

Raising Special Kids[®]



families helping families for 30 years

2009
Annual Report to the Community



You are the best resource help ever!
Thanks!

Mission

The mission of Raising Special Kids is to improve the lives of children with disabilities by providing families with parent to parent support, training, information, and individual assistance.

Programs and services are offered free of charge, in English and Spanish, without regard to the child's disability, age, family income, qualifying conditions or other eligibility factors.



Credo of Family Support

We believe that experienced families are a key source of knowledge and support to help new parents in becoming effective advocates for their children.

We believe that professionals are important allies for families. The shared wisdom, counsel, respect and support creates enhanced positive outcomes for children.

We value diversity and celebrate our commitment to serving families in many forms.

We believe in supporting the role of the family in establishing public policy, and promoting public awareness related to families and disabilities.

We believe that parents who model effective self-advocacy encourage a child's pursuit of his or her own dreams.

Finally I can talk to someone that understands someone who has a child with a disability.

Message

from the President of the Board

This year, as for the past 30 years, Raising Special Kids has continued to provide critical support and services to families in our community who have children with disabilities and special health care needs.

As President of the Board of Directors and the parent of a child with a disability, I have seen first hand the difference that Raising Special Kids can make in the daily lives of families who are faced with complex issues relating to a child's disability. We are grateful to all of our community partners, parent volunteers and donors whose continuing dedication and support of the mission of Raising Special Kids makes all of this possible.



Kevin Bonner

In 2009, Raising Special Kids celebrated 30 Years of serving Arizona Families.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Bonner".

We're glad your Parent to Parent program is here for us. I have been looking for over a year to find a parent to talk to about my son and you found a perfect match in one day!

Family to family support

- In the past year **9,042** families of children with disabilities and professionals who serve them were supported with training, information or individual assistance—an average of **753** each month.

- Over **360** families were provided with a Parent to Parent “match,” for one-on-one support from trained parent volunteers.

- 100% follow-up and evaluation of Parent to Parent contacts revealed that **96%** reported excellent or very good results in obtaining needed information and assistance.

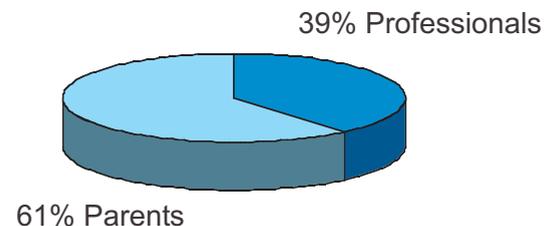


Helping families

- **84%** of parents who participated in training reported feeling better prepared to make decisions regarding a child's education, services or care.

- **29** parents were recruited and trained as Parent to Parent volunteers, Family Faculty, and for other leadership activities.

Who We Serve



Thank you for providing this information, it helps me understand how special my child is, and how to help other parents understand what it means to have a child with disabilities. Excellent, and thank you for the information!!!

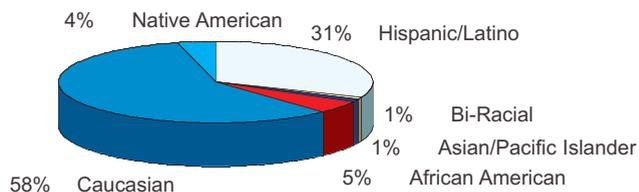
Community outreach

- **320** workshops or training programs were presented on a wide variety of topics.
- **14** Spanish-speaking parent volunteers were trained to provide family support.
- Our **1st Annual Therapies Conference** for families was a huge success in meeting the immediate needs of families and planting the seeds for future programs. 100% of parents attending said they want to attend another conference on therapy topics.
- Tribal Liaisons for the Navajo and Hopi Nations supported **63** families in northern Arizona.
- **141** Community organizations, state agencies, and medical centers referred families to Raising Special Kids.



Therapies Conference

Families: diverse language and culture



I am so happy I found you. You gave me the tools I need to be able to help my children.

Special education

- **2,762** Arizona educators, student teachers, school personnel and other professionals received training and information on how to work effectively with families.
- **87%** of the education professionals who completed training reported feeling better equipped to work more effectively with families.
- Raising Special Kids partnered with the Arizona Department of Education in the State Personnel Development Grant. Parent Volunteers served as co-presenters with staff providing training for preservice teachers in college classrooms.



Special Education Directors Forum brought together leaders from varied school districts to discuss challenges and share solutions

Parents reported

- **100%** Information received through individual assistance helped to improve my child's special education services
- **96%** I was provided with relevant information I needed to make decisions about my child's education.
- **96%** Workshop materials used in training were of high quality.
- **96%** Information received from the workshop helped improve my child's special education services

I truly feel that I'm now better equipped to not only care for kids with special needs but their families as well.

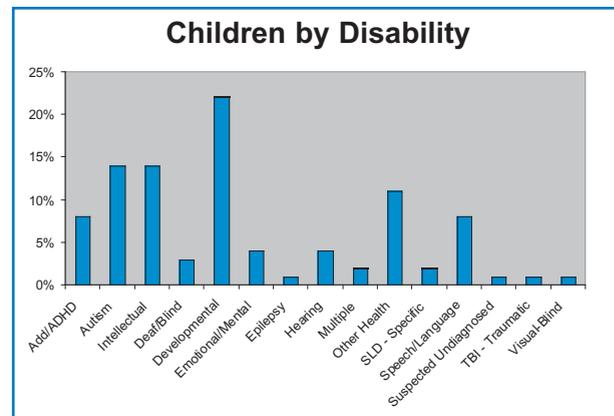
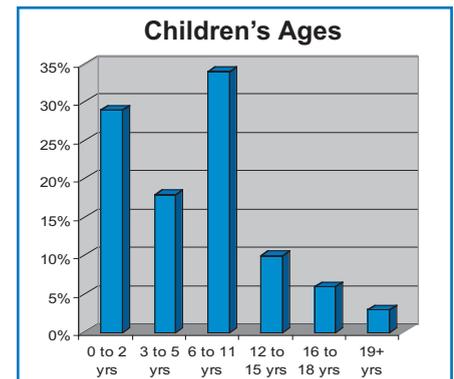
Partnering with professionals

- **93%** of health professionals report the training will improve their ability to communicate with parents about the child's care.
- **97** physicians in pediatrics and family practice residency programs completed training in the Family and Community Medicine Program. **51** Family Faculty hosted **194** hours of home visits. Participating hospitals include:

Maricopa Medical Center
Phoenix Children's Hospital
Banner Good Samaritan
St. Joseph's Pediatrics
St. Joseph's Family Medicine
Phoenix Baptist Hospital
John C. Lincoln
Scottsdale Healthcare
Midwestern University



Physician training



If I can make one doctor understand how it is for families, it is worth it.

Annie's family

The Salasek's journey of caring for a child with a disability began before their daughter, Annie, was even born. During an ultrasound, doctors identified symptoms of spina bifida, and Nannette underwent groundbreaking in-utero fetal surgery when Annie was 26 weeks of gestational age to repair a lesion on the unborn baby's back. While the surgery was not a cure, the Salasek's swift action greatly improved their daughter's prognosis. "Annie came out kicking and screaming," said Nannette. "All the doctors were amazed!"

With the surgery experience plus time spent in NICU after Annie was born, the Salaseks quickly realized the value of effective advocacy for medical care. They worked together to improve communication between doctors and families by volunteering in Raising Special Kids' Family and Community Medicine Program. "The doctor who told me we had to start catheterizing



Salasek Family



Annie

Annie just dropped a bomb on me," said Nannette as she described the traumatic experience of learning Annie's condition had advanced.

The Salaseks volunteered for years as Family Faculty hosting physician residents in their home to learn family perspectives of having a child with a disability. Nannette then joined the staff as Parent Leadership Facilitator to coordinate training opportunities for families.

Learning about our daughter's disability has been so helpful for our family.

Teresse's family

Twila Pochoema discovered Raising Special Kids while taking a course on advocacy. She began as a Parent to Parent volunteer giving support to families and then became a liaison for Raising Special Kids to the Hopi Tribe.

“We have used many of the services to help us with our daughter, Teresse: special education consultation, advocacy training, and guidance in locating resources—which can be difficult to find in rural areas like ours,” said Twila. “When we received a diagnosis for Teresse, all our expectations for the future were turned upside down. But learning more about our daughters’ disability has been so helpful for our family. Our older children have become advocates within their own peer groups for other people with disabilities as well.”

Twila’s efforts in helping to form the Turtle Nation Partnership, a parent advocacy group, has brought many



Pochoema Family



Teresse

families together and increased awareness. She noted her personal growth as well, “I’ve learned to speak in front of groups comfortably and change things for our community.”

Raising Special Kids has an excellent reputation for helping families deal properly with school districts and children with special needs. You have a good team that you should be very proud of.

Financial statement

\$999,234	Total Revenue
\$686,205	Parent Information, Support & Training
\$74,283	Training for Professionals
\$118,838	Community Support
\$879,326	Program Expenditures
\$119,908	Administrative Functions
\$999,234	Total Expenditures

I just thought you might want to know how excited everyone is to be working with Raising Special Kids on the new parent leadership initiative. Raising Special Kids sets the bar high...

Community relationships

- Dandelion Golf Classic sponsored by CareScape Landscape Management Services raised \$41,000.
- Special Day for Special Kids coordinated by Scottsdale Sunrise Rotary Club was attended by over 2500 participants.
- Raising Special Kids moved into the new Disability Empowerment Center which has brought together multiple organizations serving people with disabilities and their families.



Dandelion Golf Classic



Special Day for Special Kids



Celebrating 30 Years with the Arizona Diamondbacks



Disability Empowerment Center

Your organization is the best
I appreciate your unique ability to
pinpoint the best resource.



Raising Special Kids

Free resources, information and support for families raising children with disabilities or special health care needs in Arizona.

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501(c)(3) nonprofit organization