

# — EL AVISO —

## MARCH 2009

### Advocating for Your Child's Rights: How Do You Say Learning Disability en Español? Minority Health Report By Issac Itman

Is it a learning disability or a language problem? If your child can't keep up with school, do you know where to turn to determine how to help him?

"You need to know what your rights are," said Maria Avina, Bilingual Education Resource Specialist of Parents Helping Parents (PHP). The non-profit public benefit agency based in Santa Clara, CA, is focused on meeting the needs of children with special needs and their families.

Avina's personal experience made her realize how hard it is to ask the right questions and be informed about all aspects of the process regarding special education. Her son was born prematurely and when he was two she noticed he had trouble learning to speak. Later on, when he was almost three, they were connected to the school district and he received speech and language therapy.

Nevertheless, Avina said it was hard to believe when they said her son had more issues than just speech and language. Denial, blame-shifting, fear, helplessness and much later, if at all, a cry for help.

That's the regular cycle of emotions for parents who discover their kids have a learning disability. "I went through the whole thing of denial," she said. Learning disabilities or learning disorders (LD) are terms used to describe a variety of disorders affecting an individual's ability in areas such as writing, reading, listening, speaking and mathematics.

Nonetheless, there might be other disorders that fall under this category and the way they affect the learning process varies in every case. Learning disabilities do not reflect how intelligent an individual is and are not connected to a person's intelligence quotient or IQ, rather they are difficulties individuals might experience when performing a particular action.

When Avina's son started kindergarten, the school officials told her he was not catching on to the curriculum like the rest of the students and even though she asked for help, they recommended that he finish the school year with his classmates to see how he would do. Avina regrets she was not more insistent in asking for an evaluation. "At the end of the school year they came to me and said he was going to need some testing," she said. Evaluation was delayed again when her son started first grade. "They said 'let's wait,'" Avina recalls.

In the Santa Clara School District, in order to receive an assessment from the school, parents need to request that service by submitting a letter to the school. Avina found out about this protocol through another parent who advised her on the matter. "I thought, this whole time I've been waiting and I didn't know there was a formal approach," she said. "You need to know how to ask for what you want. This happens to a lot of parents, they don't know they have to do it in writing."

Avina's son was finally tested and the assessment indicated he had a learning disability. After consulting other specialists, they told her he had dyslexic.

According to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), approximately 15 percent to 20 percent of children have a language-based disability in the United States, and most of them have dyslexia, a language disability affecting reading, writing and spelling. It also affects information processing, attention and concentration.

When there are problems with math, the disorder is referred to as dyscalculis and can be present along with dyslexia. Nonetheless, dyslexia is not an impediment to becoming successful and therefore appropriate diagnosis and early intervention is needed.

Non-English speaking children face major challenges, because sometimes dyslexia is camouflaged by the language issue. "It is very hard to find information in Spanish, and even harder in other languages" said Avina, a native ▶

**LAS CLINICAS DEL NORTE: A Community Health Center, Established in 1972**

Serving the communities of Abiquiu, Ancones, Barranco, Cañon, Carson, Chili, Cañones, Cañon Plaza, Duranes, El Llanito, El Pueblo, El Rito, Gallegos, Gavilan, Ghost Ranch, La Cueva, La Madera, La Mesa, La Zorro, Las Casitas, Las Tablas, Los Pinos, Medanales, No Agua, Ojo Caliente, Olguin, Petaca, Placitas, Plaza Blanca, Rio Chama, San Miguel, Servilleta, Servilleta Plaza, Silvestres, Tierra Azul, Tres Orejas, Tres Piedras, Tusas, Vallecitos, Youngsville

Cont'd ►

English-speaker who still faced many challenges. "I spent almost a year trying to find information and it was really hard because I did not know exactly what I was looking for or what information was helpful."

Having a learning disability like dyslexia and being an English learner is "almost a double disability" because it is not easily detected, said Irene Martinez, Executive director of Fiesta Educativa, Inc., a non-profit organization based in Los Angeles that provides information and training for Latino families with children with special needs.

Martinez said non-English speaking children are unlikely to receive an early diagnosis and when they receive inquiries from concerned parents their kids are already older. "Many of them get identified when they are 8 or 9 when they could have been identified by 3 or 4," she said, adding parents may not pick up the problem either. "The socio-economic factor here is also important."

There are not many assessments that can clearly differentiate between problems with English as a second language versus reading problems. "It definitely can be masked", said Jenny Thomson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Harvard Graduate School of Education. Thomson said the main way to diagnose a reading problem is to see if the child has problems with something called phonological awareness, which means being able to think about the sounds within words. "We can assess this by, for example, asking children what is the first sound in the word 'cat' or you could ask: 'if you had the word 'price' and you took the 'p' off the beginning what would you have left?," she said. "If the child struggles with that, is the classic sign of dyslexia."

She said that if they do not have problems with this kind of activity, it is more likely the second language that is holding them up. If the child is struggling, he should receive help at an early stage. "The stronger the child's first language the easier it is to acquire skills in the second," she said. "It is good to encourage reading and writing in the native language because having really strong skills in the first language will help with learning English."

NOTE: The above information is edited from the internet under 'The Office of Minority Health'. There is more detailed information and many other health subjects. Look it up - [www.omhrc.org](http://www.omhrc.org)

Las Clinicas' CCS staff are experienced in working with these kind of issues and can support and educate parents about working with the school system as they advocate for testing and special services for their children.

## ⊗ **Community Events** ⊗

Contact: Joan Tollefson 1-505-323-1519/ 581-4728 x255/ email: [joan@lcdn.org](mailto:joan@lcdn.org)

For Health Advise when we are closed, call Nurse Advise New Mexico 877-725-2552 open 24 hours.

### El Rito

**Las Clinicas del Norte Board Meeting** - every 4th Monday, 6 pm, El Rito clinic Community Room

**El Rito Library**- Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, 11 am – 6 pm, Sat, 11 am – 5 pm

**El Rito Library Board Mtgs.** - every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 6:30 pm at Library

**AA Meetings El Rito** - Sun, 5 -6 pm, at El Rito Library. Open discussion.

**El Rito Fire Dept. Mtgs.** - every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 7 pm, at the El Rito Fire Station, open to the public

**Tutoring** - El Rito Save the Children Ctr, contact # 581-4516

**Recycling** - Tues, Thurs, Sat. 8 am - 4 pm Recycling Station at the old El Rito Dump. Call for information, Joseph Lewanski of NCSW 747-8459

### Abiquiu

**Abiquiu Fire Dept. Mtg.** - every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, 7:30 pm, Fire Dept.

**AA Meeting** - Saturday, 10am, Abiquiu Library

**Al-Anon Mtg.** - Every Mon. 5:30-6:30, Abiquiu Clinic rear bldg. For info call Jean 685-4490

**Abiquiu Library** - Sun, Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, 1 pm – 6 pm, located on the Plaza

**Recycling** - Tues.- Sat. 8 am to 4 pm. Recycling at the El Prado Convenience Station at the Rural Events Center. Call for information, Joseph Lewanski of North Central Solid Waste 747-8459.

### Ojo Caliente

**Ojo Caliente Fire Dept. Mtg.** - every 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 7 pm, Ojo Caliente Fire Dept.

The Abiquiu Studio Tour is on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> but registration will be on **March 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30PM** at the Abiquiu Inn.

Artists with the 685 prefix are eligible. Stops for the tour must be within the existing map. Registration forms may be picked up at the Tin Moon Gallery. To be on the tour you need to get your payment in by May 13<sup>th</sup> and come to registration and one other meeting. If you become a member you also have to help the tour in some way with a tour job like working on the group mailing. If you are undecided but have questions please come that evening since it is not a formal meeting and there will be tour representatives to answer your questions.

**Abiquiu Volunteer Fire Dept.** meets on the 2nd Wed of the month at 7:30 pm at the Pueblo Fire Station (until the station under construction is completed - will advise)

All community members are welcome.

We need hard working recruits.

**Abiquiu Area Emergency Services Project** (501 (C) (3) arm of the AVFD meets 2nd Wed. at 6 pm at RAC Rural Events Center Admin Bldg. until new Station operable - same)

Best, Sam Jewell

# EL RITO LIBRARY

## Thank You!

We would like to thank the Griffins for the copier machine; those that have volunteered their services as tutors and building services; and of course, those that have donated funds - please keep the contributions coming!

## New Library Hours

Due to budgetary constraints, we regret to inform the public that we have to cut our hours of operation. We will be cutting four (4) hours a week starting March 1, 2009. The new hours are: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.

## Events for March

The El Rito Library presents in concert: "**Hungrytown**" - The folk music of Rebecca Hall and Ken Anderson.  
**Saturday, March 7 at 4:00 pm** Admission Free - Donation to the Library is encouraged. Reservations are recommended: 877-806-2987.

## Quilt and Textile Search

Do you have an old handmade family quilt, rug, blanket or garment? Quilt and Textile Search in conjunction with the upcoming New Mexico Centennial are looking for pre-1930s quilts and textiles. ▶▶

We are particularly interested in those with a New Mexico history. If you have an old quilt, handmade rug, blanket or garment that might fall into this category, we will be photographing them and collecting their history at the

**El Rito Public Library on March 21  
from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.**

For more information contact: Donna at (505) 771-0018 or Colleen at (505) 892-5673 or CentennialTextilesearch@yahoo.com.

We would like to thank Viki Edwards for her help in coordinating this event. You can contact Viki at 575-581-4744.

## Events for April

**Spring Flea Market - Saturday, April 4, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm**  
**Library Community Day on April 18th.** We encourage the town of El Rito and all the surrounding communities to participate. Please visit our website for more information.  
**Dia de los Niños- Dia de los Libros.** To be announced (TBA)

## Reminders

If you are interested in **computer classes** please call Jim Harford at 581-4404. We offer **free tutoring** of all kinds, please call us here at the Library at 581-4608.

**Library Hours** **ph. 581-4608**

Change in our winter hours:  
Tuesday through Saturday 11:00 am to 5:00 pm

## PUEBLO DE ABIQUIU LIBRARY AND CULTURAL CENTER

### **TENNIS LESSONS TO BENEFIT THE LIBRARY**

Daniel and Gabriella of High Desert Tennis in Abiquiu have generously offered their expertise as a fundraiser to benefit our Library! All ages welcome, including kids. Sign up now for 12 lessons for only \$60 (that's \$5 per lesson; normal price is \$25 per session)! Lessons are 90 minutes and offered for groups of 10 two days a week after school (Mon/Wed or Tue/Thurs). Please call and let our staff know if you are interested or can help out. April through June or July through September.

### **APRENDA A HABLAR INGLÉS / LEARN TO SPEAK ENGLISH**

*Sabado, 28 de febrero, 3-6 PM / Free/Gratis*  
*Clases de Conversación Gratis cada sábado por la tarde.*  
*Llame a la Biblioteca a 685 4884 para inscribirse o puede ir por la Biblioteca durant las horas regulares, domingo a jueves, 1-6 de la tarde.*

### **Los niños son Bienvenidos! Children welcome!**

Free classes begin at the Library on Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> from 3-6 PM and continue through May 9<sup>th</sup> taught by Lorenzo Gonzales and Sabra Moore. Sign up at the Library or call 685 4884. Sponsored in collaboration with the Adult Education Program of Northern New Mexico College

**EBSCO database** on trial for a short time only in our computer lab for the following: NoveList Plus, Hobbies & Crafts, Auto Repair, Home Improvement and Small Engine Repair reference centers.

### **SPONSORS NEEDED FOR ANNUAL READ-A-THON BENEFIT & TACO/TAMALE COOK-OFF WITH DENISE CHAVEZ IN JUNE**

**Author of *A Taco Testimony: Meditations on Family, Food And Culture*.** Acclaimed author/actress Denise Chávez explores the history, lore, and preparation of tacos at the library's Annual Read-a-thon Benefit in June. "Tacos are sacred to me," writes Chávez in her book that will be read out loud at this all-day event. Chile country is the setting for Chávez's magical, tragicomic fiction and in *A Taco Testimony* she tells wonderful stories that connect literature with the culture and food of this region. Please help the library! *If you would like to read or to sponsor a reader or a family member for the Taco/Tamale Cook-Off, please sign up at the library or email Abiquiu Public Library abiquiup@gmail.com*

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

*Easy to access updates, information, and assistance in locating pending legislation and bills now available in the Library.* Important bills that directly effect you and your community are pending in the legislature. Inform yourself about House Joint Memorial (HJM) 49, HJM 15 and other pending legislation that have to do with use rights for traditional land and preserving water and the environment. *The Library is a community resource; please feel free to ask for help in viewing these materials.*

**HOURS: Sunday through Thursday 1 — 6 pm / 505 685 4884**

# Las Clinicas del Norte

**EL RITO CLINIC**  
PO Box 237, El Rito 87530  
**Phone: 581-4728**  
**1-800-869-7624**

**MEDICAL:**

MON thru FRI 8 am- 6:30pm  
Confidential Family Planning Title X Services available

**COUNSELING: 581-4728, # 232**

Call to schedule, Monday thru Friday  
Spanish speaking on Friday

**DENTAL SERVICES: 581-0028**

MON thru FRI 8 am- 6:00pm

**OJO CALIENTE CLINIC**  
PO Box 307, Ojo Caliente 87549  
**Phone: 583-2191**  
**1-866-665-6832**

**MEDICAL:**

TUES thru FRI 8 am- 6:30 pm  
Confidential Family Planning Title X Services available

**COUNSELING: 583-2191**

Call to schedule, Tues, Wed., Friday  
Spanish speaking on Friday

**NO DENTAL SERVICES**

**ABIQUIU CLINIC**  
PO Box 757, Abiquiu 87510  
**Phone: 685-4479**  
**1-866-578-1662**

**MEDICAL:**

MON thru FRI 8 am- 6:30 pm  
Confidential Family Planning Title X Services available

**COUNSELING: 685-4479**

Call to schedule, Wednesday & Friday

**NO DENTAL SERVICES**

## LCDN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - Gary Salazar; Vice-President - Marcos Garcia; Treasurer - Peter Hansen; Secretary - Pauline Varoz.  
Members - Tony Chacon, Erma Crim, Trudy Drake, George Flores, Lillian Gallegos. Honorary Member - Jeremias Archuleta

## DONATIONS – will be listed for one year

**Las Clinicas would like to thank the following 2007 and 2008 contributors**

**Abiquiu Health Fair (8/08)** - \$100 and Under - Abiquiu Studio Tour; El Valle Insurance Agency, Inc (6/08); Elipio's Blue Spruce Bar; Cerro Perdenal Heritage Assoc.; and \$ 500 - Wal-Mart, Espanola

\$ 200 - Wimett Revocable Trust Thomas or Genevieve  
Wimett (2/08)

\$ 500 - Helen Hunt (2/08); Dr. Kathleen Maley (12/08)

\$ 750 - Mrs. Katharine Atterbury (12/08)

\$ 1,000- Sam R. & Isabel E. Jewell, Abiquiu (12/08);

Andy Lopez; (12/08); Family of Stephen Patrick (12/08)

\$ 1,200 - Dr. Anthony David Garcia (4/08)

\$ 2,000 - Ruby P. Maley (12/08)

\$25,000 - An Anonymous Donor (7/08)

\$80,000 - Hegardt Foundation, Santa Fe (6/08)

## Las Clinicas del Norte, Inc.

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