5th Annual Caregivers Luncheon

This year’s event occurred on December 11, 2018 at Marcus Pointe Baptist Church in Pensacola, FL. Over 110 caregivers from the community were served. The luncheon is an annual event, held the second Tuesday of every December. The Luncheon honors caregivers in our area with delicious food, decadent desserts and lively entertainment by the Pyramid Show Choir.
Table design and food was catered by a ministry of regal hostesses based at Marcus Pointe Baptist Church who make this event happen every year. Mildred Bush and her team of hospitality hosts cooked a delicious meal and served it to our caregivers. Part of the ministry is unique table designs by each member of the team, using their own fine china, flat ware, glassware and decorations to design each table in a unique way.

Project Empower sponsors the event each year as a way to say thanks to the caregivers and families with special needs in the Panhandle of Florida. Thanks to Project Empower and EPRC for planning the event and reaching out to each caregiver, the ones who so deserve this event in their honor. Project Empower is a local coalition which strives to empower our neighbors living with disabilities. EPRC serves families with children and adults with special needs ages birth to 26 yrs old.

Visit the website for the Empowerment Parent Resource Center, a new regional resource to assist all caregivers/parents/grandparents, at www.projectempowernwfl.org.
McKinney-Vento Act to help homeless youth displaced by Hurricane Michael

Our hearts go out to the children and families who were affected by Hurricane Michael in our area. We know that many families with children with special needs have been displaced by the storm and some remain homeless living in the affected counties. We are here to assist families connect to resources in the area.

For families who have relocated to Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa or Walton counties or other states: Is your child on a waiting list to start school in a new area? The McKinney-Vento Act seeks to help homeless children and youth. The law includes students who are sharing the housing of other people due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason, or are living in hotels/motels due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations. Children and youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability are less likely to be academically successful, and less likely to graduate from high school and make it to and through college.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, state departments of education and public school districts must ensure that children and youth experiencing homelessness, including those on IEP’s, have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youth. For more information on the act and how it may help homeless families in our community, see:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnNe-bMwJ0A

EPRC Hurricane recovery guide link

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18iAKG7bbbkUuuW1la9eNU7o-xWT42SWJ58AC9sDGCI/edit
Empowerment Parent Resource Center Newsletter

Links to resources for the holidays:

First Key to a Calm Christmas, by Sandra Peoples
http://www.sandrapeoples.com/the-first-key-to-a-calm-christmas-help-for-our-routine-loving-kids/?fbclid=IwAR3PtmslBPTVDBdJEsesQ0zxDnxSA9BkXNOOr1KTTHMVMsytv72vSL5KKnTBc

Ultimate Holiday Survival Guide for Special Needs Families (120+ Links!)
http://beautifulinhistime.com/2016/11/19/special-needs-holiday-survival-guide/?fbclid=IwAR2f96dGXMfTyThuzFgiVymeCgluyKi1gwHgaWw6fHisowAHDlPxlL6r0

Photos from Caregivers Luncheon. To see more, check out our Facebook page at Empowerment Parent Resource Center.
EPRC Parent Resource Directory now available online

The Empowerment Parent Resource Center now has the EPRC Parent Resource Directory online via the website. Parents can access resources needed specific to their family’s or loved one’s needs directly on line or on a smartphone or tablet. Contact information about area agencies and community partners is listed on the site. EPRC Resource Specialists are also available by phone to help families find the right type of assistance.

On the EPRC Facebook page you will find links to events and to resource trainings presented by agencies such as the Family Network on Disabilities. These are free to parents and available any time they have time.

Visit our Website at

www.projectempowernwfl.org

EPRC helps link families to resources.

The team at the EPRC has been reaching out to families to help link them to resources in the community. We can help you and your family with resources in the community as well as local Panhandle events that are friendly to our families. Many of these are shared on our FACEBOOK page. Please like and share this local resource page with others in the community at Empowerment Parent Resource Center.
The **EPRC** is a support organization for parents living in **NW Florida** who have children with special needs. **Family Resource Specialists** are standing by to provide one-on-one support for concerns ranging from finding services for your infant to negotiating **IEP** services to transition out of high school, and supported employment.

**Call 850-444-8554 Today!**

*Please leave a message and someone will connect with you right away.*

Visit our website for more information, events and links to additional resources.

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

Funded in part from Federal Dept of Ed grant #H328C160032
EPRC seeks parent panel to assist with website design and content.

We are working to make our website easy to navigate and relevant to the concerns and interests of area families. Currently included are resources in Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties, as well as some national sites. We need to hear from you!

The parent panel would provide insight and suggestions about training and resources placed on the website as well as through other means such as Facebook and EPRC newsletters.

If you are interested in participating in a focus group and/or being contacted individually, please email EPRC.nwfl@gmail.com

Our staff at Project Empower and EPRC wish you a merry Christmas. Contact us if we can help you in any way.

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