



THE PIRC'OLATOR

Enjoy the news
with your
favorite brews

FACTS, TIPS
INFO & EVENTS
for parents and
educators

SEPTEMBER
2010



A Monthly Newsletter of the Parent Information & Resource Center - PIRC Vermont

Upcoming Events

- SEPT Milton Community Fair, 4pm-8pm
Milton Elementary School, Milton
- SEPT 18 Burlington Ensemble Performance
(a concert to benefit the Stern Center)
College Street Congregational Church
Burlington, 7:30 PM
Contact: info@sterncenter.org
- SEPT 23 Vermont Kin as Parents Conference
8:30am-3:45pm
Hampton Inn, Colchester, VT
- SEPT 23 Vermont School Counselors
Association, 8:00am-3:30pm
Killington Grand Resort, Killington
- SEPT 30 Vermont Family Network
Open House, 3pm-7pm
600 Blair Park Road,
Suite 240, Williston, VT
- OCT 22 Vermont After School Conference
7:30am-2pm
Killington Grand Resort, Killington
- OCT 28 & 29 Vermont School Boards Association
Conference
Lake Morey Inn, Fairlee
- NOV 9 Vermont School Boards Association
St. Michaels College, 4pm
Reading & Discussion with Diane
Ravitch, author of "The Death and Life
of the Great American School System".

Join Us On Facebook!

Click the link at www.pircvermont.org



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PIRC Vermont is a project of the Vermont Family Network in partnership with the Parent Child Center Network of Vermont

A Message from your PIRC Director

Fall is right around the corner and the kids are back in school! Here at the PIRC we love the fall! It gives us a chance to reconnect with our school partners and parents. Summer, for us, is a time for professional growth, a chance to catch our collective breath, and make contacts in the community. We had a great summer which presented many opportunities. In June, Kathleen and I attended the National PIRC Directors' Conference (co-sponsored with National PTA) in Memphis. This gave us a chance to catch up with PIRC personnel from other states and share success stories. It also gave us a preview/warm up to the hot summer we enjoyed here in Vermont! We also had an opportunity to visit with school administrators from around the State at the Vermont Principals' Association Leadership Academy. And throughout the summer we continued our work with the refugee population through the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Project, one of our community partners.



As you may know from prior editions, one of the programs we offer on an ongoing basis is Parent Advisory Councils. We typically do these with the help of a local Parent Child Center and try to move around the state. The purpose of these meetings is to bring a small group of parents together (12 – 20), where we can talk about parent involvement, relationships with schools, have rich, two-way conversation, and get feedback on our materials from a parent perspective. The current series is being held in St. Albans with the help of the PCC of Franklin and Grand Isle Counties (Family Center of Northwestern Vermont). That series continues through October. We are currently looking for a site for the November through February series.

With the change in Directorship, we also had time to do an extensive search for my replacement as the School Based Parent Involvement Coordinator. In mid-August, we filled that position. We had an outstanding pool of candidates and I am excited to introduce the newest addition to the PIRC team, Lindsay DesLauriers. Lindsay is a native Vermonter and comes to us with experience teaching middle school and at the college level. She will be hitting the road to do her field work with our school partners now that schools are back in session. You'll find her bio later in this edition of the PIRC O'Lator.

And the last development of the summer was working with VFN, our host agency, in competing with other area non-profits for an AmeriCorps/VISTA member for the year. The Agency is proud to announce the addition of Melissa Leo to the VFN team. The process was a great opportunity that allowed me, personally, to learn about AmeriCorps and the year of service that so many people are signing up for.

So for you educators in our readership, we're glad you're right back at it and hope you had a restful, yet fulfilling summer. For those schools that have yet to begin a relationship with us, we'd love to come meet you and discuss our menu of services, many of which come with grant money attached to help you increase parent involvement in your community. Give us a call!



PIRC Welcomes Lindsay DesLauriers

Lindsay is a native Vermonter, a mother, and certified secondary English teacher. Just prior to coming to PIRC as the School Based Parent Involvement Coordinator, Lindsay completed an MA Program at UVM, where she also taught English 1 for the past two years. Before that, she taught 8th Grade Language Arts and worked as an AYP Reading teacher. She is thrilled to join the PIRC team, and we are thrilled to have her as a resource! Please e-mail her at LindsayD@PIRCVermont.org or call (800) 800-4005, ext 246



(Left) Vermont Family Network's new logo! Same programs, different look! Please visit us at www.vtfn.org

PIRC VT Reaching Out to Refugees and Immigrant Families

PIRC Vermont is a member of the Refugee and Immigrant Services Network (RISN). The group meets regularly to discuss issues of relevance to the refugee populations and address challenges faced by service providers.

RISN provides a wonderful opportunity to learn about new and existing cultures settling in Vermont and to explore options that would make parent involvement in education easier. RISN also allows PIRC to connect with other agencies and organizations working with families throughout Vermont.

At the same time, PIRC is able to share communication strategies and best practices for family and community involvement.

Vermont Family Network granted AmeriCorp VISTA to join the organization

Welcome Melissa Leo, who will be working at VFN full time for one year. AmeriCorp VISTA is a wonderful program, where individuals sign up for a year, dedicating themselves to serving their communities. Vermont Family Network is very fortunate to be on the receiving end of the wonderful energy this program brings. Melissa will be working on developing a volunteer program at VFN, working with Family Support and the PIRC to reach out to under served communities to encourage participation. We are very excited to have Melissa onboard. To find out more about AmeriCorp and their various programs, please visit www.americorps.gov



Flynn Center brings performance and workshop dealing with learning disabilities to the stage



Performance: Sept. 23 and 24 8:00 p.m. FlynnSpace. Please don't miss this wonderful performance by Lida Winfield, a local dancer, choreographer and storyteller who also is a VSA Vermont instructor. In this multimedia reflection on her experience growing up with a learning disability, Winfield shares the gifts and difficulties she experienced especially in learning to read, a task she accomplished in her twenties.

Workshop: Sept. 25 2:00 – 4:00p.m. at Flynn. Winfield will also be offering a workshop especially for people who are affected by or interested in learning disabilities. Using improvisation, participants will explore different ways of creating stories and movement together. Telling and hearing each other's stories requires risk, but by sharing them we build bridges between each other. Creativity and an open mind is all that is needed to enjoy this workshop; no prior experience necessary. All sizes and abilities welcome to attend.

This workshop is available at a discounted price of \$10 for friends of VSA Vermont. (Though we hope you will attend the performance, you do not have to attend the performance to attend the workshop.) To receive the discount and register for the workshop, call or write Bridget Edwards, Program Manager: 802-652-4539 or bedwards@flynncenter.org

New Grant Opportunities!

PIRC Vermont is excited to announce that we now offer more grant opportunities for schools that want to improve and increase parent involvement! In addition to our ongoing Solid Foundations grant program, we will now work with you to develop a customized grant of up to \$1,000 to help your school implement parent friendly improvements! Please contact Lindsay DesLauriers, our new School Based Parent Involvement Coordinator, to discuss some of the new ways that PIRC Vermont can partner with your school. (800) 800-4005, ext 246, LindsayD@PIRCVermont.org