

Oklahoma Parents Center

Fall/Winter 2012



Mission Statement

The Oklahoma Parents Center is dedicated to the inclusion and **equality of children** and adults with disabilities. Our mission is to train, inform, educate, and **support parents**, families, professionals and consumers in **building partnerships** that **meet the needs** of children and youth with the full range of disabilities ages birth through twenty-six.

Save the Date

The Oklahoma Parents Center, Inc., is excited to announce our upcoming 7th Annual Statewide Conference, **Friday, May 31, 2013**. The conference will be held at the Sheraton Midwest City Hotel at the Reed Conference Center, located at 5750 Will Rogers Road.

As with every statewide conference, there will be great speakers, much information shared, lunch, and plenty of door prizes. Experts from Oklahoma State Department of Education, the Oklahoma Disability Law Center, the Special Education Resolution Center and the Office of Civil Rights will be conducting informational sessions for students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

All Oklahoma parents are invited to participate in the conference. This year's conference will also include the following OPC sponsored events:

- ♦ 2nd Annual Art Contest for students with disabilities;
- ♦ 2nd Annual Parent of the Year award; and
- ♦ 1st Annual Educator of the Year award.

There will be an awards ceremony at the conference to honor the winners!!!

Registration will begin on March 15, 2013.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



"Things move fast here at the Oklahoma Parents Center!" says Latisha. "You have to be flexible and enjoy the challenges and opportunities." And even after 4 years, Latisha still loves her job. "Something new and exciting happens every day. It really is fun to come to work each morning."

After earning her bachelor's degree in from East Central University in Ada, Latisha was sure she wanted to use the skills she had learned in college; she just wasn't sure where. The Business/Grants Manager position at the Oklahoma Parents Center was the perfect fit. Latisha glides through a multitude of various activities on any given day of the work week. "It's inspiring to see that the OPC team is constantly thinking ahead, planning trainings, and working each and every day to reach as many Oklahoma parents as possible."

With a husband and three children under 8 years old, striking a balance between work and life is essential. "I've managed to find just the right balance to have a successful and productive career, spend a little time with my husband and raise my three daughters: Sara, Abby, and Cori. At the end of the day, I can truly say that it is worth the effort to be able to contribute to both my career and family in a positive way."



Ellen Kimbrell, Associate Director, is the mother of two sons, Jake and Billy. Billy was born with a rare skin disorder. Shortly after birth he was diagnosed with profound hearing loss. He is now 26 years old and is one of the major reasons that Ellen is so passionate in her advocacy for people with disabilities.



A strong quality Ellen possesses is her hands on experience of living and working with a person with a hearing loss. Ellen has been with the Oklahoma Parents Center for eleven years - she currently holds the position as Associate Director. Her vast experience enables her to lead the team in parent advising through daily phones that come into the OPC. Over the years, Ellen has been instrumental in educating, training, and informing parents about their child's basic rights in special education.

On the state and national level, Ellen has attended numerous conferences and meetings to ensure that best practices are in place for Oklahoma's Parent Training & Information Center, the OPC. She has served on several committees and is currently on the board for the Special Education Resolution center. "I am very proud and honored to be a part of The Oklahoma Parents Center. Every one of us is committed to this organization and the families that we serve in the state of Oklahoma. Individuals, regardless of their disability, have the right to be included."

Feds: Schools Must Open Sports To Kids With Disabilities

By [Michelle Diamant](#) Copyright © 2013 Disability Scoop, LLC. All Rights Reserved. -- January 25, 2013

For the first time, federal officials are telling school districts that they must offer students with disabilities equal access to school sports.

In [guidance](#) issued Friday to districts across the country, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights said that children with disabilities have the right to participate in their school's extracurricular activities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Accordingly, the agency said that students with intellectual, developmental, physical and other types of disabilities should be afforded opportunities to play for their school teams with modifications, aids and services as needed.

However, in cases where accommodations would “fundamentally alter” the game or create an unfair advantage, federal officials said schools are obligated to create separate, but equally supported opportunities for kids with disabilities to participate. Examples could be a wheelchair basketball league or unified teams where students with and without disabilities compete together, they said.

“Sports can provide invaluable lessons in discipline, selflessness, passion and courage, and this guidance will help schools ensure that students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to benefit from the life lessons they can learn on the playing field or on the court,” said Education Secretary Arne Duncan.

While students with disabilities have a right to participate in school sports, the Education Department made clear that they may have to meet certain standards of skill or ability in order to join a team so long as the criteria are not discriminatory.

The guidance spoke specifically to the responsibilities of elementary and high schools, but the Education Department said that colleges have a similar obligation to offer access.

Advocates for inclusion in school sports said the move could do for students with disabilities what Title IX did for women.



“OCR’s guidance is a landmark moment for individuals with disabilities, as it sends a loud message to educational institutions that students with disabilities must be provided opportunities for physical activity and sports equal to those afforded to students without disabilities,” said Terri Lakowski of the Inclusive Fitness Coalition.

To read the letter, you can visit:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201301-504.pdf>

PARENT SURVEY BROCHURES

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Special Education Services (SES), in collaboration with the Oklahoma Parents Center, Inc. (OPC) annually collect information regarding SoonerStart/Early Intervention and schools' efforts to partner with parents for the provision of special education and related services. To do this, the OSDE-SES and OPC would like to invite you to complete the Parent Survey!

Answer: Take the Survey Online



Visit our website
and follow the
Survey Link
at

www.OklahomaParentsCenter.org

Answer: Have a copy mailed

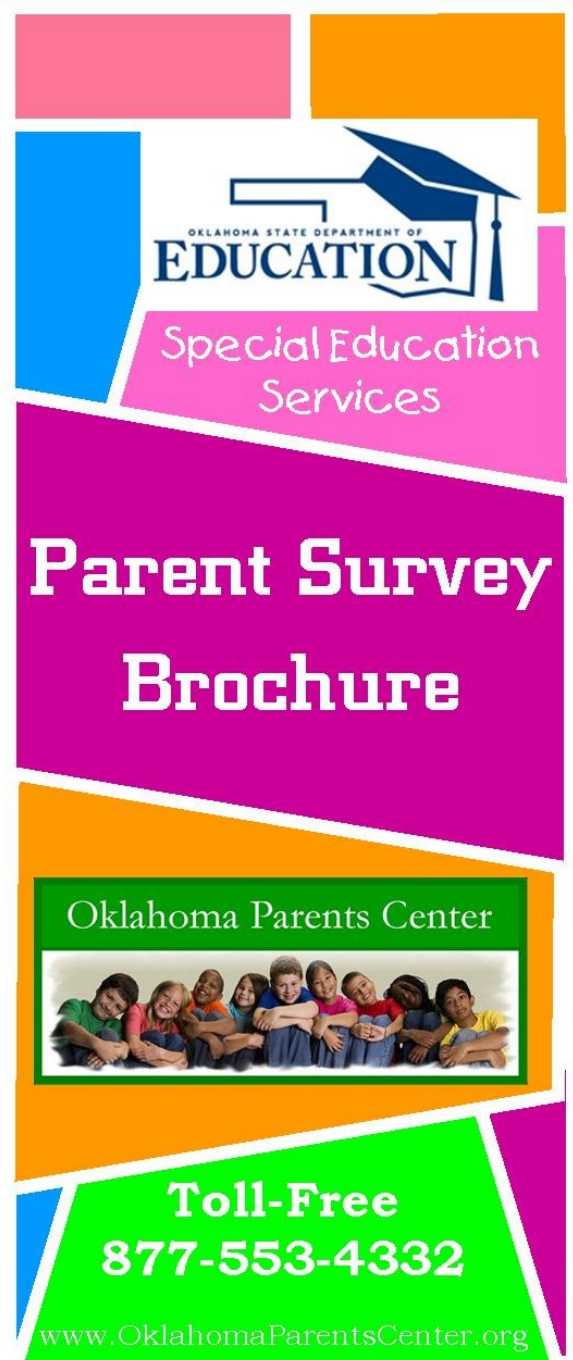


Call toll-free at
877-553-4332
and request a copy
be mailed to you.

Answer: Over the telephone



Call toll-free at
877-553-4332
to answer the
survey to the staff
at the **OPC**.




OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Special Education
Services

**Parent Survey
Brochure**

Oklahoma Parents Center



**Toll-Free
877-553-4332**

www.OklahomaParentsCenter.org

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) and the Oklahoma Parents Center, Inc. (OPC) have combined efforts to support the Oklahoma State Personnel Development Grant II (OK SPDG II) program in Oklahoma. The OPC staff will present parent programs at selected school districts throughout the state.

The content of the parent programs will include an introduction of Oklahoma's Tiered Intervention System of Support (OTISS). OTISS is Oklahoma's tiered system of academic and behavior interventions and support. Comprehensive implementation of OTISS will improve instructional quality, provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed in school, and assist with the identification of learning disabilities as well as other disabilities. OTISS was developed, and currently supported, through the OK SPDG II. Schools will be posting flyers and advertising the meetings at the local level. OTISS is a systematic approach to instruction in which the site attempts to respond to and prevent school based problems. The primary goal is to function as a preventative model.

This is accomplished by the following:

- 1) identifying students who are not doing as well as they should;
- 2) making efforts to improve performance; and
- 3) examining our efforts to see how it works.



For more information regarding OTISS, please contact the Oklahoma State Department of Education by telephone at (405) 522-1461 or the Oklahoma Parents Center toll-free at 877-553-4332.

Special Education Resolution Center (SERC)
Metro OKC~Area Directors of Special Services (Metro ODSS)
Oklahoma Parents Center (OPC)
In conjunction with the
Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE)

Approaching Difficult Conversations

with Greg Abell, Sound Options Group, LLC

Thursday, February 28, 2013
8:30 a.m. ~ 3:30 p.m.

Sheraton Midwest City Hotel
at the Reed Conference Center
5800 Will Rogers Road
Midwest City, OK



Greg Abell has been working with schools and families for over 20 years to help them work more effectively together. It is sometimes difficult to know how to talk to the school about your concerns. Sometimes school procedures and change are just a mystery to parents!

To register return the info below to:

877-553-4332 ~ Phone

405-379-2106 ~ Fax

info@oklahomaparentscenter.org ~ Email

Deadline for Registration is Friday, February 22,
as space is limited.

First name: _____ Last name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Child's name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Disability: _____ Grade: _____ School: _____

Please list any special accommodations, if needed: _____

Special Education Resolution Center (SERC)
Metro OKC~Area Directors of Special Services (Metro ODSS)
Oklahoma Parents Center (OPC)
In conjunction with the
Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE)

Approaching Difficult Conversations

with Greg Abell, Sound Options Group, LLC

Friday, March 1, 2013
8:30 a.m. ~ 3:30 p.m.

Tulsa Technology Center
Riverside Campus
801 East 91st Street
Tulsa, OK



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Lending Library

Did you know...

The Oklahoma Parents Center
has a Lending Library, and it's

FREE!

We are very excited about the
opportunity to offer another
method to assist you in becoming
better
educated and informed.

Visit our website

www.oklahomaparentscenter.org

to search our inventory or contact
our Librarian, Misty Dowell, toll
free at 877.553.4332 for
more information.



Donations Appreciated

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (hm) (____) (wk) (____) (cell) (____)

E-mail: _____

PLEASE MARK ALL THAT APPLY:

Parent

Relative

Foster Parent

Special Educator

Service Provider

Other

Birthdate/Sex of Child: _____ Primary Disability of Child: _____

I would like to make a tax-deductible donation of:

_____ \$5.00 _____ \$10.00 _____ \$20.00 _____ \$50.00 _____ Other: \$ _____

Your donation of any amount to the OPC is greatly appreciated!

You can also visit www.OklahomaParentsCenter.org to donate online!

Also please send me more information on the following: (Check all that apply)

_____ I would like to schedule a workshop.

_____ I would like individual assistance and information.

_____ I would like more information about the parent training and information center.

Contact Us:

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www.OklahomaParentsCenter.org

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SAVE THE DATE!!!

OKLAHOMA PARENTS CENTER'S 7TH ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

“Building Relationships...Creating Successful Change”

SHERATON MIDWEST CITY
AT THE
REED CONFERENCE CENTER

5750 WILL ROGERS ROAD
MIDWEST CITY, OK 73110
405-455-1800

FRIDAY,
MAY 31ST, 2013

8:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M.

*The Oklahoma
Parents Center
is looking for
“A FEW GOOD
PRESENTERS”!*

*You can submit a
presentation proposal
via email to
lcoats@oklahomaparentscenter.org.*

Registration will be available beginning March 15, 2013.

*We are very excited to
announce our
1st Annual
“Teacher of the Year”
Award!*



*In addition to our
2nd Annual
“Parent of the Year”
Award!*



*Calling all
artists...calling all
artists!!! The 2nd Annual
Art Contest is coming
soon!!!*

*Details to follow in the
upcoming weeks...*