

Winter 2010-2011

HAPPY 35TH ANNIVERSARY, IDEA!!



In the last week of November, we celebrated the 35th anniversary of the guaranteed right of all children, regardless of disability, to a free appropriate public education. Public Law 94-142 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act) was signed into law by President Gerald Ford on November 29, 1975. It became known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) when it was reauthorized in 1990. What a significant difference this landmark legislation has made in the lives of students with disabilities and their families!

In his remarks at the anniversary celebration, U.S. Department of Education Secretary, Arne Duncan, stated

“For 35 years, IDEA has guaranteed students with disabilities their civil right to a free, appropriate public education. Through it, millions of students with disabilities have received an education that prepares them to be full participants in our economy and our communities.

“. . . But for all of the progress, we can all agree that we haven’t completely fulfilled the promise of IDEA. Our children continue to face prejudices and lingering roadblocks. No belief is more damaging in education than the misperception that children with disabilities cannot really succeed and shouldn’t be challenged to reach the same high standards as all children.

“. . . Through IDEA, Democrats and Republicans agreed on several important principles. Students with disabilities should be guaranteed a ‘free, appropriate public education.’ They should learn side by side with peers of all abilities. They should have an individualized education program to guide their educational experience. And, parents should work with school officials as partners in their children’s education.

“. . . Through IDEA, we’ve learned that parents are indispensable participants in their children’s education. . .

“. . . While the graduation rate and postsecondary enrollment rate are both increasing, they’re still far too low. Over the past 20 years, the employment rate of adults with disabilities has remained unacceptably low. And although students with disabilities are included in their neighborhood schools more than ever before, we haven’t created a seamless system that addresses the needs of every child.

“. . . With our collective courage, commitment, and compassion, we will see the day when all children with disabilities grow up to be successful adults who are fully integrated into the community and strong contributors to our national economy.

“Working together, we will keep IDEA’s promise to all of our children with disabilities.”

As an organization, IN*SOURCE is proud to have been a part of this journey for 35 years and joins Secretary Duncan in the commitment to continued success in fulfilling the intent and keeping the promise of IDEA.

35 Years!



Welcome New Staff



Aimee Herbert
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I am so excited and very grateful to be a part of the IN*SOURCE family and to have the opportunity to carry on the movement that the parents before me started to make life for my daughter and all the other special needs families so much better!

I am the mother of three. Trenten is 12 and is a very loving young man who is very active in sports and plays the tenor sax in his school band. Sabrina is 10 and has truly shaped my life into what it is today. She was born with a rare chromosomal abnormality which has caused her to have severe developmental delay and epilepsy. Although she is nonverbal and non-ambulatory, she has taught me how to find all the smaller blessings in life and just how truly blessed we all really are in so many different ways. And finally there is Cami, my very bubbly 7 year-old who loves to sing, dance and change clothes at least ten times a day!

I come to IN*SOURCE from an Independent Living Center where I was a service coordinator for several years. There I had the privilege of working with all types of families affected by all different types of disabilities. My role as their service coordinator was to make sure that those we served had all the supports in place to maintain a functional independent life within their own homes. I have also advocated for disability rights on the federal, state and local levels. Some of my experiences and trainings include ADA, Article 7, IDEA, Medicaid Waivers, ADA accessibility, independent living skills training and conflict resolution.

Most of all I love working with families who have children with special needs. It has been a passion of mine since the birth of my own daughter, and I truly look forward to working with families in Region 19 to help them navigate the education maze and help them get their children appropriate educational supports so we can watch them soar into the future and achieve all they possibly can!

(Aimee is assisting families in Fayette, Henry, Rush, Union and Wayne counties.)

*"The future depends on what we do in the present."
Mahatma Gandhi*

I have lived in the Kokomo area since I was 3 years old. My wife, Myra, and I have two children, Brooke who is 26, and Travis who is 7. We were blessed to be able to adopt Brooke and bring her home from the hospital when she was 3 days old. Travis was our grandson before he was our son. Although his adoption was final only last year, Travis has lived with us all but 9 months of his seven years. Brooke was diagnosed with ADHD when she was in primary school and, when she was a teenager, with bipolar disorder. We have been working with Travis on some of the same issues as well as some abandonment issues. He has been diagnosed with ADHD, PDD, and he also has a seizure disorder.

It seems like I have always had a place in my heart for kids with special needs . . . or kids that didn't fit in. I first started working with another scout with special needs as a Junior Leader in Boy Scouts and helping a co-worker that had a seizure disorder when I was a teenager. When I was a young adult, our church was very involved with foster care and with a group home, and I had the opportunity to work with a lot of children from grade school through high school who were involved in these programs for over 20 years. I remain in contact with many of them today.

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Life has been a grand adventure so far. I have been able to travel to about 40 states and two other countries. I have also had the opportunity to ride a Harley through many states and over 10,000 miles. I feel I have had so many opportunities and challenges, but out of all of the adventures and challenges, I feel so blessed to be able to work with Travis. I do get frustrated at times, but it is such a privilege to be a part of his life. It is my goal to help him be all that he can be and have a happy and fulfilling life. I am looking forward so much to getting to the point where I can also help other kids fulfill their potential.

Always remember, any challenge can be an adventure!

(Bill is assisting families in Cass, Clinton, Howard, Miami, Tipton and Wabash counties.)

IN*SOURCE Needs Your Help!

IN*SOURCE needs your help more than ever this year during these challenging economic times. While our funding is stable for the long-term, there is an increasing need for donations to supplement grant funding so that we can help even more families next year.

The following comments are just two of the many we continue to receive from parents grateful for the support provided by IN*SOURCE in helping them understand the special education



process and work with school personnel to get appropriate services for their sons and daughters:

“IN*Source is one of the most valuable assets I have for helping our daughter through the complex special education laws. Without your help I fear she would have fallen through the cracks in our public school system. Thank you so much for your help!”

“IN*SOURCE has helped me in many ways, by informing me of options, and has been extremely helpful as an advocate to get services I would not have known were available to me.”

It is hard to communicate in writing how valuable IN*SOURCE assistance is to the families we serve. We decided it would help to show you, so we have brought parents and staff together to share their feelings through a video message. You can view the video, generously created (and donated!) by Grass Roots Media, at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9S3_evi2muw or you can search for INSOURCE2010 on YouTube. Each day, parents thank our staff members and tell us that IN*SOURCE is the reason that their children with disabilities are succeeding in school. Now, some of them are telling everyone to help ensure that this valuable program continues to make a difference for families like theirs.

Last year, we assisted over 25,000 families one-on-one, attended 793 case conferences, and reached 5,753 parents through free training classes. Please consider making a donation to help IN*SOURCE sustain the important work we do. Your contribution will help us continue to provide assistance to families free of charge. You can make a difference to the families that depend on us.

Happy Holidays,

Richard Burden



All donations to IN*SOURCE are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Yes, I/we would like to support IN*SOURCE. Enclosed is my/our gift.

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ALL THE BEST TO THEDA!

At the end of June, after 33 years of dedicated service to families, Theda Nixon retired from IN*SOURCE. Her commitment to improving the lives of children with disabilities, her compassion, her tenacious advocacy and her incredibly strong work ethic were qualities genuinely appreciated and already missed by her colleagues and by the scores of families she has supported over the years. The many positive and appreciative comments received about Theda speak for themselves -



“ . . I cannot say enough how grateful we are that . . . Theda Nixon is on your staff. . . Theda is a wealth of knowledge, capable of speaking for and offering hope for those with disabilities. . . ”

“Theda – So glad I have you to lean on! I honestly don’t know what I would do without you. You are extraordinary! I’ve been truly blessed to have you and your services.”

“Thank God for this woman; she made all the difference in my child’s world.”

“Mrs. Nixon is the best. We need you!”

We need you too, Theda! Your efforts on behalf of families and your devotion to our mission have made a difference for us all. We wish you and your family all the best as you enjoy retirement.



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