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SEPTA would like to thank

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For sponsoring the mailing of our newsletters.

# The Advocate

*“Every Child is Born with Wings...  
Make it a Choice to Educate  
and Advocate for the Chances for  
All Children to Learn to Soar”*



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### The Advocate

The Advocate is the free public newsletter of the Special Education PTA of South River.

Published monthly from August to June of each year by the Executive Board Members of the SEPTA - this newsletter is mailed directly to families of classified students of the South River Public School District from the Office of Special Education. Additional copies are available at the South River Public Library. Past editions of the Advocate can be downloaded from our website. Interested individuals may sign up for our electronic newsletter and a listing of other newsletters related to special education issues by visiting our website at:

[www.specialeducationpta.org](http://www.specialeducationpta.org)

Questions related to the Special Education PTA as an organization, the services we provide, and our calendar of events can be answered by telephone at: (732) 651-7157 or by email at [info@specialeducationpta.org](mailto:info@specialeducationpta.org)

If you would like to submit letters or articles, post information or contribute pictures to be included in future editions of the Advocate please contact our newsletter by email at: [SRPTAAdvocate@aol.com](mailto:SRPTAAdvocate@aol.com)

## BETTER IEP's:

### a workshop for parents.

SEPTA of South River will be hosting a free public workshop on

**Wednesday, February 2, 2005 from 7-9pm**  
at the South River Public Library (downstairs meeting room)

This workshop is designed specifically for parents to help improve their understanding of “the components that make up a Better IEP” and how to utilize documents and resources to ensure that aspects of their child’s educational needs are mentioned and addressed at their child’s annual IEP meeting. This workshop will include the showing of the video, “IEP success: the Basic Underlying Principles of IEPs” featuring Dr. Barbara Bateman.

Additional handouts, tips and resource sheets will be given to participants who attend. Interested parents are invited (but not required) to bring a copy of their child’s statement of present level of educational performance to review and identify areas of need in their child’s future IEP.

***\*Coffee and refreshments will be served.***

For more information on this workshop please call the SEPTA information line at (732) 651-7157 or email the Advocate at [SRPTAAdvocate@aol.com](mailto:SRPTAAdvocate@aol.com)

## Renewing the Spirit of the Holiday Season

On behalf of the Board Members of SEPTA we would like to extend a warm thank you to all the families who attended our first ever Holiday Movie Party on December 11.

We had a wonderful turn out for this event with over 23 children and 22 adults attending!

We hope that all those who attended our Holiday party had a wonderful time and enjoyed the wonderful trip the Polar Express gave in awakening and renewing the spirit of the holiday season in all of us..

SEPTA was very pleased to make this year’s Holiday party something special for the classified students of the South River School District. For those of you who supported our PTA through annual membership, our note card fundraiser, and our annual Kidstuff Discount Book sales we humbly offer our gratitude for helping us raise the funding needed to keep our PTA’s programs going.

*Thank you.*

## NEWS FROM THE WEB:

### SSEPAC

[www.ssepac.org](http://www.ssepac.org)

**The Sharon Special Education Parent Advisory Council** has a wonderful resource library list for parents to locate book titles on various topics such as specific learning disabilities, advocacy, books for children with disabilities and audio and visual materials as well.

### The National Center for Technology Innovation

[www.nationaltechcenter.org/matrix](http://www.nationaltechcenter.org/matrix)

This site includes a paper (A Review of Technology-Based Approaches for Reading Instruction: Tools for Researchers and Vendor) and a searchable database that, in their words, "...presents evidence and products for the use of technologies that support the instruction of reading for students with reading disabilities."

### *Tips & Tricks for Parents*

## Preparing for your child's Annual IEP meeting

With the rush of the Holiday season past, New Year's resolutions made, and the loom of the fast approaching tax season most parents have little time to even consider to start preparing for their child's approaching yearly IEP meeting.

Some very important things parent's should remember when preparing their child's approaching IEP meeting is that it should be centered around your child's unique and individual needs, document how his or her disability affects learning, and that also include social skills and related service needs.

### *But just where is a parent to start in preparing for the meeting?*

Teachers and other related service providers do supply parents with progress reports throughout the year in respect to their child's progress towards his or her individual IEP goals. Parents, please take the time to look at these quarterly reports and note the areas your child is making progress in and the areas where addition reinforcements or remedial help/services maybe needed.

Parents take the time to fill out a positive student profile for your child. It will provide you and the child study team with a picture of the whole child; not just the child who performs a certain way at school. Hopefully it will help identify and address IEP goals and objectives and provide for a better picture of your child's strengths and areas of need. It is also important to give the positive student profile to your child's teacher and related service providers at least one month before the IEP meeting and at the beginning of year new school year. As a parent, you can request a copy of the proposed goals and objectives and the present levels of educational performance prior to the IEP meeting. Carefully review

this document prior to the IEP meeting. It will (and should) point out the academic areas that your child needs remediation help and supports or alternative academic approaches your child may need to succeed in learning the required curriculum/course. A present level of educational performance report should describe your child's current educational status and academic testing results and standings.

These requests are simple measures a parent can undertake to make a conscious effort to address all areas of need in the upcoming IEP.

### *Now where can parents get additional help they may need?*

#### Goal View:

[www.goalview.com](http://www.goalview.com): is an subscription based web service that will assist in locating goals and objectives for a child's IEP based on the information you provide when you subscribe.

#### The Learning Resource Center

(a state funded special education library located in Dayton )has a large collection of books a parent can use to reference goals and objectives based on grade, related services, and the child's disability etc.

Annual membership is only \$2.00 and well worth it. Contact the LRC-C at (732) 274-5570 for more information.

#### The Arc of N.J.-No. Brunswick

Members of the Arc of N.J. can have an "educate advocate" attend their child's annual IEP meeting with them to provide assistance.

Yearly membership to the Arc is \$25.00 which will also provide you with access to other ARC programs. Please contact them at (732)246-2525 for more information.

**“Learn How Your Child Can Benefit  
from Assistive Technology”**

**Wednesday, March 2nd 7pm at  
the South River Public Library** (downstairs meeting room)

**Join us for a “hand-on” presentation of various  
assistive technology devises available to assist  
learning in children with disabilities.**

**Special Guest Speaker Jeannette Van Houten from the United Cerebral Palsy of NJ  
will supply information, demonstrate devises, supply resource lists, and talk about the  
“UPC Lending Library Program”**

(The UCP Lending Library is a program which lends assistive devices and tools to its members to “try out” and  
“see if” the item is the right item for the intended person prior to purchasing the item for the individual.)

**\*Children welcome to attend with their parents.**

For more information call the SEPTA information Line (732)651-7157 or email the Advocate at [SRPTAAadvocate@aol.com](mailto:SRPTAAadvocate@aol.com)

**Preventing Abuse of  
Special Needs Children**

**Wednesday, April 6th**

**7pm at the So. River Public Library**

**An absolute must attend workshop for  
any parent of a classified child!**

Parents will learn how to effectively teach you child about the  
different types of abuse he or she may face while learn how to  
recognize signs and behavioral changes the may signify that your  
child may use if he or she is being abused.

To register call (732)651-7157 or email [SRPTAAadvocate@aol.com](mailto:SRPTAAadvocate@aol.com)

**Applications for the  
2005 SEPTA  
Scholarship**

(This \$250. 00 scholarship is open to  
graduating classified students of the  
South River School District)

**will be available to  
students on  
March 22, 2005.**

**Applications must be received by the  
May 17, 2005 deadline.**

# The SEPTA of South River

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South River, New Jersey 08882  
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E-mail: [info@specialeducationpta.org](mailto:info@specialeducationpta.org)

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***"Every Child is Born with Wings....  
Make it a Choice to Educate and  
Advocate for the Chances for  
All Children to Learn to Soar"***

*The SEPTA of South River was founded by a group of parents who  
wished to promote the education and advocacy rights of the special needs  
children of their community..*

*By providing parents with the tools and effective advocacy skills ~*

*We endeavor to keep this goal a reality so that*

***Every Child Will Fulfill Their Dreams  
and Learn to Soar.***

Interested in  
obtaining a copy of the

**SEPTA of  
South River's**

**S. E. Resource CD-Rom?**

Contact SEPTA

At (732) 651-7157

Or Email us at:

[info@specialeducationpta.org](mailto:info@specialeducationpta.org)

Cost: \$7.50

(includes ship/handling fees)

## **Help Wanted:**

Would you like to help with our  
Newsletter, or Website?

Have you come across an  
interesting book, article or  
website that deals with  
education, special ed., or  
parenting that you'd like to  
share with others? Write a  
short summary and we'll love  
to put it in our newsletter and  
web page. Email it to:  
[SRPTAAdvocate@aol.com](mailto:SRPTAAdvocate@aol.com)

## **Up Coming Events:**

### **January**

#### **January 5:**

7:30pm South River  
Public Library

**"An evening  
conversation with  
Superintendent Ron  
Grygo and Director of  
Special Education, Lisa  
Michallis"**

Discussion of the state of  
special education in South  
River and the State of New  
Jersey, the new initiatives to  
progress learning, No Child  
Left Behind, and the progress  
of the new primary school.

### **February**

#### **February 2:**

6:30pm Parent Forum  
7pm SEPTA meeting

South River Public  
Library (downstairs meeting room)

#### **"BETTER IEP's":**

This workshop will focus on how  
parents can take an active part in  
helping provide pertinent  
information at their child's annual  
IEP meeting which will allow all  
participating members at the IEP  
meeting to write a "BETTER  
IEP". Interested parents are  
invited (but not required) to bring a  
copy of their child's present level of  
education performance report to  
review and identify areas of need in  
their child's upcoming IEP.

### **March**

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South River Public  
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**"Learn How Your  
Child Can Benefit  
from Assistive  
Technology"**

Presentation by Jeannette  
Van Houten United Cere-  
bral Palsy of New Jersey

Join us for a hands on presentation  
utilizing assistive devices and  
technology available to help  
children with various disabilities.