

Parents helping parents and professionals enable individuals with disabilities to reach their own potential

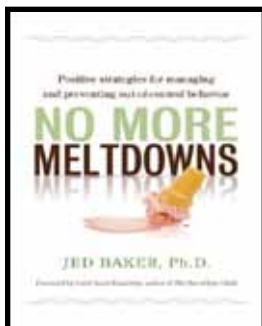
## Parents & Professionals Learning Together Conference

Parent Network of WNY, Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC) and People Inc. are proud to present distinguished national speaker **Jed Baker, Ph.D.** during the annual "Parents and Professionals Learning Together" Conference. Dr. Baker will be presenting "**No More Meltdowns: Handling Behavior Challenges and Teaching Social Skills**" on May 12, 2010 at Lucarelli's Banquet Center located at 1830 Abbott Road in Lackawanna NY.



Keynote speaker Jed Baker is the director of the Social Skills Training Project, a private organization serving

individuals with autism and social communication problems. In addition, he writes, lectures, and provides training internationally on the topic of social skills training and managing challenging behaviors.



Dr. Baker will assist parents and professionals in building their understanding of children's behavior challenges. The conference will focus on demonstrating effective strategies for preventing and managing meltdowns among difficult to reach children. Dr. Baker uses the following 4-step model that will improve everyday relationships with the children in your life:

1. Managing your own emotions by adjusting your expectations
2. Learning strategies to calm a child during a meltdown moment
3. Understanding why a meltdown occurs
4. Creating plans to prevent future meltdowns

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The conference will be broken down into four sessions:

- Session 1: Understanding Challenging Behaviors and the Need for Social Skills Training
- Session 2: No More Meltdowns: Managing and Preventing Challenging Behaviors
- Session 3: Key Components of Effective Social Skills Programming
- Session 4: Social Skill Training Strategies and Sample Lessons

For more information about this conference or to register, please call Tracy Kosmoski at 716-817-7484 or go online to:

[www.parentnetworkwny.org](http://www.parentnetworkwny.org).



Parent Network of WNY is excited to welcome Catrice Huff as the new Outreach Coordinator for the agency. Catrice is responsible for developing and maintaining connections within the community throughout the eight counties of Western New York. Her responsibilities include building relationships with area social service agencies,

## Meet Our New Staff Member: Catrice Huff

school districts, faith-based organizations, health care providers and other community organizations; attending outreach events in the community, including but not limited to committee meetings, exhibit tables, community events; and report on status of outreach initiatives and make recommendations for change where appropriate to the agency.

Catrice has begun reaching out to faith based organizations to better inform the community about the services Parent Network offers. Catrice holds a Masters degree in Childhood Education and a Bachelor's of Science degree in Early Childhood Development from Buffalo State College.

Catrice was a domestic engineer for close to a year before coming to Parent Network. Prior to that, Catrice spent time as a long-term substitute teacher in several different schools in the Buffalo school district. Additionally, she worked for three years at Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled, Inc. as a Life Skills Trainer and an Individual Service Environment Habilitation Instructor, providing direct care services to people with disabilities.

Catrice enjoys her new job which she feels fits well into her family life. As the new Outreach Coordinator, Catrice hopes to give back to the community and raise her son in a positive environment.

by Yone Coore  
Communications Intern

# Applications for the iPod Touch & iPhone: More than just fun and games

Do you have an iPod Touch or an iPhone? Did you know that there are many applications for these devices that can benefit a person with special needs? There are many more of these applications than can be discussed in this article, but hopefully it will give you a sense of what's out there.



## Communication

- ABA Flashcards in several categories like actions, emotions, alphabet, etc. – uses actions, photos, text and audio to teach new words and concepts.
- iCommunicate – uses pictures and storyboards to help develop language comprehension.
- iPrompts – a visual prompting tool to help with transitions from one activity to the next.
- Proloquo2Go - a communication tool that has over 7000 symbols, natural sounding text-to-speech voices and much more.

## Reading

- ABC Pocket Phonics – can be used to teach letter sounds, letter writing practice and 170 first words.
- See Read Say –220 of the most common sight words that can be spoken at the touch of a button.
- eTextbooks – access eTextbooks, read them and view your notes when you are connected to the internet

## Writing

- iWriteWords –trace numbers, lower case and upper case letters using numbered prompts
- Doodle Buddy – a finger painting application that can be used to teach how to make the correct strokes to write letters and numbers.

## Math

- Cloud Math – practice addition, subtraction, multiplication and division; choose your level of difficulty.
- Money – Learn to Count Money – provides practice problems to help users learn how to count with money
- Freddy Fraction – a fun way for kids to learn about fractions, decimals and percents

## Assistive Technology

- BigNames – Large Text Contact List – makes it easier to view and read your contact list by offering larger, high-contrast text
- SoundAMP R – an audio processor that helps you hear better by amplifying soft and medium sounds and softening loud ones

## Miscellaneous

- IEP Checklist – a tool for parents and teachers to help in planning an IEP; sponsored by the Parent Education Advocacy Training Center (PEATC)
- iRewardChart – makes it easier to reward children for good behavior and keep them motivated

The above applications just scratch the surface of what is available.

There are also music, art and games applications available. These applications vary greatly in cost from free, to reasonable (\$24.99 and under) to somewhat costly (\$49.99 and up).

Many schools are beginning to use iPods in the classroom as tools to help students learn. For example, a fifth- and sixth-grade special-education teacher at Gibbs Elementary School in Canton, Ohio uses the iPod Touch in his classroom. His students have a variety of learning disabilities that often cannot be overcome with regular teaching methods. But something as simple as a flash-card slide show on touch-screen iPods, with finger swipes for moving from one digital photo to the next, tends to electrify the kids. He has seen dramatic improvements in the students' skills. (Source: [http://www.twincities.com/ci\\_14045406](http://www.twincities.com/ci_14045406))

At my son's last Committee on Special Education (CSE) meeting with our school district, his speech therapist and I requested an iPod Touch and a speech application (Prloquo2Go) to help him improve his articulation and intelligibility. The CSE chairperson requested a referral/rationale from the therapist and some information from me about the specific program. While they have not officially said yes yet, everyone on the CSE seemed very positive about the idea.

If you are looking for new ways to help your child, do what I did and take some time to search through the applications. You might be surprised at what you can find that could benefit you and your child.

by - Jennifer Zolnowski

## Staff Members

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## Parent Network receives national FAST grant from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Parent Network of WNY has received a new national grant to help families of individuals with disabilities become aware of and advocate for family support information and services within their area. The "Family Advocacy and Support Training" (FAST) project will provide family support and leadership training to families of individuals with disabilities across Western New York. The project will address topics relating to advocating for one's family and strategies for systems change.

The FAST grant supports Parent Network's mission of: "Parents helping parents and professionals enable individuals with disabilities to reach their own potential". It will help enhance the organization's capacity to meet the needs of diverse families throughout Western New York.

The FAST project was awarded last fall by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## Howard Lewis Parent University of Buffalo: A New Resource for Parents

As parents, we teach our children the importance of education as a way to build their future. Knowledge is a gift that is yours for life. Parents of Buffalo Public School students have a new resource to help teach this lesson to their children. Buffalo is encouraging parents to show how important education is by offering ongoing courses that are of interest to parents.

The Howard Lewis Parent Center began in 1989 on the premise that all children can learn and that parents and children must become partners and learn together. Their focus has been working to help non-English speaking families build their knowledge of our culture and language, assist in building computer skills, and supporting parents so they are better able to support their children. With new Federal Stimulus Funds available, a push was begun to expand the focus and locations for these family based courses. The expansion of courses across Buffalo resulted



in twelve additional sites being added to what will now be known collectively as the Howard Lewis Parent University. It is hoped that students will see that finishing High School is just one more step, but not the last, to their education.

Parent Network of WNY is very pleased to be a member of the University not only as a participating course site, but also as a provider of classes. The courses offered by Parent Network include; Special Education: What's It All about? (code HYCL 207), What to Do with All That Paper: Binder Building (Code HYCL 208), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: An Overview (Code HYCL 212), and Really Terrific Instruction – RtI – Response to Intervention (Code HYCL 209). To review the full coursework offering and to register, call 816-3170 or go online to:

[www.buffaloschools.org/parentu](http://www.buffaloschools.org/parentu)

by Kim Walek

Community Corner

### Empowering Ourselves for a Brighter Future

A conference for community and family supporting individuals with Down syndrome

**Saturday, May 1, 2010**

8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

St. Mary's High School  
142 Laverack Avenue  
Lancaster, NY 14086

For more information, contact Leah at -  
Email: [MarchewkaLeah@yahoo.com](mailto:MarchewkaLeah@yahoo.com)  
Phone: (716) 631-7505 or (716) 440-5127

### Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day (DD Day)

A full-day conference featuring speakers, awards, workshops, exhibits, entertainment and a parents' room

**Thursday, May 27, 2010**

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.

Buffalo Niagara Convention Center  
153 Franklin Street  
Buffalo, NY 14202

For more information, call (716) 896-2180

Online: [www.ddawny.org](http://www.ddawny.org)



### Your Success Stories

Families...Has Parent Network of WNY made a difference in your life or the life of your family member? If so, we would love to hear about it. Let us know if you attended a workshop or called Parent Network's Information & Referral number. Tell us the situation, how Parent Network helped and what the final outcome was. We would like to share your story with other families and with the people who are responsible for providing the funding for our services. Send us your success story by mail to Parent Network of WNY, 1000 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; by email to [info@parentnetworkwny.org](mailto:info@parentnetworkwny.org); or by calling our Information and Referral Specialist at 332-4175. Thank you.

# New Autism Support Group

The Center for Autism Support and Education (CASE) and The Children's Guild Foundation Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) Center at Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo are collaborating on a series of support groups for parents of children with ASDs.

The support group will meet monthly from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m at Parent Network (1000 Main St, Buffalo, NY 14202). Below are the upcoming meeting dates.

**April 14, 2010**  
**May 12, 2010**  
**June 9, 2010**  
**July 14, 2010**  
**August 11, 2010**

For more information about the support group or the meetings, please call (716) 878-7600.



CASE: Center for Autism  
Support and Education



# The Parent Network of WNY

Phone: (716) 332-4170

Toll free: (866) 277-4762

Fax: (716) 332-4171

Information and Referral: (716) 332-4175

Website: [www.parentnetworkwny.org](http://www.parentnetworkwny.org)

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Your support of the Parent Network of WNY is an  
invaluable gift to all parents. You can lend your support  
to Parent Network in several ways: by making a donation,  
through a bequest in your will or becoming a member.  
All donations are tax-deductible. Checks can be made  
payable to:

## The Parent Network of WNY

For more information on donations, bequests or  
membership, call our main phone number.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Buffalo, N.Y. 14202

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