

## Are “vouchers” for you?

### Arizona Scholarships for Pupils with Disabilities

Since 2006, Arizona has offered scholarships for children with disabilities to use toward tuition at private schools. These may appear very attractive to parents seeking a better educational program for their child with special needs, but it is important to be fully informed about all aspects of the program in order to make the best choice for your family.

Controversy swirls around the program which is often referred to as a voucher system. Debates have raised a number of issues about the scholarship program including whether it :

- “aids” religion (contrary to Arizona’s Constitution) if used at a religious school
- segregates children with disabilities and isolates them from the general community
- takes money away from public schools and undermines accountability for public funds
- benefits only children whose parents can afford to pay any difference between the scholarship amount and the full tuition charges at a private school.



The amount of each scholarship is based on the funding formula used to determine the amount of money the public school would receive to educate the child.

Scholarship proponents maintain:

- the money aids the child and family, not the private school—even if the chosen school is religious, it is essentially a vendor providing educational services
- some children need environments or supports that are not available in their public school, and this program shifts the decision of where to educate a child from districts to the child’s parents
- the program introduces the idea of competition for educational funding

There have been a number of conflicting decisions regarding legality and funding of the program in recent months. Families caught in the controversy have been left to deal with the impact on finances, planning, and the emotional toll on their children.

This school year began with legal permission from the courts to continue the program, but no funding was found for it until after many schools were back in session.

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## From the Director...

It was the first day of school and I saw Harold standing on the street corner. Harold was in the grade ahead of me, and as I continued walking on my first day of 5th grade, it seemed curious that he was standing there, instead of walking in the same direction. Harold didn't have many friends, so it wasn't the fact he was by himself, it was just that he didn't appear to be going anywhere like the rest of us. After a few days, Harold wasn't standing on the corner anymore.

Barbara started kindergarten with me. Barbara was physically much larger than our classmates. She resisted every attempt to bully her into submission, but was tormented by some of the boys in our class. Barbara had visual and hearing impairment and a cognitive disability. After a few years, Barbara left our school and her family moved away.

In my third grade class Patrick was a whirlwind. He was constantly in motion and had a hair-trigger temper which was often unleashed on anyone who happened to be in the near vicinity. Patrick was unrepentant when caught in infractions, had a loud voice and a vocabulary of words I wasn't familiar with, but which provoked shock and dismay in the teacher. I heard Patrick was asked to leave the school and his family moved away.

Harold, Barbara, and Patrick were removed from public school for the same reason — they were students with disabilities. Because my parents knew Barbara's parents, I heard she entered a special program in her new community. I later heard a rumor that Patrick ended up in trouble with the law. I can still remember the expression on Harold's face, but I never saw him again. My schoolmates became some of the 1.5 million missing children with disabilities who left, or were never enrolled, in the public education system. Prior to the passage of federal law, today known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), children with disabilities did not have the right to receive a free, appropriate public education. Not only were these students missing from our schools, but lacking education, employment, and social opportunities they were often absent from any other type of participation in our communities.

This month marks the thirty-third year since children with disabilities won the right to attend their public schools. Sometimes we forget how significant this law has been, but I hope we never forget what it would have meant for children like Harold.



**Raising  
Special Kids**

*families helping families*

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Parent to Parent support is the heart of Raising Special Kids. Information about local services, educational programs, advocacy, or special health care needs is available in both Spanish and English. Services are provided at no charge to families in central and northern Arizona.

Raising Special Kids is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

# Raising Special Kids Calendar

**Please note:  
WE MOVED!**

Workshops and trainings will be held at Raising Special Kids' Phoenix location.  
Our new location beginning in October is:  
**5025 E. Washington, Phoenix, AZ 85034.**

*If you require special accommodations to attend a Raising Special Kids sponsored activity, please notify us at least 48 hours in advance.*

## Raising Special Kids Hosted Events, Training & Workshops

**Call 602-242-4366 or 800-237-3007 to register.**

*All workshops at Raising Special Kids are free of charge, but you must call and sign up if you wish to attend.  
If no one has signed up for a workshop, it will be cancelled.*

### Understanding the IEP

Learn about the purpose of IEPs through an overview of the IEP document and meeting.

**Wed., Oct. 8, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Wed., Nov. 5, 1:30 - 3 pm**

### Advanced IEP

Learn about the requirements for IEPs and how to effectively participate in IEP meetings.

**Wed., Oct. 15, 1 - 2:30 pm**

**Thu., Dec. 4, 10 - 11:30 am**

### 504

Learn about the intent and requirements of 504, responsibilities of schools, and samples of 504 accommodations.

**Mon., Oct. 6, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Wed., Nov. 19, 1:30 - 3 pm**

### Parent's Rights in Special Education

Learn about the rights and responsibilities of parents in special education.

**Thu., Sept. 25, 10:30 - 12 noon**

**Fri., Oct. 24, 1:30 - 3 pm**

**Thu., Dec. 11, 10 - 11:30 am**

### High School Transition

Learn how to prepare youth for post-secondary education, employment and life in the community.

**Thu., Oct. 9, 4 - 6 pm**

**Wed., Oct 29, 10 am - 12 noon**

**Thu., Nov 6, 4 - 6 pm**

**Mon., Nov 18, 4 - 6 pm**

**Wed., Dec. 3, 10 am - 12 noon**

**Wed., Dec. 17, 4 \* 6 pm**

### Parent/Professional Collaborations in Education

Learn ways for parents and professionals to develop working relationships.

**Thu., Nov. 13, 10 - 11:30 am**

### AzIEP to Preschool Transitions

Learn about the requirements for transition and tips for a smoother process.

**Thu., Oct. 16, 10:30 - 11:30 am**

### Self Advocacy for Youth

Learn how students can advocate for themselves.

**Tue., Oct. 7, 4 - 6 pm**

**Wed., Nov. 12, 4 - 6 pm**

**Thu., Dec. 11, 4 - 6 pm**

### Resilient Relationships

This workshop is facilitated by Raising Special Kids Family Support Staff and their spouses. It shows families ways to become resilient after their child receives a life changing medical or disability diagnoses.

**Fri., Oct. 10, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Tue., Oct. 21 6:30 - 8:00 pm**

**Fri., Nov. 14, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Tue., Nov. 18, 6:30 - 8:00 pm**

**Fri., Dec. 12, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Tue., Dec. 16, 6:30 - 8:00 pm**

### Parents as Advocates

Learn effective ways for parents to advocate for their child to receive appropriate services.

**Wed., Oct. 29, 1:30 - 3 pm**

**Wed., Dec. 17, 1:30 - 3 pm**

### Positive Behavior Support

Tips and positive techniques for families of children who have behavior issues.

**Wed., Sept. 10, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Wed., Oct. 15, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Mon., Oct. 27, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Wed., Nov. 12, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Mon., Nov. 24, 1:30 - 3 pm**

**Wed., Dec. 10, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Mon., Dec. 22, 1:30 - 3 pm**

### Volunteer Training

**Mon. Oct. 6, 6:30 - 8 pm**

**Mon. Oct. 13, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Wed. Oct 22, 1:30 - 3:00 pm**

**Sat. Oct. 25, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Thu. Nov. 13, 6:30 - 8 pm**

**Wed. Nov. 19, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Wed. Nov. 26, 1:30 - 3:00 pm**

**Wed. Dec. 17, 10 - 11:30 am**

**Mon. Dec. 22 - 10 - 11:30 am**

Too busy or too far to come to our office? We'll come to you! Use your talents to help other parents. **Call today for an appointment: 602-242-4366.**

### IEP 1-to-1 Consultation

Bring your child's current IEP as well as your questions and concerns. We will privately address your individual issues and offer solutions and strategies to help you advocate more effectively for your child.

**Call for appointment:  
602-242-4366.**

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Spanish workshops - pg. 7*

While it is good to have choices, “private” might not mean “better”. Here are some things to consider when deciding whether the scholarship may be right for your family:

- 1 What is enticing you about this option?
- 2 Is your decision being influenced by a temporary or long term issue?
- 3 Are you comfortable knowing the legal mechanisms of accountability in special education are missing in private schools? (A child does not have the same legal rights in a private school.)
- 4 For students with disabilities, there is often a need to try a lot of options and to refine approaches. Is there a multi-disciplinary team available to meet, at your request, for problem-solving and consultation?
- 5 What are the qualifications and experience of the teaching staff?
- 6 What is the school’s plan to meet the individual needs of your child?
- 7 Will the school address needs in academics, social development, physical education, fine arts, etc. to cover all developmental domains?
- 8 Logistics: What are the hours? Is transportation provided? Is after-school care available? Lunches? Is a nurse available on site?

### Items to note

- In 2007-2008 The Arizona Scholarship for Pupils with Disabilities issued 186 scholarships of which 37% were used to attend a religious school.
- The scholarships are often referred to as “vouchers” causing some confusion with other voucher programs available in Arizona.
- Private schools are not required to accept all students
- Private schools are not subject to legal requirements in special education under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
- Charter schools are not private schools

### History of the scholarship program in brief:

- The legislation was originally passed in 2006
- An initial challenge was rejected by the Arizona Supreme Court.
- A second challenge, filed in February of 2007, was upheld by the Maricopa County Superior Court. In May, the Arizona Court of Appeals overturned that decision.
- The case was moved to The Arizona Supreme Court which authorized the Legislature to continue funding the programs until it issues a ruling.
- In August \$5 million was shifted from another area of the Department of Education’s budget to fund the program.
- Arizona Supreme Court will decide on September 23 whether to accept the current appeal.

- 9 Have you done a classroom observation and compared this with other options?
- 10 What are the measurements of progress? Are they rigorous? How often, and in what way, will you be notified of progress?
- 11 What standards are used for evaluation? Are they individualized?
- 12 What is the student completion rate?
- 13 What does the school use to prove claims about their program?
- 14 Are you evaluating the private school on the same standards you would apply to your child’s previous school?
- 15 If the school enrolls only children with disabilities, or just one type of disability, will your child need to develop skills and opportunities to help her be included, or participate, in the larger community?
- 16 Do you have a back-up plan for another school if this doesn’t meet the needs of your child?

The needs of each child and family are unique. Schools can vary widely in their offerings and ability to meet a child’s needs. As the primary experts on their child, parents have the responsibility to carefully evaluate available options.

### Follow up on line:

[www.ade.az.gov/ess/StateFedInitiatives/AZScholarship.asp](http://www.ade.az.gov/ess/StateFedInitiatives/AZScholarship.asp)  
[www.ij.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1066&Itemid=165](http://www.ij.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1066&Itemid=165)  
<http://www.arizonaea.org/blog/index.php?section=Vouchers>

# A parent's perspective

We are a family who has received the Arizona Scholarship for Disabled Students for the past two years. Our son attends a private school for children with autism. These last few years have been such a roller coaster ride trying to find the right school placement for him.

Two years ago our son attended public school in our district. He was asked to leave the ESY (Extended School Year) program he was in for the summer after the second day. The teacher explained to me that she had too many children with behaviors in the class and our son would not be given the appropriate amount of time he needed due to the needs of the other kids in the class.

I was crushed, and I knew she could not legally ask us to leave the program. This was the same program he was to enter into that fall. I thought to myself, "if she cannot handle the reduced number of kids in the summer school program, how is she going to handle a full classroom in the fall, and where will that leave our son?"

I knew I had to find another option for him. There was no way I could send him back to a classroom he was asked to leave. My only hope was that we were on the waiting list for a private school that appeared to be the perfect fit. I called them right away and they told me he was accepted for the fall. With borrowed money from a family member, we had our son enrolled in a place that seemed to be our only option, and we were thrilled to place him there.

After meeting with the school directors, we knew in our hearts that these people really understand our

"Since 1982 Arizona has routinely placed children with disabilities in private schools when school officials decide such a placement can better serve a child's needs. The new scholarship program improves that system by removing bureaucratic red tape and putting the power to choose the right school into the hands of those who know children's needs best—their parents."

*from the website of  
The Institute for Justice,  
defending the scholarship program*

son and what his needs are. Shortly after he started school we were told about the scholarship program, and we applied. We were elated to find out that we qualified.

We were heart sick when we heard that the scholarship had been overturned this spring, but we knew we had to keep him at this school. There was no going back to public school. Not after all the great strides he has made. This last year he finally became potty trained with the help of the school staff and

their direction on a home program. He follows routines flawlessly, and he is even starting to echo all sorts of words after being non-verbal for most of his 7 years. I cannot imagine where he would be if he were in the classroom he was destined for in the public school. It makes me shudder.

The financial burden is taking its toll. We decided to put our house up on the market that we have lived in for 9 years in order to lessen the financial burden. We have also been looking to possibly move out of state where the services for our son may be more abundant and less expensive.

These are hard decisions. My husband is a Phoenix native and I have lived here 20 years. Looking down the road, the cost year to year to send our special needs son to private school each year is impacting what we are able to save for our two younger son's futures. I am so grateful for what the scholarship program has given our family. I hope it can continue.



## APIPA is new CRS contractor

Families using Childrens Rehabilitative Services (CRS) will be able to continue visiting physicians at the same clinic locations.

The Arizona Department of Health Services anticipates no disruption in scheduled appointments or services despite a new management contract. The statewide con-

tract to administer the business and managed care aspects of CRS statewide was awarded to Arizona Physicians IPA (APIPA).

Beginning October 1, 2008, all members enrolled in CRS will become members of APIPA-CRS.

Some services will now also be available closer to members'

homes including those provided through pharmacies, laboratories and therapists. Member Services should be available for assisting families 24 hours every day.

New member information packets will be arriving in the mail. For information, please call 1-866-275-5776 or email [ocshcn@azdhs.gov](mailto:ocshcn@azdhs.gov).

## ¿Los “comprobantes” son para usted?

### Becas de Arizona para Alumnos con Discapacidades

Desde 2006, Arizona ha ofrecido becas para niños con discapacidades a ser usadas para la enseñanza en escuelas privadas. Esto puede parecer muy atractivo para los padres que están buscando un mejor programa educativo para su niño/a con necesidades especiales, pero es importante estar completamente informados acerca de todos los aspectos del programa antes de poder hacer la mejor elección para su familia.

La controversia se encuentra alrededor del programa, al que frecuentemente se llama sistema de comprobantes. Los debates han sacado a la luz varios temas sobre el programa de becas, incluyendo:

- Si “ayuda” a la religión (contrario a la Constitución de Arizona) si se usa en una escuela religiosa.
- Segrega a los niños con discapacidades y los aísla de la comunidad en general.
- Toma dinero de las escuelas públicas y debilita la obligación de rendir cuentas por fondos públicos.
- Beneficia a los niños cuyos padres pueden pagar cualquier diferencia entre la cantidad de la beca y los cargos totales de enseñanza en una escuela privada.

La cantidad de cada beca está basada en la fórmula de financiamiento usada para determinar la cantidad de dinero que recibiría la escuela pública para educar al/la niño/a.

Los defensores de las becas sostienen que:

- El dinero ayuda al/la niño/a y su familia, no a la escuela privada — aún si la escuela elegida es religiosa, ésta es esencialmente un vendedor proveyendo servicios educativos
- Algunos niños necesitan ambientes o apoyos que no están disponibles en su escuela pública, y este programa transfiere la decisión sobre dónde educar al/la niño/a de los distritos escolares a los padres de dicho/a niño/a.
- El programa introduce la idea de competir por el financiamiento para la educación.

#### Notas de Interés: :

- En 2007-2008 las Becas de Arizona para Alumnos con Discapacidades emitieron 186 becas, de las cuales 37% se usaron para asistir a una escuela religiosa.
- Frecuentemente se hace referencia a las becas como “comprobantes”, causando alguna confusión con otros programas de comprobantes disponibles en Arizona.
- No se exige a las escuelas privadas que acepten a todos los estudiantes.
- Las escuelas privadas no están sujetas a los requerimientos legales en educación especial de acuerdo con el decreto IDEA (Decreto de Educación para Individuos con Discapacidades).
- Las escuelas incorporadas no son escuelas privadas.

En meses recientes ha habido varias decisiones contradictorias acerca de la legalidad y el financiamiento del programa. Las familias atrapadas en la controversia se han visto forzadas a lidiar con el impacto sobre las finanzas, la planeación y la carga emocional en sus niños. Este año escolar empezó con el permiso legal de las cortes para continuar con el programa, pero no se encontró financiamiento alguno para el mismo sino hasta que muchas escuelas entraron nuevamente al año académico.

Aunque es bueno tener opciones, “privada” podría no significar “mejor”. Estas son algunas cosas a considerar cuando se decide si la beca puede funcionar bien para su familia:

1. ¿Qué le atrae acerca de esta opción?
2. ¿Su decisión está siendo influenciada por un asunto temporal o a largo plazo?
3. ¿Se siente cómodo/a sabiendo que faltan los mecanismos de responsabilidad para la educación especial en las escuelas privadas? (Su niño/a no tiene los mismos derechos legales en una escuela privada.)
4. Para estudiantes con discapacidades, frecuentemente existe la necesidad de probar muchas opciones y afinar enfoques. ¿Existe un equipo multidisciplinario disponible para que se reúna, a petición de usted, para la resolución de problemas y consulta?
5. ¿Cuáles son las calificaciones y la experiencia del personal docente?

# Español

## ¿Los “comprobantes” son para usted?

### Becas de Arizona para Alumnos con Discapacidades

Tenga en cuenta:  
Nos movimos!

6. ¿Cuál es el plan de la escuela para satisfacer las necesidades individuales de su niño/a?

7. ¿La escuela atenderá la necesidades académicas, sociales, físicas, en bellas artes, etc. para cubrir todos los campos de desarrollo?

8. Logística: ¿Cuáles son los horarios? ¿Se proporciona transporte? ¿Está disponible el cuidado para después de la escuela? ¿Almuerzos?

9. ¿Ha usted observado el salón de clase y lo ha comparado con otras opciones?

10. ¿Cuáles son las mediciones de avance? ¿Son rigurosas? ¿Con qué frecuencia y de qué manera se le notificará a usted el avance?

11. ¿Qué estándares se usan para la evaluación? ¿Son individualizados?

12. ¿Cual es el porcentaje de terminación de los estudiantes?

13. ¿Qué usa la escuela para probar sus declaraciones con respecto al programa?

14. ¿Está usted evaluando a las escuelas privadas con los mismos estándares que usted aplicaría a la escuela previa de su niño/a?

15. Si la escuela inscribe sólo a niños con discapacidades, o sólo un tipo de discapacidad, ¿necesitará su niño/a desarrollar habilidades y oportunidades que le ayudarán a que se le incluya, o a participar en la comunidad en general?

16. ¿Tiene usted un plan de respaldo para otra escuela si ésta no satisface las necesidades de su niño/a?

Las necesidades de cada niño/a y familia son únicas. Las escuelas pueden variar ampliamente en lo que ofrecen y la capacidad para satisfacer las necesidades de los niños. Como los principales expertos sobre sus niños, los padres de familia tienen la responsabilidad de evaluar cuidadosamente las opciones disponibles.

## CALENDARIO ESPAÑOL

Nuestra nueva ubicación a partir de octubre es el siguiente:  
5025 E. Washington, #204  
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Por favor llamar al 602 242-4366 o al 800-237-3007 para confirmar su asistencia a los talleres

### IEP

Una perspectiva general de Educación Especial y de los planes 504.

viernes, de octubre 24, 10 – 11:30 am  
viernes, de noviembre 21, 10 – 11:30 am

### El Comportamiento Positivo

viernes, de octubre 17, 1:30 – 2:30 pm  
viernes, de noviembre 14, 1:30 – 2:30 pm  
viernes, de diciembre 19, 10 – 11:30 am

### ENTRENAMIENTO PARA VOLUNTARIOS

Acompañenos a un entrenamiento para voluntarios y así desarrollar su liderazgo ayudando a otras familias a aceptar y sobrellevar el diagnóstico de un hijo (a) con necesidades especiales de salud.

martes, de octubre 7, 1:30 – 3 pm  
viernes, de noviembre 7, 10 – 11:30 am  
viernes, de diciembre 5, 1:30 – 2:30 pm

### Grupo de apoyo para padres (hombres)

Grupo de padres (hombres) con hijos con necesidades especiales. Para más información, lláme al 602-242-4366, Lugar: La Oficina de Raising Special Kids (Criando Niños Especiales)

EN ENTRENAMIENTO SERA EN ESPAÑOL

### Historia del programa de becas en resumen:

- La legislación fue aprobada originalmente en 2006.
- Un reto inicial fue rechazado por la Suprema Corte de Arizona.
- Un segundo reto, presentado en febrero de 2007, fue confirmado por la Suprema Corte del Condado Maricopa. En mayo, la Corte de Apelaciones de Arizona invalidó esa decisión. El caso se pasó a la Suprema Corte de Arizona, la cual autorizó a la Legislatura continuar financiando los programas hasta que se emita un fallo.
- En agosto se transfirieron \$5 millones de dólares del presupuesto de otra área del Departamento de Educación para financiar el programa.
- La Suprema Corte de Arizona decidirá el 23 de septiembre si acepta la apelación actual.



# Report to the Community

*Raising Special Kids 2007-2008: A Year in Review*

## FAMILY SUPPORT

In the past year, 6,795 families of children with disabilities and 1575 professionals who serve them were supported

**—an average of 566 people or families each month.**

Over 268 families were provided with a Parent to Parent “match,” for one-on-one support from trained parent volunteers. 100% follow-up and evaluation of Parent to Parent contacts revealed that 96% reported excellent or very good results in obtaining needed information and assistance.

**Volunteers contributed 2014 hours toward accomplishing the mission and goals of Raising Special Kids.**

**96% of parents who participated in training reported feeling better prepared to make decisions regarding a child’s education, services or care.**

38 parents were recruited and trained as Parent to Parent volunteers, Family Faculty, and for other leadership activities.

253 workshops or training programs were presented on a wide variety of topics.



*Family*

## HIGHLIGHTS

“Truly, incredibly helpful!  
Was so good to hear  
from a parent with an  
older child not to sweat  
certain things.  
Thank you so much.”  
— *Parent*

“She gave me some good  
advice, it was great to  
talk with another parent  
who’s been through what  
we’ve been through.”  
— *Parent*



*Student volunteers*

Raising Special Kids is committed to serving the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families.

**Tribal Liaisons for the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe supported 261 families in northern Arizona.**

20 Spanish-speaking parent volunteers were trained to provide family support.



*Advocates from the Hopi Tribe*

**Raising Special Kids welcomes three new members to our Board of Directors:**

**Elaine Ellis, MD, Elizabeth Freeburg, and Karen Hinds**





## PARTNERSHIPS WITH PROFESSIONALS

Working with the Arizona Department of Health Services, Raising Special Kids coordinated the development of a **new statewide program to help families of Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) babies** connect to supports and services after their child leaves the hospital.

Through Raising Special Kids' innovative Family and Community Medicine Program, training is provided to physicians completing residency programs in pediatrics and family practice medicine. Our Family Faculty, comprised of trained volunteer families, open their homes for residents to visit and learn about the day-to-day realities of raising a child with special needs. **During the past year 43 physicians from 9 hospitals completed our training program and gained valuable insight into the challenges families face.**

### Hospitals participating in the Family and Community Medicine Program

Maricopa Medical Center  
Phoenix Children's Hospital  
Banner Good Samaritan  
St. Joseph's Pediatrics  
St. Joseph's Family Medicine  
Phoenix Baptist Hospital  
John C. Lincoln  
Scottsdale Healthcare  
Midwestern University



*Hosting a visit for Federal Education officials.*



*Working with representatives of state programs*



*Presentation to Arizona Department of Education*

**3,863 Arizona educators, student teachers, school personnel and other professionals received training and information on how to work effectively with families.**

96% of the professionals who completed training reported feeling better equipped to work more effectively with families.

**132 Community organizations, state agencies, and medical centers referred families to Raising Special Kids.**

10 student nurses, in cooperation with the Maricopa Community College District, attended training on family-centered care at Raising Special Kids.



*Workshop for Transition:  
Where Will I Live?*



*Volunteer parent presenting to  
dental students*



*Dr. Glick of Childrens  
Rehabilitative Services  
Dental Clinic*

## HIGHLIGHTS

"I want to thank you for helping me... It is so great that there is someone out there to help, and make parents feel like they are important, and can do the things that need to be done for their children.

Thank you!!"

— Parent

Wow! Fantastic experience. The phrase "Having a child with special needs is a life-changing experience" really is true!

— Medical Resident

This call has made my day. I was just sitting around thinking about these concerns and the phone rang. I feel so much better having solutions after talking to you.

— Parent

"I will be better able to advise parents who need not only information but social and emotional support. I had heard of your program but didn't know how great it was!"

— Professional

Parent (volunteer) gave good advice—she was very nice and an incredible woman who's been through a lot. Thank you for the follow up call and thank you for listening when I just went on and on talking to you.

— Parent

...Without you, I would be pulling my hair out. I would be lost, not knowing what to do or where to turn.

— Parent





## MILESTONES

We were proud to be selected as the beneficiary for the first Biz Bash in Arizona. Many thanks go to **Arizona Business Bank** for their generous sponsorship and organization of a terrific evening that featured a fantastic performance by Three Dog Night, amazing food and a truly fun atmosphere. It was an historic event for Raising Special Kids that resulted in raising a record \$129,000 to help Arizona families.

Our second annual co-sponsorship of Special Day for Special Kids celebrated a wonderful opportunity for families to relax and share time together in a fun and welcoming environment.

Work began on our new Youth Video Project, an exciting endeavor within our Family Health Information Project. Raising Special Kids is creating a computer-based interactive game to help prepare youth with special health care needs for transition into adult systems of care.

Raising Special Kids committed to join with other disability organizations in moving our Phoenix offices to the brand new Disability Empowerment Center of Arizona. The universally designed and accessible center, will feature a variety of non-profit resources to serve the disability community.

The past year included our first time offering Sibshops—supportive workshops for siblings of children with disabilities or special health needs.



*Buddies at  
Special Day for Special Kids*

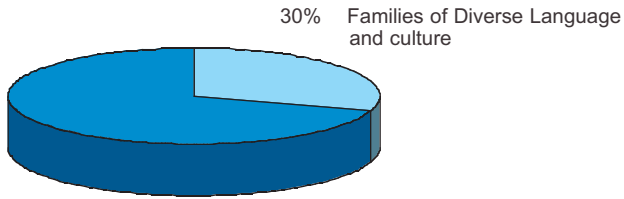


*Sibshop*

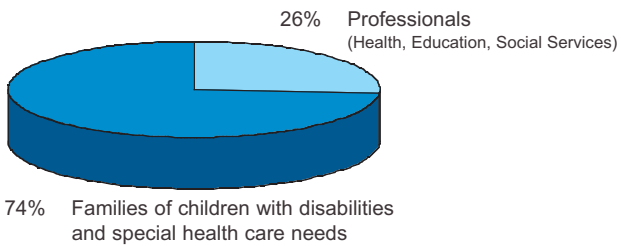


*President of the Board Jodi  
Feuerhelm (center) with two  
Volunteer Parent Presenters*

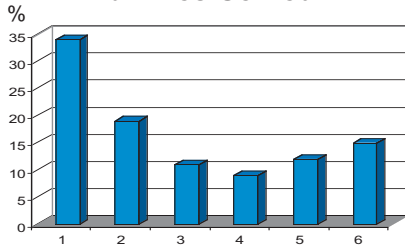
### 2007-2008 Total Contacts



### Parents and Professionals Served

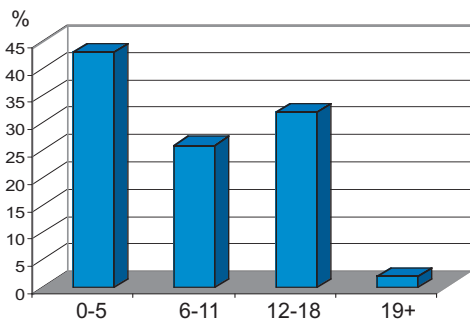


### Disabilities of Children of Families Served



- 1 Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy or Cognitive Disability
- 2 Other Health Impairments
- 3 Speech or Language Impairment
- 4 Visual or Hearing Impairment
- 5 Emotional Disturbance or Mental Health
- 6 Specific Learning Disability or Other

### Ages of Children of Families Served



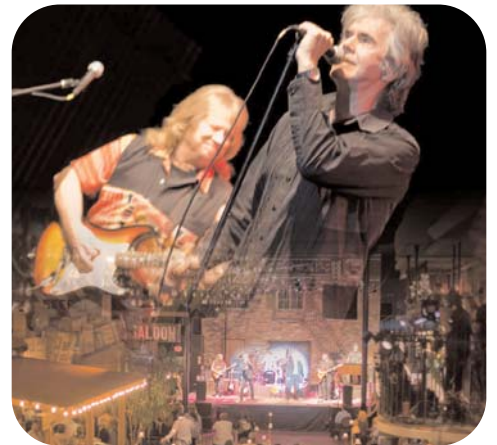
2007-2008



Self-advocates at transition conference



Artist rendering of the new Disability Empowerment Campus 5025 E. Washington St., Phoenix



Biz Bash featured a concert by Three Dog Night



**Raising  
Special Kids**  
families helping families

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS 2007-2008

## THANKS TO YOU!!!

Raising Special Kids gratefully acknowledges our partners in the community who support our work with families.

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Division of Developmental Disabilities

Arizona Department of Health Services  
Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs

Arizona Department of Education  
Exceptional Student Services

U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Special Education Programs

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
Maternal and Child Health Bureau

## REFERRING ORGANIZATIONS & INDIVIDUALS

Referring organizations and individuals guided families of children with disabilities and special health care needs to our organization.

|  |  |                                     |                               |
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| ARIZONA DEPT OF HEALTH SERVICES                      | JANICE DAY                             | MARICOPA INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES | ELISA SIMPSON, RJ             |
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| ARIZONA SAVES  | DESERT VOICES                          | MDA CLINIC                          | SOUTHWEST BEHAVIORAL HEALTH   |
| ARIZONA SELF HELP                                    | DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES | MEDICAID                            | SOUTHWEST HUMAN DEVELOPMENT   |
| ARIZONA SPINA BIFIDA                                 | DYSART HIGH SCHOOL                     | MERCY CARE PLAN                     | ST JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL          |
| ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY                             | EASTER SEALS                           | MESA UNIFIED SCHOOL DIST            | ST VINCENT DE PAUL CLINIC     |
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[www.raisingpecialkids.org](http://www.raisingpecialkids.org)



As of Thurs., October 2, 2008, please note our new Phoenix address:  
**5025 E. Washington St.,  
Suite 204  
Phoenix, AZ 85034-2005**

Our phone, and email will remain the same:

602-242-4366  
Fax 602-242-4306  
800-237-3007  
[info@raisingpecialkids.org](mailto:info@raisingpecialkids.org)