to Social Security Disability Help by October, 31st, 2012. The essays can be submitted to:
<http://www.socialsecurity-disability.org/contest/newengland-essay>
- Five winners will earn the chance to donate \$250.00 to the charity of their choosing as well as a \$25.00 gift card to Barnes and Noble.
- Five runners up will be selected to receive a \$25.00 gift card to Barnes and Noble and finally, five third place winners will each receive a \$15.00 gift card to Barnes and Noble.

- The winning essays will be posted on the [Social Security Disability Help Blog](http://www.socialsecurity-disability.org/blog): <http://www.socialsecurity-disability.org/blog>

To learn more about the contest or if you have any questions please contact us at mac@socialsecurity-disability.org.

Transition Planning Assistance Clinics for Ages 14 – 22

Unsure what to do before your son or daughter reaches age 22?

Let us help you with your child's journey.

SUPPORT  **brokers**
of The Arc of Massachusetts

Transition is about planning for life. The transition your son or daughter will make from school to adult life in the community is a long journey beginning at age 14 through 22 years. Transitional services include postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated (and supported) employment, continuing adult education, adult services, and independent living or community participation.

If you want **one-on-one** help from a transition expert, sign up for a problem solving session provided by SUPPORTbrokers of The Arc of Massachusetts. A broker will help you tackle problems and propose solutions by brainstorming ideas and giving you options, guidance, and resources geared toward your child's needs, strengths, preferences, and interests.

One hour, individualized clinics will be provided at The Arc of Massachusetts (217 South St. Waltham 02453) on the following days in October and November 2012. Cost is \$50/hr.

- October 22 at 6pm, 7pm, or 8pm.
- October 26 at 12 pm, 1pm, or 2pm.
- November 13 at 10am, 11am, 12pm, 6pm, 7pm, or 8pm.

Anyone who has a son or daughter with an intellectual or developmental disability is welcome to register for a session today by calling Beth Rutledge at 781-891-6270 ext. 101.

Testimonial

Before starting our transition work with The Arc for our son, we had no idea of the enormity of the transition task. We now have a plan. Our son has made so much progress because we know what we need to teach him and where he wants to go. And the most amazing part...we now know that he can get there and flourish as a successful, independent, happy adult. (Mother of 14 year old with I/DD)

iPad Resources & Links



iPhone / iPad Applications (Apps)

- **iPhone/iPad Apps and Resources for Autism**

Comprehensive listing of Apps with links to reviews, Links to lots of other sites, including grant resources compiled by a parent, an adult with autism, and an SLP

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/pub?key=0Ajblta8OTS0KdHRMVWx0Q3pvOWRXRXBfd01jc3lqakE&hl=en&single=true&gid=0&output=html>

- **iPhone/iPad apps for AAC**

detailed reviews of apps with ratings – maintained by an SLP

<http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/article/iphoneipad-apps-for-aac>

- **Resources – Apps, Funding, Insurance, Etc.**

includes specific advice about trying to get insurance to cover iPads

<http://itaalk.org/resources.html>

iPad Funding

- **Funding For iPads from Autism Society**

<http://www.autism-society.org/news/funding-for-ipads.html>

Courtesy of the Autism Society's contact center, Autism Source, the list below includes organizations that offer grants and other assistance for children with autism:

- [ACT Today](http://www.act-today.org/act-today-grant-program.php) <http://www.act-today.org/act-today-grant-program.php>
- [Danny's Wish](http://www.letschatautism.com/ipads-for-autism-application/) <http://www.letschatautism.com/ipads-for-autism-application/>
- [The Adam Scott Foundation Autism Grants Program](http://www.autismqld.com.au/index.php?page_id=310)
http://www.autismqld.com.au/index.php?page_id=310
- [Hollyrod Foundation](http://www.hollyrod.org/) <http://www.hollyrod.org/>
- [iHelp for Special Needs](http://www.ihelpforspecialneeds.com/iHelpWelcome/Need_An_iPad_App.html) http://www.ihelpforspecialneeds.com/iHelpWelcome/Need_An_iPad_App.html
- [The iTaalk Autism Foundation](http://itaalk.org) itaalk.org
- [The Puzzling Piece](http://www.thepuzzlingpiece.com/ipad.html) <http://www.thepuzzlingpiece.com/ipad.html>
- [Small Steps in Speech](http://www.smallstepsinspeech.org/application) <http://www.smallstepsinspeech.org/application>
- [The Conover Company](http://conovercompany.com/grants) <http://conovercompany.com/grants>

The above grants are for children with autism and often with language delays.

Other individuals with autism and their parents may want to contact their state's Assistive Technology program. You may find these by searching the Autism Society's resource database: www.autismsource.org

Once on the search page, choose your state and click on Assistive Technology; your state agency will come up.

Assistive technology programs may have a borrowing program for the iPad. They also offers very low interest loans with reasonable payment plans for many devices and iPads may be covered. They also can search for an alternative device that serves the same purpose and may be covered through them. If you have any questions, please call the AutismSource contact center, 800-3AUTISM (800-328-8476)

...Continued on Page 8

- **“5 Steps to Getting an iPad Covered by Insurance: A mom’s Story of Success”**
<http://itaalk.org/fundingsources/medicalinsurancecoverage.html>
- **Grants & Funding Sources for iPads from itaalk**
<http://itaalk.org/resources/fundingsources.html>



***UNIVERSAL DESIGN:
EXPERIENCE THE
DIFFERENCE!***

November 14-16 at the Boston Convention Center & Exhibition Center

The ArchitectureBoston Expo 2012 (ABX) will be held November 14-16 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. It is the biggest and best building trade show in the region, attracting 80,000 design professionals. The event will include workshops, tours, exhibits and special events.

Of special interest is the exhibit: UNIVERSAL DESIGN: EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE! We all know that when it comes to making spaces accessible, the devil is in the details. ABX features an interactive universal design/accessibility exhibit revealing these details, including two ramps, toilet rooms and kitchenettes meant to look identical to one another. One will be universally designed and easy to use, while the other will have common design errors (sometimes quite subtle) making it difficult or impossible to use. There will also be a 'Vision Corridor' to where one can experience walking through a corridor with limited sight. ABX attendees are encouraged to navigate through the space with a wheelchair, scooter, crutches, stroller or cane - all will be provided. They will be assisted by volunteers with disabilities and members of the Boston Society of Architects Access and Design for Aging Committees. They will explain the design distinctions that make one side much more user friendly than the other, and ensure that participants are safe (should they get 'stuck' at a door that is difficult to open.)

The exhibit Hall is FREE if you register before October 31st. All are welcome, so consider coming with friends, colleagues and family.

To register: <http://abexpo.com/register/registration>

(After October 31st registration is \$15.00 so register early!)

Or register by phone at [877-779-3215](tel:877-779-3215).

An ASL interpreter is available on request.



The Salvation Army
619 Purchase Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

The Salvation Army will be accepting CHRISTMAS APPLICATIONS starting on Monday, November 5th thru November 16th, and also on Monday, November 26th thru Friday, December 3rd. The hours will be from 9:30 – 11:45 a.m. They will not be taking any applications in the afternoon.

Also available for WORKING INDIVIDUALS ONLY evening hours on Thursday, November 15th and on Thursday, November 29th from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Full time students or people fulfilling community service hours during the day, will need to bring documentation of such to be seen in the evening.

Anyone wishing to apply for food assistance and toys for their children (ages infant to 16) will need to bring the following documentation:

IF ON WELFARE: Photo I.D. for person applying and Individual Mass. Health cards for all other family members; official rent receipt, or bill, or mail with name and current address dated (within the last 2 months).

IF ON SOCIAL SECURITY, SSI, DISABILITY, OR CHILD SUPPORT: Photo I.D. for person applying, Birth Certificates, SS cards, or Individual Mass. Health cards for all family members living in the household. Official rent receipt, or bill, or mail with name and current address dated (within the last 2 months).

IF EMPLOYED OR UNEMPLOYED: Photo I.D. for person applying, Birth Certificates, SS cards, or Individual Mass. Health cards for all family members living in the household. Official rent receipt, or bill, or mail with name and current address dated (within the last 2 months).

All applications will be taken at the Salvation Army office located at 619 Purchase Street, New Bedford. If you need more information, please contact call 508-997-6561. There will be Portuguese and Spanish individuals available for the application process.

Information to *Share*

The Nemasket Group's 21st Annual



H*O*L*I*D*A*Y*

B*A*Z*A*A*R*

Saturday, November 17th
9:00am to 4:00pm at
The Nemasket Group
56 Bridge Street in Fairhaven

**Our Chance Auction
has over 100 Prizes!!
Visit us for
Breakfast & Lunch!!**

**Textiles
Jewelry
Gift Baskets
Ornaments
Stained Glass
Knitwear
Photographs
Pottery**

**For more information please call 508-999-4436
or e-mail HolidayBazaar@NemasketGroup.org**

Family Connections Center Newsletter

Information to Share



iPad and IOS Devices: From Cradle to College

Friday, October 19, 2012

8:30am–12:30pm (breakfast included) \$75 per person*

Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center

181 Boston Post Road, Marlborough, MA 01752

Who Should Attend? Higher-ed faculty, administrators, principals, library/media specialists, counselors, transition specialists, parents, speech-language pathologists, physical and occupational therapists, advocates, PK-12 educators, literacy coaches, and other specialists.

Keynote: *Lori Cooney, Project Coordinator and Universal Design Specialist, Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston*

Lori has extensive experience in delivering online and face-to-face professional development for educators across the country on curriculum, instructional resources, mobile technologies, instructional & universal design techniques that meet the learning styles of all students. She designed, developed and initiated a faculty iPad program at the community college level and supports a nationwide Special Interest Group (SIG) on the use of mobile technologies with students with intellectual disabilities in higher education. Additionally, Lori has presented at MassCUE, Massachusetts Schools and Libraries Association, RIEMA (RI Educational Media Association), and numerous colleges and universities. Lori is a STAR Discovery Educator, WPI Technology Humanist, Christa McAuliffe Teacher.

Presenters:

John Lemansky, Senior Systems Engineer, Apple Inc.

John has been with Apple for 8 years as a Senior Systems Engineer working with K12 schools in the Northeast. His areas of interest are technology accessibility and wireless communications. Prior to coming to Apple, John worked for 13 years as a Senior Systems Engineer, Area Technical Specialist and Systems Engineering Manager with Novell, Inc. He holds a BS in Electrical Engineering from West Virginia University. He has taught at Garrett Community College, MD and the Northeastern University State-of-the-Art Engineering Program.

Paul D'Ascoli, Account Executive, Apple Inc.

Paul has been an Account Executive in the technology industry for the past 10 years supporting education accounts across New England. His passion is helping institutions enhance learning and engage students through the use of digital content and personal devices. His role is to work with all levels of the institution to understand the needs and align the appropriate Apple Education resources to support its vision for the future.

For conference flyer or to register:

<http://www.communityinclusion.org/ipad-ios-conference>

**All proceeds support the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston*



Sibshops is a program for brothers and sisters of kids with special needs



Our 2012 Sibshops schedule:

October 25th

November 29th

December 27th

They are held from 5-7pm

At the Nemasket Group

56 Bridge Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719

Our Sibshop program is for children ages 8-13
Who have siblings with special needs. Sibshops are a great place to meet other children
with similar life situations and play fun games!

For more information and to sign up

Contact: 508-999-4436

Kathleen Amaral x133

Jennifer Newcomer x118

space is limited and registration required

Family Connections Center Newsletter

Information to Share



Family Connections Center

Is proud to host
MASS CHILDREN HEALTHY SMILES



DENTAL CLINIC

Here at the Nemasket group
56 Bridge Street

Fairhaven, Ma

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3rd, from 4pm until 6pm

- Dental Screening
- Cleaning
- Sealants
- Fluoride Varnish
- Home care instruction

Appointments are set into 30 minute sessions.

Space is limited.

Call to schedule an appointment and obtain the permission release forms:

Kathleen Amaral 508-999-4436 ext 133

Deadline to sign up is Friday November 23rd.

**October is National Disability
Employment Awareness Month!!**

The purpose of National Disability Employment Awareness Month is to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities.

Held annually, National Disability Employment Awareness Month is led by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, but its true spirit lies in the many observances held at the grassroots level across the nation every year. Employers of all sizes and in all industries are encouraged to participate in NDEAM.

Family Connections Center

Joint Project of The Nemasket Group and
DDS (*Greater New Bedford Department of Developmental Services*)
56 Bridge Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719
Phone: 508-999-0077
Fax: 508-997-9239



United Way
of Greater New Bedford

Creating a network of family support
for individuals with developmental
disabilities and their families