Annual Report
to the Community

2010

Raising Special Kids
Mission

To improve the lives of children with disabilities and special health care needs by providing parents with information, training and support.

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 & support to help 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.
“I am so glad I called. You opened up my world and now I can reach out to find what my kids need. Thank you so much for your help.”
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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Kevin Bonner</td>
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<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Elaine Ellis, MD</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Vickie Herd</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Elizabeth Freeburg</td>
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<td>Heather Buchta</td>
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<td>Jim Cole</td>
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<td>Bob Cox</td>
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<td>Blanca Esparza-Pap</td>
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<td>Karen Hinds</td>
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<td>Shirley Kaufman</td>
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<td>Michael Remus</td>
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<td>Gabriela Sanchez Orozco</td>
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<td>Susan Voirol</td>
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<td>Tim Watters</td>
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Fennemore Craig
Extended Family Disability Services LLC
Wells Fargo Private Client Services
Quarles, Brady, Streich & Lang
Channel 3 TV
Nothing But NET
Community and Public Relations Manager, Channel 3 TV
Tempe Union High School District
Retired Attorney
Director of Special Education, Deer Valley Unified School District
President of G.A.N.E. (Grupo de Apoyo para Nios Especiales)
Tempe Union High School District
Colliers International

2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
“Thanks to you, our child is one of the thousands of kids who is getting treatment, and getting better every year. We’re proud of all the work he's done, and every year brings more success!”
Improving life for children with disabilities and special health care needs

Helping families

Raising Special Kids strives to improve the lives of children with disabilities and special health care needs by supporting people who care for them: families and professionals.

6,231 parents received information, training, and individual assistance.
“Your information is so practical and useful. I know what to do now.”
Most families are not prepared with the skills and knowledge to address the unique challenges of raising a child with a disability. Each step of a child’s development reveals the need for new creative solutions which are made more complex by the presence of extraordinary health or ability issues unfamiliar to the family or their support network. Bringing families new to these challenges together with experienced parents who can share their knowledge has proven to help provide children with the environment and support they need to fully develop their potential. The staff and trained volunteers of Raising Special Kids are family members with experience raising a child with a disability.

265 Parent to Parent Matches

All participants in our volunteer parent mentoring program receive follow-up contact from staff.

91% of parents report the experience helped them become more effective in advocating for their child.

100% reported positive benefits from emotional support and the opportunity to talk with “someone who understands.”
“The meeting on Saturday was AWESOME! I learned so much!! It was so helpful for my meeting at the school today. I went in overly-prepared and came out a happy mom.”
Supporting Professionals

Acquiring an understanding of the challenges of families living with disability face each day helps professionals in health, education, child care and social services provide more effective services to children and their families. The insight professionals gain from informed parent leaders results in improved care, better systems management and more positive outcomes for individuals with disabilities and the communities in which they live.

Parent Panels

Parent Panels

Trained Parent Leaders present directly to students in education, health and social services. Their perspective on the challenges of raising a child with special needs adds fresh insight to training programs and helps prepare future professionals to provide family friendly services.

64 pediatric and family practice physicians from six hospitals and medical centers completed training and Home Visits.

Family and Community Medicine

Through the Family and Community Medicine Program, pediatric physicians in residency complete an orientation with Raising Special Kids staff followed by a home visit with Family Faculty—trained volunteer parents—for a first-hand look at the challenging role of raising a child with special needs.

691 Pre-service teachers attended parent panel presentations.
My reaction to the entire presentation was "wow!" Raising Special Kids provides a phenomenal service and now I have a new resource to help me.”
Serving Diverse Communities

Raising Special Kids provides support through information, training, and assistance in finding resources to thousands of Arizona residents each year. Services are offered free of charge to families and available to diverse communities in English and Spanish throughout the state. Assistance is designed to meet the unique needs of each family and is available through varied methods including individual consultation, workshops and conferences, and parent leadership development opportunities.

2004-2005
Total Contacts

Families of Diverse Language and Culture: 32%
Need new data

Community Outreach Activities

- Special Day for Special Kids
- Autism Conference – Window Rock
- Hopi Special Needs Activity Day – Kykotsmovi
- Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Council
- Training at Head Start programs serving Navajo and Hopi families
- In collaboration with UMOM, monthly workshops, training, and family support services, were provided to meet the unique needs of homeless families.

Staff and Parent Leaders represented the family voice on systems-level boards, committees, and activities:

- First Things First
- Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
- State Rehabilitation Council
- ICC for Part C programs
- Special Education Advisory Panel
- Cultural Competence Committee (ADHS)
- Foster Care Review Board
- Division of Developmental Disabilities Sustainability and Innovation Task Force
- Arizona Autism Coalition
- Children’s Action Alliance’s Health Care Committee
- Arizona Disability Advocacy Coalition.

Sent data to Vickie for new report
“Raising Special Kids has been a tremendous help, comfort and encouragement to countless individuals and families who wrestle with some of the toughest issues people have to face.”
Education

Many parents, and indeed, many professionals, find the system under which special education operates to be overwhelming. Some families found their child exiting high school before they fully understood the complexities of qualifying for special education services, developing Individual Education Programs (IEPs), and the availability of assistive technology. Raising Special Kids has helped thousands of parents understand their rights and how the system works so they can advocate effectively for what their child needs to receive a “Free and Appropriate Public Education” (FAPE) as guaranteed by law.

The U.S. Dept. of Education awarded Raising Special Kids a 5-year federal grant to serve as Arizona’s Parent Training and Information Center. Parent centers in each state provide training and information to families of infants, toddlers, school-aged children, and young adults with disabilities and the professionals who work with them. This assistance helps parents participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the educational needs of children and youth with disabilities.

Health

Raising Special Kids serves as Arizona’s Family to Family Health Information Center under an award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Our services encourage principles of family-centered care, and educate about policy and regulatory developments that may impact children and youth with special health care needs and their families.

92% of parents reported information at workshops will help them make better decisions about their child’s education.

94% of physicians trained reported improvement to their ability to communicate with families.

Principles of Family Centered Care

- Acknowledges the family as the constant in a child’s life.
- Builds on family strengths.
- Supports the child in learning about and participating in his/her care and decision-making.
- Honors cultural diversity and family traditions.
- Recognizes the importance of community-based services.
- Promotes an individual and developmental approach.
- Encourages family-to-family and peer support.
- Supports youth as they transition to adulthood.
- Develops policies, practices, and systems that are family-friendly and family-centered in all settings.
- Celebrates successes.
“Thanks again for attending the IEP meeting! I can't believe we finally got what we've been after for two whole years. I am really enthusiastic and have high hopes!!”
Family Stories

The O’Hare Family

When she mentioned at Jack’s 18-month checkup that her son was not using any words, Ellen recalls being told “not to worry.” After three more months passed with no words, their doctor recommended an Early Intervention evaluation. It was while receiving speech and occupational therapies that Ellen learned about Raising Special Kids.

She began consulting with staff, attending workshops and learning how to work with their school to get appropriate placement and services for Jack. Ellen finds the insight gained in the workshops to be invaluable and has attended “as many as I can!”

Ellen has become a leader in a support group for families of students with special needs at Jack’s school. She regards Raising Special Kids as an essential tool in assisting other families whom she often refers for services. Tom, a teacher at Midwestern University, has been instrumental in incorporating Raising Special Kids Parent Panels into classes for medical students at the university. Both parents use their experience of their child’s disability to reach out to help other families and professionals improve the lives of children.

Disabilities of Children of Families Served

1 Autism
2 At Risk (0-3) Developmental Disabilities
3 Developmental Disability
4 Speech/Language Disorder
5 ADD/ADHD
6 Down Syndrome
7 Behavioral Health

Age of Children of Families Served

Sent data to Vickie for new report
“Thank you, thank you for a wonderful conference today! I learned so much and got alot of resources that I did not have before. Thank you for all that you do!”
Milestones

A foundation grant from the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust for parent training supported a series of parent conferences throughout the state:

- Collaborative Therapy Conference – Phoenix Children’s Hospital
- Assistive Technology Conference – Noah’s Convention Center
- Practical Parenting Conference (Spanish) – Banner Estrella Medical Center
- Practical Parenting for Foster Parents – Disability Empowerment Center
- Collaborative Therapies Conference – Tuba City

Financial Statement

*Reporting year revenue and expenditures*

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<tr>
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<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Revenue</td>
<td>$ 879,118</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Information, Support &amp; Training</td>
<td>$ 670,072</td>
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<td>Training for Professionals</td>
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<td>Community Support</td>
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<td><strong>Program Expenditures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expenditures</td>
<td>$ 880,624</td>
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“Reader satisfaction with the newsletter is extremely high. Readers almost universally found the information is presented in a manner that is family friendly and easy to understand. The reputation for being trustworthy and reliable is excellent.”

— Piper Trust Report on results of Newsletter Survey
Thank You to our Community Partners

Special thanks to our State Partners who fund Family Support Programs

Arizona Department of Economic Security - Division of Developmental Disabilities
Arizona Department of Health Services - Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs
Arizona Department of Education

Referral Agency
A Place to Call Home
Aid to the Adoption of Special Kids
American Academy of Pediatrics
Arizona Autism United
Arizona Baptist Children's Services
Arizona Bridge to Independent Living
Arizona Care Providers, LLC
Arizona Center for Disability Law
Arizona Child Study Center
Arizona Counseling and Treatment Services
Arizona Department of Economic Security - Child Protective Services
Arizona Department of Economic Security - Division of Developmental Disabilities
Arizona Department of Education - PINS
Arizona Department of Health Services - Bureau for Women's and Children's Health Services
Arizona Pediatrics
Arizona State University
Arizona's Children Association
Association for Supportive Child Care: The Child Care Connection
Bart Stevens Special Needs Planning Services
Bureau for Women's and Children's Health Services
Cardon Children's Medical Center
CareConnectAZ
Catholic Charities
Cenpatico
Child & Family Resources/AzEIP
Child Care and Referral
Children's Rehabilitative Services
Christina Family Care Agency
City of Phoenix Early Head Start
City of Phoenix Head Start
Community Information & Referral
Coronado Elementary School
Deer Valley School District
Devereux
Direct Care Personnel
Dreaming Summit Elementary School
Emily Center
Family Learning Center
Family Partners
First Southern Baptist Church @ Sahuaro Ranch
First Things First
Friendly House
GALA
GANE
Gilbert Parent Council
Gilbert Unified School District
Glendale Family Health Center
Glendale Union High School District
Golden Gate Theological Seminary
Health and Associates Incorporated
Health Through Nature
Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies, Maricopa County
High Functioning Asperger's Group
Hummingbird
Hurley Ranch Elementary School
Jewish Family & Children's Services
Joni and Friends
Kith and Kin
La Frontera EMPACT
Laveen School
Learning and Loving It Symposium
Legend Springs
Life Development Institute
Lindbergh Elementary
Magellan of Arizona
Maricopa Health Plan
Maricopa Medical Center
Maryvale Family Health Center (MIHS)
Melmed Center
Mexican Consulate
Mesa Unified School District
Mountain Health and Wellness
Mountain View High School
Murphy School District
Muscular Dystrophy Association
NAMI Arizona
Northern Arizona Autism Society of America
On Angel's Wings
One Life Unlimited
Parenting Arizona
Payson Education Center
PEDI Center
People Of Color
Phoenix Children's Hospital
Phoenix Interfaith Counseling
Providence Clinica Famila
Providencia
Quality Care Network
Rehab Without Walls
RISE, Inc.
S.E.E.K.
Safe Haven
Salt River High School
SARRC
Sharing Down Syndrome
Southwest Behavioral Health
Southwest Human Development
Southwest Network
St. Joseph's Hospital
Sunrise E Elementary
Sunshine Acres
TASK San Diego
Tempe Unified School District
Touchstone Behavioral Health
Tourette Syndrome Assoc Support Group
Traumatic Brain Injury Assn.
Tungland Corporation
U.S. Department of Education
UCP of Central AZ
UMOM
Union Elementary School District/Dos Rios Elementary
United Healthcare APIPA
University Family Care
Washington Elementary School District
Weinburg Elementary/Chandler
West Valley Family Development Center
Yavapai School

Donors
“We called Raising Special Kids, because we knew the information and training you provide to families is clear and accurate.”

Tommi Pierce, Special Education Director, Gilbert School District