



Partners for Success  
**Family Support and Resource  
 Center**

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### **Mommy & Me Cupcake Decorating Class**

Looking for something fun and different to do this summer with your children? Charm City Cupcakes in Baltimore offers Mommy & Me Cupcake Decorating Classes. They also offer classes for Teens and Adults. The cost varies and you can purchase supplies from Charm City Cupcakes or bring your own.

When registering for a class, please specify if any members of your party will need sign language as an accommodation as they have someone who signs that can assist with the class.

For more information contact Tiffany at [registration@charmcitycupcakes.com](mailto:registration@charmcitycupcakes.com) or visit their website at [www.charmcitycupcakes.com](http://www.charmcitycupcakes.com).



### **AG Bell's 2011 Preschool-Age Financial Aid Program Now Open**

The AG Bell Preschool-Age Financial Aid Program is currently accepting applications. The program is for families of preschool-age children who have been diagnosed with a moderate-to-profound hearing loss and who are in pursuit of spoken language education for their child. Grants are awarded to assist with expenses associated with obtaining services, such as auditory support services, speech-language intervention, preschool tuition, etc. Families who apply should be committed to a listening and spoken language approach for the education of their child's communication, social and cognitive skills. The application deadline is August 1, 2011. For more information visit the AG Bell website at [www.agbell.org](http://www.agbell.org)

### **Project ASPIRE Offers Support to Parents**

A team at the University of Chicago is currently developing Project ASPIRE—Achieving Superior Parental Involvement for Rehabilitative Excellence. Project ASPIRE will teach parents the skills and knowledge they need to create the best possible early language environment for their children with hearing loss.

Project ASPIRE is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education and aims to helping families from low socioeconomic backgrounds gain the knowledge and skills to best help their children with hearing loss develop listening and spoken language. The program will offer animations to illustrate important concepts and video clips to show parents how to apply early intervention strategies in real-life.

Project ASPIRE developers are seeking families to help participate in this program. If you or your family are interested in allowing the team to videotape the interaction between you and your child with hearing loss, contact Beth Suskind at (773) 702-2298 or [bsuskind@surgery.bsd.uchicago.edu](mailto:bsuskind@surgery.bsd.uchicago.edu)

### **Your Input Is Needed!**

Help improve services for transition-aged youth and the families in Maryland

Are you the parent or guardian of a young person with a disability who exited school in 2010?

If so, the Governor's Interagency Council on Transition for Youth with Disabilities would like your opinion on the supports your son or daughter received. Please visit <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/563807/Transition> to complete a short survey (only 10 questions).

It will take only a few moments and will help improve transition services in the state.

## Ease Child's Fears of Move to Middle School

The transition from elementary school to middle school can pose new challenges for teens and added concerns for youth with disabilities. Studies show that student who drop out of school often struggle making the shift from elementary to middle school or middle school to high school. A parent's support and involvement at this pivotal time, however, can pave the way to a successful school life and help a student maintain a positive view of school.

Following are typical challenges of moving on to middle school and how parents can help students prepare for them.

### **New building and new staff.**

Preparation in the following ways can help your child's adjustment to an unfamiliar setting and new teachers.

- Request an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting just prior to the start of school. Parents can request that all of their child's regular education teachers be invited to the meeting. They can also write a short introduction to their child and leave a copy with each teacher. The introduction should briefly describe when their child was diagnosed, what the child's needs are, and growth in development from year to year. Parents can also give a brief overview of their child's strengths and needs to the teachers at the meeting. Children may also come to the meeting so they can talk about what works best for them in school.
- Request a copy of your child's schedule. An unknown schedule can be a source of anxiety for students. Parents can lessen that anxiety by taking their child to school and finding the classrooms on the schedule.
- Mail the introduction to teachers who weren't able to attend the IEP meeting. Parents should also provide phone and/or email contacts so teachers can contact them. Two to three weeks after school begins, parents may want to email teachers asking them if they have any concerns about their child or the IEP.

### **New and larger group of peers.**

Oftentimes, students in middle school are moving to a building that incorporates students from other elementary schools, which means more new faces. To help children meet more students their age, parents can enroll them in summer opportunities such as community education classes, citywide sports teams, or summer camps.

### **More than one teacher a day.**

Great organizational skills are required when students have multiple teachers and classrooms. Parents can support their child in these ways.

- Provide organizational tools, such as three-ring binder with pockets for storage.
- Keep an eye on their organizational needs for the first few weeks. If a student is having great difficulty, request an IEP meeting to discuss the new need and some possible accommodations. For examples, parents can request an extra set of textbooks at home, assistance with a locker, or having a cubby in classrooms where students can leave supplies.
- Help the student develop a checklist that he can review each morning to make sure needed materials are ready.

### **Teens likely want more privacy and independence.**

At the middle school age, parents are challenged by finding a balance between encouraging independence and providing and enforcing guidelines that teenagers still need. Parents should set fair and consistent rules with boundaries, the boundaries help children learn that responsibility comes with new independence.

Other ways to strike the right balance in the relationship with young teens include the following:

- Be involved in their education at school. Parents can do this by volunteering, joining school committees, building relationships with teachers, visiting the school, and attending parent-teacher conferences. Research shows that when parents are involved in their child's education, children earn higher grades in school and have better behavior.
- Keep the lines of communication open. Talk every day about what happens at school; ask often if there are messages from school. If teens bring concerns home from school, listen and offer help to improve the situation. If a teen brings bad news home, they've probably already been disciplined. They would benefit from a discussion about possible solutions. At the middle school age, it's time to step into a solution mode.
- Review the IEP and school records each year.
- Get to know other parents and form support groups to work on problems and issues of mutual interest.

Reprinted from Pacesetter, [www.PACER.org](http://www.PACER.org)

## Breakfast Is For Champions

Eating breakfast, let alone making it, may seem like the last thing you or your family has time for on a school day. But it's worth setting the alarm a few minutes earlier to grab some food. Breakfast jump-starts kids both mentally and physically, and gives them the energy they need to perform optimally at school. A morning meal also helps kids maintain a healthy weight. Children, and adults, who skip breakfast are more likely to overeat later in the day. To make a quick and healthy kid-friendly breakfast that even an adult could love:

- Toast a whole-grain frozen waffle and top with fresh fruit and light syrup.
- Spread lowfat cream cheese and jelly on a whole-wheat English muffin
- Stir a few spoonfuls of lowfat granola into a cup of lowfat yogurt.
- Prepare a packet of plain instant oatmeal using lowfat milk, and sweeten with natural applesauce.
- Pair string cheese with apple slices and a glass of orange juice.

Reprinted from *Woman's Day*, [www.womansday.com](http://www.womansday.com)

## Get Your Child Going

Teaching basic self-discipline and time management skills can help children deal with the urge to procrastinate.

**Find an entry point.** If your child has trouble figuring out where to begin on a task, teach her how to see it as a series of smaller steps, including one she can start with. Cleaning her room, for example, means putting away toys, folding clothes, and making the bed.

**Set the timer.** Children get a huge kick out of games that prompt them to race the clock. Setting an egg timer can give him the nudge he needs to tackle the dishes or his math worksheet. Make sure to emphasize the fact that the top priority is doing the job well, not just as quickly as he can.

**Make a chart.** Knowing how to prioritize effectively is a skill you can help your child learn from an early age. Create a chart or fill out a calendar together, covering when and what his responsibilities are, including playtime, so he has a better grasp of what it means to have a schedule. Make it fun, decorate with stickers and check duties off as you go.

**Give her a choice.** You might offer her a reward, 15 extra minutes on the computer, or a trip to the park, for sticking to the schedule you've decided on together. Make it clear that she'll have to complete the tasks regardless, but she'll get the reward if she does so on time. Leave it up to her to decide.

Reprinted from *Scholastic Parent & Child*, February 2011,  
[www.scholastic.com/parents](http://www.scholastic.com/parents)

## Tips for Parents of Preschoolers

Read early and read often. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of reading. You can't start reading to a child too soon. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- **Read together every day.** Read to your child every day. Make this a warm and loving time when the two of you can cuddle close.
- **Give everything a name.** Build comprehension skills by playing games that involve naming objects. Say things like, "where's your nose?" or touch your child's nose and say, "what's this?"
- **Say how much you enjoy reading.** Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him. Talk about story time as the favorite part of your day.
- **Be interactive.** Discuss what's happening in the book, point out things on the page, and ask questions.

## Getting Organized

When it comes to having a successful school year, being organized can make all the difference! Research shows that students who are organized do better in school and don't get as frustrated during daily routines. Help your child get off to a good start this year with these ideas.

- **Create a homework spot.** Help your child choose a quiet place with plenty of light, such as the dining room table or a desk in their bedroom. Maybe stock a cardboard box or plastic tote with school supplies like pens, highlighters, calculator, reference books (pocket dictionary, thesaurus). Your child will also need a place to store notes and old quizzes so they can be reviewed at exam time.
- **Keep a clean locker.** An organized locker will let your child grab supplies quickly between classes. For instance, store books and folders for morning classes on the top shelf and afternoon materials on the bottom. Also suggest that your child keep extra pens and pencils in a pouch inside the locker.
- **Manage time wisely.** Good time-management skills can help your child stay organized. Remind your child to read their agenda book each morning so assignments that need to be turned in are not forgotten. Remember to budget time for after-school activities. Hang a family calendar in a central location, ask everyone to fill in their activities so your child can plan around family obligations or arrange for rides.

**Family Support and  
Resource Center**

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PO Box 894  
Columbia MD 21044  
Phone: 410-480-4597 (v/tty)  
Fax: 410-480-4598  
E-mail: partners@msd.edu

A statewide support service for families with  
children who are  
Deaf or Hard of Hearing  
and the professionals who support them



## POSSIBILITIES, A Financial Resource for Parents of Children With Disabilities

The Pacer Center has a free book to be downloaded, over 200 pages. Learn about record keeping, planning for education, developing self-determination and self-advocacy, health care, life insurance, financial issues, guardianship, employment, understanding housing, and other issues you may need now and in the future.

visit <http://www.pacer.org/publications/possibilities/>  
To download this exciting publication.

## Mark Your Calendar Now

### July 11, 18, 25, 2011

Adventures in ASL!  
Barnes and Noble  
FSK Mall, Frederick, MD  
For all children ages 3 - 5 with an adult  
For more information or to register Contact Lori Moers  
Lori.Moers@msd.edu

### July 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2011

Adventures in ASL!  
Barnes and Noble  
On The Avenue, White Marsh, MD  
For all children ages 3 - 5 with an adult  
For more information or to register Contact Deb Marquez  
(410) 480-4540 or Deborah.Marquez@msd.edu

### July 27, 2011

Summer Play Group  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Charlotte Hall Library  
37600 New Market Road, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622  
For more information or to register contact  
Cheri Dowling at  
cheri.dowling@msd.edu or (443) 277-8899 (v/text)

### August 10, 2011

Summer Play Group  
10:00 am - 11:30 am  
Storyville  
Rosedale Public Library  
For more information or to register contact  
Cheri Dowling at  
cheri.dowling@msd.edu or (443) 277-8899 (v/text)

### August 12, 2011

Maryland Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Conference  
Hearing and Speech Agency  
5900 Metro Drive, Baltimore, MD 21215  
8:30 am - 4:00 pm  
Featuring Rachel St. John, MD, NCC, NIC-A  
Fostering EHDI and the Medical Home  
For more information or to register contact  
Cheri Dowling at (443) 277-8899 or CAD800@aol.com

### September 14, 2011

Just For Mom's  
7:00 - 8:30 PM  
Maryland School for the Deaf - Columbia Campus  
8169 Old Montgomery Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043  
Denton (Main) Building Multi Purpose Room  
Don't lose sight of yourself, your goals, dreams, relationships, or  
career despite the intensive demands of raising a child. This  
workshop will explain why it is important to find balance in your  
life and how to do it.

### September 21, 2011

Manipulative Visual Language  
7:00 - 8:30 PM  
Maryland School for the Deaf - Frederick Campus  
400 South Carroll Street, Frederick, MD 21705  
Elementary Building, Room #F108  
MVL uses colored shapes to teach the parts of written English.  
Shapes are used to visually demonstrate common patterns in  
simple sentence structures.

For information about any of the workshops listed above please  
contact the Family Support & Resource Center at 443-277-8899  
(v/text) or cheri.dowling@msd.edu