

Children with Special Health Care Needs
ABLE Program
PO Box 144660
Salt Lake City, UT. 84114-4660

Dear Principal,

Summer, 2009

We of the ABLE Program under the Utah State Department of Health would appreciate the opportunity to work together with you on behalf of one of your challenging students or promote a future dialogue with your Child Service Team on educationally related health and learning topical issues.

The Able Program has an extensive experience coming to Utah Schools in the past twenty years as a part of our clinical services. We are currently changing to a community-based system of care process that promotes, community education, coordination, and networking, which we think ideal for returning to our philosophical origins within the schools. You may download our new brochure at <http://health.utah.gov/able/aboutus/introduction.html> and we are hopeful this information will reinforce your thinking about interventions and helpful ways to engage and collaborate with parents, teachers and community partners.

When helping special-needs children and families, we especially like working to assure a child's sense of security, attachment and belonging, to promote recognition of achievement, and to build the child and family's sense of identity.

We are very interested in joining with you in collaboratively bringing together community services for troubled children. We promote strengthening parent-school partnerships, while simultaneously enhancing motivation using the family's own cultural resources.

We draw on the Medical Home concept, which promotes having the family's health provider who participates in special needs child's educational and community functions. Schools have found us helpful toward connecting these kinds of health resources. In addition, we use collaborative team methods, similar to the familiar Families and Agencies Coming Together (FACT) model, to utilize and coordinate various needed personnel and services in the child's natural environment.

Many schools throughout the Salt Lake Valley and beyond have shown interest over the past two decades in helping develop interdisciplinary teams of school personnel and other community members to support and advocate for especially difficult children. We also share expertise in availability and use of extensive community resources to help formulate such teams. We encourage you and your staff to use our informative community-based web site at www.health.utah.gov/able.

If you are excited about learning more about our consultation and support in sharing these ideas together, particularly in providing assistance to your various teams on how to provide wraparound services for some of your most complex and multi-needs students and families, please let us know by calling the ABLE Program at 801-584-8552.

Yours in Collaboration,

Louis Allen, MD, Pediatrics

Susan Dickinson, MS, Pediatric Psychology

