

Dialogue

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From the Executive Director

State Budget Cuts Are Now Our Reality

By Bill Bowman

When *Dialogue* went to press in June, we had learned that the 2002-03 state budget deficit might exceed \$30 billion.



That's more than a third of a planned budget of \$86 billion. It's clear from the Budget Conference Committee action taken in mid-June that a reduction on the order of \$52 to \$60 million in total Purchase of Services budget for the state of California is a reality. The final number is still up for some debate, but an unallocated budget reduction is the mechanism the state has chosen to use. Here in Orange County, that translates to about \$3 million in cuts to our services allocation.

Unallocated reductions are mandatory spending cuts that are not specified to be made in any particular service categories. In other words, the Regional Center must reduce spending in services, but how is not specified by the State. Unallocated reductions require each regional center to examine the patterns of its

spending on services and look for ways to either manage service delivery or manage the process more efficiently in order to meet the reduction target. We have been informed that the Department of Developmental Services considers this to be of highest priority and will use all its tools to ensure that each community reaches the target. We will need your assistance as we call on consumers, families and service providers to look with us at where spending can be reduced or limited.

In my experience, this scenario constitutes a true fiscal crisis, and when there's been such a crisis in the past, our families, consumers and providers have always been willing to help and even make sacrifices, if necessary. That shared spirit has helped us get to where we are today.

A particular challenge to us at this point is that it's unclear when the budget will be signed, which makes it unclear when the spending reduction efforts can get underway. The longer it takes to get the budget signed, the shorter the time we have to implement reductions, and that increases the amount of reductions we have to make. That might not be so devastating if we thought the deficit was only

going to last a year, but unfortunately, this is a problem that probably won't be going away in the next year or two. Shortfalls could carry over into the following years, creating a nearly impossible challenge to overcome.

We at RCOC are making and will continue to make every effort to manage the resources we are allocated as efficiently and effectively as possible. In order to do that, we look for every "best management practice" we can find. We appreciate your efforts to help us make sure the critical needs of our folks get met, regardless of your role, be it consumer, parent or vendor. With your partnership, I am confident that we will maximize whatever resources we are given. I thank you in advance for your responsible and careful action to assist us.



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Looking for a Dentist?

Regional Center of Orange County recently surveyed local dentists to compile a list of providers who have special interest or skill in caring for people with disabilities. This list includes names, addresses, phone numbers, languages spoken, and information about the types of insurance accepted. To obtain this list, please contact Patricia Arnold, information specialist at Comfort Connection Family Resource Center at (714) 558-5400.



Maintaining Oral Health Is Important for People with Disabilities

This and future issues of *Dialogue* will include information on oral health for people with developmental disabilities that has been obtained by RCOC's nursing and medical staff. The information is not meant to be comprehensive or in any way replace regular visits to a dental professional. The purpose is to help educate consumers, their family members and care providers about the importance of maintaining healthy teeth and gums.

When to Contact a Dentist

- Call dentist immediately for a broken or knocked out tooth. *Take person and tooth to the dentist.*
- Call dentist immediately for pain or infection (example: pimple on gums).
- Call dentist if gums bleed longer than two weeks. *Look for blood-soaked toothbrush.*
- Call dentist about any sores or bumps in mouth lasting longer than two weeks.
- Make appointment for dental exam at least once per year.

Our Vigilance is Always Needed

By Holly Nogales, president,
RCOC board of directors

We all know we're in the midst of a state budget crisis. It's now anticipated that the budget shortfall for fiscal year 2002-03 will be around \$30 billion. I don't know about you, but that is staggering to me. I don't see how any organization funded by public tax dollars can *not* be affected. By the time you read this, RCOC will probably know how its bottom line is

impacted and will be working to make appropriate adjustments.

As a parent, I want to join with consumers and other parents to examine the services we or our children are receiving to see if there's anything that can be spared at this time. For instance, if you don't need all the respite or day care at your disposal right now, please let your case worker know. If you find you need more assistance at a later date, you can work with your service coordinator to have services increased again. We all need to prioritize our needs and see if there are ways we can economize. If we do this now, we may be able to

prevent more drastic action later.

Although this coming fiscal year is one that requires sacrifices on almost everyone's part in order to balance the state budget, we who are family members of people with developmental disabilities need to remain vigilant about what our elected officials are doing and keep our voices and faces before them so that the services and rights of our loved ones do not get eroded.

Thank you for considering my request to look at your individual situation. Working together, I believe we have greater strength to effect positive change for our family members.

New Members Join RCOC Board of Directors

Six new members have been elected to RCOC's board of directors since May, 2001, each serving three-year terms. Nancy Creelman, C. Terrence Fletke and Kim Vuong were elected in May 2001. Tresa Oliveri, Jud Robert and Steven Tanner were elected at RCOC's June board meeting.

Nancy Creelman has two sons, one of whom is an RCOC consumer. She has 24 years of professional experience working with children and adults with disabilities. She works for the Orange County Department of Education as a special health care assistant. She attends to the medical needs of students with disabilities. She also interprets when needed for Spanish-speaking parents in Individual Education Plan meetings.

C. Terrence Fletke also has a son with a developmental disability. Terry is a certified public accountant and a partner in Syme & Fletke, a CPA firm. He has previous board and committee experience with the Capistrano Valley Symphony, Orange County Financial Society and the Industrial League Credit Union. Terry also has served as a member and special consultant to the California

State Board of Accountancy.

Kim Vuong has cerebral palsy and works at The Dayle McIntosh Center in the Assisted Technology Department. She attends college and is majoring in computer information. She was previously a board member at the West Los Angeles Regional Center.

Tresa Oliveri is parent of a Regional Center consumer and serves as her son's parent service coordinator. She is a member of the Interagency Autism Group of the Orange County Department of Education and RCOC. This group of parents, school district personnel and private practitioners works to bring the best practice to the treatment and education of preschoolers with autism. She is also past president of the Irvine Unified School District's Community Advisory Committee.

Jud Robert has a grandson with a developmental disability.

Currently Jud is an associate with a turnaround management consulting group. His background includes 30 years as president and chief operating officer of various consumer products companies. He was an RCOC board member in the 1980s and has also served on several corporate boards of directors.

Steven Tanner has a son with a developmental disability. Steve is executive vice president of development for Pick Up Stix, a Chinese fast-food restaurant chain, and has served on the company's board of directors. He is a certified public accountant and brings his finance and management background to the RCOC board of directors.



Pictured, left to right: Terry Fletke, Tresa Oliveri, Nancy Creelman, and Kim Vuong.

R.A.D.D. Review

Tele-Friends Are Waiting by the Phone!

If you're a Regional Center consumer, you might want to try Tele-Friend to meet new friends who live near you. We suggest that you always meet in a public place and that you provide your own transportation.

To place an ad in Tele-Friend, call (714) 796-5270 for the form that you need.

If you would like to talk to any of the people listed here, call (714) 796-5270 for a Tele-Friend list. You must be a Regional Center consumer or parent to respond. Request the Tele-Friend list to find out about other people who might live in your town: Anaheim, Brea, Dana Point, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, La Habra, Villa Park and Yorba Linda.

Toby of Costa Mesa ... "I am 32 years old and share an apartment with a roommate. I like to fish and race bicycles. I work as a landscaper."



Peter of Costa Mesa ... "I love to watch movies, listen to music, e-mail my friends, go to Disneyland and the movies. Every Sunday I go to church and help in the video department. I work at Benetton in South Coast Plaza and do everything from organizing to cleaning. I am 32 years old and live with my family. I don't drive but I do take the bus."



Kenneth of Costa Mesa ... "I like window shopping, swimming, going to the movies and writing songs. I work at Pizza Hut doing a little bit of everything. I am 24 and I live in a group home."

Frederick of Orange ... "I am 45 years old and have my own apartment. I like going out for coffee, desserts, dinner, listening to country and classical music, going to the mall, dances, used bookstores, weight lifting,

swimming, and going to the Orange Public Library. I was a custodian at Michael's, but would like to work at the library."



Richard of Tustin ... "I like to role play, watch TV, exercise, build model motorcycles, play Christian music, read the Bible, Special Olympics, and shop at second hand stores. I am 46 and work as a custodian at UC Riverside. I live in a group home."

Manuel of Westminster ... "I am 38 and use public transportation. I like amusement parks, music, going to the beach, making friends and calling them on the phone. I work at Von's market as a courtesy clerk."



Consumer Advisory Team Update

By Sam Durbin, president

For the last few months the CAT team has dedicated their time to raising the money for the People First Conference on June 7, 8 and 9. We raised enough money to have nine people go. And the conference was a success. Self-advocacy is what we believe in. It has changed us to be more in control of our lives and has changed others to be open-minded to let us be free and let us fly.

In 2004 the National Conference for People First will be held at the Anaheim Marriott. I will be on the planning committee for this conference for the next two years. I also will be speaking.

We also want to thank Orange County ARC for having us at the

May CAT meeting. They made us feel very welcome and they were very polite and treated us with respect. Thank you again.

We would love to have you be a part of our team, and I know all of you have great ideas, so come be a part and have some fun.

The CAT team voted to not have a meeting in August. Our next meeting will be held at the RCOC East/Central office at 801 Civic Center Drive, Santa Ana on September 11 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. All are welcome, but

please call Betty Bath at (714) 796-5263 if you plan to attend a meeting so we know how many people to expect. CAT meetings are always on the second Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.

Well, that's all for now. I just wanted the Team to know how much they mean to me and that I love them all. They are the cream in my coffee and the smile on my face.



CAT Team Members, front, from left: Molly Van Norman, Joey Bilow, Kevin Tremelling, Mary Ayres, Maria Garza. Back, from left: Sharon O'Keefe, Peter Settas, Virginia Rangel, Kathy McCrystal, Michael Bailey, Sam Durbin, Michelle Sieloff.

Safety Stu's Corner

Safety Alert!

Hello Safety Friends:

This month we'll review an important safety tip. We at GET SAFE have taught more than 400 Regional

Center of Orange County clients who have now become official GET SAFE students. We have seen great students and made some good friends. We look forward to seeing many more who have not yet been able to participate in our safety classes. At this time, we need your help. During the pretend hold-ups in our safety workshops, we run into problems with students trying to hold on to their property. Those of you who have successfully participated in the work-



shops know that if someone is trying to rob you, you must always give up your things so that you will not get hurt. And since you know this, please pass this safety tip on to your friends. Tell them that if someone is trying to steal their stuff and they are being threatened, either by a person who has a weapon or who may physically hurt them, ALWAYS, and I repeat: ALWAYS, give them the items they are asking for. You must remember that your life is much more valuable than a watch, purse, wallet or backpack. We can replace those items, but we cannot replace you. If you were to get hurt, it would make your friends and family really sad. The GET SAFE and Regional Center staff cares about you, and that is why we teach you about safety.

So let's review:

If someone is walking by you and just says, "Hey, nice backpack!" Do you have to give the backpack to them? **NO**

If someone grabs you and says

that they want your backpack or they will beat you up, Do you give them the backpack? **YES**

And after you give them the backpack (or money, purse, wallet etc.) go to a safe place, call the police and tell them what happened.

I am very proud of how great your safety skills are becoming. So if you have a friend who hasn't had the chance to yell "**Back off!**" or talk about safety, please share your safety tips with them, so they will **GET SAFE** like YOU!

If you have a safety question for Safety Stu and the Safety Team, write to us at Regional Center of Orange County, P.O. Box 22010, Santa Ana, CA 92702. If we use your question in Safety Stu's corner, we will send you a safety T-shirt, absolutely free.

Thanks for staying safe,
Safety Stu



Parent/Support Groups *Grupos para Padres*

For meeting times and locations, see the monthly RCOC Community Calendar that comes in the mail to you, or call the group contact or Jacqui Kerze at RCOC, (714) 796-5299.

- ❖ **A Touch of Love** - For limb deficient children and their families. (800) 493-5462. Hablamos español
- ❖ **Ain't Misbehavin'** - A support network of parents interested in exchanging information on behavioral issues. Call (714) 889-7260
- ❖ **Asperger Syndrome** - Contact Caroline Wilson, (562) 425-2292 or South County call (949) 454-6302
- ❖ **Autism Support Groups** - Huntington Beach area, contact Leaza Howe, (714) 841-6766; North County, contact Paula Peterson, (714) 288-9005; South County, contact Beverly Lee, (949) 249-9277; Newly diagnosed autism, contact (310) 543-0662 (Long Beach area)
- ❖ **Cerebral Palsy** - For info. & support, meetings & groups, contact Family Support Services at UCPA, (714) 557-1291
- ❖ **Chinese Parent Support Group for the Disabled** - Contact Kitty Tsan at (949) 588-0123
- ❖ **Circle of Support** - A monthly meeting for consumers, parents and assistants. Contact Gary and Claudia Eien, (714) 648-4185
- ❖ **CLASP (California League of Angelman Syndrome Parents)** - Contact Katie Hendren, (714) 962-4152
- ❖ **Compassionate Friends** - For parents who have experienced the loss of a child. Call Roy Redman, (714) 993-6708
- ❖ **DADS' Group** - For fathers of children with autism and related disorders. Call Norm Booth, (714) 961-1315
- ❖ **Family Visions** - For parents of visually impaired children. Contact Karin Crilly, (714) 573-8880, ext. 109
- ❖ **Fathers Support Network** - Contact Jeff Braun at the Family Support Network, (714) 543-7600
- ❖ **First Evangelical Free Church Disabilities Ministry** - Contact Connie Hutchinson, (714) 529-5544
- ❖ **Fragile X Group** - For parents or family members of people with Fragile X. Contact Sali Farber at (714) 544-9551
- ❖ **Friendship Ministries** - Christian group at Orange County Worship Center for teenagers and adults with developmental disabilities; call the church at (714) 547-9631
- ❖ **Guys and Gals Group** - A recreational group for adult consumers. Contact Lena Lynch, (714) 796-5213 or Jacqui Kerze, (714) 796-5299
- ❖ **Hearts United Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (HUG)** - Contact Irene Kontz, (714) 636-5430
- ❖ **Mitochondrial Disease Group** - Call Sherry Clitheroe, (714) 968-9373 or Lissa Mirand, (562) 920-9981
- ❖ **Mom's Group** - For moms of children with autism in North Orange County. Contact Jill Riley, (714) 288-1566
- ❖ **Moving on at 3 Parent Group** - To support and educate parents of children transitioning from Early Start services. Contact RCOC's John Zeimantz at (714) 796-5339
- ❖ **Non-Ketotic Hyperglycinemia (NKH) Family Support Group** - Contact Tammy L. Hanna (714) 444-4454
- ❖ **One In A Million Kids** - For parents of children with rare or undiagnosed disorders. Call Georgia or Gary Freedman-Harvey, (310) 588-2562 – not a support group but does assist over the phone
- ❖ **Orange County Parents of Disabled Multiples** - Contact Bree Dennis at (909) 734-3616
- ❖ **Parent Connection** - To connect with other parents of RCOC consumers (Eng., Spanish & Vietnamese), call (888) FRC-BABY
- ❖ **Parents of Kids with Epilepsy** - A support group. Contact Mary Repp at (949) 462-1927
- ❖ **P.R.O.U.D. - Parents Regional Outreach for Understanding Downs** - Support for parents of children with Down syndrome. (714) 547-2895
- ❖ **Rett Syndrome Group** - Contact Rebecca Craft, (949) 856-9320 or Susan McLaughlin, (949) 858-8411
- ❖ **Sibshop** - Workshop for siblings ages 8-13 of children with special needs. Call Kathleen McFarlin, (714) 557-1291
- ❖ **Single Parent Group** - For single parents of children with special needs. Contact Jacqui Kerze, (714) 796-5299
- ❖ **Team of Advocates for Special Kids (TASK)** - Educational assistance and support for parents of children to ages 3 to 22. Call (714) 533-TASK (8275)
- ❖ **Tuberous Sclerosis** - Support group for families. Contact Lee Ann Addison for more information, (949) 495-7126
- ❖ **Vietnamese Parent Support Group** - Contact Queenie Hoang at (714) 557-1291; pager number (714) 664-6899
- ❖ **Williams Syndrome** - Support for families of people with Williams Syndrome. Call Darlene Ginnett, (562) 598-5559

Grupos En Español

- ❖ **Grupo de Autismo Angeles** - Para más información llame a Gloria y Jose Hernandez, (714) 995-1955
 - ❖ **Grupo Arcoiris Síndrome de Down** - Para más información llame a Maria Piceno, (714) 558-5400
 - ❖ **Hacia Los 3 Años...Transición** - Un grupo de padres con niños recibiendo Servicios de Intervencion Temprana Para Educacion y Apoyo durante el proceso de transición. Para más información llame a Consuela Morales (714) 685-5514
 - ❖ **Noche de las Madres** - Para más información llame a Barbara Dominguez (714) 998-4912
 - ❖ **Nuevos Horizontes** - Para más información llame a Barbara Dominguez, (714) 998-4912
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What's The IDEA?

By Juda Carter, M.A.
RCOC Education Training and
Standards Coordinator

In the last issue of *Dialogue* I wrote that an IEP is an Individualized Education Plan for every student eligible for special education



services in public schools. This month we will look at how the IEP is developed. First question: Who develops the IEP? The IEP is developed by the IEP team. That team includes the

child's teacher, a school administrator, a general education teacher, any service providers and the **child's parents**. The parents are considered full and equal partners in developing the plan to meet their child's special needs. Second question: How is the IEP developed? The steps to an IEP are as follows:

- 1) The team reviews the child's current level of progress.
- 2) The team develops goals and objectives to meet the child's needs as indicated by the review.
- 3) The team decides what placement is the "least restrictive environment" in which the child's needs can be met.
- 4) The team decides what supportive services are necessary for the child

to receive educational benefit from his/her placement.

Throughout this process, parents are full and equal members of the team, including developing goals and objectives and making decisions about placement and services. As members of the team collaborate, they often develop new resources and perspectives on meeting the child's needs.

Please remember that Regional Center service coordinators want to support parents in the IEP process. Your service coordinator will attend school meetings and assist you with accessing appropriate services to meet your child's needs.

Coming next issue: "How we define 'Least Restrictive Environment.'"

Aspira ProFamily Moves from Pilot to Program

In August, 2001, Regional Center of Orange County initiated a pilot program with Aspira Foster and Family Services called Aspira ProFamily. The pilot was instituted to address the challenges faced by families considered by RCOC to be at risk of going into some kind of crisis. The primary goal has been to improve the self-sufficiency of those families by providing home-based services focused on helping families provide a safe and healthy environment for their children and teaching them to identify and utilize community resources. So far, Aspira has served 33 families, and 10 families have successfully completed the program.

"At RCOC we try to look across the board for patterns that indicate new areas of need, and then we look at how we can address that need. We're seeking to be proactive rather than reactive in order to prevent crises," says Bill Bowman, RCOC

Executive Director.

ProFamily is a six-month program that includes an assessment of the family's need, development of a Family-Centered Support Plan, then weekly two-hour visits by a parent mentor who works with the family to identify and utilize existing community resources and provides support, modeling, information and education.

Leslie Dominguez has been a parent mentor with Aspira for eight months. She says, "It's been fun. Most families have been successful. There are two things people want: help with behavior and help with schools. Everyone has done at least one IEP [Individual Education Plan], some, two or three."

The ProFamily service is generally provided to families with children under 10 years of age who are Regional Center consumers. Examples of "at risk" conditions could include any combination of:

- Parents are RCOC consumers
- Single parent or guardian
- Both parents working
- Public assistance recipient
- History of drug or alcohol abuse

- History of domestic violence
- History of mental illness
- More than one disabled child
- Increasing problems at school and/or at home
- Past or current Child Protective Services involvement

One parent who has benefited from the program is Samantha Boulden, a single mom who has a seizure disorder and is a Regional Center consumer along with her daughter. Samantha says she learned a lot from her parent mentor, Leslie Dominguez. "She helped me get the school to work with me. Leslie came with me to the IEP, helped me get the programs my daughter needed. My daughter's doing wonderful. Leslie and your program helped me be what I am today, an advocate for my daughter," says Samantha.

The success of the pilot has led RCOC to make Aspira ProFamily an official vendored program effective July 1, 2002.

If you feel that your family might need this service, please contact your service coordinator to explore it further.

Consumer Spotlight

Richard Sanchez Takes Pride in His Progress

Richard Sanchez is a pretty happy guy. He lives in a nice home, he has a good job, he can take the bus wherever he wants to go, and he participates in track and field with the Special Olympics. Life hasn't always been so good for Richard though. He has overcome significant challenges to achieve stability and emotional maturity.

Richard has mild mental retardation, mental illness and is a recovering alcoholic. For about the past five years he has lived in a group home called "Growth Through Intervention," which is a sober-living home run by Midcities ARC.

Richard says, "I rate this home number one in Orange County. I plan on staying in this home until I'm old."

His care provider, Zolton Cunningham, says that the residents of the home have weekly round table meetings to resolve conflicts and decide on menu plans and recreational activities. He says the staff members keep the guys occupied with their various appointments and outings such as dances, bowling and fishing. The home also has a pool table, workout gym in the garage and a swimming pool.

Zolton says about Richard, "He's a super duper guy. He knows what's right and what he needs to do to stay where he is. He quit drinking a couple years after he got here. When his father died about a year ago, he didn't binge, but he did have a couple beers."

Richard is honest about his past mistakes and his weaknesses, but he is also proud of his accomplishments. He says, "I have been through a real bad behavior most of my life. I used

to get into fights, but no more. It doesn't do any good. I hung around with the wrong people, made wrong friends. Last time I had a drink was when my dad passed away. June is a year [since I've had a drink] and I will get a sobriety chip at AA."

Richard credits God and Alcoholics Anonymous with helping him turn his life around. When asked how he coped with the loss of his father, he says, "The person who helped me is God. I also like to read the Bible."

Richard also likes the work he does at UC Riverside with a group from Midcities ARC. He does custodial work, cleaning windows and picking up trash.

Richard has a good support structure in place. When he gets frustrated or angry, he calls people who can talk him through the issue. He might call his RCOC service coordinator, Lissette Pelayo, or his church hotline. He attends AA meetings a couple times a week.

The group home staff also helps him work through his emotions. Zolton says, "We do a lot of role playing, talk a lot, and encourage him to forget about the past because you can't change it."

That has definitely made an impression on Richard. He's now philosophical about the past and his positive self-talk is evident in his conversation. For instance, Richard says, "If you bring up the past, I just get mad. I learn to forget about so and so. Not holding grudges

[is important]. It won't do you any good, it will only hurt you. I make the best out of things."

Lissette, Richard's service coordinator, says, "He's been very stable. He's good at resolving problems on his own and he's good at communicating his needs."

Richard's family is proud of him, too. His mother Nina says, "He's improved a lot. He's not angry all the time. He wanted to quit drinking and he made it."

His sister-in-law, Karen, echoes Nina's sentiments when she observes, "He's done so much better controlling his anger. He's been working out with weights and trying to lose weight for Special Olympics. That takes a lot of self-control. He's lost about 30 pounds."

Perhaps Richard's worst vice now is that he loves to shop at second-hand stores and sometimes returns home with a lot of stuff and not very much money.

Richard Sanchez is a happy guy for good reason. He has come a long way in his life to overcome serious difficulties. Richard is an example to other people that you can change if you truly desire to do so.



Richard Sanchez, pictured here with Lissette Pelayo, his RCOC service coordinator, recently won two silver medals in track and field at the Special Olympics held in June.

We Want Your Opinion

We at the Regional Center are interested in your feedback about *Dialogue*. We want to know if it is meeting your needs for information about Regional Center of Orange County and resources for people with developmental disabilities. For that reason, we have included a reader survey in this issue. If you would like your voice to be heard, please fill out the questionnaire and return it to RCOOC by August 15 by any of the following means: mail in the attached postage-paid envelope, fax to (714) 547-4365 or hand deliver to one of our Area offices (see back cover for locations).

Please check one of the following.

I am a:

- Regional Center of Orange County consumer
- Family member of an RCOOC consumer
- RCOOC service provider
- Other interested party (please specify) _____.

Beside each of the statements below, please put a check mark to indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, or have no opinion.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Overall, I find the articles in <i>Dialogue</i> to be informative	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Overall, the articles in <i>Dialogue</i> are easy to understand.	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
The information in <i>Dialogue</i> is timely.	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
The appearance of <i>Dialogue</i> is attractive.	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Compared to other newsletters I receive, the overall quality of <i>Dialogue</i> is good.	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Other information or topics I would like to see in *Dialogue*: _____

Other comments: _____

Quality Assurance Assistance Needed from Consumers and Families

As part of its ongoing effort to enhance quality assurance activities, the Regional Center of Orange County is looking for consumers and family members to assist with quality assurance evaluations of residential facilities and day programs. Interested people will attend a group training session, and each evaluation requires a commitment of approximately four hours in one day. Assistants may choose to participate on as many or as few reviews as they wish.

Activities involved in the evaluations include inspecting records for compliance with regulations, observing the physical environment for

health and safety conditions, observing consumers' daily activities at home and/or at their day programs, interviewing consumers about their satisfaction with the service, and assessing the effectiveness of the service provider in assisting consumers to achieve their goals.

Regional Center quality assurance coordinators will serve as team leaders on the evaluations. Volunteers will need to provide their own transportation.

If you are interested in participating or have questions, please call Delia Lona in the Outcomes work group at (714) 796-5245.

Parent/Partner Service Coordinator Course Offers In-Depth Information

A six-week course entitled "Service Coordination and the Regional Center" is available at the Regional Center of Orange County to enhance family members' and others' knowledge of the regional center system. The course is also the first step for those who wish to become parent/partner service coordinators (PSCs). The course includes information on the:

- Role and responsibilities of the service coordinator,
- Documentation required for service coordination, and
- Resources available to consumers, parents and RCOC service coordination staff.

Dale Elizabeth Garcia, RCOC's training administrator and the course instructor says, "The parent/partner service coordination program has been in operation at the Regional Center of Orange County for over 20 years. It's the only class of its kind in the state. It is an invaluable way for family members, consumers, and other interested community members to learn more about the resources and services available to people with developmental disabilities. We have guest presenters who are knowledgeable about a variety of topics. The result is that the students can become more effective partners in the service coordination process."

See PSC, page 11



Dale Garcia, left, PSC course instructor and Janice Reyes, parent service coordinator.

Will the Spotlight Shine on You?

It's that time of year again ... time to think about nominating a deserving person or organization for a Regional Center of Orange County Spotlight



Award. It's time to polish those dress shoes, take your suit or evening gown to the dry cleaners, and save up the \$35 for a ticket to the Spotlight Awards banquet. If you start about July 15, you only need to save \$6 a week to have the \$35 by the August 23 deadline. After that, the ticket price goes up to \$40.

This year the ceremony will be held on Friday, September 20 from 6:00 p.m. to midnight at the Irvine Marriott Hotel. We are honored that KNBC news reporter Laurel Erickson will serve as the master of ceremonies. The evening promises to be festive with bright lights, an elegant ballroom, a raffle for beautiful gift baskets, a delicious dinner, live dinner music, and of course, the suspenseful moment when the Spotlight Award recipients are revealed. Then, there will be dancing until midnight with a hip D.J.

Nominations will be accepted through August 9. Nominees must work or be involved with people with developmental disabilities in Orange County. If you haven't received a nomination form, you can download it from RCOC's Web site at www.rcocdd.com or request one from Betty Bath at (714) 796-5263. Nomination forms are available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. A panel of judges who will not know the identities of the nominees will evaluate the entrants.

Look for your official Spotlight Awards invitation in the mail soon and start planning for the celebration.

Important Things to Know...

Please note that the schedule for the RCOC board of directors meetings has changed. Starting July 11, the full board will meet every other month on the second Thursday at 6:00 p.m. at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana. The subsequent meetings for 2002-03 will be held in September, November, January, March and May.

The Legal Aid Society of Orange County provides free civil legal services to low income people and seniors who live in Orange County. Some of the services offered include a hotline program that provides advice and counseling over the phone. Self-Help Clinics are available on topics such as eviction, family law, bankruptcy, small claims court and tax preparation. The Health Consumer Action Center provides assistance with Medi-Cal, CalOPTIMA, Healthy Families, County Medical Services for Indigents (MSI), Mental Health Care and other health-related issues. The Lawyer Referral Service makes referrals to private attorneys when

clients' needs fall outside legal aid guidelines. For more information, call (800) 834-5001 or (714) 571-5200. The Web site is www.legal-aid.com.

The Legal Aid Society also has kiosks at seven locations in Orange County called I-CAN! that can help you fill out certain court forms at no charge. The system uses a computer screen that asks questions, and you touch the screen to select answers. I-CAN! creates completed forms for the following civil matters: 1) Answer to governmental complaint regarding parental obligation, 2) domestic violence restraining orders, 3) fee waivers, 4) license denial review, 5) paternity petition, 6) small claims matters, 7) eviction defense, and 7) wage assignment review.

I-CAN! kiosks can also assist in Spanish or Vietnamese. The computer asks questions in Spanish or Vietnamese, then fills out the form in English.

I-CAN! services are currently located in Santa Ana, Orange, Irvine, Fullerton, and San Juan Capistrano. Call (714) 571-5232 for specific

addresses. I-CAN! is also available on the Internet at www.legal-aid.com.

United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) of Orange County's *Swap Meet* is a list of equipment being donated, sold or requested. It is a two-sided sheet published quarterly that is mailed to about 1,500 families. Items offered for sale do not move quickly and are removed from the list after three months. Types of items donated or requested include pediatric wheelchairs, suction machines, diapers, humidifiers and walkers as well as custom-made or harder to find items such as standers, scooters and bouncing chairs. If you are interested in donating items, making a request or being added to the mailing list, call UCP at (714) 557-1291.

Disabled Dealer is a classified advertising magazine similar to *Pennysaver* that contains equipment to buy, sell or trade such as accessible vans, wheelchairs, scooters, etc. For more information, call (800) 588-5099 or look at the Web site at www.disableddealer.com.

PSC (from page 10)

Some of the topics covered in the class include the person-centered planning process, history and overview of the regional center system, and resource information in the areas of living options, adult resources, Early Start, and education.

Janice Reyes has been a PSC for more than ten years. She is the mother of a Regional Center consumer and executive director of Hope University, a Regional Center day program. She says, "Being a parent service coordinator allows me the

opportunity to handle all the paperwork for my daughter, and I feel I have a closer working relationship with the Regional Center. I am more aware of the services provided and stay in close contact by attending seminars which are offered."

Currently 70 parent/partner service coordinators participate in the program, including four RCOC consumers who serve as their own PSCs. Seven RCOC service coordinators are PSC facilitators. Their role is to provide hands-on supervision and instruction, ensure that the

required paperwork is completed accurately and on time, and make sure that services are being provided appropriately.

"Service Coordination and the Regional Center" will be offered on six Wednesday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. starting October 2, 2002. Class location will be RCOC's East Area Office at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana. For class registration and inquiries, please contact Emily Tactay, RCOC training assistant, at (714) 796-5248 or e-mail at etactay@rcocdd.com.

Board of Directors 2002 - 2003

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2002-2003 Board Meetings:

July 11 ❖ Sept. 12 ❖ Nov. 14 ❖ Jan. 9 ❖ March 13 ❖ May 8

*The board of directors meets at 6:00 p.m. at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana.
The public is welcome.*

The Regional Center of Orange County has four locations to serve you:

Orange Office

3111 N. Tustin Street, Suite 150
24-hour phone no.: (714) 685-5555
TDD: (714) 685-5575

San Juan Capistrano Office

26311 Junipero Serra Road, Ste. 180
24-hour phone no.: (949) 234-8800
TDD: (949) 488-3399

Santa Ana Office

801 Civic Center Dr. West
24-hour phone no.: (714) 796-5100
TDD: (714) 667-6021

Westminster Office

13950 Milton Ave., Suite 200
24-hour phone no.: (714) 889-7200
TDD: (714) 889-7234

RCOC Web site: www.rcocdd.com

*Dialogue is normally published four times per year for consumers, families, service providers, and members of the community by the Regional Center of Orange County. We welcome your ideas, contributions and suggestions. Please send all correspondence to: **Karen Taylor**, Dialogue Editor, Regional Center of Orange County, P.O. Box 22010, Santa Ana, CA 92702 or call her at (714) 796-5208.*

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*The Regional Center of
Orange County is a nonprofit,
private agency that contracts with
the California Department of
Developmental Services to provide
services to individuals with
developmental disabilities.*

Look for Tele-Friends on page 4!

R.A.D.D. Review

Dialogue Newsletter

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