And Away We Go!
Travel Tips For Individuals With Disabilities
Staff Spotlight
Gloria Demara - Bilingual Family Support Specialist

For more than a year, Gloria Demara has been a family support specialist for Raising Special Kids serving families in the Yuma area.

Gloria graduated from Northern Arizona University with a Bachelor’s of Science in Human Relations and a Masters in Social Work; a great foundation for her work at Raising Special Kids.

However, that is not the only preparation Gloria received. At the age of three, her older son was diagnosed with Autism. Like many parents, Gloria did not know what to expect. She began on a journey familiar to many of our families.

As her knowledge of autism increased, the recognition of similar symptoms in her younger son followed. He too was eventually diagnosed as having autism.

With two of her children receiving a diagnosis of autism, Gloria decided to turn her focus to “learning how to teach them to learn.” With her sister, she frequently traveled to Phoenix to attend conferences and take advantage of education opportunities to learn about effective methods to assist her boys. Some of the things that Gloria found most helpful were employing Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), positive behavior supports, and learning about the special education process as well as working diligently with the boys’ school teams to develop appropriate Individualized Education Programs for each of them.

Gloria acknowledges that the journey was not always smooth and is happy to be in a position to assist other families in learning about their rights and responsibilities and about the resources available for them on their journey.
And Away We Go!
Travel With Individuals With Disabilities

“The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page”

- Saint Augustine

Although parents may want to encourage enriching and diverse experiences for their families, traveling with children will present challenges. Planning travel for children with disabilities may add yet another level of things to organize and consider when thinking about a trip or a vacation.

Travel = Adventure

When asked about tips for traveling with kids with disabilities, veteran traveler, Kim Daswick, says, “My first tip is to go!” Daswick has been traveling with her family since her triplets, now 20, were little, and she says she looks at traveling as an adventure and not necessarily as a restful vacation. One of her triplets, Sidney, has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. They have traveled by car and air, both internationally and domestically. After a few trips, Daswick decided to put together a travel organization book that includes not only information about her daughter’s medical history, a list of medications, and doctors’ contact information, but also a handy checklist of items not to be forgotten. Some things on the list are essentials (tools to adjust her wheelchair) but not all, like Sidney’s favorite straw, which Kim says, “just makes things easier.” She also recommends making sure to pack a good attitude because, “It is the most frustrating thing when you’ve done all the legwork beforehand and things don’t turn out to be what you’ve arranged.”

Have your boarding passes ready

Delta Air Lines has introduced a program at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport to help individuals with disabilities become more comfortable with air travel. Team members from Delta Air Lines, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Air Serv (the company that provides wheelchair assistance at Sky Harbor) can assist with navigating through the terminal all the way to the departure gate including a mock flight developed as a hands-on practice experience for travelers with disabilities and their families.

According to Andrea George, Performance Leader at Delta who adapted the program from one in Atlanta, “Often, it’s the family members and caregivers who are the most concerned about the process.” The program, called “GO (Gompers Outreach) Fly” is a partnership with Gompers Habilitation program and Delta Air Lines and involves collaboration with representatives from Delta, TSA, and Air Serv.

Representatives from the agencies collaborating on the GO Fly program agree that the best way to ensure easy and stress-free terminal navigation is communication. They suggest having a conversation with the airlines at the time the reservation is made. Disclosing information
about the needs of the traveler with a disability will allow airline personnel to work with the families and provide access to supports and services. Travelers are often surprised to hear that medical equipment is not considered carry-on luggage, and items such as augmentative communication devices and medically necessary equipment can be brought on to the aircraft without additional charge. It may be helpful to bring an extra bag to the boarding area to collect the items that won’t be checked at the gate (e.g., foot rests for a wheelchair).

Questions about screening policies and procedures at the security checkpoint are handled by the TSA Cares program. This is a dedicated resource specifically for passengers with disabilities, medical conditions or other circumstances, who want to prepare for the screening process prior to flying. Travelers may request a Passenger Support Specialist (PSS) who has received specialized training in disability services from the Transportation Safety Administration. Travelers can request assistance ahead of time by calling the TSA Cares hotline at 1-855-787-2227, Monday through Friday, 8am-11pm EST. For passengers who do not require the level of support provided by a PSS, it may be helpful to use a Disability Notification Card that can be discreetly provided to TSA agents to inform them about any pertinent medical or developmental concerns.

Collaboration between agencies is not limited to the GO Fly program. George says TSA notifies her when they receive a request from a Delta passenger for assistance from a PSS agent. She then follows up with a phone call to discuss the types of supports that best meet the traveler’s needs. For example, she asks about the possible need for additional room and informs the travelers that seating in the rows that provide extra room, available to typical travelers for a premium price, are available for travelers with disabilities at no added charge on Delta flights.

Regardless of the carrier, identification is required to board any flight. Individuals who do not have a driver’s license need another form of acceptable identification such as a passport or a state-issued identification card to proceed through airport security. Arizona identification cards are available to people of all ages (including infants) for a fee. Interested individuals can obtain the Driver’s License/Identification Card Application from the Arizona Department of Transportation.

**Are we there yet?**

For those whose travel plans include wheels that don’t leave the ground, Candy Harrington, author of 22 Accessible Road Trips; Driving Vacations for Wheelers and Slow Walkers, provides these tips and resources for planning an accessible road trip:

- Emergency road service is essential, but very few towing companies have wheelchair-accessible tow trucks. To avoid being stranded, check out ADA Auto Club, 800-720-3132, which provides lift-equipped transportation.
- Pack along a can of Fix-A-Flat tire inflator. It’s a quick and easy way to repair a flat, and it beats waiting for the tow truck.
- If you have an adapted van, carry the phone number of your van conversion facility, in case you have any problems with the electronics or the lift. They probably can’t fix the problem over the phone, but they can recommend a qualified repair facility near you.
- Newer fast food restaurants will have the most accessible restrooms.
- If your hotel bathroom isn’t accessible, stop by a Pilot - Flying J truck stop. Most have acces-
sible shower rooms with roll-in showers; and although there is a charge for using them, it’s a good alternative in a pinch.

- Get your America the Beautiful Pass. It is good for free admission to national parks and monuments across America. The Access Pass is free to people with a disability, while the Senior Pass is just $10 for people over 62.
- Pack smart and leave your big suitcase in the car. Just roll up an entire set of clothes for each day when you pack; then simply remove one set at each stop. Combine that with a small overnight bag for toiletries and you’re good to go.
- Last but not least, don’t leave home without your accessible parking placard, as it’s valid throughout the US, except in New York City. Consult the FIA World Parking Guide for disabled parking regulations in different states.

Staycation?

Water and Sun Safety

With sunshine and elevated temperatures, consider your child’s response to heat when planning activities outdoors. The effects of medications may increase sensitivity to sun and heat. Keep the following handy for any outdoor excursions:

- Hat
- Water
- Sun Block
- Sunglasses

For sun safety, Special Olympics has developed an easy-to-understand brochure. You can download a copy at http://www.somena.org/Uploads/A19_sun_safety.pdf to start a discussion with your child.

Summer often brings excursions to the pool or beach. Water safety is for everyone. Personal flotation devices (PFDs), approved by the US Coast Guard, should be put on as soon as possible when getting near the water. Make sure the PFD fits correctly by testing it before participating in any water activities.

For children with Autism Spectrum Disorders the National Autism Association has a brochure to help families be proactive about addressing potential risks of wandering. The publication goes into additional detail about the following general guidance:

- Secure your home
- Consider a personal locating device
  - Consider an ID Bracelet
  - Teach your child to swim
  - Alert trusted neighbors
  - Alert first responders

The Arizona Division of Developmental Disabilities also offers an ID bracelet or shoe tag for individuals who receive DDD services. Speak to your child’s Support Coordinator for more information.
Move On When Reading

Retention of 3rd Graders

This is the first year that 3rd grade students who Fall Far Below (FFB) on the Reading portion of the AIMS were required to be retained, unless specifically exempted under state law. State law requires that promotion/retention decisions for 3rd graders be based on this information.

Re-assessment for Promotion

Upon completion of a summer school or online program provided by the district/charter, or at the request of a parent, districts/charters are responsible for reassessing the student(s) and making related promotion decisions.

While state law does not provide any appeal process for parents to challenge their child’s retention, a parent may request that the district/charter reassess their child to determine whether the child may be promoted.

IEP and 504

504s are accommodations and are not sufficient on their own for exemption of the law. Exemptions are allowed only for students with IEPs relevant to reading and language.

If a school/charter hasn’t completed the entire Special Education assessments or the entire IEP process for a student by end of year, that student may be promoted, based on the probability they will be in Special Education.

Didn’t Take AIMS?

If a child doesn’t take the AIMS assessment for any reason, the retention/promotion decision will revert back to the district/charter retention policy for a final decision.

Intervention and Remedial Strategies for Retained Students

State law requires districts/charters to provide at least one of the following options to students who have been retained due to FFB on AIMS 3rd grade Reading:

1. Students retained will receive a new reading teacher the following year
2. In the following year, students retained will receive intensive reading intervention before, during or after-school along with their regular intensive reading instruction
3. District/charters may offer a 4-6 week (suggested 20 hours) of intensive reading instruction through a summer school program for the student(s) who FFB on the AIMS 3rd grade Reading. Students may or may not improve enough to be promoted to 4th grade, even after this intensive reading summer school.
4. District/charters may offer a 4-6 week (suggested 20 hours) of intensive on-line instruction (or parents may seek their own options).
No Cost Workshops & Training
Talleres y Entrenamiento Sin Costo
Register online at www.raisingspecialkids.org or call 800-237-3007
Regístrese en línea en www.raisingspecialkids.org o llame al 800-237-3007

Phoenix
Disability Empowerment Center
5025 E. Washington St. #204
Phoenix, AZ 85034
Our office is a fragrance-free environment.

IEP Training
Thu. 7/24/14, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
Sat. 8/16/14, 10:00pm - 12:00pm

Parent-Professional Collaboration
Tue. 8/19/14, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Positive Behavior Support
Sat. 8/16/14, 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Turning 18 - Legal Options
Thu. 7/24/14, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
Tue. 8/19/14, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Conferences
Multiple workshops in one day

Summer School for Parents
Saturday, June 28, 2014
8:30am-3:15pm
Nina Mason Pulliam
Conference Center
5025 E. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Early Intervention Track
• IFSP Basics
• Functional Outcomes
• AzEIP to Preschool Transition

Special Education Track
• IEP Training
• Bullying Prevention
• Positive Behavior Support

Turning 18 – Legal Options
Vie. 8/22/14, 10:00am - 11:30am

Entrenamiento de IEP
Sáb. 8/16/14, 10:00am - 12:00pm

El Comportamiento Positivo
Sáb. 8/16/14, 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Northern Arizona
Please visit our website for a complete listing of upcoming events.

Southern Arizona
Please visit our website for a complete listing of upcoming events.

Conferences
Escuelade verano para padres
sábado, 28 de junio 2014
8:30am - 3:15pm
Nina Mason Pulliam
Conference Center
5025 E. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85034
• Entrenamiento del IEP
• Prevencionde Burlas
• El Comportamiento Positivo

IEP Webinar
Wed., June 25th 2014
12:00pm - 1:00pm

Ten Things To Know Before Your IEP Meeting

For more information visit raisingspecialkids.org
or call 800-237-3007

Summer School for Foster Parents
Sat., June 28th 2014
8:30am - 3:15pm

• IFSP Basics
• Functional Outcomes
• AzEIP to Preschool Transition
• IEP Training
• Bullying Prevention
• Positive Behavior Support

Summer School for Parents
Sat., June 28, 2014
8:30am - 3:15pm
Nina Mason Pulliam
Conference Center
5025 E. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85034

• IEP Training
• Positive Behavior Support
• Journey to Adulthood

Summer School for Foster Parents
Sat., July 12th 2014
8:30am - 3:30pm

• IEP Training
• Positive Behavior Support
• Journey to Adulthood

See above for more information

Nina Mason Pulliam
Conference Center
5025 E. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Entrenamiento en Español
Disability Empowerment Center
5025 E. Washington St. #204
Phoenix, AZ 85034
Somos una oficina libre de fragancias.

Cumpliendo los 18 – Opciones Legales
Vie. 8/22/14, 10:00am - 11:30am

Conferencias
¡Y Allá Vamos!
Viajes con Individuos con Discapacidades

“El mundo es un libro, y aquellos que no viajan sólo leen una página” - San Agustín

Aunque la intención de los padres sea proveer experiencias enriquecedoras y diferentes a sus familias, viajar con niños puede presentar retos. El planear viajes para niños con discapacidades podría aumentar el nivel de asuntos que se deben organizar y que se deben tomar en cuenta cuando se está pensando en un viaje o en unas vacaciones.

Viaje = Aventura

Cuando se le pidió consejos a la experta en viajes Kim Daswick, acerca de cómo prepararse para viajar con niños con discapacidades, su primer consejo fue “Vayan! Muchas personas simplemente no viajan.” Daswick ha viajado con su familia desde que sus trillizos, quienes hoy en día tienen 20 años, eran muy pequeños. Ella dice que para ella las vacaciones son una aventura y no necesariamente un descanso. Uno de los trillizos tiene parálisis cerebral y usa una silla de ruedas. Ellos han viajado en auto y por avión, nacional e internacionalmente. Daswick elabora una lista de las cosas que no debe olvidar. Muchas de las cosas en la lista son cosas básicas, como las herramientas para graduar la silla de ruedas, pero también incluye las cosas favoritas de Sidney, como su sombrero de paja preferido, lo cual según Kim, “hace que todo salga mejor.” Ella también recomienda emparcer en el equipaje una buena aptitud porque, “lo más frustrante es cuando se ha planeado todo por adelantado” y las cosas no resultan a como se planearon.

Tengan sus tarjetas de embarque listas

La línea aérea Delta Airlines ha introducido un programa en el aeropuerto Sky Harbor de Phoenix, para que los individuos con discapacidades viajen más cómodamente. A principios de abril, un jueves por la noche, los ayudantes del programa Gompers Habilitation y sus familiares y cuidadores llegaron al aeropuerto Sky Harbor donde les esperaba el equipo de bienvenida de Delta Air Lines, la Administración de Seguridad de Transporte (TSA) y Air Serv (la empresa que provee asistencia con las sillas de ruedas en Sky Harbor). El grupo se estaba preparando y ensayando durante un simulacro de vuelo, diseñado para desarrollar destrezas y experiencia para asistir a los viajeros con discapacidades y a sus familiares.

De acuerdo con lo expuesto por Andrea George, una Líder de Desempeño de Delta, quien adaptó el programa basándose en uno similar de Atlanta, “Frecuentemente son los familiares y los cuidadores quienes más se preocupan con el proceso.” El “GO (Gompers Outreach) Fly” es un programa de colaboración entre Gompers Habilitation y Delta Air Lines, e incluye la cooperación de representantes de Delta, TSA, and Air Serv.

Todos los representantes de las agencias que colaboran en este programa consideran que la mejor forma de asegurar la navegación del terminal con facilidad y sin estrés es por medio de la comunicación. Ellos recomiendan que se comience la conversación desde el momento en que se hace la reservación con la línea aérea. El dar información sobre las necesidades del pasajero con discapacidades, le permitirá al personal de la línea aérea quienes conocen los recursos disponibles, trabajar adecuadamente con las familias para proveer acceso a medios de apoyo que quizás sean desconocidos por la persona haciendo la reservación o por el pasajero.

Con frecuencia los pasajeros tienen preguntas acerca de las reglas de inspección y procedimientos en los puntos de control de seguridad. El programa TSA Cares es un recurso adicional dedicado específicamente para servir a los pasajeros con discapacidades, con condiciones médicas u otras circunstancias, quienes desean prepararse para el proceso de inspección de seguridad antes del vuelo. Los pasajeros pueden pedir el servicio del Especialista de Apoyo al Pasajero (PSS) que ha
recibido capacitación especial incluyendo asuntos de etiqueta para con el individuo discapacitado y sobre los derechos civiles del discapacitado. Los pasajeros pueden pedir este servicio por adelantado llamando a TSA Cares, al número directo 1-855-787-2227.

Aquellos pasajeros que no requieran el nivel de apoyo proveído por un PSS, tal vez les ayudaría imprimir una tarjeta de notificación de discapacidad Disability Notification Card y proveerla discretamente a los agentes del TSA, para informarles acerca de alguna preocupación médica o de desarrollo.

La colaboración entre las agencias no está limitada al programa GO Fly. George afirmó que TSA le notifica cuando reciben aviso por parte de un agente de PSS, anunciando que un pasajero de Delta requiere asistencia. Ella prosigue a contactar telefónicamente al pasajero para precisar qué tipos de ayuda se requieren para cubrir al máximo las necesidades del pasajero. Por ejemplo, ella pregunta si habrá necesidad de un asiento con más espacio e informa a los pasajeros que los asientos que ofrecen un espacio más amplio por lo general se ofrecen por una tarifa adicional, sin embargo estos se ofrecen a los pasajeros con discapacidades sin costo adicional en los vuelos de Delta.

Sin importar cuál sea la aerolínea, es requerido tener identificación para abordar cualquier vuelo. Aquellos individuos que no tengan licencia de conducir necesitarán tener otro tipo de identificación aceptable, tal como un pasaporte, o la tarjeta de identificación emitida por el estado para proceder a pasar por el punto de seguridad del aeropuerto. La tarjeta de identificación de Arizona está disponible para personas de cualquier edad (incluyendo infantes) gratuitamente. Los interesados pueden obtenerla en Driver’s License/Identification Card Application del Departamento de Transporte de Arizona.

¿De vacaciones cerca de casa (Staycation)?

Para información sobre lugares accesibles cerca de casa, el emprendedor del área de Phoenix Brett Heising creó el sitio www.brettapproved.com. Hace poco Brett trabajaba en una corporación Americana y dejó este trabajo para crear este sitio electrónico, él sabe que “todo el mundo, sin importar su discapacidad o problemas de movilidad se merece viajar — con confianza.” En la actualidad el sitio electrónico ofrece Brett scores o calificaciones de distintos lugares como hoteles, restaurantes, y sitios de entretenimiento en Phoenix, Chandler, Gilbert, Mesa, Scottsdale y Tempe. Las calificaciones reflejan la opinión de los visitantes al sitio, quienes dan sus comentarios y ofrecen sus propias calificaciones. Heising anima a los visitantes a que sugieran nuevos lugares y a que den sus calificaciones. Entre sus planes está el continuar la extensión del sitio, y esperamos seguir los escrutinios de lugares de amplio alcance en Arizona y más allá.

No importa cuál sea la razón de sus planes de viaje, la preparación, la comunicación y una buena aptitud parecen ser la clave para tener una experiencia exitosa, placentera y libre de estrés. Bon voyage!
Family Story - Dawn Bailey

Having a child with a rare, undiagnosed genetic condition is a challenging journey. We faced so many unknowns with medical issues and developmental stages. It was very hard to find resources and groups that could help. My first contact with Raising Special Kids was about 5 years ago, when I had some difficulty with my daughter’s preschool and related services. I called to explain about my daughter’s condition and request assistance and was contacted that same day. You helped me understand my daughter’s IEP as well as offering great suggestions on how to approach the school and work with them to resolve the issues. The best part of that conversation was hearing from a parent who could share her story. For the first time I felt like I had someone to connect with. I have now had the benefit of this insight over the last 5 years, as well as the opportunity to attend many workshops offered by Raising Special Kids. I feel more confident in knowing how to effectively advocate for my daughter and that empowerment is priceless!

Last year, I was in a place where I wanted to start giving back, so I became a Parent Leader with Raising Special Kids. I participated in several programs to share my family’s story, hoping to help professionals understand us better. And although my intent was to give back, even in volunteering I continue to benefit from each experience. It took a few years for me to put myself out there, but being connected with Raising Special Kids has allowed our family to feel like we belong and we’re accepted.

Parent Leaders are the Heart of Raising Special Kids

Thank You!

Apache Junction
Lorena Villalobos

Chandler
Gilbert Alonzo
Dawn Bailey
Martí Baio
Martha Burrer
Samantha Flores
Kristina Hunt
Lisa Myers
Kelly Randall
Noelle White

Flagstaff
Maggie Carbajal
Tina Rabe
Kelly Reed
John Ward

Gilbert
Carol Boyd
Holland Hines
Tammy Leeper
Heather Monica
Louise Murphy
Heather Prouty

Glendale
Isabel Dorame
Dawn Kurbat
Danielle Martinez
Marci Monaghan

Goodyear
Stephanie Culbreth

Lake Havasu
DJ Carpenter

Mesa
Chad Cloward

Eric Elam
Cynthia Elliott
Kristina Park
Danielle Pollett
Michelle Tetschner
Erika Villanueva

Peoria
Sharon Blanton

Phoenix
Inilda Christensen
Marissa Huth
Chris Jones
Nicole Kauffman
Michelle Kiley
Heather Joy Magdelano
Damita Radtke
Ched Salasek

Michael Sanderfer
Sherri Scruggs
Chuck Smith
Maura Urquidi

Rio Rico
Maria Scholnick

Scottsdale
Chris Atherton
Steve Lee
Chris Linn
Shauna Mattson
Katie Petersen
Mary Quinsler

Tempe
Megan Davis Dey
Janet Romo
Laurie Shook

raisingspecialkids.org
After the exciting changes of summer, the day will come when supplies will be purchased, backpacks will be packed and the kids will head back to school. Although some of us start singing It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year, children may be anxious about the start of a new school year and the changes that go along with it.

Here are some ideas to help ease back-to-school jitters:

1. **Explain**
   Parents often know what to expect and we forget that our kids don’t have that knowledge. Simply talking about what’s happening when may help alleviate some apprehension.

2. **Count down**
   The concept of the passage of time is a difficult one to comprehend for some kids. Having a visual representation, (whether it’s a paper chain from which you rip off one link per day, or a calendar where you cross off every day) will provide a concrete example of how long it will be until the first day of school.

3. **Drive by**
   Make an effort to visit the school even if it’s only a drive-by now and then throughout the summer. Mentioning something positive about the physical building or something that occurred within it may also be helpful in alleviating apprehension.

4. **Social stories**
   Develop a social story that describes your child using his or her strengths to successfully navigate the back to school transition or other stressful situations that have them concerned.

5. **New routine**
   Find out about your child’s upcoming schedule and try to reference it throughout the day, as in “Oh, it’s 9:30. When you start school, this will be the time you’ll be starting Speech.” In the week or two prior to the beginning of school, start practicing school-year sleep routine to help your child acclimate to appropriate bed and wake times.

6. **Meet the teacher**
   Visit the school for Meet the Teacher Night or, if no such event is available or the energy of that type of environment is not beneficial for your child, contact the teacher to see if you can arrange a short visit. Take pictures of important places and things to review with your child and use in social stories.

7. **Introducing…!**
   Consider putting together a one-page introduction for the teacher. Include a picture of your child and bullet point the things that are most important for the teacher to know about them.

8. **Give ‘em space**
   Designate a workspace for your child at home. Where do you want backpacks to go? Where will they do their homework? If your child will need supervision and assistance, consider designating somewhere in the main living area.

9. **New outfit?**
   The tradition of a new first day of school clothes and shoes may be right for your child and help them anticipate with excitement wearing that carefully-selected outfit. However, some kids are very sensitive to the texture of new clothes and the pokey, stiff tags that haven’t had the benefit of several washings to soften them up.

10. **Review your child’s IEP**
    Identify any changes that have occurred since the last time you looked at it and identify if those changes are things that would require an IEP meeting to discuss. Remember, parents can request an IEP meeting at any time. It’s always a good idea to do so in writing (email counts).
Subscribe to Our Weekly e-News NOW!

MONDAY MEMO

and pay nothing — EVER!

• National & Local News
• Legislative Updates
• Community Events
• Heartfelt Family Stories
• Inspirational Quotes
• Raising Special Kids Workshops

“I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for the Monday Memo. It’s always informative, professionally written and relevant to me and my family. I often find myself forwarding links to your stories to family members or friends.”

STEP 1 Select your offer:
- □ Subscribe indefinitely for $0
- □ I couldn’t possibly pay nothing, I must donate something to support this great organization and terrific publication

STEP 2 Visit www.raisingspecialkids.org or call 602-242-4366/800-237-3007 to subscribe

STEP 3 Let us know what you think! info@raisingspecialkids.org