

THE NETWORKER

a publication of Matrix Parent Network & Resource Center • Spring 2016

Matrix Parent Network is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1983 to serve families of children with special needs. We serve Marin, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma counties.

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SOME MUSINGS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...



Call To Action

ACTION = Do Something!

The theme for this Spring Networker is a “Call to Action”. Matrix has been providing information and tools through our newsletters, websites, social media, trainings, etc., to all of you for the last 30+ years. We hope those have been useful and helpful to you. Now we are asking you to take that information—our tips and strategies—and take action—to do, to act. **“But wait!”**, you might say. **“I am already too busy, too stressed, too overwhelmed, and now you expect me to do more?”** I hear you and understand. This issue will have a series of small but effective ways for you to “take action”.

As parents, we often feel immobilized and stuck, unsure what next step we should take to help our child be successful. We are overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information hurtling our way (what is reliable and what is not) and the constant juggling of priorities. These feelings are not unique to families. Professionals in this field also can relate. The simple suggestions that we feature in this issue can help. Though different, each is a call to action, a conscious effort that can make a difference. **Get busy! I know you can.**

FOR FAMILIES:

- **THINK:** Take a few minutes each day to think about the gifts your child brings you and the world. I know some days it will be hard to think about gifts when faced with all the challenges. Take action by trying.
- **CONNECT:** Find another family and connect. Build the parent network by sharing ideas and support.
- **LEARN:** Find who your policy makers are and how to connect with them.
- **SHARE:** Spread the word to family and friends about how Matrix helps you!

FOR PROFESSIONALS

- **THINK:** Take a few minutes each day to remember why you chose this field and what it means to you.
- **CONNECT:** Find other professionals who share your passion and build your network.
- **LEARN:** Rapid changes in the field can mean that continuing education is not only a career requirement, it builds your repertoire and capacity to be effective.
- **SHARE:** Spread the word about what a potential resource Matrix is to your colleagues.

Nora

Nora Thompson, Executive Director



Call To Action

Parent Services

Call To Action

Sometimes it seems that we spend most of our time and energy simply absorbing and reacting to all the pressures, stimuli, and challenges life throws into our laps. A big part of raising any family is simply “keeping up”. Those who are parenting, educating, or otherwise supporting children with special needs know that being action-oriented is a particular challenge. Professionals in the field have enormous impact on our children’s lives and wellbeing. Simple actions can be powerfully rewarding for children, families, and colleagues.



Tips On Taking Action For Families

- Find your local Special Education Advisory Committee. These committees are active in all localities.
- Visit our Matrix website to learn more at: <http://www.matrixparents.org/information-topic/selpas-cacs/>
- Attend meetings locally in Marin, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma Counties.
- Hear about new developments in your county that may affect your child.
- Speak about your concerns.
- Engage in parent-to-parent mentoring. The educational and emotional benefits that come from being a mentor (or mentee) are precious.
- Join a local parent support group where you can share experiences with others in our community.
- Be vocal and spread the word on the successes and challenges you find on your journey. The greater success we have in nurturing every kind of child in our community, the more we all benefit.
- Ask people you know for the support you need—whether it’s time, money, compassion, understanding, or empathy.
- Create awareness by sharing when you can. We all have something to give.

Tips On Taking Action For Professionals

- Tune in to your families and their needs. At times we forget what took us down this career path. Compassion is a wonderful gift to give.
- Stay up to date with workshops, trainings, and continuing education.
- Make referrals to other community organizations when needed. Sharing information with others in our community helps to support families.

CALL TO ACTION RESOURCES

Everyone has a voice. Let’s take action and spread the word about all our communities have to offer!

LLAMAR ACCIÓN A LA RECURSOS
Todos tienen una voz. Tomemos acción en correr la voz de lo que nuestras comunidades tienen para ofrecernos.

SELPAs

Special Education Local Plan Areas

Marin: (415) 499-5850

Napa: syip@napacoe.org (email)

Solano: (707) 399-4460

Sonoma: (707) 524-2750

Vallejo: (707) 556-8921 x50002

CACs

Community Advisory Committees

Marin: Marin County Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
(415) 499-5850

Solano: Contact Rayna Ortez
Email: rortez@solanocoe.net

Sonoma: Contact Kristie Anderson
cacsonomacounty@yahoo.com
(707) 524-2750

Vallejo: Community Advisory Committee Special Education (CACSE)
(650) 243-7459

Professional Development

(MCOE) Marin County Office of Education, (415) 472-4110

(NCOE) Napa County Office of Education, (707) 253-6810

(SCOE) Solano County Office of Education, (707) 399-4460

(SCOE) Sonoma County Office of Education, Contact: Chuck Wade,
cwade@scoe.org (email)

(SEAC) Marin County Special Education Advisory Committee
Contact: Jonathan Lenz, Director
jlenz@marinschools.org (email)

Servicios para Padres

Llamar a la acción

A veces parece que pasamos más de nuestro tiempo y energía simplemente absorbiendo y reaccionando a todas las presiones, estímulos y desafíos que la vida pone en nuestro regazo. Una gran parte de elevar cualquier familia es simplemente “mantener el ritmo”. Los que están criando, educando, o de otra manera apoyando a los niños con necesidades especiales saben que está orientado a la acción de un desafío particular. Los profesionales en el campo tienen un enorme impacto en la vida y-el bienestar de nuestros hijos. Las acciones simples pueden ser poderosamente gratificantes para las familias de los niños y colegas.

Consejos Sobre Cómo Tomar Acción para las Familias

- Encuentre su Comité Asesor de Educación Especial local. Estos comités están activos en todas las localidades.
- Visite nuestro sitio Web Matrix para obtener más información en: <http://www.matrixparents.org/information-topic/selpas-cacs/>
- Asistir a las reuniones a nivel local en Marin, Napa, Solano, y Sonoma.
- Escuchar acerca de los nuevos desarrollos en su condado que pueden afectar a su hijo.
- Hablar acerca de sus preocupaciones.
- Participar en la tutoría de padres a padres. Los beneficios educativos y emocionales que vienen de ser un mentor (o aprendiz) son preciosos.
- Unirse a un grupo de apoyo local de padres donde se puede compartir experiencias con otros en nuestra comunidad.
- Ser vocal y difundir la palabra sobre los éxitos y desafíos que encuentre en su camino. El mayor éxito que tenemos en la consolidación de toda clase de niño en nuestra comunidad, más que todos se benefician.
- Pedir a la gente que conoce por el apoyo que necesita, si es el momento, el dinero, la compasión, la comprensión o la empatía.
- Crear conciencia a través de compartir cuando pueda. Todos tenemos algo que dar.

Consejos sobre la Toma de Decisiones Para profesionales

- Sintonizar sus familias y sus necesidades. A veces nos olvidamos de lo que nos llevó por este camino profesional. La compasión es un regalo maravilloso a dar.
- Manténgase al día con talleres, capacitaciones y educación continua.
- Hacer referencias a otras organizaciones de la comunidad cuando sea necesario. El intercambio de información con otros en nuestra comunidad ayuda a apoyar a las familias.

ALGUNAS REFLECCIONES DEL DIRECTOR EJECUTIVO...

ACCIÓN = ¡Hacer Algo! Llamar a la Acción

El tema de la red para estanavegador de primavera es una “llamada a la acción”. Matrix ha estado proporcionando información y herramientas a través de nuestros boletines de noticias, sitios web, redes sociales, cursos de formación, etc., a todos ustedes por los últimos 30 años y esperamos que esos hallan sido útiles y serviciales para usted. Ahora le estamos pidiendo tomar esa información, nuestros consejos y estrategias, y tomar acción, de hacer, de actuar. “¡Pero espera!” Tu podrías decir. “Ya estoy demasiado ocupado, demasiado estresado, también abrumado y se espera que haga más?” Te escucho y entiendo. Este problema tendrá una serie de pequeñas formas eficaces para “tomar acción”.

Como padres, a menudo nos sentimos inmovilizados y atorados, inseguros del próximo paso a tomar para ayudar a nuestro hijo a tener éxito. Estamos abrumados por la gran cantidad de información precipitándose en nuestro camino (lo que es fiable y lo que no es) y el malabarismo constante de prioridades. Estos sentimientos no son exclusivos de las familias. Los profesionales de este campo también se pueden relacionar. Las sugerencias simples que tenemos a disposición en este tema pueden ayudar. Aunque diferentes, cada una es una llamada a la acción, un esfuerzo de conciencia que puede hacer una diferencia. A trabajar, sé que puede.

Nora Thompson, del Director Ejecutivo continúa en la página 5

The Early Edition

a publication of Matrix Parent Network & Resource Center • Spring 2016

The Early Edition is a publication of the Matrix Family Resource Center (FRC) program — part of California's interagency system of early intervention services for children from birth to 36 months. Our FRC staff is here to provide information and support to help you care for your baby. Additional information and resources are also provided in a designated Birth to 3 section on our website at www.matrixparents.org.

BIRTH TO 3

Building Social Bridges

As new parents, we figure out quickly that our social world is going to change with the arrival of our newborn. Having a child with special needs, however, can really throw us off our social game.

Picture this if you will: an elevator ride to the 12th floor of a major medical center. You're running late, you're thinking about the questions you need to ask the specialist you waited three months to see, and your baby is sporting her brand-new hip dysplasia ankle bar. A well-meaning elevator mate exclaims, "What the heck is that?" and really does expect you to respond in detail about the thing that's holding your baby's legs apart.

If your baby or toddler's disability is visible to others, it can help to have strategies for handling these situations, such as what to do or say when well-meaning people offer advice or when the park regulars look at you with pity in their eyes.

If you are open to answering questions or engaging in polite conversation you may be able to:

- **Raise awareness by explaining your child's disability to strangers (especially if the disability is rare).**
- **Help the people in your life understand your child's disability and the way it has changed your life.**
- **Give people information to help them cope by sharing literature, showing videos, and answering questions.**

Having a child with a disability does change what we can do, when we can do it, and with whom we can do it. The sooner those changes can be embraced with grace and dignity, the easier your family's social life will be.

Parent support groups and parents you meet at organized special needs playgroups might become a social network you never expected, but one that will feed you and your family like no other.

Sometimes it takes more than one type of village. Be open to building social bridges whenever and wherever you can...maybe even during that elevator ride.



We can help with transition to preschool. call 800.578.2592



CALL TO ACTION RESOURCES LLAMAR ACCIÓN A LA RECURSOS

Marin
Kalmanovitz Child Development Center of Marin County
(415) 600-6200

Solano
Children's Nurturing Project (CNP)
(707) 422-0464

Sonoma
The Early Learning Institute (ELI)
(707) 591-0170

REGIONAL CENTERS
(GGRC) Golden Gate Regional Center
Marin County Office
(415) 446-3000
(NBRC) North Bay Regional Center
Napa | Solano County Office
(707) 256-1100
Sonoma County Office
(707) 569-2000

La Edición Temprana

una publicación de Matrix Centro de Recursos Familiares • Primavera 2016

La Edición Temprana es una publicación Matrix Centro de Recursos Familiares (FRC) programa como parte del sistema interinstitucional de los servicios de la intervención temprana para niños de California desde el nacimiento hasta los 36 meses. Nuestro personal del FRC esta aquí para proporcionar información y apoyo para ayudarle a cuidar de su bebé. Información adicional y recursos también están proveídos en un área designada en la sección recién nacido a tres en nuestro sitio de web, www.matrixparents.org.

NACIMIENTO A 3

Construyendo Puentes Sociales

Como nuevos padres, que sepamos rápidamente que nuestro mundo social va a cambiar con la llegada de nuestro recién nacido. Tener un hijo con necesidades especiales, sin embargo, puede realmente despistarnos nuestro juego social. Imagine lo siguiente así decirlo: un viaje en ascensor hasta el piso 12 de un centro médico importante. Se le hace tarde, usted está pensando acerca de las preguntas que usted necesita preguntar al especialista que esperó tres meses para ver, y su bebé está luciendo su nueva barra de cadera displasia en el tobillo. Un compañero del elevador bien intencionado exclama, "¿Qué diablos es eso?" Y realmente espera le responda en detalle sobre lo que las piernas del bebé esta colgando. Si su bebé o la discapacidad del niño es visible para otros, puede ayudar a tener estrategias para manejar estas situaciones, tales como qué hacer o decir cuando las personas bien intencionadas ofrecen consejos o cuando los clientes habituales del parque te miran con compasión en sus ojos. Si usted está abierto a responder a las preguntas o participar en una conversación educada que puede ser capaz de:

- **Crear conciencia al explicar la discapacidad de su hijo con extraños (especialmente si la discapacidad es rara).**
- **Ayudar a las personas en su vida a comprender la discapacidad de su hijo y la forma en que ha cambiado su vida.**
- **Dar a la gente información para ayudarles a hacer frente al compartir literatura, mostrando videos y responder preguntas.**

Tener un hijo con una discapacidad cambia lo que podemos hacer, cuando podemos hacerlo y con quién podemos hacerlo. Cuanto antes esos cambios pueden ser abrazados con gracia y dignidad, la vida social, más fácil será la vida social. Grupos de apoyo para padres y padres que se reúnen en grupos la necesidades podrían convertirse en una red social que nunca se espera, pero que alimentarán a usted y su familia como a ninguna otra. A veces se necesita más de un tipo de pueblo. Estar abierto a la construcción de puentes sociales cuando y donde sea posible. Tal vez incluso durante ese viaje en ascensor.



Podemos ayudar con la transición a la pre-escuela Llama 800.578.2592

ALGUNAS REFLECCIONES DEL DIRECTOR EJECUTIVO...

viene de la página 3

ACCIÓN = ¡Hacer Algo! Llamar a la Acción

PARA LAS FAMILIAS

- **PENSAR:** Tome unos minutos cada día para pensar en los dones que su hijo le trae a usted y al mundo. Algunos días serán difíciles para pensar en dones cuando se enfrenta a todos los retos. Tome acción al tratar.
- **CONECTAR:** Encontrar otra familia y conectar. Construir de la red de padres al compartir ideas y apoyo.
- **APRENDER:** Busque quién hace su poliza y cómo comunicarse con ellos.
- **COMPARTIR:** Corra la voz a familiares y amigos sobre esto.

PARA PROFESIONALES

- **PENSAR:** Tóme unos minutos cada día para recordar por qué eligió este campo y lo que significa para usted.
- **CONECTAR:** Busque otros profesionales que comparten su pasión y construir su red.
- **APRENDER:** Los cambios rápidos en el campo pueden significar que continuando educando es no sólo un de que se basa su repertorio y capacidad para ser eficaz.
- **COMPARTIR:** Corra la voz acerca de que Matrix es el potencial de recursos a sus colegas.

Nora Thompson, del Director Ejecutivo

Make An Impact



Raising a Child With Special Needs Is a Marathon — Not a Sprint!

Join our inaugural half marathon* fundraising training team, the Matrix Milers!! We have teamed up with the Santa Rosa Marathon and Coach Alexis Lynch (a Matrix board member!) to create a 13-week training program to prepare you for race day on August 28th. Whether this is your first-ever half marathon or your 10th, we promise you a great training experience!

The Training Program Includes:

- A free pair of Balega running socks
- Free entry to the Santa Rosa Marathon half marathon distance (for the first 40 people who join the team upon completion of fundraising \$500)
- A full training schedule to keep you on track seven days a week
- Coached training runs on Saturday mornings – Some of our runs will take place at the DeLoach Winery with wine tasting events following the runs
- A Matrix Milers technical running tee
- A bottle of DeLoach wine with your photo on the label
- A personalized fundraising page
- Cross training opportunities
- Visits from experts on topics such as running, nutrition, injury prevention, and more
- Family friendly social events
- Prizes
- And so much more



*There is also a 5K option, which gets you a Matrix Milers technical running tee, discount entry to the race, email support provided by Coach Alexis, and invitations to a couple of training runs.

Everyone, everywhere is invited to join our team and fundraise for Matrix, regardless of whether you are available to attend the Santa Rosa weekly runs and events! Remote runners will receive a Matrix Milers shirt and email support from Coach Alexis. **Sign up now to receive all of the perks and swag!**



SIGN UP NOW
for Matrix Milers
Contact Kristie Anderson
(415) 475-2188
kristiea@matrixparents.org

COMING SOON:



Spring Training: Ayla and Jonathan

MATRIX MIGHTY MILERS

We are excited to announce that we will be adding a kid's component to our Matrix Milers Fundraiser.

Coach Jonathon Clark will be leading the kids in a 12 week training program for the Santa Rosa Marathon 5K race.



This is an inclusive training team for kids of all abilities! Keep an eye out for more information and how to sign up!

Matrix News

NEW DATA SPECIALIST AND TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

New Faces at Matrix



Coleman McDonough, Data Specialist

Coleman joins us as our new Data Specialist. He grew up in Novato and went to Sonoma State where he studied Psychology and Computer Science. Coleman has over 30 years experience in computer systems support.



Lilea Duran, New Board of Directors' member

As the mother of two special needs children, Lilea was drawn to serve on the Matrix Board of Directors, seeing the chance to support families within Napa County and create more opportunities for children locally.



Rhonda DuCharme, New Board of Directors' member

Rhonda, a mother of three, has been using the tools provided by Matrix to advocate for her son, who was diagnosed with Autism at age four. She hopes to bring special needs families together and give kids a sense of community and friendship with one another.



MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Making a Difference Through Working Together

We have been working with a remarkable young man, Erik N. Weber. Erik was diagnosed with autism at age two. He went on to graduate from law school, pass the California Bar Exam, and write two books. Erik enjoys running. His accomplishments include winning many Special Olympics medals. He is an amazing role model for our families. Like Matrix, Erik is committed to helping all persons with special needs to work towards reaching their full potential.

Erik helped us to raise funds at a speaking event in January for Matrix families. He is also providing support for our Matrix Milers running team to raise funds in the Santa Rosa Marathon this August. Yes, Erik will be running, too! He will also be visiting the Oak Hill School to connect with autistic children and their parents who can benefit from his experiences. We are grateful for Erik's commitment and support. His amazing energy and enthusiasm helps us to help more special needs families.

We are looking for new organizations and/or individuals to build partnerships and work with us to benefit families in our communities. If you know of any we should connect with, please email me at denisel@matrixparents.org.

Thank you, Denise LaBuda, Board President

RECENT EVENTS

ERIK WEBER SPEAKING EVENT

On January 24th, we had the pleasure of welcoming Erik Weber and his mother Sandy for a speaking event at the Lark Theatre. They shared their journey with autism, an incredibly inspiring story of hope, persistence, and love.

Thank you to our sponsors – Sutter Health; tuLIPS; Ready, Set, Go Therapy, Inc.; Law Office of Alexis Lynch; Santa Rosa Express Youth Running Club; Jump Start Learning to Learn and Autism Center of Northern California; and Novato Pediatric Dentistry.

We also thank everyone who came to hear the speakers, and most of all, thank you to Erik and Sandy!



Tony and Emily jamming



Beth and O Happy Dagger

HOPS AND HARMONIES

Hops and Harmonies, sponsored by Andy's Produce Market, was a night to remember! It was a night filled with good people, amazing music, great beer, and delicious food!

There were about 200 people in attendance helping us raise \$4000 for Matrix!

A special thank you to everyone who came out and supported us, and to our talented Matrix staff members (and their bands) who provided the wonderful music: Tony, with Vardo; Beth, with O Happy Dagger; and Emily, with Survival Guide.

Thank you to Lagunitas for providing us with this fundraising opportunity!



Novato Office:
94 Galli Drive, Suite C
Novato, CA 94949

Fairfield Office:
817 Missouri Street, Suite 2
Fairfield, CA 94533

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www.matrixparents.org

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New Matrix Trainings & Events

TRAININGS FOR FAMILIES:

Special Education Rights and Responsibilities

- April 20, Marin, Español
- April 27, Marin, English
- May 6, Sonoma, English
- May 26, Sonoma, Español
- June 7, Solano, English
- June 21, Solano, Español



CA Promise Training

- April 25, Solano, English
Español (Un traductor estará presente en este entrenamiento)

Behavior Intervention Plan Training

- May 19, Marin, English
Colleen Arnold

EVENTS:

Matrix Milers

- June 4, First Day of Training!
- August 28, Matrix Milers–Race Day!

NETWORKER

Call To Action Issue • Spring 2016

Our mission: To empower families of children with special needs to successfully understand and access the systems that serve them.

Nuestra misión: Capacitar a las familias de niños con necesidades especiales para entender y acceder a los sistemas que los sirven.

If you would like to reprint an article: Please credit Matrix Parent Network & Resource Center as your source of information. This includes articles which we have adapted from other sources.

If you have any questions regarding our policy, please contact us at 800.578.2592 or email us at info@matrixparents.org.



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