Guardianship, Alternatives to Guardianship & Special Needs Trusts Event

Part 2 of our “Planning for the Future” Series

We are pleased to announce Christine Thompson—Ibrahim from Jones & Ibrahim, PLLC will be presenting both topics to Island County Families.

Areas of Decision Making Where Most Guardianships are Focused

Date: Saturday, January 21st  Time: Noon–2pm
Where: Island County Human Services
105 NW 1st Street, Coupeville
(last building on the left with the green roof)

To RSVP or Questions: Contact Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson
t.wheeler-thompson@co.island.wa.us (360)632-7539

Time for questions with a disability attorney that practices in Island County will be worth your time.
Guardianship, Guardianship Alternatives & Special Needs Trusts

Presented by: Christy Thompson-Ibrahim
Date: Saturday, January 21st
Time: Noon-2pm
Where: Island County Human Services
105 NW 1st Street, Coupeville (last building on the left, the green roof)
Call Tiffany to RSVP
(360)632-7539

It Is Time to Dance
Special Needs Dance Party
April 21st 2-4pm
Coupeville Hall

Everyone is invited. Bring your family, neighbors and other community members.
Sensory friendly event. No strobe lights and the music is turned down.
Just a good time for all.
Potluck and your dancing shoes.

Island County Parent to Parent invites you to our FREE Helping Parent Training

Your experience can help other parents cope and grow.
Register to attend our HELPING PARENT TRAINING

Are you ready to offer support to another parent raising a child with special health care needs &/or developmental disabilities?

February 11th 10am-2pm (lunch provided)
Please Register by 2/1 (360)632-7539

Obtaining Free & Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) IEP & 504 Clinic
Jen Cole from PAVE (Partnerships for Action, Voices of Empowerment)

About this workshop—Topics include:
• Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
• 504 Plans
• Evaluations
• Communication & Advocacy
• Parents Rights & Responsibilities

Saturday, April 29th 9:00am-Noon
Human Services Blding
105 NW 1st Street
Coupeville

To RSVP or Questions, Contact Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson (360)632-7539
t.wheeler-thompson@co.island.wa.us

DISCLAIMER This event/activity is NOT being sponsored by the school district, and the district assumes no responsibility for the conduct or safety of the event/activity. In consideration for the privilege to distribute these materials, the South Whidbey School District shall be held harmless from any cause of action, claim, or petition filed in any court or administrative tribunal arising out of the distribution of these materials, including all costs, attorney’s fees, and judgements or awards.
Sit & Relax with a hot cup of coffee, a delicious pastry and some great conversation.

You will meet other parents who understand the highs, lows, myths and realities of raising a child with special needs. Drop by anytime, children are always welcome & no need to RSVP.

We May Not Be Therapy but we sure are Therapeutic

First Wednesday of the Month
Whidbey Coffee
31275 WA 20 (next to Wendy’s in Oak Harbor)
11am-Noon
February 1st, March 1st, April 5th

We hope to see you there. If you have any questions, please contact Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson
Island County Parent to Parent Coordinator
(360)632-7539  t.wheeler-thompson@co.island.wa.us
Is it time to start planning for the future?
Will your other child take guardianship or be heavily involved in your special needs child’s future when you are ill or gone?

About the author, Britta: I am a sibling to a brother with Down syndrome. I come from a very family oriented background, so being so involved in my brother’s life is so essential to me. I currently work at The Arc of Snohomish County as the Leadership Development Coordinator/Adult Sibling Support. I enjoy every aspect of my job when working with individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. It is definitely where my heart belongs.

When I started to seriously think about the day my parents will no longer be around to care for my brother, I realized there was a lot I needed to know. There were also things that I didn’t even know to ask about.

Having a conversation with my parents about the future was not easy, but once I identified some specifics, it started to feel less overwhelming. I also like to think it helped give my parents some peace of mind to have some planning in place.

There are going to be individual variations in what topics to cover, but the following Ten Things to Talk About are ones I’ve found to be the most important. Even the ones that don’t seem as urgent, like building a community network, are just as vital as those that are related to financial and legal issues. In the end, what we siblings are trying to do is get a handle on aspects of our brother/sister’s life that help make it as stable, safe and fulfilling as it can be.

10 THINGS FOR SIBLINGS TO ASK ABOUT

1. SOCIAL SECURITY, SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI), & OTHER BENEFITS
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is the primary source of income for most adults with an intellectual/developmental disability, as well as children with disabilities whose families have low income. If either of your parents are retired or deceased, however, your sibling may be eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), which has a higher benefit level. Both benefits are administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Understanding your sibling’s Social Security benefits is essential. Not only are benefit amounts different (depending on the person’s circumstances), but eligibility for SSI is the door to other benefits, like medical coverage and DDA services. It’s also really important to know how financial assets can affect his/her eligibility and how to ensure they are not lost, such as through a special needs (supplemental) trust.

2. SPECIAL NEEDS (SUPPLEMENTAL) TRUSTS
A special needs trust allows your sibling to have resources beyond the limit set by SSI without risking his/her eligibility for benefits and services. Our state has a public/private trust called the Life Opportunities Trust (aka DD Endowment Trust Fund), which is administered by The Arc of Washington State and is for DDA clients only. You can also set up a special needs trust through an attorney. If your sibling has one, ask where it’s held and how the funds can be used to benefit your sibling.

3. MEDICAL INFORMATION
With your sibling’s diagnosis, more than likely they have specialty doctors and/or a primary physician. Make sure you have all physicians’ contact information for your brother or sister for any health related situations. Keep a hard copy of your sibling’s diagnosis and medical documents, or know where to locate them. They will be needed to apply for government benefits such as SSI, Medicaid/Medicare and DDA eligibility. You would be surprised how easy it is to lose track of these documents, so be sure to keep them safe and easily accessible.

4. GUARDIANSHIP AND DECISION MAKING ALTERNATIVES
Find out if your sibling has guardianship. Not everyone needs it, and it is not automatically assigned at age 18. It’s a legal process that must be petitioned by someone (usually, by a parent or other relative). There are many alternatives to guardianship that help a person with financial, medical and other decision-making that do not require legal action and can be just as effective. It’s also a requirement by our state that these less restrictive alternatives be considered first. If your parents have set up a guardianship with an attorney, be sure to have the contact information and find out what would need to be done to transfer guardianship. The annual report paperwork is a very intimidating process but can be accomplished on your own, discuss with your parents on how to fill out this paperwork spe-
specifically for your sibling. We have a Guardianship and Special Needs Trusts event January 21st.

5. DDA SERVICES FOR HELP AT HOME, WORK AND IN THE COMMUNITY
Find out if your sibling is a client of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). If so, does s/he receive a paid service?
If your sibling is a paid client, get a list of the specific program and services (e.g., waiver program or Community First Choice) as well as the contact information for her/his case manager.
If your sibling is a DDA client, but is not receiving a paid service, find out if a service has been requested or if any assessments have been done. Although there are limits to the number of people who can be enrolled in DDA waiver programs, there is no waiting for services through Community First Choice. It’s important to request what’s needed and to find out what’s available, but don’t let availability keep you from requesting what’s needed.

6. EMERGENCY PLAN OF ACTION
Talk with your parents about what needs to happen in case of an emergency and you’re not at home or able to reach your sibling. What neighbors or community members would be able to go to their home and check in? Can the case manager help arrange for supports if you or other family members are not around to respond? It is important to have a plan of action for emergencies, as well as a simple plan for check-ins to avoid having a problem turn into an emergency.

7. DAILY SCHEDULE OR ROUTINE
Continuity and a regular schedule are crucial for a lot of individuals. Get to know your sibling’s daily routine, which includes both weekdays and weekends. What are things they’re used to doing or gets upset if a particular thing doesn’t happen in a particular way? Are there medications or other health-related practices that have to be taken or done at certain times? Have it written down and kept up to date.

8. FAVORITE PLACES
Participating in the community is an important part of your sibling’s life; like all things with someone who needs support, however, it takes a little extra effort. It’s really helpful to find out from your parents if there are places and events in your community where your sibling likes to participate (and on the flip side, does not want to be). Become familiar with the places and people your sibling thrives in and around, where they can be their best and happiest self. Also understand the locations and people to stay away from that provoke stress, and ways to support them to keep from getting overwhelmed or upset if those places can’t be avoided.

9. COMMUNITY NETWORK
There may be times when your sibling is on their own in the community—either planned or unplanned. Find out who is involved in their daily life outside the home (bus driver, store clerk, business owner, neighbors). Introduce yourself and let those people know how to contact you if they see something out of the ordinary (your sibling is alone, distressed, being bothered by someone, etc.). In turn, make sure your sibling knows who to go to if they need help and you’re not around or they can’t find you.

10. FRIENDSHIPS
Having friends makes life richer for everyone, but it’s going to take extra support to help your brother or sister build and maintain these important relationships. Find out who’s part of your sibling’s personal life (people they like and those they might like to know better), and make sure they stay connected in as many ways as possible. Find out if there are established routines with friends, and initiate new ones by coming up with things they can do together (going to a movie or a special event/activity in town). Little ways to keep those connections are by helping to remember and celebrate a friend’s birthday, and finding simple ways to stay in touch and involved. Without that extra support, your sibling can easily become isolated and cut off from a vital part of life.

It is never too early, or too late, to start these conversations. The more information shared with the potential caregiver or family members that will “keep an eye” on your child, the better. If you have more questions, I can connect you with adult siblings here on Whidbey Island. They are always willing to help out other families going on this journey.
Cyber Bullying: The new Threat

"Cyberbullying" is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones.

Prevent Cyberbullying

Parents and kids can prevent cyberbullying. Together, they can explore safe ways to use technology.

Be Aware of What Your Kids are Doing Online

Talk with your kids about cyberbullying and other online issues regularly. Know the sites your kids visit and their online activities. Ask where they’re going, what they’re doing, and who they’re doing it with. Tell your kids that as a responsible parent you may review their online communications if you think there is reason for concern. Installing parental control filtering software or monitoring programs are one option for monitoring your child’s online behavior, but do not rely solely on these tools. Have a sense of what they do online and in texts. Learn about the sites they like. Try out the devices they use. Ask for their passwords, but tell them you’ll only use them in case of emergency. Ask to “friend” or “follow” your kids on social media sites or ask another trusted adult to do so. Encourage your kids to tell you immediately if they, or someone they know, is being cyberbullied. Explain that you will not take away their computers or cell phones if they confide in you about a problem they are having.

Establish Rules about Technology Use

Establish rules about appropriate use of computers, cell phones, and other technology. For example, be clear about what sites they can visit and what they are permitted to do when they’re online. Show them how to be safe online. Help them be smart about what they post or say. Tell them not to share anything that could hurt or embarrass themselves or others. Once something is posted, it is out of their control whether someone else will forward it. Encourage kids to think about who they want to see the information and pictures they post online. Should complete strangers see it? Real friends only? Friends of friends? Think about how people who aren’t friends could use it. Tell kids to keep their passwords safe and not share them with friends. Sharing passwords can compromise their control over their online identities and activities.

Understand School Rules

Some schools have developed policies on uses of technology that may affect the child’s online behavior in and out of the classroom. Ask the school if they have developed a policy. www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/prevention

Report Cyberbullying

When cyberbullying happens, it is important to document and report the behavior so it can be addressed.

Steps to Take Immediately

Don’t respond to and don’t forward cyberbullying messages. Keep evidence of cyberbullying. Record the dates, times, and descriptions of instances when cyberbullying has occurred. Save and print screenshots, emails, and text messages. Use this evidence to report cyberbullying to web and cell phone service providers. Block the person who is cyberbullying.

Report Cyberbullying to Online Service Providers

Cyberbullying often violates the terms of service established by social media sites and internet service providers. Review their terms and conditions or rights and responsibilities sections. These describe content that is or is not appropriate. Visit social media safety centers to learn how to block users and change settings to control who can contact you. Report cyberbullying to the social media site so they can take action against users abusing the terms of service.

Report Cyberbullying to Law Enforcement

When cyberbullying involves these activities it is considered a crime and should be reported to law enforcement: Threats of violence, Child pornography or sending sexually explicit messages or photos. Taking a photo or video of someone in a place where he or she would expect privacy. Stalking and hate crimes. Some states consider other forms of cyberbullying criminal. Consult your state’s laws and law enforcement for additional guidance.

Report Cyberbullying to Schools

Cyberbullying can create a disruptive environment at school and is often related to in-person bullying. The school can use the information to help inform prevention and response strategies. In many states, schools are required to address cyberbullying in their anti-bullying policy. Some state laws also cover off-campus behavior that creates a hostile school environment. www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/report
# Potential Predator Apps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kik</strong></td>
<td>Allows potential predators to communicate anonymously with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tinder</strong></td>
<td>Dating app that allows users to “rate” profiles and locate “hookups” via GPS tracking; rating encourages bullying and GPS tracking opens door for predators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Snapchat</strong></td>
<td>Self-destructs photos sent within a few seconds unless someone takes a screen shot; notoriously used to post revenge porn, called “snap porn”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Potential Bullying Apps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yik Yak</strong></td>
<td>Allows users to anonymously send sexually explicit and abusive language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whisper</strong></td>
<td>Encourages users to share secrets with strangers, which can encourage bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ask.fm</strong></td>
<td>Encourages anonymous Q&amp;A; associated with multiple suicides across U.S.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Deceptive Apps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vaulty</strong></td>
<td>Snaps a photo of anyone trying to access “vault” with wrong password; intention to hide Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audio Manager</strong></td>
<td>Deceptive app disguises itself as “Audio Manager”, but hides other apps, messages and media behind a locked screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HiCalculator</strong></td>
<td>Looks like a calculator, but allows user to hide photos, videos and messages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A great opportunity for parents with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder to attend an informational training about accessing insurance and a variety of local services.

Friday, January 20th from 1-2pm.
If you are interested or would like more information about what is being presented please email Jaemee at jaemee.w@tlcwhidbey.org

It is that time of year again…

PLAY BALL!

Registration for Challenger Division has begun. $10 discount if registered before February 1st. The Challenger Division provides opportunities for boys and girls with physical and developmental challenges to enjoy the benefits of Little League participation. Challenger Division Baseball is a club for ages 4 –22 through North Whidbey Little League but all island players are eligible with waiver. For more information call North Whidbey Little League Tel. 360.679.1522 Email: info@northwhidbeylittleleague.org

Bright Stars
Dance 4 Autism & Special Needs

Winter Dance Series
Special Dance for Special Families
For more information please call (360)682-6237 or inmotioncompany@ymail.com
Exploration For All: Autism Early Open

Thanks to a generous grant from Safeco Insurance, we are proud to present Exploration for All: Autism Early Open at Pacific Science Center. On the second Saturday of each month, through December 2017, all families affected by autism spectrum disorder are invited to explore Pacific Science Center during a special free morning visit from 8-10 a.m. – before we open to the public. Experience our exhibits without heavy crowds when we have softened general lighting and decreased the noise level and visual stimulation on interactive exhibits wherever possible. Additional accessibility resources can be found below. Call to verify dates and times (206)443-2001

2017 Events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 21</th>
<th>February 11</th>
<th>March 11</th>
<th>April 8</th>
<th>May 13</th>
<th>June 10</th>
<th>July 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 12</td>
<td>September 9</td>
<td>October 14</td>
<td>November 11</td>
<td>December 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AMC is proud to partner with the Autism Society to offer unique movie showings where we turn the lights up, and turn the sound down, so you can get up, dance, walk, shout or sing! Our Sensory Friendly Film program is available on the second and fourth Saturday (family-friendly) and Tuesday evenings (mature audiences) of every month. Please check your local listings for specific showtimes, and don't forget to share your family fun with #AMCSensoryFriendly.

Cascade Mall in Burlington is our local theater. (360)707-2727
All the favorite movies are offered. Right now they are offering Sing, LaLaLand, XXX and Hidden Figures. Something to please almost everyone.

SEATTLE SYMPHONY

Sensory Friendly Concerts, a new program designed specifically for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other disabilities, invites families with children ages 5–8 to enjoy small chamber works and participatory group songs in Soundbridge Seattle Symphony Music Discovery Center. The concert experience includes instrument exploration before or after the show, a meet-and-greet with the featured musicians, and a 35-minute performance hosted by a board-certified music therapist. This year we will highlight a different social skill at each concert, and offer opportunities for families to connect with one another within and outside of the concert setting.

Other concert features include:
Flexible seating options, including sensory cushions and zones designated for sitting, standing and dancing
Comfortable lighting and lower volumes to accommodate visual and auditory sensitivities
Specially trained concert buddies available to greet families and guide them through the concert experience
Resources emailed to families before the event, including a social story, visual schedule, photos of performers and the venue, and recordings of the featured chamber works
The series includes three concerts in Soundbridge Seattle Symphony Music Discovery Center on selected Saturdays or Sundays at 10am or 12 noon.*

Upcoming Performances include:
**Two Cats in February** Seattle Symphony musicians and Board-Certified Music Therapist Michael Thomas present the stunning and simple composition Trees by Daniel Dorff, written to accompany the poem of the same name by Joyce Kilmer. Through participatory group songs and a duet for clarinet and flute, we’ll explore what can happen when we take turns playing music together.

**The Old Magician in April**. Seattle Symphony musicians and Board-Certified Music Therapist Michael Thomas bring audience members along on a journey with an old magician’s assistant as he helps his master with one last experiment. Through the magician’s story and participatory group songs, we’ll highlight listening to others and lending a helping hand.


Sensory Friendly Opportunities off the Island
Mission Statement

Parent to Parent Programs offer emotional support and information about disabilities and community resources to parents who have a child with a disability or special health care need.

We utilize trained veteran parents called “Helping Parents” who provide one-on-one support to newly diagnosed parents who have a child with similar needs.

Support & Advocacy Groups

Coffee and Conversations
Feb 1st, March 1st, April 5th (First Wed of the Month)

Spanish Support Group (PAMI)
Jan 3, Feb 7 & March 7 (First Tuesday of the Month)

People First of Washington
Jan 5, Feb 2 & March 2 (First Thurs of the Month)

Friends Helping Friends
Jan, Feb 16 & March 16 (3rd Thurs of the Month)

Whidbey Functioning Autism Social Group
Meets monthly for support and social events. Email Todd for details fineart@whidbey.net

South Whidbey Family Meetings
Jan 13, Feb 10 & March 10 (2nd Friday of the Month)

For more info on these support groups contact Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson (360)632-7539

If you are seeking support, Parent to Parent is always available for emotional support, resources and networking opportunities.

What is Parent to Parent?

Parent to Parent Coordinator
Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson
Human Services
PO Box 5000
Coupeville, WA 98239
(360)632-7539
t.wheeler-thompson@co.island.wa.us

Support Services
No Cost Services:
• Support
• Resources
• Newsletters
• Support Meetings
• Educational Workshops
• Social/Recreational Events
• Presentations in our Community

http://arcwa.org/getsupport/parent_to_parent_p2p_programs