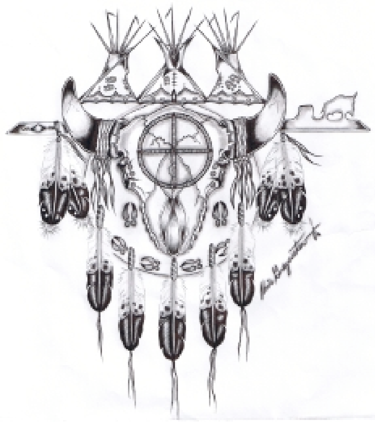
MINIWAKAN TIYOSPAYE NEWS



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News from the little creek that sings

Guest Column by Jordan Laducer

Hello, my name is Jordan Laducer. I am 18 years of age and I go to school at Turtle Mountain Community High School. I was asked to write this letter to share my side of the story on how modifications helped me.

When I was born I was 42% deaf in my left ear. Because of this I did not comprehend things fast and really did not know how to read or how to spell things out. Later in life when I was in middle school and even before middle school I had so many problems in comprehending things that it was really a struggle for me to learn things at a slower rate than my fellow classmates at the time. I was always brought up by my family that when life gets hard keep your head up and keep trying till you succeed. Knowing that my parents were with me every step of the way I then knew that I could do whatever I wanted to do if I set my mind to it.

Now that I am in high school things have changed for me so much. At the beginning when I was a freshman in high school I pushed everyone away because I thought that I did not need no one to help me. I figured since I really did not get any help before that I did not need help now. As I grew older and more cautious with my disability I then understood that nobody can help me unless I myself am willing to trust someone again to help me and to help myself in the process. The reason why I've said this is because so many times people have helped me and once I started to get comfortable with them and started to trust them they then left because they either found a different job or they felt that I did not need any more help.

Now that I am a senior in high school I have come to realize that the only person besides my parents was Duane Foss, a local teacher at my high school who specializes in helping people who need modifications. I would really like to thank Mr. Foss for really helping me in the long run.

In the future I would like to go to college for business because this was one class that was very easy for me and the only class that I really understood. My plan is to go into business to be a business major with minors in advertising and law.

Jordan Laducer

For the people who are struggling in their disabilities I would *like* to tell them that it gets easier in the end, but it really doesn't. You have to learn to live with it. And yes, you have a hard road ahead of you, but like my parents have said, "keep your head high because when life gets hard you have to keep strong and keep fighting because you will succeed in the end." I mean look at me I am a prime example of a person who succeeded because I am a person who really did not know how to read or spell and now a person with a 3.5 GPA. I am a member of an honor society, three-year member of student council, and a four-year member of FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America). Remember this, anything can happen if you put your mind to it..

The Challenges of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

by SLC Staff Writer, Maria Burns

Maria Burns

Love is a wonderful healer, but it cannot undo brain damage. These are words posted by a mother who adopted a child with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. They convey both the love she feels for her child, but the constant struggles and feelings she and her family face in raising a child with such a condition.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, or FAS, is a disease that affects children who were exposed to alcohol while their mothers were pregnant. Children with FAS have behavioral and developmental problems that will affect them the rest of their lives as a result. {The best site we could find on the causes, prevention and symptoms of FAS was this one by the Center for Disease Control.}

Raising a child with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome can be rewarding. Children with FAS can be very loving and it is always a joy for parents to watch their children grow. But, parents of children with FAS will encounter many struggles. It is not always easy raising children and raising a child with FAS is more difficult because he or she will have more needs as result of having this disability.

Guilt

For parents of children with FAS, guilt is a major problem. It is after a child with FAS is born and throughout that child's life the mother may feel very guilty. She now sees the direct effect her drinking had on her unborn child. It is not a condition that goes away. Realizing that if she had not drank while pregnant then her baby would not be suffering from the problems he or she has is a very difficult thing for many mothers to grasp. For mothers who are dealing with these feelings it is very important to seek help. These feelings will not go away and your child needs you even more now to help him or her develop. You can ask your doctor about helping you find a therapist or many other places that provide services for mother may be able to help as well.

[redacted]

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome continued …

Learning

Children with FAS have difficulty learning. They have a hard time sitting still in class, in following directions and remembering what they are told. All of these things make it difficult for children with FAS to do well in school. Special education classes can help, as well as having an IEP, individualized education plan, set up that will specifically work with your child's needs. It is important to understand that children with FAS, like other children with learning disabilities, will take longer to learn many things than other children. It is very important to remain patient with them. It may at times be frustrating, but it is important to remember it is a just a child you are dealing with and he or she is likely trying his or her best.

For some practical suggestions on how to help a child with FAS learn be sure you read, from the Fetal Alcohol Community Resource Center, this page on 8 Keys to Successful Intervention for Children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Finding help can be difficult. Your school system is required to offer special education services, but staff may not be sure of how to best help a child with FAS. Depending on where you live, there may not be as many services available to you. It is important that you seek out resources. Your school system is the best place to start. Other places like Head Start or Even Start programs will be able to give you some direction as well.

Childcare

Another challenge often faced by parents of children with FAS is finding someone reliable and responsible to care for their child. Because children with FAS have special needs it is important to make sure you are leaving your child with someone that realizes that. Leaving him or her with a 14-year-old babysitter or a 70-year-old relative may not be the best thing to do because they may not understand your child's condition. You want to make sure that they understand that your child isn't misbehaving, but because of some of his learning and behavioral problems he doesn't understand not to do that or that he is supposed to listen to them.

Socializing

Children with FAS often end up more isolated from other children. Young kids do not understand that a child with FAS may be acting out because she has FAS and it is not because she is "just weird" or any of the other wrong ideas other kids might get because they don't know what FAS is. Children have a hard time understanding things like FAS and will unfortunately not necessarily want to play with another child that has a hard time listening or doesn't understand the rules of the game or that pays attention for just a short amount of time before moving on to something else. It is important to try and have your child socialize with other children and that your child be taught how to behave around other children, such as things like hitting is not acceptable.

Sometimes parents of children with disabilities are overly protective and feel as though other kids will be cruel or not understand their child's FAS and as a result they keep their kids from playing with other kids or being involved in activities. This is not healthy either. The best way for children with FAS to learn how to interact with other children and society is to allow them to do so. They will probably make some mistakes, but we all do. It is important to let them know when they do something inappropriate, but it is also important to allow them to socialize.

A Parent's Guide to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, published by the Wake Forest University Medical School, can give you some helpful ideas in all of these areas.

published by
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An Indian-Owned Business

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome continued …

Medicine

Many children with FAS take medication to help with learning or behavior problem. These medicines can have a number of side effects. Some make children tired, some make them unable to sleep, some may give them headaches or make they feel sick to their stomachs. It is important to know what your child is taking and the side effects the medicine might have. If your child is taking more than one medicine, be sure to see if the medicines taken together might have other side effects. The best person to talk to about this is your pharmacist or doctor. He or she can tell you what to expect from medications, how you might avoid bad side effects and other things like if the drugs should be taken with food or at certain times of the day for the best results.

Parents of children with FAS will likely encounter many obstacles to overcome, but all parents do. It is not always easy raising a child with FAS, but you will find that it is also rewarding. It is important to help make sure your child gets the help he or she needs and by doing that, you will make it easier for him or her to develop and learn. There are many resources out there for parents of children with FAS. It is important that you realize that you are not alone.

[Maria Burns is a writer on staff with Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc. She is the author of the “Straight Talk from Maria” series, which provides layperson’s descriptions of common disabilities and chronic illness affecting American Indians, including Diabetes, Depression and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.]

Workshops now available …

CARING FOR OUR PEOPLE TRAINING FOR STAFF SERVING TRIBAL MEMBERS WITH DISABILITIES The Introduction to Disability & Culture is recommended as the first workshop of the Caring for Our People series. This two-day workshop focuses on information on disabilities of all types, coping strategies, disability services, cultural issues, legal rights, financial resources, and service barriers that one may encounter in a tribal community. Whether one is new to the disability field or an experienced staff member, this workshop will provide you information and assistance in serving tribal members with disabilities. It is also an opportunity to share your experiences and learn from other staff, people with disabilities and their families.

DISABILITY ACCESS: EMPOWERING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES & THEIR FAMILIES Know what your rights are and make sure you get the services you need. This workshop will focus on the services available to people with disabilities, their rights and finding just about any information you will ever need from the phone number to the tribal vocational rehabilitation office to a sample letter to the school asking for a change in your child’s educational plan. The workshop takes place in a computer lab, using the Disability Access CD-ROM, which we will teach you to use and give you for free, thanks to funding from a grant from the Department of Education.

CONTACT Derrick Dauphinais (701) 351-2667 Spirit Lake OR Willie Davis (701) 477-0322 Turtle Mountain to schedule one of these workshops. We are willing to travel to any reservation in the U.S. but we give priority to the