



SPIN NEWS

The Newsletter for Parents of Children with Special Needs

SPECIAL
PARENT
INFORMATION
NETWORK

February 2016 Volume XXXII, No. 3

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

919 Ala Moana Blvd., # 101
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814



PHONE
586-8126

Neighbor Islands dial the exchange below, then 6-8126

Kauai - **274-3141**

Hawai'i - **974-4000**

Maui - **984-2400**

Molokai - **1-800-468-4644**

Lanai - **1-800-468-4644**



FAX
586-8129



E-MAIL
spin@doh.hawaii.gov



WEB
www.spinhawaii.org



Like us on Facebook

DON'T MISS SPIN'S 30TH CONFERENCE!

In her book *Families*, author Jane Howard said, "Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one." That sums up SPIN's motivation to put on our conference each Spring. We want families of children and young adults to know that they are not alone, and that despite the struggles around raising a child with a disability, there's a lot to celebrate, too!

This year there's even more to celebrate on **Saturday, April 16th** at the University of Hawaii Manoa Campus Center--it's "**SPIN's 30th Reunion!**" And like the cartoon says, it won't be the same without you, so we hope you'll consider attending.

SPIN believes strongly in building partnerships between school and home, so you'll find elements of both class reunions and family reunions at the conference. . .



Catching up on the News

We have 16 different workshop topics to keep you up-to date on the latest evidence-based information. There will also be over 50 agency displays on the 2nd Floor to help you find the right support.

Finding Old (and New) Classmates

If this is not your first conference, we bet you'll run into familiar folks to network with, and if this is your first,

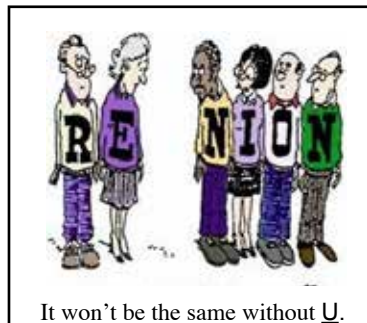
you'll make new friends.

Awards

Lunchtime will be our opportunity to give out awards to deserving parents and professionals. Please consider nominating your heroes (see page 5).

Family Stories

Our morning presentation will reconnect you to some of our best SPIN stories over the last 3 decades.



Ono Food

The Campus Center is known for its tasty lunches.

Favors

There will be lots of prizes, including goodies for every guest.

So don't be shy. Check out our conference program on page 7 and make plans to join us. We still have a few airfare scholarships for our Neighbor Island ohana.

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ABLE Act Update

It's now been 14 months since the passage of the **Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act**, and families of children and adults with disabilities are still waiting for an opportunity to set up a tax-free savings account much like existing 529 college savings programs. These ABLE accounts will allow folks to save up to \$14,000 a year without affecting public benefits. Up to now, parents have had to take care that their child has no more than \$2,000 at any time or risk losing needed SSI and Medicaid coverage. Once ABLE Accounts are up and running, families and individuals can have up to \$100,000 in total savings to help pay for certain education and health related expenses.

Hawaii and 33 other states have passed laws to set up ABLE programs for their residents, but as of today, no accounts have been opened. Folks who will administer these programs are waiting for final regulations from the Internal Revenue Service.

A new development in December may speed up the availability of ABLE accounts. Congress included a provision in its tax bill (the Consolidated Appropriations Act) that allows folks to establish an ABLE account in any state. This will permit families to shop around for the best options once state programs are up and running. Some bigger states, like Virginia, Florida and Ohio, appear ready to open their programs in the next month or so. If you would like to be notified of new developments, call or email SPIN. For more information on the ABLE Act, go to: <https://parentingspecialneeds.org/article/new-savings-accounts-may-fund-care/>.



COMPARISON OF ABLE ACCT. & SPECIAL NEEDS TRUST

	ABLE Account	Special Needs Trust
Eligibility	Same as SSI; disability must have occurred before age 26	Under age 65
Expense	\$ - administrative fees	\$\$ - attorney's fees
Spending Restrictions	For qualified disability expenses ONLY (education, transportation, assistive technology, health care, personal support, etc)	Same as ABLE plus travel, entertainment, other items to supplement the individual's quality of life
Funding Limits	\$14,000 per year; up to \$100,000 in assets without affecting SSI	No limits
Medicaid Payback	If funds remain in account after the beneficiary dies, it may be required to repay Medicaid	No payback required if trust was set up by family
Control Over Spending	By individual with a disability or his/her representative	By a Trustee
# of Accounts Allowed	One per individual	No limits
Tax on Earnings	No	Yes



LAST MINUTE TAX DEDUCTIONS

Families of children with disabilities often have greater expenses than other families. Luckily some of these expenses are tax deductible. If you are still working on your taxes, think about whether you have some of the expenses below.

- ✓ Therapy received as a medical treatment, for example, speech therapy or physical therapy
- ✓ Special diets such as gluten-free or ketogenic diets. You can deduct the amount over and above what a regular diet would cost.
- ✓ Gas mileage for medical visits--currently 23¢ a mile
- ✓ Equipment, devices and supplies to treat a medical condition
- ✓ Tutoring by a trained tutor. Your child's doctor will need to certify that these services are necessary.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has a fact sheet about available credits, benefits and deductions for families of children with disabilities at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p3966.pdf>.





Got Questions? Ask SPIN



In our December SPIN News **Ask SPIN** column we offered some suggestions to a parent who was frustrated over a lack of productive communication with her child's school, resulting in a lack of appropriate support for her child. Here's what we recommended:

- 1) Working up the "Chain of Command"-- starting with the classroom teacher and then with the principal, if there is still an issue, before contacting the District Education Specialist or the Complex Area Superintendent;
- 2) Educating yourself about your rights, as well as strategies to use in the IEP process;
- 3) Keeping "cool" in meetings with school staff (curb your emotions, be polite, avoid blaming others);
- 4) Considering mediation through the Mediation Center of Hawaii; and
- 5) Calling the Learning Disabilities Association and/or the Hawaii Disability Rights Center for advice and advocacy.

SPIN's intent was to focus on early intervention--fixing the disagreement before it resulted in a written complaint or due process hearing request. Our column resulted in three helpful comments from other agencies and individuals providing support and information to families, so we wanted to share their insights below:



**The Learning
Disabilities
Association of
Hawaii**
(808) 536-9684

"The list below is the actual order of interventions we support as the Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), based on level and intensity of intervention:

1. *Work it out with the school, no other support, etc.*
2. *Work with the principal, DES, CAS.*
3. *In conjunction with number 2, call LDAH for assessment of need, training, technical assistance (including referral to law websites and other resources), and if it's a really difficult case, advocacy.*
4. *It is rare LDAH cannot settle conflicts, but if we can't, then we refer to the Mediation Center. We stay with the family while they enter into mediation.*
5. *Where mediation and advocacy does not seem to work, then we support the family in creating a state complaint or filing for due process."*



**DOE Complaints
Management
Program**
(808) 586-5374

The Complaints Management Program (CMP) receives and investigates written complaints from families and other individuals who believe that a violation of a student's rights under IDEA has occurred around identification, evaluation, placement or the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The CMP Educational Specialist also wants families to know that her office is available to answer questions, help them understand their rights and receive a second opinion, if needed. Families can also make a phone complaint--a less formal option than a written complaint--and a quick and effective way to resolve a disagreement. The CMP acts as a bridge to improve communication between parents and school. She helps clarify legal requirements, and when a school has not followed regulations, she helps monitor progress toward a solution.



**Art Cernosia, esq.
Vermont Attorney
and Education
Consultant**
acernosia@gmail.com

At his annual workshop at the Learning Disabilities Association Mr. Cernosia added to parents' understanding of IDEA with a legal update that he also uses to train audiences, including hearing officers. Despite the fact that this update contains a lot of information about due process, he says *"My goal is to never get there [to due process]. Using the law, not as a threat, but as a tool to advocate for your child. At times we need to be reminded of what the law says to empower parents to ask questions, to be respectful."* Later, in discussing the options parents have for resolving conflicts, Mr. Cernosia observed *"mediation is not used in Hawaii to the extent it should be... It is less adversarial and it preserves the relationship. If you reach an impasse, I would highly recommend that you ask the school for mediation."* For a copy of Mr. Cernosia's remarks, go to: <http://goo.gl/gvtIRa>.

Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity

April 25-26, 2016

The theme of the 32nd annual Pacific Rim Conference will be "From the Margins to the Center." They will be showcasing 2 days of workshops and keynote speakers that will explore answers to the question of "how do we innovate to bring more people from the margins of society into the center where they can live to their full potential?"



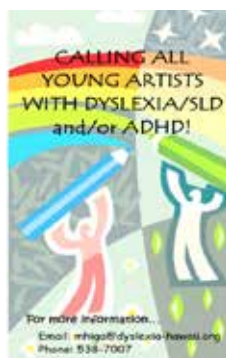
The topic of "Innovation" will tackle the conference theme and explore the journey from exclusion to inclusion.

Look for cinematic entertainment and enlightenment at the Mini Film Festival. Each year Pacific Rim offers a variety of national and international films embracing disability and diversity. Check out the website for a

complete listing of film offerings this year: www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/events/film-festival.

With international, national and local speakers taking on the theme and leading discussions, this year is gearing up to be great. There are three main topic areas that will spawn a wide variety of workshops. Under the topic of "Foundation" you will find sessions on inclusion, advocacy, quality of life, education and childhood development. The "Exploration" topic will focus on health, diversity, resiliency, disability laws and rights.

Pacific Rim has a very limited number of scholarships available for parents and caregivers who have a child with a disability. They will be offered on a first come, first served basis only and will include admission to keynotes, workshops, the film festival for both days, and lunch on Monday. If you are interested, call SPIN at 586-8126. The deadline to apply is March 14th. Hurry and call us today!



Calling Young Artists

The Hawaii Branch of the International Dyslexia Association is looking for local artists in grades 3-12 to submit an art piece or bookmark by March 15, 2016. Email Margaret Hida, mhiga@dyslexia-hawaii.org or call 538-7007 for the bookmark template and artwork release form.

WHO: Students (grades 3-12) with dyslexia/SLD and/or ADHD

GOAL: Design an art piece using any of the following: colored pencils, crayons, pastels, watercolor, oil, acrylic. Size of paper or canvas should be no larger than 8-1/2 x 11 inches. The winning designs will capture the theme:

"Where Reading Will Take You"

PRIZE: Prizes will be awarded to the winning artists in each of three age groups: 3rd - 5th grades, 6th - 8th grades, 9th - 12th grades.

DEADLINE: Postmarked by March 15, 2016

MAIL TO: HIDA
PO Box 893670
Mililani, HI 96789-0670

NOTE: Winning artwork will become the property of HIDA for reproduction as HIDA deems appropriate. Return the completed consent form that must be signed by your parent or legal guardian and returned to HIDA with your artwork by March 15, 2016.

On the back of your artwork, please write the following:

- Your Name
- Age
- Mailing Address
- Phone Number
- Name of School You Attend / Grade

Contests & Enrichment

The Hawaii Department of Education's website has a hidden gem of information for parents and students called "Contests and Enrichment." It is a current listing of contests and programs and their deadlines that are available to students in varying grade levels. From Doodle for Google, to scholarships and grants, to writing, art and video contests, there is something that is sure to tickle the competition bug in many kids. You can find the listing by going to the DOE website at www.hawaiipublicschools.org, click on the Parents & Students tab, then the Contests and Enrichment block. Use the drop-down menu to choose the dates (use "within a year" to see the complete listing) and press "Go". The full web link is www.hawaiipublicschools.org/parentsandstudents/contests/pages/home.



2016 SPIN Awards Needs Your Nominations!

Every year, SPIN publicly celebrates key parents and professionals whose efforts make a positive difference in the lives of our keiki with disabilities and their families. The SPIN Advisory Committee is looking for candidates for our 2016 SPIN Awards and we need your help in nominating someone who models the qualities and actions that families appreciate and rely on. There are three award categories:

- The **Parent of the Year Award** is given to a parent of a child or young adult with a disability whose actions and advocacy have benefited other families.
- The **Professional of the Year Award** is given to a professional who has had a significant impact in improving services for children and or youth with a disability and their families.
- The **Family Choice Award** is given to a professional who has been particularly helpful to families as they sort out services for their child with a disability. This individual may not have an impact on the larger system, but is recognized in his or her community as an extraordinary professional.

We encourage you to share your aloha and nominate one or more very special people for any or all of the awards. You can go to our website at www.spinhawaii.org, click on the conference tab and download a nomination form. Or call us at 586-8126 and we'll mail you a form. Deadline to apply is March 15th.



Family-School Partnerships are Now School Policy

The Board of Education's passage of its policy on **Family and Community Engagement/Partnership** (Policy 101.14) last June was a shared victory. The Special Education Advisory Council, the Coalition on Children with Special Needs, the Hui for Excellence in Education, and a number of other organizations had spent several years encouraging policymakers to revise an existing policy on family engagement to include the National PTA's Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

The National PTA had developed these standards in 2007 to shift the focus from what schools should do to involve parents to what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success. These standards are based on evidence-based practices and have been adopted by numerous states and cities.



Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued, and connected

to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.



Standard 2: Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.



Standard 3: Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously partner to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.



learning opportunities that will support their success.



Standard 5: Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.



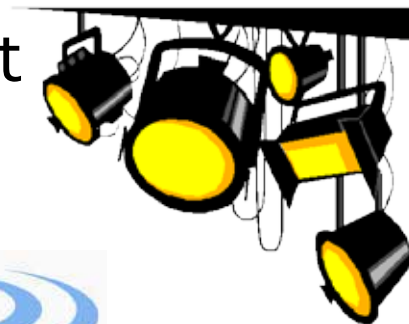
Standard 6: Engaging/partnering with community—Families and school staff engage/partner with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

For a copy of the Board Policy on **Family and Community Engagement/Partnership** go to [www.hawaiiboe.net/Docs/101/101.14%20\(2015-06-16\).pdf](http://www.hawaiiboe.net/Docs/101/101.14%20(2015-06-16).pdf)



While searching for a new app to showcase in the App Corner, on the SPIN website, we came across a little gem that can be used by parents and teachers alike and kids across the board seem to love it! It's called Go Noodle and it's a free website with a lot of interactive games and videos that can help kids focus, provide a transition between subjects or just help them get the sillies out. With over 100 activities to choose from, ranging from calm, moderate to vigorous activity, Go Noodle can help kids manage their energy in a fun and easy way. Teachers can use it to start the day with a morning stretch, have some mindful meditation before a test and have a dance party at the end of the day. Parents can use it at home to do a bit of yoga before homework begins, sing a song between math and English worksheets and do some kinesthetic learning to clear the brain after a long day at school. And for indoor recess and rainy days at home, there are 10-15 minute videos designed to get kids moving and grooving and laughing. Sign up for free at www.gonoodle.com.

Spotlight on Support



The Assistive Technology Resource Centers of Hawaii is a nonprofit organization that links people of all ages and needs with technology. ATRC is an education center and does not sell assistive technology (AT) products, though they do recommend vendors if you request it. A sampling of the many services they offer statewide are:

- Device Demonstrations: make an appointment to check out different types of AT that may help you.
- Device Lending Program: borrow AT to "try before you buy" or while your AT is being repaired.
- Computer Redistribution Program: you can apply for a refurbished computer, monitor, printer or keyboard, if you do not have access to one.
- AT Exchange Program: trade or donate AT to help others. Donated items must be in good condition.
- Training and Technical Assistance: fee-based classes for computer literacy, using social media and more.
- Public Awareness Programs: ATRC can come to your event/school/program to showcase AT.

For more information, visit them on the web at www.atrc.org, like their Facebook page or call 808-532-7110.

Make-n-Take Workshops Inspire Creativity

Therese Willkomm, an assistive technology guru, came back to Hawaii for two make-n-take workshops on both Hawaii island and Oahu in January. Participants made and took home 10 different projects, including a SPIN favorite, the Eileen - a simple, portable, adjustable iPad holder, smart phone holder and document holder. Like most of Therese's devices, it's made with easy to find objects like old campaign signs, corner guards from the hardware store, sticky tape and velcro.



If you missed the workshops, or want ideas to create your own assistive technology solutions, check out the University of New Hampshire's YouTube page, www.youtube.com/user/ATinNH. You will find step by step videos on low tech solutions to fit nearly every need. SPIN would like to send a special shout-out to the Hawaii and Pacific Deaf Blind Project, Easter Seals Hawaii and Assistive Technology Resource Centers of Hawaii for sponsoring these workshops. Mahalo!

"SPIN's 30th Reunion"



Saturday, April 16, 2016, UH Campus Center Ballroom

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Registration/Networking/Displays
9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. Keynote Presentation
9:45 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. View Displays



1st PERIOD 10:20 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.

Launching into Adulthood	Say "Cheese"	Paving a Path to Preschool	From Living Hell to Living Well	Inside Out	Access for All
Secondary Transition	Positive Thinking	Preschool Transition	Positive Behavior Supports	Childhood Brain Development	Universal Design for Learning

11:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon View Displays
12:00 noon - 1:15 p.m. * Buffet in the Ballroom * Awards Presentation *

2nd PERIOD 1:20 p.m. - 2:20 p.m.

Bully Free Zone	Navigating the Insurance Maze	Breathe	Teaming for Success	Technology is Where it's AT	Rights of Passage
Bully Prevention & Advocacy	Health Insurance: Public & Private	Stress Management	IEP & 504 Planning	Assistive Technology	Guardianship & Alternatives

3rd PERIOD 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Life on the Spectrum	ADD it Up	Learning Outside the Lines	Cyberbullying: Control+Alt+Delete
Autism Spectrum Disorders	ADD / ADHD	Dyslexia	Monitoring Technology Use

WORKSHOPS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Registration Form

Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Island _____

Phone (H) _____ (C) _____ (W) _____

E-mail _____ (H/W)

Child's age: _____ Disability: _____

☐ \$25 per Parent, ☐ \$40 for two Family Members, ☐ \$25 per College Student, ☐ \$40 per Professional

☐ Amount enclosed \$ _____ check # _____

Make checks payable to SPIN (Special Parent Information Network)

*** Airfare Scholarships are limited, and based on availability ~ apply early! ***

- ☐ I am a Neighbor Island Parent/Grandparent of a child with special needs and would like to apply for a SPIN Airfare Scholarship. (max. 2 scholarships per child)
- ☐ Please send me an application via ☐ email ☐ postal mail
 - ☐ My Airfare Scholarship application is enclosed
 - ☐ I will send in the application later



Send completed form(s) with payment as soon as possible to:

SPIN, 919 Ala Moana Blvd, Room 101, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Fax: (808) 586-8129 E-mail: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

Questions? Call us (808) 586-8126

Web: www.spinhawaii.org





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

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Honolulu, Hawaii

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

Return Service Requested

Spring Calendar of Events

- | | | | |
|-------------|--|-------------|--|
| 3/5 | Access Surf Day at the Beach | 3/25 | Easter Seals Backyard Movie and Sleepover |
| 4/2 | White Plains, Ewa Beach from 9:00 am - | | 7:00 - 9:00 pm \$15 includes snack & breakfast. |
| 5/7 | 1:00 pm. FREE surfing event, for all ages | | 710 Green St. Honolulu. RSVP 529-1726 or |
| | and abilities. Sign up online @ accessurf.org | | eaiwohi@eastersealshawaii.org |
| 3/12 | SEAC - Special Education Advisory | 3/26 | TACA: IEP Workshop |
| 4/8 | Committee Meeting 9:00 am - 12:00 pm | | 10:00 am-12:00 pm Aliamanu Community |
| | Oahu; 919 Ala Moana Blvd. 5th floor, | | Center, 101 Kauhini Rd., Honolulu RSVP |
| | 586-8126. www.seac-hawaii.org | | www.tacanow.org/local-chapters/west/hawaii |
| 3/12 | Easter Seals Bunny Breakfast & Egg Hunt | 4/9 | My Journey Autism Awareness Event Hilo |
| | 9:00-11:30 am, Central Union Church | | 4:00 - 6:00 pm UH Hilo Campus Center Plaza |
| | 1660 S. Beretania St. Honolulu | | Sharing stories of autism. Pre-registration |
| | \$12 general, \$8 kids 3-12, free kids 02 | | required: 238-6280 or anaya@hawaii.edu |
| | RSVP: 529-1727 or easterseals.com/hawaii | | |
| 3/12 | Hands & Voices Hawaii Ice Cream Social | | SAVE THE DATE! |
| | 10:00 am - 12:00 noon Comprehensive | 4/16 | 30th Annual SPIN Conference |
| | Services Center. 1953 S. Beretania St. | | 8:30 am - 4:00 pm at UH Campus Center |
| | For families with deaf/hard of hearing | | Registration forms and airfare scholarships |
| | and deaf/blind children, and community | | available www.spinhawaii.org , call us at |
| | members. RSVP on H & V Hawaii facebook. | | 586-8126 or email spin@doh.hawaii.gov |
| | | 4/25 | 32nd Annual Pac Rim Conference |
| | | 4/26 | Hawaii Convention Center. For info, contact |
| | | | www.pacrim.hawaii.edu |