

Possibilities in Education and Training

Spring/Summer
2023



Embracing Freedom and Independence in a New Home

By Michelle Johnston, *Program Coordinator, Iowa UCEDD, Center for Disabilities and Development*



In November of 2022, Kingsley Boona overcame several obstacles and achieved a major milestone when he transitioned from living at Woodward Resource Center to a shared home in Tama. Through his

commitment to transitioning and his referral to Money Follows the Person (MFP), Kingsley was able to accomplish this goal. MFP is a program which provides eligible Medicaid recipients funding for the transition services and enhanced supports needed for the first year after the transition to community living. With the dedicated support of MFP Transition Specialist, Kendra Walde, Kingsley made the transition and their combined efforts played a vital role in facilitating his successful move.

Kendra worked closely with Kingsley and the staff at Woodward Resource Center to ensure he would have the supports, services, and resources he needed when he moved to the community. Kendra also worked with the Conner Training Connection (CTC)

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A Bumpy Road Leads to a Life Well Lived in the Community

By Michelle Johnston, *Program Coordinator, Iowa UCEDD, Center for Disabilities and Development*



Although his transition from Woodward Resource Center to his current home in the community included some bumps along the way, Nick Arrendell says his home is his favorite place to be. After

living at Woodward for a couple of years, Nick made the transition to the community. The first attempt in the community was not successful, so he moved into an intermediate care facility (ICF) at One Vision Disability Services. He now resides in a home in Mason City purchased by his sister Angie and brother-in-law Josh. So after a few not quite right moves, he has landed in the perfect place.

When Nick is home, he finds joy in drawing and indulging in 80's movies. Among his favorites are "Secret to My Success" and "Beverly Hills Cop." While immersed in these films, Nick enjoys identifying characters who resemble people he knows personally.

During Nick's transition to his new home, Gina

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for assistance with the first few months of rent and some groceries to start out. The CTC covers specific transition-related costs for individuals moving from the resource centers.

Now Kingsley shares a home with three roommates and a committed staff member. This transition has given him a newfound sense of independence and the opportunity to have meaningful relationships with both his roommates and supportive staff. When asked about his favorite part of living in the community, Kingsley enthusiastically exclaimed, "Freedom—and having an internet connection!"

When he resided at Woodward, Kingsley did not have access to the internet. Being able to spend time on his tablet and iPad provides him a lot of entertainment. He plays games and explores a wide range of content on YouTube. Kingsley thinks his roommates are "great!" He enjoys spending time with them around the house and dining out together for lunch or dinner. Kingsley says his favorite place to eat out is Taco Johns. "I love the potato olés!"

Through his regular participation at REM, Iowa Day Habilitation, a program that supports adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and promotes community integration, Kingsley finds fulfillment and develops life skills. During his time there, he enjoys various activities including card games, crafting, and going on outings.

Kingsley has some great advice for anyone thinking about making a successful move to the community. "It's important to listen to the people who give you support and follow their directions," he said.

Kingsley Boona's journey from Woodward Resource Center to his own home in Tama is a testament to his perseverance and the effectiveness of programs like Money Follows the Person. With the ongoing support of dedicated professionals, Kingsley not only has been able to achieve independence, but also has given himself the opportunity for personal growth, meaningful relationships, and an enriched quality of life.

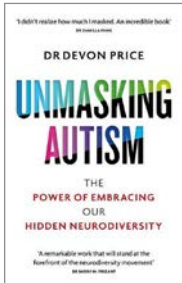
Makarios, a transition specialist with Money Follows the Person (MFP), played a crucial role. MFP is a program which provides eligible Medicaid recipients funding for the transition services and enhanced supports needed during the first year after the transition to community living. Gina's assistance included working with the Conner Training Connection (CTC) to secure a yearlong YMCA membership for Nick. The CTC covers specific transition-related costs for individuals moving from the resource centers.

A highly social individual, Nick thrives in the company of others. His YMCA membership has opened doors to a wide range of activities. He thoroughly enjoys playing pickleball and racquetball, and honing his basketball and football skills. He even had the opportunity to take a dance class with his sister. Nick also has participated in Special Olympics, with great success in the Turbo Javelin, which has allowed him to spend quality time with Josh. And thanks to Angie, Nick has been attending shows at the NIACC Performing Arts & Leadership Series. This engaging experience not only exposes him to various art forms, but also strengthens the bonds he shares with his sister and support staff.

Nick works at Affordables, a thrift store, where he finds great satisfaction in sorting and dating books, along with talking to his co-workers and the customers. Soon, he will also begin volunteering at the Humane Society, where he will spend time playing with the cats and walking the dogs. Nick is also actively involved with his church community, attending services and participating in church activities.

Things are running smoothly for Nick now, but it took everyone working together to make that happen. Angie knows her brother does well with a set schedule and lots of opportunities for social interaction. Her advice for family members helping a loved one make the transition to community living: ask the provider to give them a glimpse of what their life will look like and how they will be involved in the community!

The Center for Disabilities and Development's disability resource library is always growing! Below you will find a collection of newly acquired material available for check out from the library. Subjects include autism, dyslexia, anxiety, and more! You can browse through and find these books and others at the disability resource library online catalog at uichildrens.org/drl-catalog. For further information or questions, you may contact the disability resource librarian, Mitch DeFauw, at mitchell-defauw@uiowa.edu.

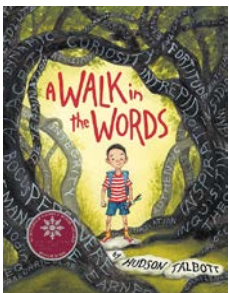


Unmasking Autism: Discovering the New Faces of Neurodiversity

by Devon Price, PhD

In *Unmasking Autism*, Dr. Devon Price shares his personal experience with masking and blends history, social science research,

prescriptions, and personal profiles to tell a story of neurodivergence that has long been dominated by those on the outside looking in. Unfortunately, living in a neurotypical world means it can also be a source of incredible alienation and pain. Most masked Autistic individuals struggle for decades before discovering who they truly are. They are also more likely to be marginalized in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, and other factors. In this book, Dr. Price lays the groundwork for celebrating the traits of autism and offers exercises that encourage and promote self-expression.



A Walk in the Words

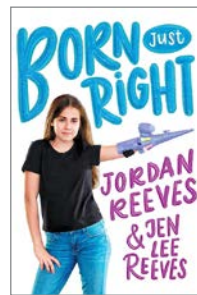
by Hudson Talbott (picture book)

When Hudson Talbott was a little boy, he loved drawing, and it came naturally to him. But reading? No way! One at a time, words weren't a problem,

but long sentences were a struggle. As his friends moved on to thicker books, he kept his slow reading a secret. But that got harder every year. He felt alone, lost, and afraid in a world of too many words.

Fortunately, his love of stories wouldn't let him give up. He started giving himself permission to read at his own pace, using the words he knew as stepping-stones to help draw him into a story. And he found he wasn't

so alone--in fact, lots of brilliant people were slow readers, too. Learning to accept the fact that everyone does things in their own unique way, and that was okay, freed him up and ultimately helped Hudson thrive and become the fabulous storyteller he is today.

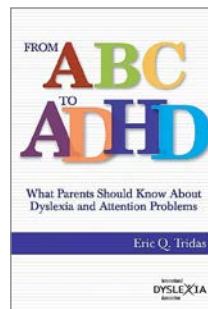


Born Just Right

by Jordan Reeves and Jen Lee Reeves

When Jordan Reeves was born without the bottom half of her left arm, the doctors reassured her parents that she was "born just right." And she has been proving

that doctor right ever since! With candor, humor, and heart, Jordan's mother, Jen Lee Reeves, helps Jordan tell her story about growing up in an able-bodied world and family, where she was treated like her siblings and classmates—and where she never felt limited. Whether it was changing people's minds about her capabilities, trying all kinds of sports, or mentoring other kids, Jordan has channeled any negativity into a positive, and is determined to create more innovations for people just like her.

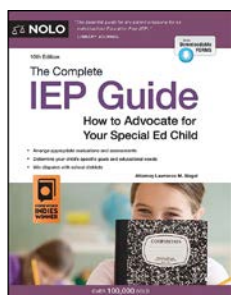


From ABC to ADHD: What Every Parent Should Know About Dyslexia and Attention Problems

by Eric Q. Tridas

From ABC to ADHD is an understandable, reliable source of information for parents of a child with a developmental or behavioral problem. Written by an experienced team of physicians and neuropsychologists, this essential guide walks parents through topics that

include the role of attention in reading and the causes of ADHD and dyslexia. Chapters also provide an overview of the latest findings and professional advice in the areas of diagnosis, treatment, coexisting conditions, and advances in neurobehavioral research. Readers will also learn about the relationships of different brain functions, such as attention, memory, and executive function, and how they affect behavior and academic performance.

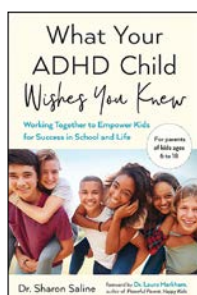


The Complete IEP Guide: How to Advocate for Your Special Ed Child

by Lawrence M. Siegel, Attorney

Federal law guarantees every child a free appropriate education, and the goal of the Individualized

Education Program (IEP) is to assure that every child with special needs receives what the law promises. This powerful book covers eligibility rules and assessments, working with outside experts, developing a child's ideal educational program, preparing for and attending IEP meetings, and resolving disputes with school districts. Also included in the guide are key forms, sample letters, and resources parents and educators need at every stage of the IEP process.



What Your ADHD Child Wishes You Knew: Working Together to Empower Kids for Success in School and Life

by Dr. Sharon Saline and Dr. Laura Markham

What if you could work with your child, motivating and engaging them in the process, to create positive change once and for all? In this insightful and practical book, veteran psychologist Sharon Saline shares the words and inner struggles of children and teens living with ADHD - and a blueprint for achieving lasting success by working together. Topics include setting mutual goals that foster cooperation, easing academic struggles, and tackling everyday challenges, from tantrums and backtalk to staying organized, building friendships, and more.

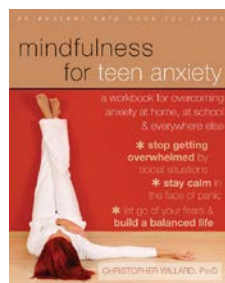


Planet Earth is Blue

by Nicole Panteleakos
(middle grade fiction)

Twelve-year-old Nova is eagerly awaiting the launch of the space shuttle Challenger - it's the first time a teacher is going into space, and kids across America will watch the event on live TV in their classrooms. Nova and her big sister, Bridget, share a love of astronomy and the space program. They planned to watch the launch together. But Bridget has disappeared, and Nova is in a new foster home.

While foster families and teachers dismiss Nova as severely autistic and nonverbal, Bridget understands how intelligent and special Nova is, and all that she can't express. As the liftoff draws closer, Nova's new foster family and teachers begin to see her potential, and for the first time, she is making friends without Bridget. But every day, she's counting down to the launch, and to the moment when she'll see Bridget again. Because Bridget said, "No matter what, I'll be there. I promise."



Mindfulness for Teen Anxiety: A Workbook for Overcoming Anxiety at Home, at School, and Everywhere Else

by Christopher Willard, PsyD

In this second edition of Mindfulness for Teen Anxiety, psychologist and learning specialist Christopher Willard offers teens proven-effective, mindfulness-based practices to help teens cope with their anxiety, identify common triggers, learn valuable time-management skills, and feel more calm at home, in school, and with friends. The book covers skills including public speaking, taking tests, meeting new people, and much more. Readers will also learn special skills to cope with their anxiety, including special breathing exercises and guided visualization exercises that can help in tense situations.

Possibilities in Education and Training is a quarterly publication of University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities. It is an outreach initiative of the Conner Training Connection, a program funded by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to support the transition of individuals with disabilities from congregate to community-based settings.

As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others. —Audrey Hepburn

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