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February 2005

Our lending library has a lot of new books. Here are just a few you might be interested in reading:

- *Inclusive Middle School*
- *"You're Going to Love This Kid!"*
- *Negotiating the Special Education Maze*
- *Quick Guides to Inclusion*
- *A Good Friend: How to Make One, How to Be One*
- *Change Your Brain, Your Life*
- *Rolling Along with Goldilocks and the Three Bears*

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## LaTEACH Debuts

Louisiana has a new state-wide grassroots advocacy organization being developed with funding from the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council.

LaTEACH, Louisiana Together Educating All Children is an opportunity for parents, educators, administrators and community members to work together to effect systems change at the state, district and local school board level.

LaTEACH is currently recruiting parents, educators and other interested persons in our area: to inform members on law,

proposed legislation, administrative rules, etc. that impact all students; to coordinate member advocacy locally through phone trees, listservs, policymak-



ers on issues that impact students.

Mary Jacob is the LaTEACH Coordinator for your area and requests that all interested parties that want to join this new organization, fill out and return the enclosed Mem-

bership Application.

LaTEACH is not just a regular education or special education organization. Their goal is to promote equal educational opportunities to ALL children!

**Mission Statement:**

"LaTEACH promotes appropriate, inclusive education for all students. We work to make parents, educators, the general public, and state leadership informed and supportive of research based and effective practices used appropriately for each student."

## LaCAN has two new regional team leaders

LaCAN recently selected two new regional leaders for the metropolitan New Orleans area. Olantha Scott, is the new leader for Jefferson Parish and Sherrie Raby is the new leader for Orleans, Plaquemines and St. Bernard Par-

ishes. LaCAN, Louisiana Citizens For Action Now is a statewide grassroots network of individuals and families who have worked together since 1988 advocating for a system that supports individuals to live in their own homes rather

than having to move to a facility to receive needed services. Specifically they have advocated for implementation of Louisiana's Community and Family Support System Plan. Regional LaCAN teams

# Rights to Regular Education

**“Children with disabilities are first and foremost children, worthy of equal respect, opportunities, treatment, status and place.”**

## **Moral Rights -**

Children with disabilities are first and foremost children. They will benefit from the same experiences that are desirable for all children for the same reasons. They will also benefit from avoidance of the same undesirable experiences for the same reasons. Inclusion provides opportunities for socialization and friendships to develop. It provides a sense of belonging and appropriate modeling of social, behavioral, and academic skills.

## **Civil Rights -**

Separate is not equal. If something is offered to all children it must be accessible to all children. Access should not be denied based on disability or any characteristic alone. Children with disabilities have a right to go to the same schools and classes as their friends, neighbors, brothers and sisters.

## **Parental Rights -**

Parents have a right, as experts on their own children, to pursue the least restrictive environment with supports and services for their children to successfully achieve their individual goals.

They will always have far longer and greater responsibility, and vested interest in their child's future, than any system or paid professional. They are equal partners of the IEP Team.

## **Ethical Rights -**

Giving every child a sense of belonging, value and worth enhances their overall quality of life. Including children with disabilities in general education classes models acceptance of diversity. It teaches children how to function together with others of different abilities.

## **Legal Rights -**

The Individual's with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) passed in 1975 and has been amended recently. Children with disabilities are to be educated to the maximum extent with children who do not have disabilities.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed in 1990 and extended civil rights to those of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to people with disabilities.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act passed in 1973. No otherwise qualified individual with disabilities in the

United States...shall solely by reason of his disabilities, “be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Civil Rights Act passed in 1964 protects the rights of all “minority groups.”

Supreme Court—Brown vs. Board of Education 1954 “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal”.

Federal Court Cases -

Ronacker vs. Walter (6th Circuit Court 1993)

Oberti vs. Board of Education of the Borough of Clementon School District (3rd Circuit Court, 1993)

Sacramento City Unified School District vs. Holland (9th Circuit Court 1994)

Greer vs. Rome City School District (11th Circuit Court 1992)

Daniel R. R. vs. State Board of Education (5th Circuit Court 1989)

Board of Education vs. Rowley (2nd Circuit Court 1982)

For a complete copy of this literature, please call Mary Jacob at 504-888-9111.

## **LaCAN -**

*Continued from page 1....*

include parents, individuals with disabilities and parents. These members are notified by telephone trees to contact state agency officials, legislators or the governor when necessary.

LaCAN provides information and support to individuals wishing to effectively advocate for the expansion and improvement of community and family support services for people with disabilities and their families through email updates, regional workshops, regional team leaders, and personal contact.

LaCAN does not provide support services such as respite or personal care to individuals with disabilities and their families.

“Linking lawmakers and families to make a difference for individuals with disabilities.”

If you are interested in joining LaCAN or are already a member and would like to meet your new team leaders, please feel free to contact Olantha at (504) 834-4687 or email her at [olantha@juno.com](mailto:olantha@juno.com) or Sherrie at (504) 382-8012 or email her at [sherriraby@cox.net](mailto:sherriraby@cox.net).

# INCLUSION, INCLUSION, INCLUSION!

When asked, educators, families and students with and without disabilities agree that while inclusion is not always perfect, its benefits far outweigh any negatives. Everyone agreed that inclusion benefits everyone. Here's what they thought about inclusion:

- Improved self-concept.
- Developing a greater sensitivity to the needs of others.
- Developing more appropriate role models.
- Becoming more helpful in meeting the needs of classmates with disabilities.
- Opportunities to develop natural friendships.
- Greater acceptance of diversity through exposure to people with disabilities.
- Improved confidence and happiness.
- Evidencing fewer behavior problems.
- Improved academic performance.
- Opportunities to develop friendships with children with disabilities.
- Preparation to live in the "real world".
- A sense of belonging.
- Increased sense of community.

***The basic premises of inclusive school communities is that schools are about belonging, nurturing and educating all children regardless of their differences in culture, gender, language, ability, class and ethnicity.***

***Inclusion is belonging to one race, the human race.***

## President Bush Recognizes National Inclusive Schools Week

The White House released a Presidential Message supporting the important work of teachers, administrators, families, and students in making the Nation's schools more inclusive. The Presidential Message also promotes greater action towards increasing the capac-

ity of schools and communities to provide a quality education to an increasingly diverse student population, particularly to those who have disabilities. The Presidential Message signed by President George W. Bush reads in part: "The education of our children, regard-

less of background or disability, must always be a national priority. National Inclusive Schools Week highlights our Nation's progress in this area and promote's greater opportunities for children and youth with disabilities."

***Inclusion is the opposite of exclusion.***

## Inclusion Is, The future. by: Marsha Forest

Inclusion is belonging to one race, the human race.

Inclusion is a basic human right.

Inclusion is struggling to figure out how to live with one another.

Inclusion is not something you do to someone or for someone. It is something we do with one another.

Inclusion is not a person "the inclusion kid", Not a program.

Not an adjective. Not an add on.

Inclusion is not something we do half of. It either is or isn't. It's not a fad. Nor a bandwagon. It is a trend, similar to democracy, "with liberty and justice for all". All means all. No buts about it.

Inclusion is elegant in its simplicity, and like love, awesome in its complexity.

Inclusion is a battle cry, a par-

ent cry, a child's cry to be welcomed, embraced, cherished, prized, loved as a gift. As a wonder, A Treasure.

Inclusion is not spending more money on building more prisons, mental hospitals, nursing homes, group homes, but investing in real life and real people.

Inclusion is the future!

***In a successful, unified system, educators believe not only that all students can learn, but also that they have the skills, knowledge and dispositions to teach all students.***

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Information for this newsletter was collected from [www.inclusiveschools.org](http://www.inclusiveschools.org) and [www.kidstogether.org](http://www.kidstogether.org). For more wonderful articles, visit these two websites.

This newsletter was paid for by funds provided by The Louisiana Department of Education and the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. To learn more about the LA Department of Education, visit [www.doe.state.la.us](http://www.doe.state.la.us). To learn more about the LA Developmental Disabilities Council, visit [www.laddc.org](http://www.laddc.org).

*Louisiana*

Youth Leadership Forum's  
**First Annual Official Auction and Gala**  
To Benefit the LYLFF Scholarship Fund  
**Friday, April 1, 2005**  
7:00 until 10:00 p.m.

**UNO's Homer T. Hitt Alumni Center on UNO's Campus**  
**Food \* Auction \* Entertainment**  
**\*Ticket Order Form Enclosed\***  
**To make a donation, please call Brenda or Twyla at 888-9111.**

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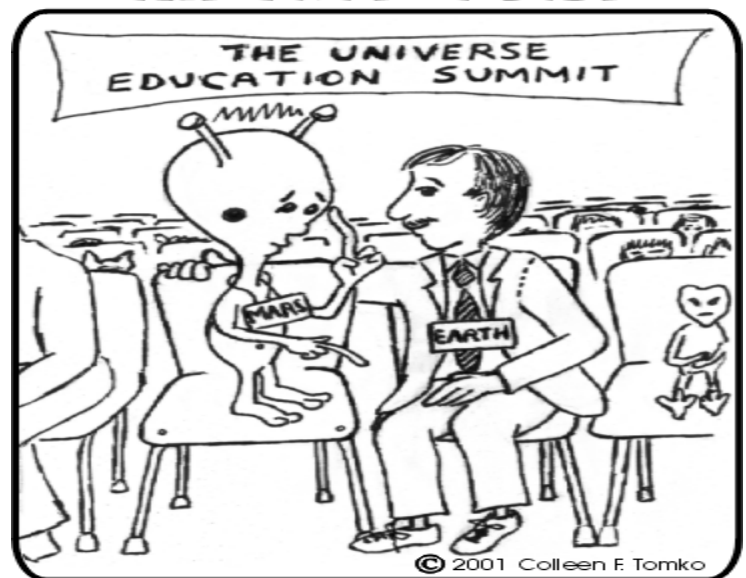
**Spring 2005**

**Parent Weekend Workshop**

*(April date and location to be announced shortly.)*

This intensive workshop on special education topics is provided to a limited number of parents/family members of students with disabilities ages 3 - 21 to support and assist their efforts to be meaningful participants in the education of their child. Hotel rooms and travel arrangements will be provided on a "couple" basis, so it is required that two people supporting a student share a room and travel. Hotel rooms, meals and mileage is provided. For a registration form, please call:  
Mary Jacob at 888-9111 or 800-766-7736

**THE PARENT SIDE**™



Let me get this straight... You label certain kids and take them away from the rest of the kids and call that special? Then you group those kids in the separate placements by their labels and call that individualized? What planet are you from?