

# IT TAKES A VILLAGE!

## Finding the Community Resources Your Child Needs

From help with behavioral problems, to day care, to respite care, and recreational programs, there are many services available to help promote the health and well being of your child or youth with special health care needs. It can be hard trying to sort through everything you hear about that may or may not be useful. There are many places you can go for help:

- **Parent-to-Parent Support.** Other parents with children who have the same or similar health care needs as your child can be extremely helpful in choosing community resources. They can also serve as a great source for emotional and practical support. Your child's Primary Care Provider (PCP) may be able to refer you to other families in the practice who are willing to connect and share experiences. You may also find a local, regional or national parent support group based on your child's specific disability in the phone book or on the internet. There are local chapters for disability specific organizations in the Washington metropolitan area. Another resource in the District of Columbia is the DC Family Empowerment Center—Family Support 360 (202) 448-1450.
- **Your child's Primary Care Provider.** There are several ways your child's Primary Care Provider (PCP) can help link your family to community resources. He or she may make a specific service referral through your insurance (some insurance companies have special needs care coordinators), provide you with a handout of local services indicating which services are recommended, have a list of available resources posted in his or her office, or he or she may refer you to another member of the office staff who knows what is available. For more information on ways your child's PCP can be involved see the AAP Policy statement: The Pediatrician's Role in Community Pediatrics. available at <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;115/4/1092>.
- **Parent Training and Information Center.** A PTI is a state-run organization funded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that serves to provide parents with information and training about disabilities, parent and children's rights under the IDEA and related laws, and resources in the community, state and nation. For basic information about PTIs see <http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/basicpar/bp3.pdf>. To contact the District of Columbia PTI call: (202) 678-8060 or 1-888-327-8060.
- **National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities.** This is the center that provides information to the nation on disabilities in children and youth; programs and services for infants, children, and youth with disabilities; IDEA, the nation's special education law; No Child Left Behind, the nation's general education law; and research-based information on effective practices for children with disabilities. For a list of agencies and organizations in the District of Columbia that can help you connect with resources in your community see <http://www.nichcy.org/stateshe/dc.htm>.