



# SPIN NEWS

The Newsletter for Parents of Children with Special Needs

SPECIAL  
PARENT  
INFORMATION  
NETWORK

## December 2017 Volume XXXIV, No. 2

SPIN is co-sponsored by the Disability & Communication Access Board and the Department of Education. Services include a phone line for information referral and support, a quarterly newsletter, an annual conference and community workshops. SPIN is guided by an Advisory Committee made up of parents, teachers and people with disabilities.

### SPIN

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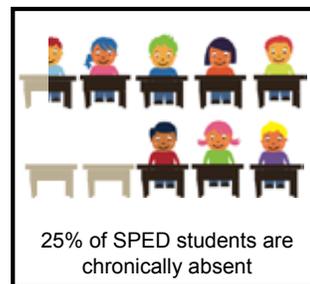
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## SCHOOL EVERY DAY

Awareness is needed before change can occur. That's why we wanted to share some important facts about chronic absenteeism-- defined as a student missing 15 or more days in a school year.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- More students with disabilities are chronically absent than any other group of students.
- At one Oahu high school, **52%** of the students with IEPs were absent 15 or more days in the school year.
- Students whose ethnicity is Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander have the highest absenteeism rates.
- Students who receive free or reduced lunch are more than twice as likely to be chronically absent as students who are not economically disadvantaged.
- Students can be chronically absent even if they only miss a day or two every few weeks.



- By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three predictors that a student may drop out of school.
- Good attendance is a habit that will help students be more successful at school, in higher education and on the job.

### WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Make getting to school on time every day a priority.
- Schedule doctor and other appointments for after-school hours.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to her teachers or counselor.
- Stay on top of your child's social contacts and school work.

For more ideas, visit the website below.



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

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# LRE = INCLUSION = MAINSTREAMING?

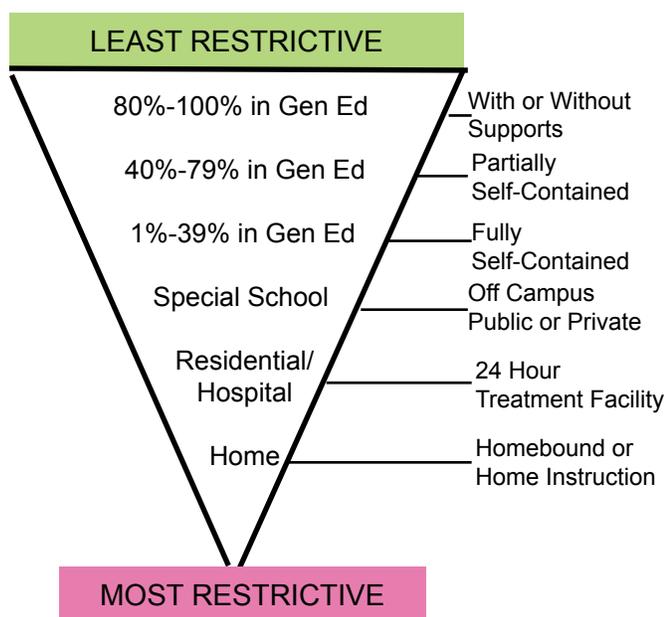
There is a bit of confusion among parents, school folks and advocates over these three terms. Some people see them as identical concepts, but their meanings are somewhat different.

## Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

This refers to a legal mandate of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that students with disabilities be educated *to the maximum extent appropriate* with peers without disabilities. LRE requires that IEP teams begin the placement discussion with the general education classroom and only move to a more restrictive placement when the nature or severity of the student's disability is such that his or her needs cannot be met alongside their nondisabled peers, even with the provision of supplementary aids and services.

IDEA requires that school districts have a range or *continuum* of different placement options to meet students' individualized needs. Less restrictive placement options must always be considered first as the IEP team determines the appropriate educational placement for the student.

### Continuum of Alternative Placements



The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals that rules on Hawaii due process cases has also added four factors that must be balanced to determine LRE for a student: 1) the educational benefits to the student of the general education classroom compared to the special education classroom, 2) the non-educational benefits of being

able to interact with one's non-disabled peers, 3) the effect of the student with a disability on the teacher and the other students in the classroom, and 4) the cost of including the student in a regular classroom.

## Mainstreaming

IDEA does not mention the word 'mainstreaming' although it is generally meant to refer to educating students with disabilities *in the mainstream of the school*--in the general education classroom alongside same-age students without disabilities. For many parents of older children with disabilities, mainstreaming has a more negative connotation of 'sink or swim' or 'dumping.' It meant placing their children in the general education classroom but not providing them with the necessary supports and services to allow them to be successful in that setting.

## Inclusion (inclusive education)

Like 'mainstreaming', the word 'inclusion' is not part of the wording of the IDEA regulations. However, the U.S. Department of Education has used it in recent policy statements and guidance to states. The 2015



**Policy Statement on the Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs** described the following elements of inclusion:

- ✓ learning together with their peers without disabilities;
- ✓ holding high expectations;
- ✓ intentionally promoting participation in all learning and social activities;
- ✓ providing individualized accommodations; and
- ✓ using evidence-based services and supports to foster their development, friendships with peers, and a sense of belonging.



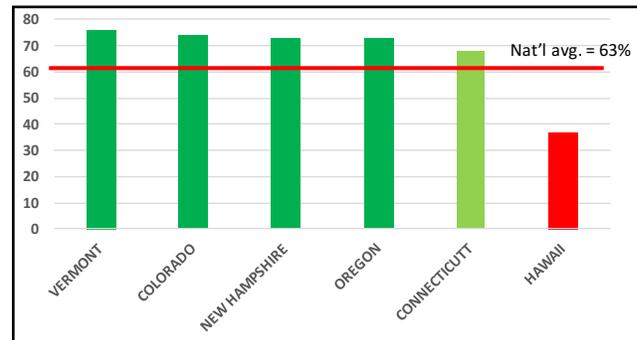
In a recent memo to school leaders, Superintendent Kishimoto described inclusive education as "all students having the opportunity to be educated in the general education classroom to the greatest extent--expectations are high and instruction is standards based."

While inclusion is not a new effort of the Department, it is receiving more emphasis in the BOE/DOE Strategic Plan. Check out how Hawaii complexes are performing in providing inclusive settings for students with disabilities (page 3).

# STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS ON INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

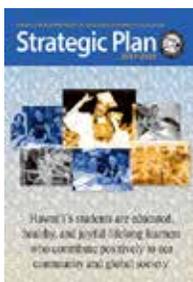
For more than a decade, Hawaii has held the unfavorable ranking of being the *least* successful of all states and territories in including students with disabilities in the general education classroom for most of their school day. The chart at the right shows that in school year 2015-16, only 37% of Hawaii students with IEPs spent 80%-100% of their day in the general education classroom, compared to a national average of 63%. The other five states in the chart exceeded the national average, with Vermont leading at an inclusion rate of 76%--more than twice that of Hawaii.

% of Students with Disabilities Who Spend 80% or More of Their Day in a General Ed Classroom



Source: 2015-16 Part B Annual Performance Report Data

Most special education advocates and educators believe that this lack of access has contributed to poor academic performance scores and post-school outcomes. In an effort to provide a more effective and equitable education to students with disabilities, the **Strategic Plan for 2017-2020** has added **Inclusion Rate** as a Student Success Indicator. Here's what the plan says:



**About inclusion rate as an important measurement of providing a quality education:**

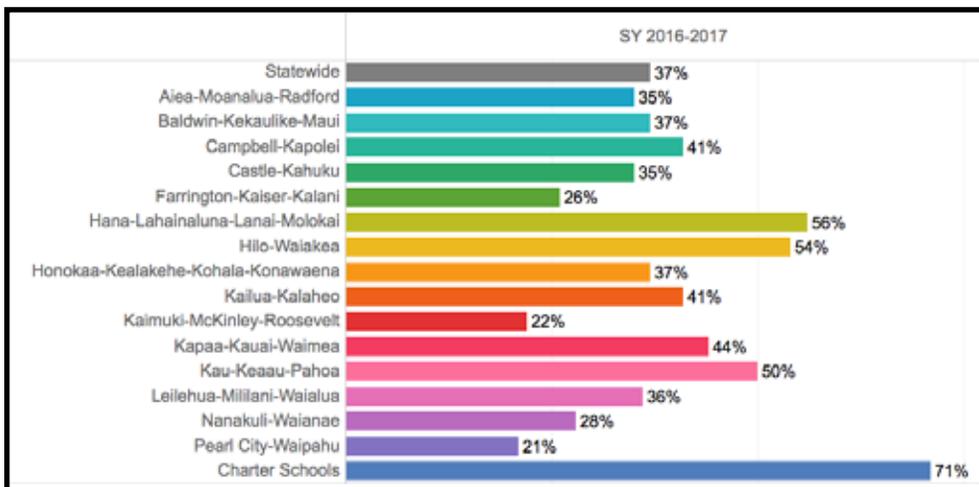
*Inclusion is a commitment to success for all students. Research shows that inclusive practices result in better attendance, achievement, referral rates and postsecondary outcomes.*

**About inclusive practices:**

*Experience and research show that inclusive practices are best for high-needs students. Students who are most severely impacted by our achievement gap, including those receiving special education services and English Learners, deserve high-quality education in a regular classroom setting. Statewide training and support will be provided for inclusion in classrooms that is balanced with specialized supports.*

## STUDENT SUCCESS INDICATOR 3: INCLUSION RATE RESULTS

In the Strategic Plan, Inclusion Rate is defined as “percentage of students receiving special education services who are in general education classes for 80 percent or more of the school day.” Is this LRE or inclusion? Are schools required just to report placement or also whether an array of individual supports are provided? The first year results of measuring Inclusion Rates were reported out at the November 7, 2017 Student Achievement Committee meeting of the Board of Education. Using the new Strategic Plan Dynamic Tool, the SY 2016-17 data



that the statewide inclusion rate remained at 37%, while the complex area rates ranged from 21% to 71%. The latter rate belonged to charter schools, who traditionally do a better job of including students with disabilities in the same classroom as their non-disabled peers. A target of 51% inclusion statewide has been set for SY 2019-2020.

Source: Strategic Plan Dynamic Tool - Inclusion Rate (<https://tinyurl.com/yaj2qqaa>)



# ABLE Plan Update

The **Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act** of 2014 gave people with disabilities receiving government benefits and their families a financial tool to put money aside for purchases to enhance quality of life without risking the loss of those benefits (like SSI and Medicaid). The Act was modeled on the popular '529' College Savings Plan that allows tax-deferred savings for higher education.

### \$14K Yearly



Individuals, their families and friends can deposit up to \$14,000 a year in an ABLE account. (The limit goes up to \$15,000 in 2018). Account holders choose from a variety of investments, and can withdraw money throughout the year for qualified expenses.

### \$100,000 Cap



Accounts that grow larger than \$100,000 over the years will cause SSI benefits to be suspended.

## What are 'qualified expenses' under the ABLE Act?



Health/Wellness /Prevention



Housing



Financial Management



Education



Transportation



Job Training and Support



Assistive Technology



Funeral and Burial Expenses

## Who is eligible to open an ABLE Plan account?

Current eligibility is limited to persons whose disability occurred before age 26. Legislation has been introduced in Congress to expand eligibility to individuals whose disability occurred before age 42.

### Proof of Eligibility includes:

Receiving SSI OR Receiving SSDI OR Meeting SSA's definition of eligibility

## Where can you go to set up an ABLE Plan account?



Although Hawaii has yet to set up its own ABLE Program, there are 22 states and the District of Columbia who are ready and willing to set up accounts for Hawaii residents: Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington. Tennessee's program is the only one without an annual administrative fee which ranges from \$30 to \$50 for most state ABLE programs.

For more information about the Achieving A Better Life Experience Act and links to the state ABLE programs listed above, go to the ABLE National Resource Center: <http://ablenrc.org/>.



# Holiday Helpers: Tips to Make the Season Bright



## Showing Gratitude

As parents, we try to instill good manners into our children. One of the first things we teach our keiki is to say “thank you” to show gratitude. Whether it’s trick or treating, sending cards for gifts received or when someone opens the door for us, we prompt our kids to say thank you, even if they don’t really connect why they have to say it. To help our children experience gratitude through their thoughts and feelings, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has come up with four questions for parents to ask:



**NOTICE:** What have you been given or already have in your life that you are grateful for? Is someone thinking about you or caring about you enough to give you a gift?



**THINK:** Why did you receive this gift? Do you think you owe the giver something in return? Do you think the gift was something the giver had to give you? If not, you might be more grateful for the gift since it was given freely.



**FEEL:** Does it make you feel happy to get this gift? What does that feel like on the inside? What about the gift makes you happy?

These questions can help children connect positive feelings to the gifts they receive in their life, both material and things we take for granted like home, family and community.



**DO:** How do you want to show how you feel about the gift? Prompting children when they feel gratitude can help them choose to respond by showing their own appreciation with a note,

a hug or paying the good deed forward.

Other ways to foster gratitude in children:

- Have a moment of thanks each today where everyone shares something they are thankful for.
- Tell your children why you are grateful for them. It shows that gratitude extends beyond material things.
- Have them pitch in when they want something. By helping to pay for things they want, they appreciate them more.
- Write thank you notes to teachers, coaches and other helpful people that make a difference in their lives.
- Instill an “attitude of gratitude” and look for the silver lining, even when times are tough.

## Reducing Stress

The holidays are upon us, with sleigh bells ringing and fireworks popping, bringing laughter and excitement along with worry and stress. Here a few tips from around the web to help you not only survive the winter break but come through the new year with comfort and joy.



### SET EXPECTATIONS



Be upfront and work together to plan excursions and holiday parties, set limits on gift giving and decide what goodies you will bake this season. Create a visual calendar so everyone will know what’s coming up and have a plan if your child needs to leave a party or event early.



### MAINTAIN ROUTINES



Changing routines can mean an increase in stress for a child. Try to keep a regular schedule for key things like going to bed and at least one meal a day like breakfast. This will give your child a familiar start to the day and a good nights sleep is good for everyone.

### RESERVE SPECIAL TIME FOR YOUR CHILD

Everyone is on the go during the holidays. Try to set aside 5-10 minutes a day to spend some one-on-one time with each of your children. Read a holiday book together, let them tell you a story or just sit quietly together, snuggling and enjoying the moment.



### BRING YOUR OWN FOOD & SUPPLIES

If your child only eats things that are yellow, is on a special diet, or feels stress over new foods, its ok to bring your own to holiday gatherings. If there are certain toys, games, books or supplies that can help calm your keiki, be sure to bring those too.



### AVOID CROWDS



Try to avoid areas or times that have high traffic and crowds. If you’re visiting City Hall to see the lights, go on a weekday, or take a trolley to see the sights without having to drive. If you have to attend an event with alot of people, try to find a place out of the main current. Consider asking a friend or relative to join you so you have an extra pair of helping hands to keep an eye on everyone.

Sources: [Friendshipcircle.org](http://Friendshipcircle.org), [Parentingspecialneeds.org](http://Parentingspecialneeds.org), [Oneplacefor specialneeds.com](http://Oneplacefor specialneeds.com), [autismspeaks.org](http://autismspeaks.org)





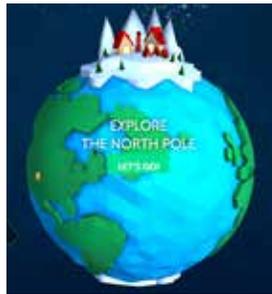
# The App Corner



A fun app that is available on any phone, tablet or computer with a web browser is [NoradSanta.org](http://NoradSanta.org). There is plenty to do before and after Christmas on this interactive site.

On Christmas Eve, not only will NORAD track Santa across the globe, you can find out cool facts about the places he travels. Watch videos, check out photos, and catch glimpses of Santa as he treks around the world.

If you click on "Explore the North Pole", you can watch videos on NORAD and Santa, play simple games in the arcade, learn fun facts about holiday traditions around the world and more about what NORAD does, all while listening to your favorite holiday music.



# Spotlight on Support



## Hawaii Disability Rights Center

The Hawaii Disability Rights Center (HDRC) is the designated Client Assistance Program (CAP) and Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System for Hawaii's estimated 180,000 residents with disabilities. HDRC engages the community in the following activities:

- > Outreach
- > Provision of Information
- > Education and Training
- > Individual Casework
- > Systemic Casework



The CAP is the advocacy program for people with disabilities who are seeking or receiving services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) or services for the blind. The P&A System helps families and individuals who need help advocating for their rights in the educational setting and in the community. There is an intake process and you can reach them by calling 949-2922 or toll free 1-800-882-1057, or apply online on their website [www.hawaiidisabilityrights.org](http://www.hawaiidisabilityrights.org) or email [info@hawaiidisabilityrights.org](mailto:info@hawaiidisabilityrights.org)



The Developmental Disabilities Division of the Department of Health is planning to improve on its Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waiver for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD). Proposed amendments to the current Waiver include:

- ✓ Clarifying how children and adults can make the best use of a new waiver service called Community Learning Services;
- ✓ Including the cost of repairs for vehicular modifications;
- ✓ Adding a service called Private Duty Nursing for adults;
- ✓ Expanding respite care that is provided by a nurse;
- ✓ Transitioning children who receive skilled nursing through the Waiver to skilled nursing provided under EPSDT (Medicaid).

Public input must be in by the end of January 2018. For more information or to leave a comment on the proposed amendments to the Waiver, email the Community Resources Branch at [doh.dddcrb@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:doh.dddcrb@doh.hawaii.gov).



# "Spin it to Win It"

Saturday April 21, 2018 • UH Manoa Campus Center Ballroom



8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Registration • Networking • Display Tables  
 9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. Keynote Presentation in Ballroom  
 9:45 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. View Displays in Boardwalk of Resources Room, 2nd floor • Networking

## EPISODE 1 10:20 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.

"Level Up"	"Inclusion: Game On"	"Learning the Rules of the Game"	"Phone a Friend"	"Connect 4 Kids"	"Power Up"
Transition to Adulthood	Inclusive Education	Social and Emotional Learning	Coping Strategies for Families	Early Intervention Transitions	Adapting Games w/ Assistive Technology

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. View Displays in the Boardwalk of Resources  
 12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. Buffet Lunch in Ballroom • Awards Presentation

## EPISODE 2 1:20 p.m. - 2:20 p.m.

"Jenga"	"Clue"	"Chutes & Ladders"	"I'll Take BLISS for \$500"	"Hungry, Hungry Hippos"	"Stratego"
Positive Behavioral Supports	Literacy Strategies	Universal Design for Learning	Mindful Meditation	Helping Picky Eaters (to age 8)	Estate & Benefits Planning

## EPISODE 3 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

"Bringing Your 'A' Game"	"The Game of Life"	"Game Changer"	"Master Mind"
Strategies to Support Students with Autism	Life Course Planning for Individuals with I/DD	Mental Health First Aid for Depression & Anxiety	Understanding Executive Functioning

Workshops are subject to change

## REGISTRATION FORM

Please print clearly

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Island \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ School/Agency \_\_\_\_\_

- \$25 per parent    \$45 for two family members    \$25 per college student    \$40 per professional  
 Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check or P.O. Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Make checks and P.O.s payable to SPIN (Special Parent Information Network).

### A limited number of Airfare Scholarships are available to Neighbor Island parents. Apply early!

- I am requesting an airfare scholarship as a Neighbor Island parent/grandparent of a child (infant to 22) with a disability. (There is a maximum of two airfare scholarships per child).  
 Please send me an application by  email    postal mail  
 My Airfare Scholarship application is enclosed.  
 I will send in the application later.



I request accommodation(s) due to a disability\*:

- I would like:  materials in an alternate format    a sign language interpreter  
 a map of accessible parking \*Note: Requests must be submitted by April 2, 2018.



Send completed form(s) with payment as soon as possible to: SPIN, 1010 Richards Street, Room 118, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • Fax: (808) 586-8129 • Email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov  
 Questions? Call us (808) 586-8126 • Website: www.spinhawaii.org



# Winter Calendar of Events



**1/6** **Access Surf Day at the Beach**  
**2/3** White Plains, Ewa Beach from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. FREE surfing event, for all ages and abilities. Sign up at [www.accessurf.org/participant-forms/](http://www.accessurf.org/participant-forms/)

**1/12** **SEAC - Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting** 9:00 am - 12:00 pm Oahu; Call for location and directions. 586-8126.

**1/25** **Side by Side Parent Support**  
 Inspire Church, Waikele 4:30 - 6:30 pm  
 Topic: Dyslexia Tips and Strategies for Parents  
 Email: [sidebyside@inspirechurch.tv](mailto:sidebyside@inspirechurch.tv)

**Mac Plus Recreation Spring Program**  
 From January to April, for ages 15+. Choose from Foodie Adventures, UH Spring Sports or Duckie Race & Festival. \$10. Sign up beginning Jan. 10. RSVP [macplus@ucpahi.org](mailto:macplus@ucpahi.org) or 532-6748.

**Hawaii Theater for Youth**  
 ASL & sensory-friendly performances  
**1/27** "The Red Balloon" @ 11:00 am for ages 5+  
**2/17** "Kinolau" @ 4:30 am for ages 8+  
[www.htyweb.org](http://www.htyweb.org) or 839-9885.

**Side by Side Parent Support**  
**1/30** "Executive Functions"  
**2/27** "Effective Study Skills"  
**3/27** "Managing Challenging Behaviors"  
 All meetings are at 6:30-830 pm at Inspire Churce in the Waikele Shopping Center.  
 For more info: [sidebyside@inspirechurch.tv](mailto:sidebyside@inspirechurch.tv)

**2/19** **Sensitive Friendly Chuck E Cheese**  
 9:00 - 11:00 am, Dillingham Blvd., Honolulu  
 \$7 includes pizza, drink and 12 tokens. To RSVP visit [www.autismsocietyofhawaii.org](http://www.autismsocietyofhawaii.org) or email [autismhi@gmail.com](mailto:autismhi@gmail.com) for info.

**3/10** **Sensory Friendly Film Showing "Gigantic"**  
 9:45 am, Consolidated Theaters, Pearlride  
 Children on ASD spectrum are free, parents \$11 and siblings \$5. More info: [autismhi@gmail.com](mailto:autismhi@gmail.com)

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**4/21** **32nd Annual SPIN Conference**  
 8:30 am - 3:30 pm at UH Campus Center  
 Registration forms and airfare scholarships available. Go to [www.spinhawaii.org](http://www.spinhawaii.org) or call us @ 586-8126.



**Special Parent Information Network**  
 919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101  
 Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

*Providing a world of support to parents of children with special needs*