



A Northwest Suburban Council of PTSA committee serving families of children with special needs in Community Consolidated School District 15 and beyond.

Who we are reaching...

SPARK programs are **FREE**, open, and encouraged for **ALL** parents, educators, and administrators.

Why we exist...

SPARK was formed in response to the growing needs of families whose children learn differently or have special needs. As parents trying to navigate the system, we realize the importance of providing:

- Relevant resource programs related to special education
- Opportunities to network
- Links to parents with outside sources
- Publications and books on various special education topics

What we believe...

SPARK believes in providing a means to educate parents and educators, provide resources, network, and support families of all children receiving special education. This is accomplished at the district level through monthly evening programs with outside speakers. We also have SPARK representatives at each school who are a local contact and resource to the individual schools.

*Our hope is that **parents** and **educators** will access these **FREE** meetings for the benefit of their children, themselves, and others.*

When we meet...

SPARK programs meet once monthly on Monday evenings: **EXCEPT Oct. 18th**
Walter R. Sundling Junior High 1100 N. Smith Street, Palatine
7:00 – 8:30 pm

*Please see the program calendar on the back for exact dates and topics.
The programs can also be found on the District 15 website: www.ccsd15.net.*

*If you would like to be contacted by or connected with SPARK,
contact SPARK Chair Ani Erickson (847) 907-4732 or email her at sprakdistrict15@gmail.com
or Co-Chair Jen Kurrie (847) 963-8087*

SPARK is proud to be in partnership with PTA!



SPARK - Program Calendar 2011-112 School Year

September 19: "SPARK"ing Interest in Your Child's IEP

@ Sundling Theater

District 15 Staff

Building home-school collaboration to create seamless and successful environments for our children is a driving force behind the individual educational plan (IEP). In this session, you will learn about the special education programs and services provided in Palatine District 15. Meet district administrators, learn about who to contact with questions and concerns, and explore the unique and essential role of parents and families in the IEP process.

TUESDAY - October 18: The Role of Executive Functioning

@ Sundling Theater

Dr. Michael Frey, Comprehensive Psychological Services

Over the past several years, an intense focus in the psychological community has been on executive functioning, and its critical role in the development and behavior of our children. Dr. Michael Frey, a child and adolescent neuropsychologist, specializes in various neurobehavioral disabilities, including ADHD, learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders, Tourette's Syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, and oppositional defiant and bipolar disorder. His presentation will help parents understand their child's symptoms, become familiar with executive functioning, and learn how to select intervention to address limitations in various aspects of these conditions, including concerns for sustained attention, planning and organization, and social skills.

November 14: Transition Meeting

@ Sundling Theater and Classrooms

District 211, 214, and District 15 Transition Teams.

For most of our kids, transition can be hard – especially when they are changing to new schools with new special education teams. Three rooms will be set aside to help parents who have children transitioning to Junior High in District 15, Palatine High School or Rolling Meadows High School. These transition teams will discuss what's involved in transition and try to answer your specific questions about how to make it successful and exciting for your child.

January 23: "Dwell on the Possibilities"

@ Sundling Theater

Nancy and Bridget Brown

Nancy Brown is an inclusion consultant and her daughter, Bridget, has Down Syndrome. Bridget was the first person with a disability included in her school district, facilitated and supported by Nancy. As an inclusion consultant with the Illinois State Board of Education, Nancy has had the unique experience of working with many different school districts in Illinois helping them develop and sustain inclusive educational programs for students with disabilities. Her workshops cover: person centered planning, adaptations and accommodations, social and emotional supports for all learners, and teaming for inclusive education. Nancy presents with her daughter Bridget who is a national public speaker and an advocate.

February 27: Puberty: NOW WHAT?

@ Sundling Theater

Carla Oldham

Did puberty just sneak up on you and now you are looking at your child and saying "NowWHAT!" What happened to my sweet child? What are they doing? What is that smell? and What can I Do? If you have been worry about the day to day challenges and now find yourself with that tween/teen in puberty and didn't plan for it - this workshop is for you! We will host a frank discussion about the concerns, issues and challenges faced by all parents of tween/teens in puberty plus the strategies and supports needed for that special needs tween/teen in your house.

April 23: Internet Safety for Parents of a Special Needs Child & The \$0 Factor

@ Sundling Theater
Classroom

Palatine Police Department

Every parent struggles with the growing concerns about the internet. What about those parents who also struggle to manage those concerns with a special needs child? Implementing internet safety can be a difficult task for parents as most children have a poor understanding of the long-term effects of photos and information posted. For those with special needs, every concern is magnified because these children will be targeted for abuse and sometimes less able to identify risks. This internet safety presentation will assist parents in protecting and educating their special needs child on-line.

The following topics will be covered during the presentation:

- What dangers await on-line users with special needs.
- How are those with special needs targeted?
- Heightened on-line bullying of those with special needs.
- Continued on-line parental monitoring
- Harnessing the benefits of the internet for your child while lessening the dangers.

Carla Oldham

Can you really functionally use an idevice (ipad, ipod touch, iphone) without spending tons of money in the itunes store? ABSOLUTELY! This fun, interactive and informative session will show you just that! From using the features right out of the box, your computer, maybe a few free apps and your imagination - you too can create visual schedules, choice boards, static communication devices, social stories, educational supports and so much more! Resources for where to find/get great free apps will also be shared! Come ready to experience The \$0 Factor!