Raising Special Kids Mission

Raising Special Kids exists to improve the lives of children with the full range of disabilities, from birth to age 26, by providing support, training, information and individual assistance so families can become effective advocates for their children.

Letter from the Board President

Each year seems to bring new changes and growth at Raising Special Kids. We are pleased to present the 2015 Annual Report to feature the latest news about our mission and accomplishments from the past year.

As a medical professional, and parent of a beautiful, accomplished daughter with Down syndrome, I am particularly proud of the fact that so many professionals in health, education, and social services attended training last year to improve their skills in providing a better quality of care for families and for children with special health care needs.

As you read through the report, you’ll see how hard we’ve been working to achieve our mission of family support for parents of children with the full range of disabilities. We served more families in 2014 than we have in previous years, forged more community partnerships, and trained more professionals than ever before. The numbers are all described and presented, and you can see the impact we’ve had on the community, but Raising Special Kids has never been about the numbers.

Raising Special Kids is about the kids, each and every single one of them. I hope you will take the time to read the story from the Michael family. Laura Michael tells the real story of 2015.

For over 35 years Raising Special Kids has been there: for the Michael family, for your family, and mine. For all our children, here’s to a bright future full of promise and potential.

Paula Banahan, President
Board of Directors

What’s Inside - Table of Contents

3-4 Programs & Services
Learn more about the programs and services offered to families and professionals

5 Financials
Learn more about the financial health of Raising Special Kids

6-7 Donors & Supporters
Learn more about the donors who help make Raising Special Kids possible

8 Celebrations
Celebrate with Raising Special Kids for the awards and recognitions received
Who we Serve

85% Families with disabilities and special health care needs
15% Professionals (health, education, social services)

9057 families received information, training, and individual assistance
98% of parents said I received information to help me address a critical need related to my child's education

379 Parent to Parent Matches
92% of parents said that Parent to Parent support improved my ability to advocate for my child's needs, services, and care

Positive Family Intervention (PFI) Program

As a self-described ‘older parent,’ Laura thought her difficulty keeping up with her son had more to do with her own age than with anything else. But when the school started calling with concerns, she realized there was something more going on. Their pediatrician referred her to a psychologist, and Laura’s son was diagnosed with ADHD. Her son was later referred to a developmental pediatrician who confirmed a developmental disability.

As her son entered a new grade, Laura shared, “Fourth grade was really tough; tough for him and tough for me. I love kids! But I was having a hard time ‘getting’ my own kid. I found myself slipping into a deep depression and losing faith in my ability to be a good mom.” Laura reached out to Raising Special Kids and described her concerns about her son’s situation at school. When the discussion indicated Laura might benefit from a new approach toward managing her son’s challenging behavior, she was enrolled in the Positive Family Intervention (PFI) program.

Laura admits she didn’t fully realize what she was signing up for when she agreed to participate in the PFI program but she says, “It couldn’t have come at a better time. I thought it was going to be a class, but I didn’t think it was all going to be for me. That was a complete surprise.”

After her first PFI session Laura recalls, “I felt like I had won the lottery.” As the 2-hour weekly sessions progressed, she compared the experience to rock climbing, “I gained purchase — a handhold so I could pull myself up. I really think it saved my life!”

Laura completed the PFI program and recently reflected on what she gained from the experience, “I’m optimistic about the future. I know my son has lots to give. It’s a touchstone for me. I’m a better mother.”

Not long ago, Laura faced a difficult meeting with the school. “It was challenging but I turned to the things I learned in the PFI program. I’m much more confident. You can’t give someone enough money to buy the empowerment I gained from this training.”

Laura Michael

Programs for Parents and Families

Parent-to-Parent support has always been the heart of Raising Special Kids. Each year, more than 300 families in Arizona are connected with veteran “mentor” parents who have walked a similar path, and who understand the challenges of raising a child with a disability or special health care need.

Raising Special Kids provides training and consultation in special education to families, schools, teachers, and other professionals.

Workshops offer training in a variety of skills including advocacy, effective communication and collaboration techniques. Our newsletter, Connecting, reaches more than 11,000 parents and professionals and e-news alerts are shared by request with a growing list of interested individuals.

Over 12,000 parents and professionals were reached through e-news alerts by request.
Programs and Services for Professionals

Programs for resident physicians in pediatrics and family practice relay information about parents’ perspective on issues relating to medical services. Parent Panels and staff-led workshops are available to students in education, medical, oral health and social service fields.

4,275 Training/Conference Attendees (Parents 1,983; Professionals 2,292)
96% of educational professionals reported being better prepared to work with families
51 pediatric and family practice physicians from five hospitals and medical centers completed training and home visits
98% of physicians reported training improved ability to communicate with families

“This is honestly what I’ve been looking for – a comprehensive resource for families regardless of the diagnosis. I love that the organization is parent run, that it connects families going through similar experiences, and empowers communities.”

- Abimbola Oduguwe, M.D., Phoenix Children’s Hospital

Children Demographics

Ages
- 0-2 year – 10%
- 3-5 years – 18%
- 6-11 years – 34%
- 12-15 years – 17%
- 16-18 years – 14%
- 19+ years – 6%

Disability
- ADHD – 12%
- Autism – 24%
- Intellectual – 4%
- Deaf/Blind – 3%
- Developmental – 10%
- Emotional/Mental – 6%
- Epilepsy – 2%
- Hearing Impairment/Deaf – 1%
- Multiple Disabilities – 1%
- Other Health Impairment – 9%
- Orthopedic – 6%
- Specific Learning Disability – 5%
- Speech/Language – 5%
- Suspected/Undiagnosed – 5%
- Traumatic Brain Injury – 1%
- Visual/Blindness – 1%

Ethnicity
- African American – 6%
- Asian/Pacific Islander – 2%
- Bi-Racial – 2%
- Caucasian – 45%
- Hispanic/Latino – 41%
- Native American – 6%
Financials

At Raising Special Kids we are committed to using funds responsibly to ensure we help families today and in future generations.

Total 2,957 hours would equal over $61,000

“It (PFI) couldn’t have come at a better time. I felt like I had won the lottery. I gained purchase — a handhold so I could pull myself up. I really think it saved my life!”

Community Outreach

- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC)
- African American Conference on Disabilities
- Education for Parents of Indian Children with Special Needs (EPICS) Conference
- Tohono O’odham
- Special Day for Special Kids
- American Indian Disability Summit
- Santa Cruz World Autism Awareness Day
- Youth Action Council of Arizona (YAC-AZ)
- Connecting Tucson Community Event
- Preventative Health Collaboration
- DDD Employment and Transition Fair
- Down Syndrome Conference
- Family Fun Day – Tuba City
- Graham County Back to School Fair – Safford
- Moenkopi Child Find Event
- Special Education Director’s Institute
- Sierra Vista Ability Day
- Crane School District Kindergarten Transition – Yuma
- Mission Community Church Foster Outreach
- Safe and Supportive Schools

Where Does our Money Come From?

2015

Grants and contracts .................. $1,577,058
Donations .............................. $270,712

$1,577,058 Grants and Contracts

$270,712 Donations

PROGRAM EXPENDITURES (in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Support Services</td>
<td>$923,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Support Services</td>
<td>$646,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$36,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and General</td>
<td>$240,210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank You to our Donors!

Your generosity helps us serve thousands of families each year.

### 2015 Donors

#### Legacy Benefactors
- CareScape, Inc.  
  $300,000+
- Arizona Business Bank  
  $200,000+

#### Guardians ($500 to $999)
- AZ-Rebath
- Mike Chouteau
- Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
- Steve & Vickie French
- Mike Horne
- Ken & Valerie Kahoun Jr.
- Kile & Kupiszewski Law Firm
- Tom Maritz
- Victoria Millard
- Susan Morris
- Janna Murrell
- Chuck & Donna Riser
- Charles Sauter
- Scheller, CPA PC
- Jennifer & Dave Shields
- Sonoran UCEDD
- State Employees Charitable Camp.
- John & Molly West
- Jeff White

#### Champions for the Cause ($1,000 to $19,999)
- Paula & James Banahan
- Karen Barr
- Thomas Batson
- Nilesh U. Bhakta, MD PC
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona Barbara Brent
- Mike Hughes, The Buffa Foundation
- Carbonari Family Foundation, Inc.
- Cenpatico of Arizona
- Central Christian Church
- Charity Benefits Unlimited, LLC
- Edward B. Diethrich, M.D.
- Scott & Christine Dietrich
- Express Scripts
- Rosa Fernandez
- The Hannah B Foundation
- Heinfeld Meech & Co., PC
- Eugene Huang
- Regan Iker-Lopez
- Jennifer Kupiszewski
- Medtronic
- Joyce Millard Hoie
- Timothy & Susan Noren
- Off Madison Avenue
- Lawrence O’Neill
- Perkins Coie, LLP
- Phoenix Children’s Hospital
- TFO Phoenix
- The Wayne Foundation
- United Healthcare
- William Weiss
- Greg & Tracy White

#### Mentors ($250 to $499)
- Nancy Allen
- Emily Andrisevic
- Arizona Center for Disability Law
- Corey & Nancy Arvizu
- Marti Baio
- Clara Lee Anne Betzhold
- Kevin & Amy Bonner
- Walter Brown
- Evangeline & Patrick Buckley
- Anna Burgmann
- Julie Cauich
- Sharon and Michael Choquette
- Mike & Melissa DeMore
- Developmental Pediatrics/  
  A Division of Perinatal Associates
- Michael Disalvo
- Steve Doyle
- Nicholas Elam
- Fix It Fox, LLC
- Elizabeth Freeburg
- Susan Gregg Odom
- Nancy Gunderson
- Nathaniel Hastings
- Vickie Herd
- David Hesser
- Karen Hinds
- Philip R Hobday
- Valerie & David Iwinski
- Kara Vita, Inc.
- Emily Kile
- Ellen & William Leibow
- Nicole Madera
- Andrew Martin
- Nancy Maser
- Kathy McDonald
- Larri McNutt-Fox
- Nancy Meech
- Sharon Melton
- Dr. Shawn Meyer
- Janet Moeur
- NAU
- Nothing But Net
- Ndidiamaaka Obiesie
- Stephen & Amy Pawlowski
- Vaughn Perkins III
- Nathalie Potvin
- Heather Prouty
- John & Michele Quinn
- Bill and Rhonda Reinhold
- Pam & Mark Remsey
- Kristen Roles
- David Rucker
- Deanna Salazar
- Kenneth & Carol Schachter
- Grant Senner, MD
- Maulik Shah
- Mary Slaughter
- Jon & Lisa Soeby
- Stephanie Stevens
- Troy Stockstad
- Christopher Tiffany
- Timothy Tipton
- Tigran Unclano
- Marc & Susan Voirol
- Debbie Voll
- Claudia Weiss
- Leslie Williams
- Patricia Winner
- Kerstin Ziemmer

#### Friends (to $249)
- ADDPC
- Dr. Mary Allare
- Amy & Charles Allen
- Kristina Amator
- Amazon Smile Foundation
- Margaret & C. Leroy Anderson
- Scott Anderson
- Arlene Arvizu
- Syed Astikuzzaman
- Ellen & Lon Babby
- Kate Baker
- Susan Baker
- Karen Bannon
- Christine & Henry Barela
- Michaeleine Barlow
- Sandy Bawden
- Christine Bell

#### Community Partners

- 385
- 9,057 Families Assisted
- 2,292 Professionals Trained

“I recently spoke with your staff who took the time to listen and understand my questions and then provided the answers and resources with such clarity, that I understood completely. I now have the knowledge to know what questions to ask.”
“Thank you so much for following up. I have been so impressed by the networking system within Raising Special Kids, and the compassion and care that I have witnessed. It is comforting to know I have somewhere to turn to help me navigate and learn the insider’s perspective.”

Karen Hayenga
Bonnie Heal
Jim & Christy Hilliard
William Hoie
Helen Holden
Susan & Earle Howey
Ingrid Huang
Claudia & Leon Iglesias
Amy Jo Jankowski
Laura & Bart Jansen
Matthew Jewett
Marc Kamin
Roxanne Kane
Grace Kassnick
Geraldine Kasten
Barbara Kelley
Dr. & Mrs. Dan Kessler
Caitlin King
Sherry Klein
Dick & Betty Kowalski
Melissa Kushner
Raeann Larned
Jack Larsen
Gregory Lechowski
Stephen Lennox
Brook Lincoln
Jill Linden
Gabriela Lopez
Isaac & Ericka Lopez
Craig Martin
Suzy Martin
Courtney Mathus
Shauna & Ronald Mattson
Brian McBride
Dr. Raun Melmed
Mary Lou Micheaels
Terry Millard
Zell Millard
Maureen & John Mills
Sandra Minard
Eileen Mueske
Louise Murphy
Tobi Murphy
Ramona Napier
Chellappan Narayanan
Donald & Danielle Needham
Mary Neil
Corinne Newbold
Mark A. Nickel
Ben Novak
Kim & Jeff Obert
Nancy Oreshack
Michael & Katie Pabst
Philip Pangrazio
Dr. Leslie Paulus
Kirk & Marilyn Peda
Cathleen Penkoff
Libby Kurtz Peterson
Craig & Alissa Pierson
Shantil & Glenn Posnack
Linda Priano
Deshon Pullean
Denise & Stephen Quinlan
Veronica Ramirez
Kelly Randall
Ross Robb
Jacob Robertson
Alan & Ellen Rothbart
Debbie Rummel
Ellen Ruteimiller
Ryan Companies US, Inc.
Nannette Salasek
Michael Sanderfer
Michelle & Richard Slack
Chuck & Nancy Smith
Karim Smith
Jami Snyder
Carol Soderquist
Software, Inc.
James & Christina Speros
Mindee Stevenson
Christina & Tom Stoneking
Victoria Strayer
Amy & Eric Taylor
Debbie Terrill
Paul & Margaret Tiffany
Thomas Timmer
Kelly Triplett
Betsy Trombino
Daniel Turbyfill
Jeffrey Turner
Esmeralda Vasquez
Aaron Vix
Randy Voigt
Anh Toan Vu
Jill & Michael Walker
Virginia Ward
Jo Ann & Gordon Watkins
Theodore Wayne
Greg & Desiree Wells
Brandon & Brittany Wheeler
Latasha Whitaker
Mike & Candace Wilkinson
Debbie Wilson
Wines for Humanity
Neil Wintle
Cherie Wright
Mary Zanelli

“I’m optimistic about the future. I know my son has lots to give. It’s a touchstone for me. I’m a better mother.”
AHCCCS Autism Spectrum Disorders Advisory Committee
Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits Policy Council
AFN Emergency Preparedness Task Force
Arizona Autism Coalition
Arizona Department of Education
  • Community of Practice on Transition
  • Special Education Advisory Panel
  • Rules Committee
  • State Inclusion Coalition
Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
Arizona Disability Advocacy Coalition
Arizona State University, Presidents Community Council
ASPIRE (Achieving Success by Promoting Readiness for Education and Employment) Advisory Council
Center for Parent Information and Resources, Advisory Council
*Dignity Health Communities of Care
Division of Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council
Employment First
First Things First
FTF (ECCS) Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Early Identification Workgroup
Maricopa County Family Support Alliance
Native American Parent Technical Assistance Center (NAPPTAC) Governing Board
Parent 2 Parent USA, National Board of Directors
PBISaz (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports of Arizona) State Advisory Council
Phoenix Children’s Hospital
  • Family Advisory Council
  • Genetic Services Advisory Committee
  • Take Action for Az Kids Care Coordination
State Medicaid Advisory Council
State Rehabilitation Council