



**American Samoa
Community College**

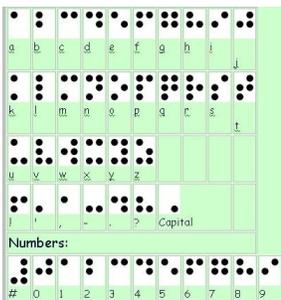
**University Center for
Excellence on
Developmental Disabilities**

**Signs that you are being
Stalked**

- Lurking around your workplace or neighborhood
- Being watched
- Repeated phone calls
- Inappropriate gifts
- Defamation of character or insults

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UCEDD *it!*

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STALKING: KNOW IT. NAME IT. STOP IT.

By: Lia Pelenato



January is Stalking Awareness month. Stalking endangers the physical and emotional well being of millions of men and women each year. Too often, stalking goes unreported and ignored, and we must take action against this unacceptable behavior. Stalkers inspire fear through intimidation, explicit threats, and nonconsensual communication often by telephone, text message, or email that can cause severe emotional and physical distress. Many victims suffer anxiety attacks, feelings of anger or helplessness, and depression. Fearing for their safety, some people are forced to relocate or change jobs to protect themselves. The National Center

for Victims of Crime (NCVC) reports that 30% of stalking victims are stalked by current or former intimate partners. For many people 'stalking' is a word that is heard on television, in movies, in popular songs and in a casual conversation. However, this is a serious crime that causes both emotional and psychological damage. This year's theme is, "Stalking: KNOW IT. NAME IT. STOP IT". Too many people are suffering from this dangerous crime but not seeking the help they need. We need to promote the awareness of this crime and report it to law enforcement officers and file a report. Do not wait around and think that it is a joke. Whether you have a few minutes, a few hours, or a few days, you can educate yourself and your

community about stalking during the month of January. We must strive to reverse this trend and put a stop to it. Despite the dangerous reality of stalking, public awareness and legal responses to this crime remain limited. American Samoa established the crime of Stalking when a law was signed on May 16, 2010. Stalking is a class B misdemeanor, unless the offense is committed during a restraining order or an injunction, or both, then it is elevated to a Class A misdemeanor. This month, let us come together to prevent abuse, violence, and harassment in all their forms and renew our commitment to bring care and support to those who have suffered from this injustice.

CELEBRATING BRAILLE DAY

By: Lia Pelenato

The 4th of January is designated as World Braille Day as it coincides with the birthday of the man who created the Braille. World Braille Day commemorates the birth of Louis Braille. He was born on January 4, 1809 in France, and in 1829 he published his method of writing words, music, and plain song by means of dots, for use by the blind.

Braille has improved the social and economic opportunities of millions of people and has given a definite method to blind people so that they can be more independent and can educate themselves. The Braille has been used for more than 200 years and the biggest advantage of this language is that it can be translated to any language world.

Close your eyes for a couple of moments and imagine your life to be like that forever, and you will get a small experience of how blind people survive in this darkness. World Braille Day is organized and celebrated to encourage people around the world to unite and promote awareness and support for the blind in our communities.

An Inclusive Planning by Ernie Seiuli



Aua Elementary Teachers

It's a new year of 2012 and the University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)

implemented three trainings on "An Inclusive Emergency Planning" at three different locations on January 4th, 11th, and 18th, 2012. UCEDD staff addressed the need for inclusion of students with disabilities in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts by providing strategies and resources that it hopes will be of use to educators, employers, and individuals with disabilities. Training at the

American Samoa Community College (ASCC), Samoana high and Aua elementary reached more than 50 teachers and

employees. The purpose of the training was to revisit the schools' emergency and evacuation plans, and assess what works and improve procedures. A preparedness checklist was used to evaluate and improve their disaster preparedness plans for students and employees with developmental disabilities (DD). The response at the training events was fa-



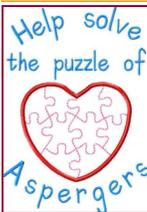
Samoana Teachers

vorable, with most participants requesting more opportunities to learn, and reevaluate their evacuation plans to make them more inclusive. Teachers and employees were informed of steps to improve accountability, and learn accurate information on saving lives. At the end of each training, participants were familiar with the basic aspects of emergency preparedness: identifying an emergency, preparedness, listing important items to have in an emergency, evacuation routes, and inclusive planning.



ASCC Securities training

ASPERGER'S DIFFERENCE by Ernie Seiuli



Asperger syndrome is a form of autism that is a lifelong disability affecting how a person makes sense of the world, processes information and relates to other people. It is a "hidden disability" where

you can't tell that someone has the condition from their outward appearance. People with Aspergers have difficulties in three main areas; social communication, social interaction, and social imagination.

UCEDD staff Ernie Seiuli joined the "Asperger Difference" webinar conducted on November 15, 2011 by Jamey Wolff. The webinar discussed Asperger syndrome, the characteristics, causes and cures, diagnosis, and difficulties with social communication and social interaction. While there are similarities with autism, people with Asperger syndrome have fewer problems with speaking and are often of average, or above average intelligence. They do not usually have the accompanying learning disabilities associated with autism, but they may have specific learning difficulties.

These may include dyslexia, or other conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and epilepsy. Many peo-

ple with Asperger syndrome want to be sociable but have difficulty with initiating and sustaining social relationships, which can make them very anxious. They may struggle to make and maintain friendships, and find other people unpredictable and confusing. They also can be imaginative in the conventional use of the word. For example, many are accomplished writers, artists and musicians. But people with Asperger syndrome can have difficulty with social imagination. This can include having a limited range of imaginative activities, which can be pursued rigidly and repetitively, like lining up toys or collecting and organizing things related to his or her interest.

Characteristics of Asperger syndrome vary from one person to another. In addition to the three main areas of difficulty, people with the condition may have love of routines, special interests, and sensory difficulties. To try and make the world less confusing, people with Asperger syndrome may have rules and rituals (ways of doing things) which they insist upon. Young children, for example, may insist on always walking the same way to school. In class, they may get

upset if there is a sudden change to the timetable or schedule. They often prefer to order their day to a set pattern. For example, if they work set hours, an unexpected delay to their journey to or from work can make them anxious or upset. The cause of Asperger syndrome is still being investigated. However, research suggests that a combination of factors—genetic and environmental—may account for changes in brain development. Asperger syndrome is not caused by a person's upbringing or their social circumstances and is not the fault of the individual with the condition.

Because Asperger syndrome varies widely from person to person, making a diagnosis can be difficult. It is often diagnosed later in children than autism and sometimes difficulties may not be recognized and diagnosed until adulthood.

You can find more information about diagnosis, and to read more about the different types of autism at <http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/brain/asperger.html>

Why Are You Being A Bully? by Lia Pelenato



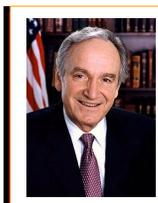
The US Department of Education recently released a study that details the discrepancies amongst anti-bullying laws and policies throughout the country. This study is the first nationwide look at bullying legislation from the Department and it highlights some inconsistencies that exist between the states. Bullying in schools has become widely viewed as an urgent social, health, and education concern that has moved to the forefront of public debate on school legislation and

policy. The focus on youth bullying has intensified over the past years as a catalyzed reaction to school violence that is often linked explicitly or by inference to bullying. In addressing this issue, in August 2010, the US Department of Education and US Department of Health and Human Services co-hosted the first Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention Summit, which brought together government officials, researchers, policymakers, and education practitioners to explore potential strategies to combat bullying

in schools. Bullying is present in our schools around the island and we have witnessed this violent behavior in of our students. Recent studies can help our teachers and parents tackle this behavior and hopefully put a stop to this violence. If you're at immediate risk of harm because of bullying, call the police at 911 or 633-1111. But if your child's teacher is not keeping your child safe from being bullied, contact the local school administrator or the Department of Education.

FYI CORNER

Keeping All Students Safe Act—(AUCD Release)



The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) applauds Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education,

Labor and Pensions Committee, for introducing the Keeping All Students Safe Act (S. 2020). This legislation would establish long overdue

protections for the use off restraint and seclusion in our nation's schools.

The Keeping All Students Safe Act would prohibit the use of seclusion and the most dangerous types of restraint, require parental notification when restraint is used and require training and certification of school personnel who implement physical restraint. Its focus on pre-

ventive techniques and positive behavioral interventions will help school personnel understand the needs of their students and address the source of challenging behaviors before they become dangerous. These national minimum standards would strengthen protections in every state and ensure the safety of all students and personnel in our nation's school.

Transplant for Children with Disabilities: Information for Parents...



Before 1990, an intellectual disability prevented a person from receiving an organ transplant. Today, according to statistics from Scientific Registry of

Transplant Recipients, many children with intellectual disabilities are on the United Network Organ Sharing (UNOS) waiting list and receiving transplants, and the survival rates are comparable to the general population. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits

discrimination against people with disabilities, and directs medical professionals to provide them with the same access to organ transplants. Acceptance or denial onto the waiting list is determined by medical professionals at individual transplant centers. A child can be denied at one center and wait-listed at another. For children with disabilities, having a parent or caregiver who is able to manage the many aspects of the transplantation process is a critical factor when a child is evaluated for a trans-

plant and put on the UNOS waiting list for an organ transplant.

Developed by the Elizabeth M. Bloggs Center on Developmental Disabilities at the UMDNJ Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, the pamphlet at this link contains information for families of children with disabilities on organ transplants.

<http://rwjms.umdnj.edu/boggscenter/products/documents/TransplantPamphletFINAL6-11.pdf>



We are on the Web!
<http://asucedd.org>

ACRONYMNS/MEANINGS

- ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ASCC: American Samoa Community College
- AUCD: Association of University Centers on Disabilities
- NCVC: National Center for Victims of Crime
- DD: Developmental Disabilities
- UCEDD: University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities
- UMDNJ: University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey
- UNOS: United Network Organ Sharing

SEND US YOUR COMMENTS

We would love to hear from you if you have comments about our newsletter, or if you would like to be added to our newsletter list!

Drop us a line at ucedd@amsamoa.edu

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MISSION

The **University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)** assures that individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages and their families participate fully in activities that will design and promote self determination, independence, integration and inclusion in all facets of life in American Samoa. The UCEDD will ensure the delivery and purpose of the Developmental Disabilities Act through culturally competent activities

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