

THE NETWORKER

a publication of Matrix Parent Network & Resource Center • Fall 2019



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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Welcoming Steve Diamond to Matrix

BY ALEXIS LYNCH, BOARD PRESIDENT



Steve Diamond, Executive Director

“We are delighted that we found an Executive Director who shares our vision and has the experience and initiative to work towards our shared goals.”

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Matrix is kicking off fall with exciting news. We are thrilled that we have selected our new Executive Director, Steve Diamond.

Our long-time leader, Nora Thompson, retired last spring. Although it was hard to say goodbye, Nora's departure created an opportunity for us to think about the future of Matrix. It took some time to determine exactly what qualities we wanted our next leader to have. We knew Matrix needed someone with a specific skill set who was compassionate, warm, and empathetic towards the families we serve and our staff. Many employees have their own children with special needs.

Steve has the skills and qualities we've been looking for. He is motivated, resourceful, and very likeable. Steve also has experience working with vulnerable populations. He led successful initiatives that strengthened existing infrastructure and programming at other organizations.

Steve comes to us from Cronin House, a residential primary care recovery program

under Horizon Services, Inc. Prior to Cronin House, Steve was at Edgewood Center for Children and Families. Edgewood operates residential, community-based, and school-based programs for children, youth, and their families who are struggling with mental health challenges.

The board and staff have many ideas for new services and programming that we would love to offer our Matrix community. We are delighted that we found an Executive Director who shares our vision and has the experience and initiative to work towards our shared goals.

We owe a huge thank you to Interim Executive Director, Beth Schecter. Beth has guided us with strong leadership and advice. We are forever indebted to her for the work she has done to stabilize and strengthen Matrix during this time of transition.

We know there are big things ahead for Matrix!

*Alexis Lynch,
Board President*

Keep an Open Mind

Parent Services

Keep an Open Mind

ARTICLE BY ALYSSA DIFILIPPO, PARENT SERVICES DIRECTOR



Wouldn't it be wonderful if your child's IEP (Individual Education Plan) was as appropriate as you think it should be? What if the goals were attainable and realistic and the teachers really "got" your child in ways that make your heart sing? Well sometimes that happens and sometimes it doesn't.

When this doesn't happen, it's good to know how to approach potential conflict with a collaborative, open mind. There are ways to work with your IEP team to resolve issues quickly and amicably if at all possible. Check out our packet on Resolving Disagreements (https://www.matrixparents.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Resolving-Disagreements_English_7.15.pdf)

It's beneficial to acknowledge your fears and concerns as a parent and empathize with the challenges teachers and administrators face.

Understanding the difference between a fixed position and an interest helps. A "fixed position" means that there is only one way to solve a problem. An "interest" suggests that a problem can be solved in several ways.

- Be willing to brainstorm and/or ask questions to help others be more specific.

- Listen carefully to the ideas of others without judgment.
- Avoid "Yes, but" and instead, try "Yes, and".
- See CADRE (Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education) website for a short video on understanding positions and interests in English and Spanish. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/understanding-positions-and-interests-video>)

If you've tried a positive and collaborative approach and it's not working, you may need to try another way to reach a favorable resolution. It may be time to investigate the dispute resolution process. Examples of this are: a facilitated IEP meeting, ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution), mediation, filing a state complaint, or due process. The CADRE website is a wealth of information on different forms of dispute resolution. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials/quick-guide-special-education-dispute-resolution-processes-parents>)

Try to remember that when you disagree, do so without being disagreeable. Separate the person from the problem if at all possible. Acknowledge that no one has all the answers. Before deciding to pursue dispute resolution remedies, please make sure your facts are correct and choose your battles wisely.

Matrix News



FAREWELL TO LEE AND JENNY

Lee De Chambeau Cox, Chief Financial Officer, is retiring on September 30 after 22 years at Matrix. Jenny Mates, at Matrix for 17 years, retired in July. Jenny shared bookkeeping responsibilities (and more) with Lee and we all miss her. Both Lee and Jenny were reunited at Lee's farewell potluck. Coworkers brought flowers, food, and well wishes. These remarkable women have always made sure our bills were paid. Lee always brought grace and beauty to Matrix. She often shared beautiful roses from her garden with each of us. Lee's strong work ethic, dedication to Matrix, and compassion for coworkers will be missed.

MATRIX WEBSITE RECEIVES UPGRADE

Our new website is up and running. Thank you West County Net (WCN). We appreciate your patience as we improve and adjust the new website.

westcounty

CREATIVITY • STRATEGY • TECHNOLOGY

WCN (www.westcounty.com) is known for excellence in website design, technology solutions, SEO (Search Engine optimization), and digital marketing services. We are grateful for the upgrade to our website. Paloma Sky Patiño, Chief Operating Officer, shared with us that WCN works with local nonprofits to give them "the tools they need to thrive".

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CHANGE

As of October 1, 2019, Matrix will no longer provide TA (Technical Assistance) to Region D. Tony Darren, who started as our Matrix Office Manager 8 years ago, became a TA Specialist and has been working from the Matrix office. With this change in TA services, Tony will no longer be working at Matrix. We'll miss his smile and his jokes. Hopefully he will continue to share his melodious music with us. Both Tony and Nora Thompson (TA Project Co-Director) will continue their TA work through PEAK Parent Center.

Servicios de Padres

Manten una Mente Abierta

ARTÍCULO DE ALYSSA DIFILIPPO, DIRECTOR DE SERVICIOS PARA PADRES

¿**N**o sería maravilloso si el IEP (Plan de Educación Individual) de su hijo fuera tan apropiado como cree que debería ser? ¿Qué pasaría si los objetivos fueran alcanzables y realistas y los maestros realmente “entendieran” a su hijo de manera que su corazón cante? Bueno, a veces eso sucede y otras no.

Cuando esto no sucede, es bueno saber cómo abordar un conflicto potencial con una mente abierta y colaborativa. Hay formas de trabajar con su equipo de IEP para resolver los problemas de manera rápida y amigable, si es posible.

Es beneficioso reconocer sus temores y preocupaciones como padre y empatizar con los desafíos que enfrentan los maestros y administradores. No repitas el pasado. Concéntrese en lo que se puede hacer hoy. Encuentre objetivos comunes y construya sobre pequeños acuerdos. Mantenga una mente abierta y esté agradecido.

Comprender la diferencia entre una posición fija y un interés le ayudara. Una “posición fija” significa que solo hay una forma de resolver un problema. Un “interés” sugiere que un problema puede resolverse de varias maneras.

- Esté dispuesto a hacer una lluvia de ideas y / o hacer preguntas para ayudar a otros a ser más específicos.
- Escuche atentamente las ideas de los demás sin juzgar.
- Evite “Sí, pero” y, en su lugar, intente “Sí y”.
- Consulte el sitio web CADRE (Centro para la resolución adecuada de disputas en educación especial) para ver un breve video sobre la comprensión de las posiciones e intereses en Inglés y Español. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/understanding-positions-and-interests-video>)

Si ha intentado un enfoque positivo y colaborativo y no está funcionando, es posible que deba intentar otra forma de llegar a una resolución favorable. Puede ser hora de investigar el proceso de resolución de disputas. Ejemplos de esto son: una reunión facilitada del IEP, ADR (Resolución Alternativa de Disputas), mediación, presentación de una queja estatal o debido proceso. El sitio web de CADRE tiene una gran cantidad de información sobre diferentes formas de resolución de disputas. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials/quick-guide-special-education-dispute-resolution-processes-parents>)

Trate de recordar que cuando no esté de acuerdo, hágalo sin ser desagradable. Separe a la persona del problema si es posible. Reconozca que nadie tiene todas las respuestas. Antes de decidir buscar soluciones para la resolución de disputas, asegúrese de que sus datos sean correctos y elija sus batallas con prudencia.

BIENVENIDA A STEVE DIAMOND Por Alexis Lynch, Presidente de la Junta

Matrix comienza el otoño con noticias emocionantes. Estamos encantados de haber seleccionado a nuestro nuevo Director Ejecutivo, Steve Diamond.

Nuestra líder de mucho tiempo, Nora Thompson, se retiró la primavera pasada. Aunque fue difícil decir adiós, la partida de Nora nos creó la oportunidad de pensar en el futuro de Matrix. Nos llevó un tiempo determinar exactamente qué cualidades queríamos que

BIENVENIDA A STEVE DIAMOND

(Continuado)

tuviera nuestro próximo líder. Sabíamos que Matrix necesitaba a alguien con un conjunto de habilidades específicas que fuera compasivo, cálido y empático con las familias a las que servimos y nuestro personal. Varios de nuestros empleados empleados tienen sus propios hijos con necesidades especiales.

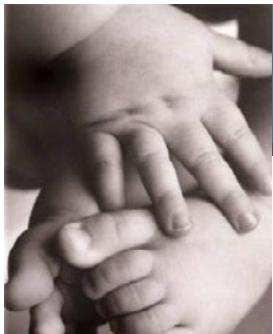
Steve tiene las habilidades y cualidades que hemos estado buscando. Es motivado, ingenioso y muy simpático. Steve también tiene experiencia trabajando con poblaciones vulnerables. Steve lideró iniciativas exitosas que fortalecieron la infraestructura y la programación existentes en otras organizaciones.

Steve viene a nosotros de Cronin House, un programa de recuperación de atención primaria residencial de Horizon Services, Inc. Antes de Cronin House, Steve trabajó en el Centro Edgewood para Niños y Familias. Edgewood opera programas residenciales, comunitarios y escolares para niños, jóvenes y sus familias que luchan con problemas de salud mental.

La mesa directiva y el personal tienen muchas ideas para nuevos servicios y programación que nos encantaría ofrecer a nuestra comunidad Matrix. Estamos encantados de haber encontrado un Director Ejecutivo que comparte nuestra visión y tiene la experiencia y la iniciativa para trabajar hacia nuestros objetivos compartidos.

Le debemos un gran agradecimiento a la Directora Ejecutiva Interina, Beth Schechter. Beth nos ha guiado con un fuerte liderazgo y asesoramiento. Siempre estamos en deuda con ella por el trabajo que ha realizado para estabilizar y fortalecer a Matrix durante este tiempo de transición.

Alexis Lynch, Presidente de la Junta



The Early Edition

a publication of Matrix Parent Network & Resource Center • Fall 2019

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, www.matrixparents.org.

BIRTH TO 3

Keep an Open Mind in the Early Years

BY ALYSSA DIFILIPPO, DIRECTOR OF PARENT SERVICES

Even when your little ones are still babies, it's essential to recognize that it is never too early to learn to address a potential conflict. Misunderstandings and disagreements happen. **Learn how to address conflict openly when your child is receiving services. Find ways to collaborate with others.** These skills will help you to be an effective advocate for your child now and for years to come. The list on the sidebar offers helpful advice on how to address and resolve disagreements.

CADRE (Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education) has developed early intervention family guidelines for IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). CADRE has resources on mediation, written state complaints, and due process complaints. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials-family-members/idea-early-intervention-mediation>)

CADRE's Early Intervention Dispute Resolution Process Comparison Chart (Quick Guide) offers a user-friendly comparison of early intervention dispute processes. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/idea-early-intervention-family-guides/cadre-materials/early-intervention-dispute-resolution-process-comparison-chart-quick-guide>)

Disability Rights California, Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy, helps families of Regional Center clients. They assist families who have a dispute with the Regional Center. (<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/what-we-do/programs/office-of-clients-rights-advocacy-ocra>)

Matrix Parent Advisors can also help! Call our Helpline, 800.578.2592, to discuss any problems or concerns you may have with your child's services. If we cannot help you, we will refer you to someone who can.

Check out the CADRE link below for a glossary of commonly used special education terms. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/idea-early-intervention-family-guides/cadre-materials/commonly-used-terms>)



We can help with
transition to preschool.
call 800.578.2592



TIPS FOR RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS

- Use "I" messages
- Make eye contact
- Watch your body language
- Put yourself in other person's shoes
- Clarify individual pieces of the conflict
- Solve as close to source as possible – start with your child's teacher first
- Utilize administrative hierarchy
- Communicate your concerns clearly
- Be calm and factual
- Document your process



La Edición Temprana

una publicación de Matrix Centro de Recursos Familiares • Otoño 2019

La Edición Temprana es una publicación de 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 de FRC está 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

Mantenga una Mente Abierta en los Primeros Años

ARTÍCULO DE ALYSSA DIFILIPPO, DIRECTOR DE SERVICIOS PARA PADRES

Nunca es demasiado temprano para aprender a abordar un posible conflicto. Los malentendidos y desacuerdos ocurren. **Aprenda cómo abordar el conflicto abiertamente cuando su hijo recibe servicios. Encuentre formas de colaborar con otros.** Estas habilidades lo ayudarán a ser un defensor efectivo de su hijo ahora y en los años venideros. La lista de "Consejos para resolver desacuerdos" en este boletín ofrece consejos útiles sobre cómo abordar y resolver desacuerdos.

CADRE (Centro para la Resolución Adecuada de Disputas en Educación Especial) ha desarrollado pautas familiares de intervención temprana para IDEA (Ley de Educación para Individuos con Discapacidades). Haga clic en este enlace para ver los recursos de CADRE sobre mediación, quejas estatales por escrito y quejas de debido proceso. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials-family-members/idea-early-intervention-mediation>)

El cuadro de comparación del proceso de resolución de disputas de intervención temprana de CADRE (Guía rápida) ofrece una comparación fácil de usar de los procesos de disputa de intervención temprana. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/idea-early-intervention-family-guides/cadre-materials/early-intervention-dispute-resolution-process-comparison-chart-quick-guide>)

Disability Rights California, Defensoría de los Derechos de la Oficina de Clientes, ayuda a las familias de los clientes del Centro Regional. Ayudan a las familias que tienen una disputa con el Centro Regional. (<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/what-we-do/programs/office-of-clients-rights-advocacy-ocra>)

¡Matrix Parent Advisors también puede ayudar! Llame a nuestra línea de ayuda, 800.578.2592, para discutir cualquier problema o inquietud que pueda tener con los servicios de su hijo. Si no podemos ayudarlo, lo referiremos a alguien que pueda hacerlo.

Consulte el siguiente enlace para obtener un glosario de términos de educación especial de uso común. (<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/idea-early-intervention-family-guides/cadre-materials/commonly-used-terms>)


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

PROBLEMA SOLUCIONANDO

ANÁLISIS METAS ESTRATEGIA INFORMACIÓN CONSEJO CONCEPTO

TRABAJO EN EQUIPO

CONSEJOS PARA RESOLVER DESACUERDOS

- Use los mensajes "I"
- Haga contacto visual
- Cuide su lenguaje corporal
- Pongase en el lugar de la otra persona
- Aclare piezas individuales del conflicto. Resuelva lo más cerca posible de la fuente: comience primero con el maestro de su hijo
- Utilizar la jerarquía administrativa
- Comunique sus inquietudes claramente
- Manténgase calmado y objetivo
- Documente su proceso

Make An Impact

Open Minds and Open Hearts

AN INTERVIEW WITH SARAH PONSFORD, MATRIX PARENT AND BOARD MEMBER



Sarah Ponsford, Hannah Ponsford, Reese Smith, Ella Ponsford on race day

Angela: Why is Mighty Milers such a unique event for families who have children with special needs?

Sarah: Mighty Milers is an event the entire family can enjoy together. When my third daughter received her diagnosis, our family schedule drastically changed. Suddenly, instead of running my older kids to soccer and ballet, we were spending every afternoon in waiting rooms for all of the services my youngest needed. It was very isolating.

Often recreational programs that cater to kids with special needs do not welcome kids with typical development. Programs for kids without special needs do not always include or accommodate kids with disabilities. When participating in Mighty Milers, our kids with special needs experience inclusion and belonging. Our runners with typical development learn to look past differences and see what we have in common. Our families meet other families facing similar challenges. All of us have fun together!

Angela: Why is physical activity important for children of all abilities and even more important for children who have special needs?

Sarah: I think the challenge of getting kids off of their iPads and out moving is a common one. When typical sport teams and programs do not work for your child it becomes even harder. The Mighty Milers running program inspires kids to get in better physical shape. They experience mental health benefits from exercise and enjoy spending time in nature. Our coaches create an environment of support, encouragement and fun. Parents sometimes tell us that after participating, their children are able to focus better. Some children also experience more overall strength and endurance and a decrease in anxiety.

Angela: Who is instrumental in making this event so successful?

Sarah: Mighty Milers would not happen each year without our partners, the Santa Rosa Marathon. Their dedication and support over the last four years has meant so much to us. We also had amazing coaches and running volunteers to train and guide our runners and help them reach their goals. Their encouragement, expertise, and patience inspired every runner to do his or her best. Finally, our wonderful community sponsors continue to play a big part in keeping Mighty Milers going.

Angela: Can you describe how the day of the event unfolds?

Sarah: Everyone meets up in the town square on race day, gathering under the Mighty Milers tent. We pass out high fives, encouragement, and neon hair color for those who want it. The kids are so excited to wear their bright team shirts. We move to the lawn area for a team picture.

After pictures, our coaches lead the team in warm-ups and stretches. Once the team is warmed up, the kids and their parents (or adult running buddy) move to the starting line. The kids each run the 5K at their own pace.

One of the most touching experiences for me was to see our parents offering so much encouragement and understanding. At one point in the race, my daughter was ready to give up. Another mom stepped in to help. I ran with her son for a while as she worked with my daughter. Soon the four of us were making our way together toward the finish line.

There is an understanding between teammates and their families that can be hard to find elsewhere. Kids and parents who are often judged in public get support and nods of "Oh, we've been there" from their teammates. As the runners cross the finish line, they are handed their medals then head back to the Mighty Milers tent for snacks and congratulations.

Angela: How can people get involved in Mighty Milers?

Sarah: Every season Mighty Milers needs team coaches, coordinators, training run volunteers, race day volunteers, and community sponsors. You can keep up to date with our needs and program news by joining our ***Friends of Mighty Milers email list at: MMFriends@matrixparents.org***. We are currently forming our committee for next season's team. Please let us know if you are interested in joining.

Make an Impact

Mighty Milers: Our 4th Year!

FRIENDS AND FAMILIES ENJOYING THE SANTA ROSA MARATHON 5K RACE



Warming up with Coach Natalie



Smiles all around on race day



Keeping up with the big guys



Race day is filled with team spirit and fun

WITH GRATITUDE TO OUR COACHES, VOLUNTEERS, FAMILIES, AND RUNNERS

There are many people to thank for the success of Mighty Milers 2019. *Our coaches, Mark Drafton and Natalie Pesce, were there every step of the way to train and encourage the team.* Their selfless efforts helped us to both raise money and raise awareness about the awesome potential within our Mighty Milers. Weekly practices strengthened the runners on many levels.

We raised \$6,000 in sponsorships and \$6,625 in team fundraising. Our wine pull and magnet sales at the Race Expo helped us to raise \$1,185. We are still waiting to learn more about our cut of the beer garden. Although we have some expenses, this is a great outcome.

To all of our volunteers, supportive families, and runners, we want you to know that your participation makes it possible for Matrix to continue offering free services to families who have children with special needs.

THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD DURING THIS TIME OF TRANSITION

Our Board Treasurer, Sarah Ponsford, organized race day details and handled logistics. Sarah also was at the center of weekly practices, ordering shirts and signage, coordinating volunteers to manage the expo booth, and so much more! **Alexis Lynch, Board President,** was a major presence throughout this event. **Nicole Wehr** helped set up the Expo booth and manned it both Friday and Saturday. **Shawn Murphy** joined on race day to take photos and help at the Expo booth. **Colleen Arnold** (one of our team sponsors) and Sarah Ponsford both worked on fundraising.

This is a time of transition at Matrix. Our board, with help from **Beth Schecter, Interim Executive Director**, hired **Steve Diamond**, our new Executive Director. Together we will work towards our vision: "Families full of hope and confidence as their children with special needs flourish and grow toward fulfilling adulthoods".

Thank you

TO OUR MIGHTY MILERS SPONSORS!



<http://www.mortonbassett.com/>

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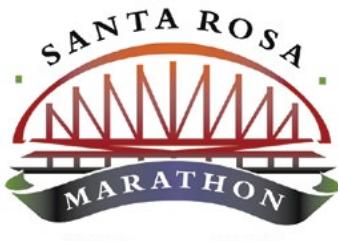
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Check Out Our Fall Trainings Online!

<http://www.matrixparents.org/upcoming-trainings/>



- The IEP Form: One Page at a Time
- El Formulario del IEP: Una Página a la Vez
- Improving Sleep Routines
- Understanding Assessments
- Entendiendo las Evaluaciones



Trainings held in both English and Spanish at several locations in Marin, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma Counties

NETWORKER

Keep an Open Mind Issue • Fall 2019

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.

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