



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.”*



## 2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# Letter from the President of the Board

President Kevin Bonner  
*Fennemore Craig*

Vice President Elaine Ellis, MD

Secretary Vickie Herd  
*Extended Family Disability Services  
LLC*

Treasurer Elizabeth Freeburg  
*Wells Fargo Private Client Services*

Heather Buchta  
*Quarles, Brady, Streich & Lang*

Jim Cole  
*Channel 3 TV*

Bob Cox  
*Nothing But NET*

Blanca Esparza-Pap  
*Community and Public Relations  
Manager, Channel 3 TV*

Karen Hinds  
*Tempe Union High School District*

Shirley Kaufman  
*Retired Attorney*

Michael Remus  
*Director of Special Education,  
Deer Valley Unified School District*

Gabriela Sanchez Orozco  
*President of G.A.N.E. (Grupo de  
Apoyo para Nios Especiales)*

Susan Voirol  
*Tempe Union High School District*

Tim Watters  
*Colliers International*

XXXXX



Kevin Bonner

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Bonner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*“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.”*



# Developing Parent Leaders



*Parent Leaders offer information and support.*

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.

# 2010

## 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.

**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.



## 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.

**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."*



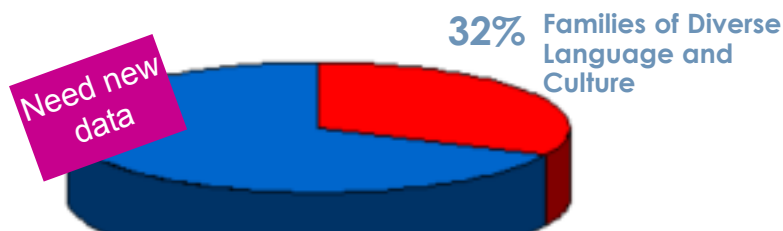
# Serving Diverse Communities

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.

## 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.

## 2004-2005 Total Contacts



Sent data to Vickie for new report

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.*

*“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.

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

# Health

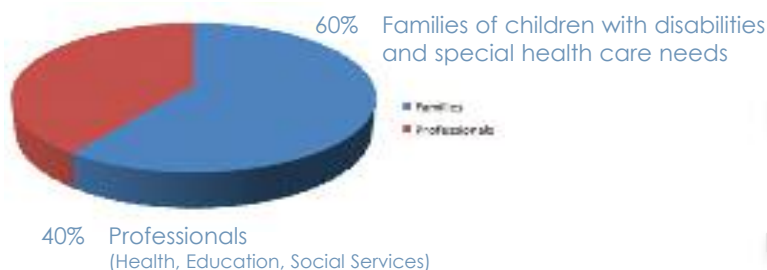
Raising Special Kids serves as Arizona's Family to Family Health Information Center under an award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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.

## 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.

Parents and Professionals Served



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

*“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

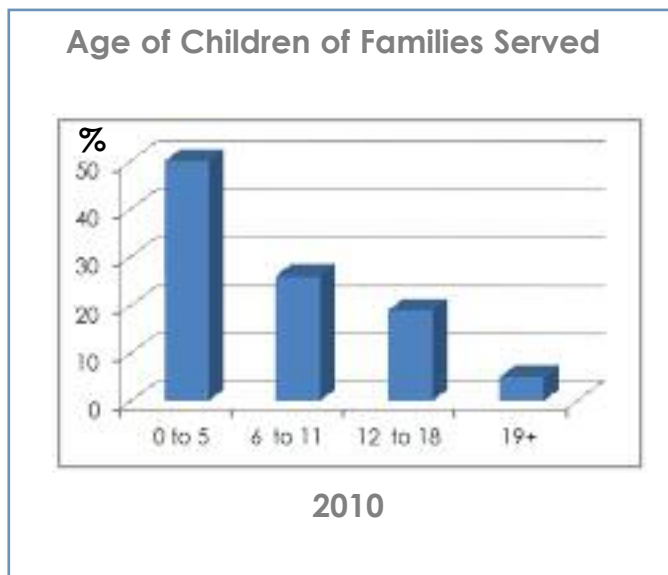
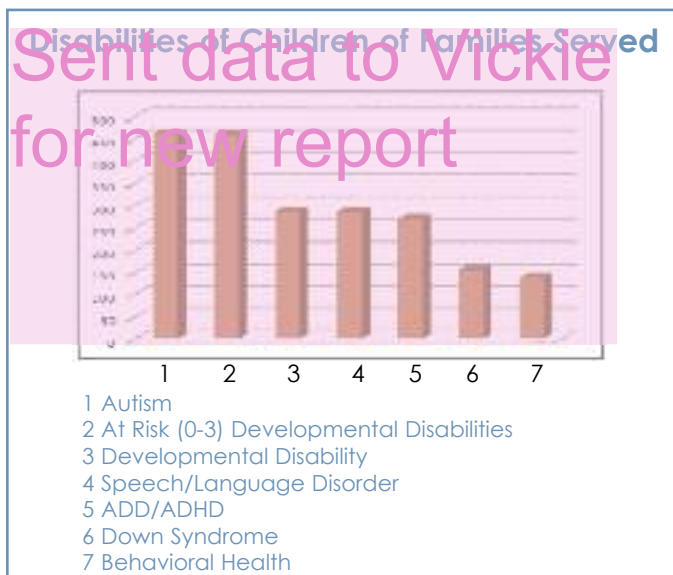
When she mentioned at Jack's 18-month checkup that her son was not using any words, Ellen recalls being told "not to worry." After three more months passed with no words, their doctor recommend an Early Intervention evaluation. It was while receiving speech and occupational therapies that Ellen learned 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 & Thomas O'Hare with son Jack who has autism

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.





*“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



# 2010

## Financial Statement

### *Reporting year revenue and expenditures*

<b>\$ 879,118</b>	<b>Total Revenue</b>
\$ 670,072	Parent Information, Support & Training
\$ 104,878	Training for Professionals
\$ 95,738	Community Support
<hr/>	
\$ 774,949	<b>Program Expenditures</b>
\$ 105,675	Administrative Functions
<b>\$ 880,624</b>	<b>Total Expenditures</b>

*“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  
Melvin E Sine Elementary  
Mesa Unified School District  
Mexican Consulate  
MIKID  
Mountain Health and Wellness  
Mountain Pointe 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 Familia

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 Assn Support Group  
Traumatic Brain Injury Assn.  
Tungland Coporation  
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





Raising Special Kids  
5025 E. Washington St., Suite 204  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
602-242-4366 • 800-237-3007 • Fax 602-242-4306  
[www.raisingpecialkids.org](http://www.raisingpecialkids.org)

Raising Special Kids is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.