

Parents as Leaders



PALs 2009-2010

PALs is an opportunity for
parents with children with
special needs birth through six
to grow as leaders

PARENTS AS LEADERS
is a part of the Wisconsin
Personnel Development Project, funded by
the Wisconsin Department of Health and
Family Services, Birth to 3 Program

 Waisman Center
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Is PALs Right for You ?

Are you a parent or other caregiver of a child who is six years old or younger and who has a developmental delay, disability, or chronic illness?

Would you like an opportunity to meet leaders and policy-makers, to ask questions about issues important to you and your family?

Would you like to meet other families to exchange information, support, ideas, and resources?

Would you like to enhance your skills for working in partnership with service providers, public schools, and community agencies?

Did you answer “yes” to more than one of these questions?

Then Parents as Leaders is for you!

*“I know **what** to do.
I know **how** to do it”*

What is PALs?

PALs is a group of parents and other caregivers who meet together four times during a year to:

- Learn about resources for children with special needs;
- Learn more about leadership and advocacy roles for parents of children ages birth to 6;
- Explore topics of interest to group members such as communicating with schools, inclusive education, futures planning, helping children make friends and financial resources;
- Learn how to access county and state resources;
- Meet some of the key leaders who make the policies and run the programs that affect children with special needs and their families in Wisconsin;
- Develop leadership skills;
- Work on projects of your choice;
- Become part of a network of parents of young children with disabilities who are knowledgeable about education, health, and social service issues; are active in their communities; support each other; and have fun together!

Location/Dates

Nov. 6-7, 2009

Jan. 22-23, 2010

March 12-13, 2010

May 7-8, 2010

Sessions will be held at facilities located on beautiful Green Lake, near Ripon, Wisconsin.

All sessions will begin **promptly** at 4:30 p.m. Friday, and end by 4:00 p.m. Saturday. **People participating in PALs commit themselves to attend all 4 sessions in their entirety.**

The workshop location was selected based on accessibility of the facility. If you need special accommodations (e.g., special meals, materials in alternate formats), contact Parent Projects at (800) 532-3321 or (608) 263-5947. Requests will be kept confidential.



Okay...How do I sign up?

PALs is open to all parents or primary caregivers of young children with special needs. Couples say attending together strengthens their PALs experience. Individual parents are welcome.

If you want more information or would like to register, call **Lynn Havemann** at **(608) 263-5947** or **Ann Ramminger** at **(608) 263-4186** or **call toll-free, 1-800-532-3321.**

Register soon -- PALs sessions are limited to 25 participants.

Visit Wisconsin's Birth to 3 website at: www.waisman.wisc.edu/birthto3/

What does it cost?

PALs is free to participants. We ask that you make a commitment to attend all four sessions. In return for your time and energy, costs of the Parents As Leaders program are covered by the State Birth to 3 Program. In addition, partial reimbursement for child care and travel expenses is available.

"I know where I stand now and feel I can actually be a leading part and not a following part."

If this sounds like a program you would like to be involved in, but you have questions or see potential barriers to your participation, contact us to discuss ways we can help make this program possible for you. We are committed to providing a program that includes a diverse group of families and experiences.



What's expected of me if I sign up?

As a PALs participant, you choose an aspect of your community where you would like to see change—a school, your place of worship, or an organization. Activities may include involvement in your Birth to 3 program, starting a support group, talking to other families, or representing the family perspective at a meeting or on a committee -- something you are interested in accomplishing.