



# Family Support Newsletter

Developmental Services of Strafford County, Inc.

August 2000

## Aggressiveness in Children

Parents of two-year-olds frequently express concern about their child's aggressive behavior. Typically developing two-year-olds, as well as other children who may be developmentally young for their chronological age, often display aggressive behavior as a normal part of development. Children who have not learned to control anger or frustration often resort to aggressive behavior. Aggression is a normal expression of emotion in young children. They have not learned acceptable ways to channel their anger.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 1996) describes

aggressive behavior as including: hitting, throwing things, name-calling, spitting, biting, pushing or pulling, forcing someone to do or not do something, destroying property, and taking someone else's possessions.

Children's aggressiveness can be a considerable issue in early childhood programs, and adults—including parents—should recognize the importance of dealing with aggressive behavior. Teachers and parents alike can help children find acceptable ways to express their anger, negotiate to get what they want or need, and handle aggression directed toward them by peers.

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## Manuals Available

Don't forget that there are a couple of manuals written by Family Support staff to assist families. The first is The Guide to Recreation in Strafford County by Betsy Carroll. There is also a Guide to Summer Camps that could help with your plans for next summer (there's even time to visit/observe camps this summer to help with your decision for next year). The other manual available is by Hugh Philbrick and called The Transition Manual. It is a guide to help students with disabilities plan for life after high school. These manuals are available for free by calling Betsy or Hugh at 749-4015.



## Thinking In Pictures

Thanks to Pat Jillette, the Family Resource Room Library received a donation of Temple Grandin's book "Thinking in Pictures". In this great book, the author writes about her experiences as a scientist and a person with autism. If you would like to borrow this book or any other from our library, please call Betsy Carroll at 749-4015



Thinking in Pictures

## Family Partnership Project

The Family Support program continues to work closely with other programs throughout DSSC to offer supports to parents as they think about future planning for their son or daughter with a disability. If you are interested in finding out more about guardianship, estate planning or general planning for the future please call Deirdre Watson or Betsy Carroll. We also have other parents available to help if needed.

## Gadget of the Month

from the Technology Lending Center



Cheap Talk is appropriate for early speech development. It allows the user to "speak" phrases that you pre-record by pushing a picture. Use this battery-operated device to provide communication and

cognitive support. It also will enhance and develop expressive and receptive language skills. Messages can be up to five seconds long and the Cheap Talk is very easy to set up. Call Betsy to borrow the Cheap Talk.

## Surveys Surveys Surveys!

We would like to thank the families who have responded to the various surveys that have come out recently. We understand that it is time consuming, but DSSC and the

State Division of Developmental Disabilities welcome feedback on services and will use your responses as we plan for future supports.

# Children's Museum of Portsmouth

Don't Forget.....

We still have passes for the Children's Museum of Portsmouth. This is a great place to spend some time with your children on a rainy summer day. Please call Betsy Carroll, Parent to Parent Coordinator, to obtain the passes. Hope to hear from you!



## Partners In Health News

This summer the Partners In Health program was able to assist 36 families by providing summer recreational scholarships. These scholarships allowed children and families to attend a variety of recreational opportunities such as amusement and water parks, camping trips, swimming lessons and day

camp. In August the Partners In Health program will be hosting a "Family Fun Day" at the movies. Hope everyone is having a great summer!

Cheryl Goscinski-Drew  
Partners In Health Coordinator

## Aggressiveness in Children (cont. from page 1)

We recommend encouraging children to express their feelings in words and to negotiate resolutions to conflict. Facilitating conversations with children may be a way to divert aggressive behaviors between children when problems arise. Sometimes adults can even suggest words to children to help them communicate the children's feelings. In time, with adult support, children are usually able to use these social skills to solve their own problems.

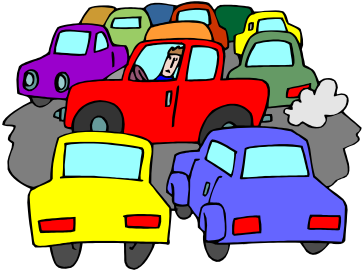
At home, when your child behaves aggressively, try redirecting his or her attention by offering a choice of other

activities. Emphasize words rather than actions. With time and practice, a child will learn to say, "I'm mad because I want to play with the truck," instead of lashing out. As adults, we can help children learn to express negative emotions in more appropriate ways. A positive attitude on the part of parents is the best start!

If you have concerns about your infant or toddler's development, you may call the Infant & Toddler Program at 749-4015. If your child is over the age of three, you may address your concerns to your local school department.

# DriveAbility

## New Driving Program in Exeter



The need to get around doesn't go away just because we age, are born with a disability or become disabled. To help senior citizens and individuals with disabilities learn to drive independently, Exeter Healthcare has launched a new driver education and training program called DriveAbility. Its two certified driver educators are also licensed Occupational Therapists which allows them to offer their expertise in "adapted driving" including the use of hand controls, foot extensions,

left foot gas pedals as well as other strategies to allow people with disabilities to operate motor vehicles. DriveAbility also offers consultations on existing equipment, clinical evaluations of an individual's driving potential and a refresher course that teaches driving skills for senior citizens.

For more info on DriveAbility services, contact Staci Frazier or Amanda Plourde at (603) 773-4927.

## Are Conference Fees Tax Deductible?

Last May, the IRS ruled that certain conference expenses that a parent of a child with a medical disability expends are tax deductible. Essentially the conference must have a medical focus, be related to your child's disability and be recommended by your child's physician. In general, conference fees and transportation

expenses are deductible while lodging and meals and entertainment expenses are not. As always, medical expenses are only deductible when they exceed 7.5% of your gross annual income and these expenses are subject to this rule as well. Before deducting these expenses, however, you should contact the IRS or a professional tax consultant for tax advice.

## Jessica Bailey

The Family Support staff would like to thank Jessica Bailey, UNH intern for all of her hard work and help during the past few months. She's done such a great job as a student intern that we hired her for the summer to fill in for an employee who is on maternity leave! Thanks Jess for putting up with us and doing such a fine job.

## Free Computers

The TLC has two older computers to give away. One is an IBM 386 with Windows 3.1 and the other is an Apple IIcs. Both have keyboards and monitors. Please contact Betsy at 749-4015 if you would like to come and get one of these computers.



## After School Recreation!

What is your child doing after school or on weekends? Is there an activity that your child would like to be involved in but is unable to be included in without assistance? Perhaps you need some help figuring out what kinds of modifications can be made so that the experience can be more successful. Once again, we will be recruiting UNH work/study students in the fall to facilitate the inclusion of young people with disabilities into the activity of their choice. Students will be back at the end of August and hopefully will be applying for various positions. Please contact Betsy Carroll at 749-4015 with your ideas and plans so that we can work together towards this goal. Hope to hear from you!

### And Jessica replies....

Having finished my internship here at DSSC, I wish to give my thanks and utmost appreciation to everyone. You have all been very encouraging and positive throughout

my time here. A special thanks to Deirdre, my supervisor, for her significant contribution in making this a valuable learning experience. Jessica Bailey

### STRESS!!

According to a recent survey of families who are raising a child with a chronic illness or a disability, stress is the most significant issue families face. Hopefully, that makes you feel like you are not alone! We are planning an evening addressing Stress Management or at least acknowledging the stress of it all! The Marriage and Family Therapy Center, sponsored by the Department of Family Studies at UNH, provides assistance to

individuals, couples and families experiencing a wide range of personal issues including having a child with special needs. Barbara Frankel will come and speak to parents and families on Tuesday October 3, 2000. Hopefully, you will come away with some ideas and strategies to help you cope with whatever creates stress in your lives. We will send flyers with specific information.

### New Support Group

by Allison Goss

Finally! There is a new support group for young children with Cerebral Palsy and their families. In an informal setting we're sharing stories, offering ideas, learning about resources, eating good food and having fun. There is a lot of mutual understanding. Not only can parents talk to others who can truly appreciate their joys, triumphs and pains, but parents can meet and learn from other children with Cerebral Palsy. Siblings meet other siblings and the children who have C.P.

can enjoy the company of others who also have C.P. While we are far from being all the same, a young mother, new to any type of support group said, "I don't feel like I'm in it all alone anymore." We're not in it alone and you don't need to be either. We're meeting monthly and we would like to meet you, too! Please call Betsy Carroll at Developmental Services, 749-4015 or Alison Goss, 749-4051 for further information.

# August Raffle

Answer these three easy questions and be entered to win a gift certificate to **Chili's Restaurant !**

- What do you like about the newsletter:
  
- What could be better in the newsletter:
  
- This is something else I'd like to see in this newsletter:

Return this page complete with the below address label no later than August 18<sup>th</sup> to:

Hugh Philbrick      DSSC      113 Crosby Rd      Dover, NH      03820



Developmental Services of Strafford County, Inc.

113 Crosby Road - Suite 1  
Dover NH 03820

Phone: 603-749-4015  
Fax: 603-743-3244

Email: [families@concentric.net](mailto:families@concentric.net)

**It's about the mission.....**