



# The Kids Newsletter

...for parents by parents.

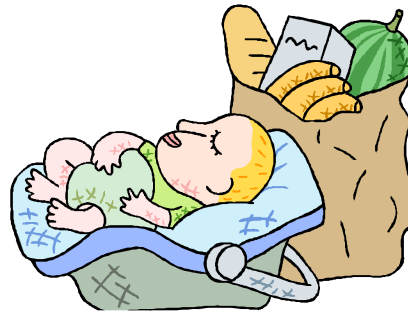
## A Parents Story

By a Central Middlesex Parent

### DRIVING SAFE!

#### Safety information and equipment ideas

So there you are. You finally get your kid in the car. You breath a sigh of relief. You are moving, on the way to school, a doctor appointment, maybe a visit to some friends – fill in the blank. Then BOOM. It's clear you ain't gonna get where you're going with any ease.



Your buckled up sweetheart is now unbuckled and having a wild time in the back seat. Or maybe she is having a full out tantrum making it difficult if not impossible for you to continue driving safely. What do you do?! Remember, our kids aren't always trying to manipulate us. If you are getting this newsletter, you know that your child has issues they cannot always control.

Many of us have been there – at a total loss. I'd like to offer some suggestions. Perhaps you've tried them. Try again. Don't give up! To start, give your child some notice before you have to leave. Tell her where you are going and when you need to leave. Let her know in time chunks she can understand. For example, “we will leave in as long as it takes to watch one Sponge Bob episode”.

***“You finally get your kid in the car. ...Then BOOM. It's clear you ain't gonna get where you're going with any ease.”***

Make sure you give yourself enough time that you won't feel pressure because you are running late.

Before you pack up your child make sure you have everything you need. If possible, get it all into the car before you take your kid out. This keeps your hands free. Also make sure the back seat doors are child locked! We keep a crate of books and activities in the back seat to entertain my kids.

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### Special points of interest:

- ☉ A Parents Story
- ☉ Rainy day summer activities
- ☉ Good websites
- ☉ Legislative Updates
- ☉ Free/ low-cost activities
- ☉ Workshops & events

### Inside this issue:

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Sometimes the promise of a treat at the end of the activity/appointment/ride is enough to quell any frightful car behavior. I know offering a treat is controversial, but sometimes we parents have to be flexible. We need to do the things we do in order to get what we want accomplished. A treat does not have to be sugar based. Maybe a few extra minutes of video or TV time upon return, or special reading time alone with mom or dad at night. Be creative.

I keep a safety bag in my car. My favorite item in it is the Buckle Boss. It is a small inexpensive device developed locally by a former school cab driver. It is a shaped piece of plastic that connects the seat belt tongue into the clicker. It stops the child from being able to unclick the buckle and getting free. You can easily open it with a key or a popsicle stick – any long thin item. The web site is listed below.

Another important item is the E-Z-On Adjustable Vest. I haven't used it, but it looks like a great option to keep your child safe in the back seat. They come in different sizes to fit from 20 pounds to 168 pounds.

#### Websites:

You can find the Buckle Boss at [buckleboss.com](http://buckleboss.com)

The safety vest can be found at [ezonpro.com](http://ezonpro.com)

The vest and other items can be found at [ewss.org](http://ewss.org)

For more involved safety equipment go to [posey.com](http://posey.com)

*“Above all, the best trick might just be to remember to praise your child for each and every successful step they take.”*

And finally, if you need further help, get in touch with your DMR or DMH contact. Ask if they have an adaptive technology department that can make suggestions or help modify a piece of equipment you already have. Above all, the best trick might just be to remember to praise your child for each and every successful step they take. From putting on their coat to leave the house to not slamming the car door.

## Legislative Updates

### THE PROBLEM ...

An Executive Office of Health and Human Services report found that **two decades of neglect and lack of funding have imperiled the human services provider industry and put the industry “at risk”**. The state’s outdated procurement system has not changed to reflect the escalating costs of providing care. This neglect has placed the **industry near bankruptcy, created high turnover among caregivers** of our children, seniors and people with disabilities, and produced a **lack of continuity of care**.

### THE SOLUTION ...

#### Modernize the human services system

Senate bill 65 will modernize the outdated procurement system of the Commonwealth’s human services industry. This legislation will reform decades-old funding systems to more appropriately reimburse human service providers for the care they provide.



Go to [www.strengthenhumanservices.org](http://www.strengthenhumanservices.org) for more information and to **find out what you can do!**

## Kids Activities

**Story hour at Barnes & Noble** in Burlington, Saugus, and Peabody. A weekly story hour for tots under six is offered during the morning at 10:30/ 11:00 am, and a family story hour called 'Pajamarama' on select Friday evenings at 6:30/ 7:00 pm, where children come wearing their PJ's. After the stories are read, snacks are served. Check out [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) under Event Detail for more information and a schedule of upcoming story hours.



The Hilltop Steakhouse in Saugus holds **Sunday Character breakfasts** on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. June's character is Dorothy the Dinosaur & Captain Featherword. Go to [www.hilltopsteakhouse.com](http://www.hilltopsteakhouse.com) for more details.

....or you can check out [www.mass-vacation.com](http://www.mass-vacation.com) and search for low cost activities in your own community.

## Useful Resources

**Check out this helpful website from a local Parent, Judy J.:**

[www.autismthemusical.com](http://www.autismthemusical.com) -Follows five LA kids over the course of six months - the **show captures the struggles and triumphs of family lives** and observes how this musical production gives the performers a comfort zone to explore their creative sides! The musical is now available on DVD.

[www.whofish.org](http://www.whofish.org) -a great website where you can **quickly look up local events and activities** in your area.



## Upcoming Workshops & Events

Be a part of something great! Riverside is offering a **Family Support Parent Advisory Committee**. The group typically meets on Friday mornings every other month from 9:30 to 11:30 AM. The next meeting is on August 8th at 9:30 am. The committee meets at our Wakefield office. Check out the enclosed flyer for details and directions.

Autism Speaks and Walk Now for Autism are holding a variety of **fundraising walk events** across the state. Each event is filled with entertainment, refreshments, an autism resource fair, and more...

Upcoming events are:

Saturday, 8/16/08, Jetties Beach in Nantucket; Saturday, 9/13/08, Stanley Park in Westfield;

Sunday, 10/19/08, Suffolk Downs in East Boston. For more details, go to [www.walknowforautism.org](http://www.walknowforautism.org)



Riverside will be **Going Green** and adding a section in the newsletter for parents to list items they have and no longer need and would like to donate or swap out with another parent. Let us know what you have and we will list it here. Email or call Riverside at 781-246-2003 ext. 221 with details or to request an item or speak to your Case Manager.

We currently have:

- Two boxes of Disposable Youth Pants (Curity Sleep Pants), size Medium, 45– 65 lbs.
- Yamaha TSR 15 Table Top Keyboard Piano. It comes with a plug adaptor or you can use batteries.

Riverside Family & Individual Support is funded primarily by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the funding source. Riverside Family & Individual Support does not endorse any product, service, or theory referred to in the newsletter. Resources and announcements are included for information only.

# Riverside Community Care

THE HELP YOU NEED CLOSE TO HOME

Riverside Family & Individual Support  
338 Main Street, Suite 301  
Wakefield, MA 01880

We're on the web...  
[www.riversidefamilysupport.org](http://www.riversidefamilysupport.org)

## We'd like your input!

This newsletter is geared at being by parents for parents with disabled children. Each Issue will have an article with a families story, useful websites, free or inexpensive resources, legislative news, and any information that may be helpful to a family raising a disabled child. Our goal is to increase awareness and reach out to families by supplying them with useful information.

### We welcome your story's and ideas!

If you would like to contribute feedback, please email, fax or mail your thoughts to:

Email: [treilly@riversidecc.org](mailto:treilly@riversidecc.org)

Please put *Newsletter* in the topic of the email.

Fax: 781-245-2454

Address: listed above.



**Check out  
the new clubs  
inside...**