



TREES NETWORK

August 2025 Newsletter



Parent/Family Meeting

Monday, September 8, 2025 7 PM - 8 PM

Local Task Force (LTF) and Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC)

Join us virtually on **Monday, September 8, 2025 from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm** for our first monthly family support meeting of the new school year. Over the past few months, our newsletter has highlighted surrounding agencies' contact information. We have reached out to some of these

local task force agencies and interagency councils to present on what they do and how they can support families. We have members from Pittsburgh/Allegheny County LICC, Preschool EI at AIU 3, a Parent Co-Chair, Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, and Pittsburgh's Local Task Force coming to talk with us about what they can do and how they can help. Anyone interested in learning more can register for the meeting by contacting Vicki Donne at donne@rmu.edu or Deanna Hiltz at hiltzd@rmu.edu or registering at [Google Registration \(https://forms.gle/QFnFueZqcmDYfeUx6\)](https://forms.gle/QFnFueZqcmDYfeUx6) Upon registration, registrants will be sent a Google Meets calendar invitation.

Local Task Forces and Interagency Coordinating Councils

A Consent Agreement on the Right to Education was signed in 1972 as part of the resolution of the PARC v. Commonwealth of PA case. It established a state task force and 29 local task forces (one in each intermediate unit). The goal of the task forces is to support parents through training, resource sharing, and networking so that they can work with their school or Local Education Agency (LEA) in a positive, proactive manner. It is a parent/family network group for families of a child with a disability.

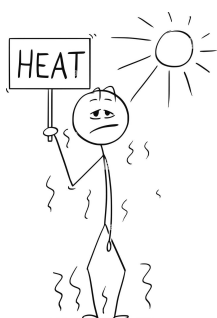
With the start of a new school year and the topic of our September meeting, we wanted to make sure you had contact information because any interested person or parent of a student with a disability may attend Local Task Force meetings and LICC meetings.. **Below is contact information for several of our area local task forces (LTF).**

- Allegheny County (LTF3) - (412) 394-5930 <https://www.ltf3.org/>
- Beaver County (LTF 27) - 724-774-7800 x7800 <https://www.bviu.org/>
- Butler County (LTF4) - 724-458-6700 www.miu4.org

- **City of Pittsburgh (LTF2)** - (412) 323-3996
<https://www.pghschools.org/departments/pse-special-education/pse-special-education/pittsburgh-local-task-force-on-the-right-to-education>
- **Washington County (LTF1)** - 724-938-3241 ext. 205
<https://www.iu1.org/departments/special-education-services/local-task-force>
- **Westmoreland County (LTF7)** - 724-836-2460
[https://urldefense.com/v3/https://sites.google.com/wiu7.org/local-task-force?pli=1;!!HE3Wh9YiWbHP!0xftEo3UIOmFjuVEkr6aBbA4cKQB7vyVfIUhHneF5jDKSOGu-T0uYgcfVomL_Sc6QyTvGUfK4dE0fF6MVDY\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://sites.google.com/wiu7.org/local-task-force?pli=1;!!HE3Wh9YiWbHP!0xftEo3UIOmFjuVEkr6aBbA4cKQB7vyVfIUhHneF5jDKSOGu-T0uYgcfVomL_Sc6QyTvGUfK4dE0fF6MVDY$)

Featured Artificial Intelligence (AI)

We have seen a lot of information in the news about artificial intelligence. There are various software applications and websites that utilize artificial intelligence programming. Many of these applications have the potential to support individuals with disabilities. We thought it might be helpful if we highlighted one of these AI applications each month. This month we are highlighting AI virtual trips. AI adds to the realism and interactivity of virtual environments. Perhaps you are like me and feel that it is too hot to go outside. Take a virtual trip by visiting some of these sites.



- [Discovery Education](https://www.discoveryeducation.com/community/virtual-field-trips/) (<https://www.discoveryeducation.com/community/virtual-field-trips/>)
- [Virtual Field Trips](https://virtualfieldtrips.org/video-library/) (<https://virtualfieldtrips.org/video-library/>)
- [GoValleyKids](https://govalleykids.com/virtual-field-trips/) website lists a host of various virtual trips (<https://govalleykids.com/virtual-field-trips/>)
 - There is a really cool site of the [international space station](https://www.nasa.gov/mission/main/iss/) where you can direct the screen to areas of the space station.
 - [Google Arts & Culture](https://artsandculture.google.com/play) has some interactive AI tours - I enjoyed the Mice in the Museum (<https://artsandculture.google.com/play>)

Upcoming Special Education Conference



On Monday, October 13, 2025, the RMU Trees Network is holding its annual Special Education Conference. This year the theme is **Leading the Way: Innovation and Inclusion**. It is free and held virtually to allow for more participation from special educators, administrators, paraprofessionals, and related service staff looking for professional development on important topics in special education. Register here:
<https://forms.gle/vuq3xXvthG8FDdhc6>

Upcoming Events Around the Area

The RMU Trees Network is a member of the Special Needs Consortium, a group of amazing service providers in the Pittsburgh area. The consortium exists to provide a forum where all service providers can network and opportunities can be shared, promoted, and advocated for to increase awareness of resources available to the community. For a full listing of member events, visit their [website](https://www.specialneedsconsortium.org/upcoming-events) (<https://www.specialneedsconsortium.org/upcoming-events>). We hope you will find some of these highlighted events of interest to you.



FREE August Summer Camp - Open Up

Mondays-Thursdays 8:30-11:30AM

Session 1: August 4-7; Session 2: August 11-14; Session 3: August 18-21

Students in grades K-5 will participate in an inclusive and engaging yoga class, play imaginative games intended to promote mindful social interactions, and make crafts they can use to help support a mindfulness practice at home. Visit their website to learn more and apply: www.open-up.org/club-camp

August 5th, August 19th 4:30PM - 6:30PM - SibShop

SibShop is an opportunity for children (ages 8-13) who have siblings with serious or chronic health problems and/or developmental needs to gain peer support as well as education while having fun. Location: Shaler Middle School, 1800 Mt. Royal Blvd., Glenshaw, PA. 15116 For further and/or questions please contact Daria Durny, LCSW, Ellie Mental Health-Wexford Clinical Director at ddurny@elliementalhealth.com or 412-763-2750

August 9th Check-in at 4PM, Wild Things game follows at 7PM

Casey's Clubhouse Combine at EQT Stadium with the Washington Wild Things

EQT Stadium – 1 Washington Federal Way, Washington, PA 15301

FREE for all participants and their families (promo code FREE at checkout). This is a unique opportunity for kids and adults with disabilities to show off their skills, meet new friends, and enjoy a day at a professional baseball stadium. No baseball experience is needed – just come ready to have fun! Register here:

<https://www.caseyclubhouse.org/combine-with-wild-things.html>

August 10th 2:00PM - 3:00PM - Azure presents Flights of Imagination Musical Adventure

Embark on a musical adventure where your imagination takes flight. Soar somewhere over the rainbow and fly to the moon as we celebrate the fantastic heights we can reach with music. <https://www.autismpittsburgh.org/azureevents>

August 14th 6:00PM - PA ABLE and ABLE Age Expansion Evening webinar

The PA ABLE Savings Program gives individuals with qualified disabilities a tax-free way to save for a wide range of disability-related expenses while maintaining important benefits.

Some of the topics include eligibility requirements for opening a PA ABLE account, the federal and state tax benefits, ABLE Age Expansion, and how PA ABLE interacts with important benefits. If you require accommodations to participate in this webinar, please contact us at info@paable.gov. Register:

<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/284ec30d-a98d-4431-b230-3f014a47b0c4@aff0f5b6-7ab3-4f66-b46c-0b7d250ad998>

August 16th 10:00AM - Sensory Events at Stoneybrook Foundation

260 Mountain Trail Lane, Acme, PA 15610

Preregistration is required.

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/stoneybrookfoundation/event/sgc/?>

August 16th 2:00PM - 5:00 PM Band Together

[Open Mic & Summer Picnic](#)

Corbriwood Ln 36 Corbriwood Ln, Gibsonia, PA

August 19th 1:00PM - 2:00PM ODS Pittsburgh Public School Summer Parent and Guardian Virtual Session

Are you a PPS family or helping professional in the PPS community?

You're invited to an ODS Pittsburgh Public School (PPS) Summer Parent and Guardian virtual session - How can the Office of Developmental Supports (ODS) Assist? Register at <https://forms.office.com/r/gAmNgJFSTD> Registration will close two days before the session.

"This session is provided by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Developmental Supports (ODS). Does your student have an Intellectual Disability, Autism, Development Disability (prior to age 9) or Medically Complex Condition (prior to age 22) diagnosis? Are you interested in connection to Supports Coordination (SC/case management)? Join us to learn more. Already registered and working with an SC? We'll address other supports and services. Please reach Mary Evrard with questions. Visit www.alleghenycounty.us/Services/Human-Services-DHS/DHS-Offices/Office-of-Developmental-Supports and click on "contact the ODS Community Liaison" to reach Mary.

September 11th 6:00PM - 7:00PM [Music Therapy @ Moondog's](#)

Band Together Clubhouse (in Moondog's) 378 Freeport Rd, Blawnox, PA

September 14th 2:00PM - 5:00PM [Live Autism Friendly Open Mic @ Band Together Clubhouse](#) 378 Freeport Rd, Blawnox, PA

September 25th 8:30AM - Special Needs Consortium Networking Meeting

Community Living and Support Services (CLASS)

1400 Braddock Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15218

RSVP: snc@specialneedsconsortium.org

OPEN UP Mindfulness Classes (free)

Open Up's mission is to teach mindfulness tools through movement practices and interactive arts while centering people living with disabilities. They want all people to be able to have ease of access in finding avenues for increasing their sense of overall well being. They believe that all people should be able to experience joy in community with others. They have inclusive movement classes at our studio and can be found in schools and community spaces around the city and beyond. <https://www.open-up.org/>

DON'T FORGET TO THINK OF YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY FOR EVENTS - check out the following:

Allegheny Library Association Programs & Events

(<https://aclalibraries.org/explore/library-programs-and-events/>)

Beaver County Library Systems (<https://www.beaverlibraries.org/system-wide-events>)

Resources for Parents and Educators

The Network provides resources for parents and teachers and these resources can be found at the [RMU Trees Network Website](https://donne94.wixsite.com/rmu-trees-network) (<https://donne94.wixsite.com/rmu-trees-network>). Information on the Network and the previous newsletters are posted on the RMU website <https://www.rmu.edu/academics/provost/trees>. In each newsletter we provide links to resources related to the topics discussed in our parent meetings and workshops as well as other information that may be helpful to families, schools, and the community. **Below are some links to resources in preparation for school.**



The Education Law Center - The Education Law Center-PA (ELC) has an annual “Back to School Guide” with publications on multiple education topics to help students, families, and child-serving professionals.

<https://www.elc-pa.org/2024-back-to-school-guide-for-students-families-advocates/>

Family’s Quick Start Guide to Special Education - This resource includes several different publications that provide essential, comprehensible information to families who are new to special education.

<https://www.pattan.net/Publications/Familys-Quick-Start-Guide-to-Special-Education>

LD Online - Back-to-School: Tips for Parents of Children with Special Needs and other Special Education topics.

<https://www.ldonline.org/Ld-topics/special-education/back-school-tips-parents-children-special-needs>

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RMU Trees Website (<https://donne94.wixsite.com/rmu-trees-network>)

RMU Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/RMUtrees/>)

