



F.A.C.T. Newsletter

December 2009

Transition to Success

“Growing up is not easy! It can be more complicated for young adults with disabilities. Far too many students with disabilities leave school lacking the academic, technical, and social skills necessary to find/or maintain employment. Often the jobs they do find are low paying and offer no health benefits. Many students with disabilities drop out of school due to a lack of interest in the traditional curriculum. Transition planning helps students complete their high school education by planning a course of study that reflects their preferences, interests, and needs. Transition planning also identifies the challenges students will face as adults and helps prepare and assist them to meet those demands successfully. Transition planning at an early age is critical. Transition services and activities should provide young adults with disabilities the necessary skills to make informed choices and decisions and obtain desired lifestyles in their communities following graduation.

Transition is an all-inclusive process that focuses on improving a student’s employment outcomes, housing options, and social networks after leaving high school. The transition planning process focuses on the unique needs and goals of the student. The Transition plan provides the framework for indentifying, planning, and carrying out activities that will help each student make a successful transition to adult life. It identifies the types of skills to be learned, which transition services will be needed, and when they will be provided. It also documents those responsible for providing related transition services.” (Will, M.C. 1984, *Exceptional Children*)

The Transition to Success program offered by F.A.C.T. identifies the need for services that may assist families and schools in developing a quality road map for students with disabilities when they go from high school to post-secondary life.

If you or someone you know could benefit from this service give us a call at 636.949.2425 ext. 256 and we will set up a meeting for you to meet with a Transition Specialist.

Tim Amato



Save the Dates

- ♦ January 9, 2010 F.A.C.T.’s 1st Trivia Night
- ♦ February 14, 2010 F.A.C.T.’s Annual Gift Gathering Party
- ♦ April 30, 2010 F.A.C.T.’s 15th Annual Hopes and Dreams Gala

 News

- F.A.C.T. has received a generous grant from the Harmon Foundation. This grant will support our consumer needs, as well as supply the funds for staff training.
- Susan Newton is the new People First Advisor
- We have hired two new Parent Partners. Joy Porter is the Franklin County Parent Partner, and Dawn Cox has joined the St. Charles crew.
- F.A.C.T.'s Board of Directors has changed! Lynn Harmon is the new President, Debbie Civey is the new Vice-President, Kathy Krueger is the new Treasurer, and Midge Smith is the new Secretary. Congratulations to all!
- F.A.C.T. would like to highlight some of our new board members:
 - Terry Stark, National City
 - Michelle Smart, Project Director Youth in Transitions, Department of Mental Health
 - Craig Frahm, CFO & Incubator Manager of Economic Development Center



Susan Newton: I enjoy working to empower people with disabilities so that they may make positive changes in their own lives as well as their communities. Being a People First Advisor will give me an opportunity to support them while they strive to achieve their goals.



Joy Porter: I am the mother of four children, one of whom spent four months in the NICU. After undergoing two surgeries and many procedures, he made a miraculous recovery with a few physical delays. Being a mother of a child with a disability has changed my life and the way that I view other parents who have children with disabilities. I have a new understanding and compassion that comes from the heart. My goal is to encourage and uplift families going through difficult times.



Dawn Cox: As a parent of a child who has been diagnosed with ADHD, I learned to educate myself not only on his disability, but how to be the best possible advocate for him. Working with the school systems has taught me that the best possible advocate for a child is their parent. Most parents feel powerless when beginning the advocacy process and learning their children's rights. I understand the joy a parent feels knowing that because of them, their child has the capabilities of navigating their own journey. I'm so excited to work for an organization that helps to put the power back where it belongs – with the family.

Dawn has recently been nominated for the Vivian Harris Award which is the highest recognition for an outstanding contribution to special education at the local, state, or national level. Dawn's work with the Boy Scouts of America has earned her this nomination. She currently offers education and training on disabilities to Boy Scout Leaders in Lincoln County, St. Charles County, and Franklin County.

Another Important F.A.C.T. Milestone

A year ago in October 2008 F.A.C.T. received four year accreditation for the first time from CQL (Council on Quality and Leadership) an international accrediting organization. We have continued on our journey with CQL and this past October (2009) they returned to collaborate with us on enhancements for our customers and community. As in the first visit it was a wonderful exchange of information and ideas as we seek to provide exceptional services for our customers. We believe the success in providing that service is an ongoing commitment and recognition that quality is a forever journey. The employees of F.A.C.T. are dedicated and passionate about the services that they provide to our customers and CQL noted and celebrated the strength of that contribution.

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank our Board of Directors. They all give of themselves in many ways to support our mission at F.A.C.T. I would particularly like to thank Frank Conard for his six years of exceptional board leadership. Frank has been a significant part of the growth and strong direction the board has provided over the last several years. He continues as an important part of the board but we welcome Lynn Harmon as the new board president and look forward to the new challenges and opportunities coming our way.

Denise Gould
Executive Director



800 Friedens Road , Suite 200
St. Charles, MO 63303

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F.A.C.T. is hosting its first annual Trivia Night.

Theme: Meet Me in St. Louis

When: January 9, 2010, 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm

Where: Knights of Columbus

3 Westbury Drive

St. Charles, MO 63301

Cost: \$20 per person, \$160 per table of 8

Dan Dillion will host our event. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Trivia begins at 7 p.m. Prizes will be given for first and last place teams. Players are welcome to bring in their own food and snacks. Beer and soda will be provided, and there will be a cash bar available. Outside alcohol is not permitted. There will be mulligans for sale, a 50/50, Heads or Tails, Dead or Alive, a silent auction, a bake sale, and a table decorating contest. Call Jennifer Brooks at (636)949.2425 ext. 255 or e-mail to jbrooks@factmo.org to sign up. Online registration is available at www.factmo.org. You must make reservations as tickets will not be sold at the door.