

*"We worry about what a child will become tomorrow, yet we forget that he is someone today." ~Stacia Tauscher*

# COWETA SPOTLIGHT

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## WELCOME BACK!

To the students returning this year - welcome back! To the new students joining our family this year, welcome to Coweta County School System!

My name is Jennifer Williams and I am the Parent Mentor for the Coweta County School System. I started working as the Parent Mentor in the Spring of 2008. My mission is to provide support, information and resources to families of children with disabilities and the professionals who serve them.

I use this newsletter as a way of providing resources to our families. Our community offers a lot for children with special needs and this newsletter will give me the opportunity to share these resources with you.

Please share this newsletter with families and friends. In addition to the newsletter, I also email my families frequently on seminars local to our area along with support groups, classes and general information. If anyone is interested in joining my mailing list, please have them email me at [jenn.williams@cowetaschools.net](mailto:jenn.williams@cowetaschools.net).

I hope everyone has a wonderful school year!



## SUGGESTED BOOKS & OTHER MEDIA

[Parent to Parent of Georgia](http://www.parenttoparentofga.org)—A first stop for families. [www.parenttoparentofga.org](http://www.parenttoparentofga.org)

[Parenting Special Needs magazine](http://www.parentingspecialneeds.org)—A magazine raising awareness and sharing life's lessons. [www.parentingspecialneeds.org](http://www.parentingspecialneeds.org)

[Coweta County School System](http://www.cowetaschools.net)—Under Programs & Projects, Click on Special Education. This is a great resources for families. [www.cowetaschools.net](http://www.cowetaschools.net)

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*And it is still  
true, no matter  
how old you are  
- when you go  
out into the  
world, it is  
best to  
hold hands and*



# Parent Rights



Parents of children with disabilities from 3 years of age to 21 have specific rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The following is a list of your rights as a parent or legal guardian:

1. Right to participate in your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
2. Right to receive written notice when the school system initiates a change in the identification, assessment or educational placement in special education.
3. Right to consent or refuse consent before any changes to special education placement are made.
4. Right to access your educational records.
5. Right to an independent educational evaluation if you do not agree with the school system's evaluation.
6. Right to confidentiality of information.

To view the full version of the Georgia Parent's Rights, please go to the Georgia Department of Education website at [www.gadoe.org](http://www.gadoe.org).

## Calling all families!

In each issue of Coweta Spotlight, I include a section on Suggested Books and Other Media. This is my chance to share with you informative books and websites on a variety of topics.

I need your help in building this resource.

Please send me the name of any book or website you enjoyed reading and would like to share with others.



This also goes for other resources as well. Please let me know of any upcoming events and I will forward the information to other families.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson once said: "Our best thoughts come from others".

Thank you for your help! I can't wait to see what information comes my way.

## Activities & Strategies for development

Physical Development—Place a hula hoop on the ground. Play music as your child walks around the edge of the hula hoop. When you stop the music, have your child jump inside the hoop. When the music starts, jump back out and walk around again.

Emotional & Social Development—Take pictures of your child surrounded by his/her favorite things. Make an album with all the pictures. Share the album with family and friends and encourage your child to talk about each picture.

Approaches to Learning—Assign your child one simple job your child can do to help the family. This can be watering a plant, feed-

ing the pet or putting toys away. Model the steps of each job. Thank your child for helping and give added support when they need help.

Language & Literacy Development— Act out simple actions, without talking, and see if your child can guess what you are doing. Then, let your child act out an action too.

Cognitive Development— Cut out shapes and invite your child to see what he/she can make by gluing the shapes onto a large piece of paper. For example, a circle and triangle can be an ice cream cone!

## Welcome to Holland

I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this.....

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."

"Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around.... and you begin to notice that Holland has wind-mills....and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

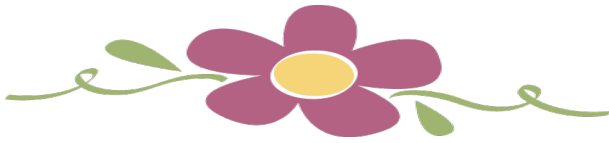
But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very very significant loss.

But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland.



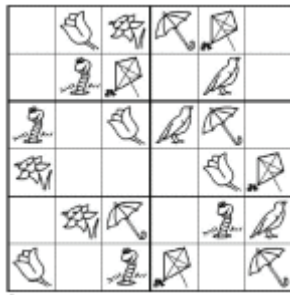
# KIDS SECTION



*I believe in you!*

## Spring Sudoku

Fill in the empty spaces using the pictures below. You can only use a picture once in each row and column. Good luck!



How many words can you make from

TEACHER

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble these "back to school" words:

*FABULOUS      GREAT      AMAZING*  
*SWEET      BEAUTIFUL*  
*WONDERFUL      CREATIVE      LOVING*

- usb \_\_\_\_\_
- sokbo \_\_\_\_\_
- ksed \_\_\_\_\_
- cipenl \_\_\_\_\_
- terchae \_\_\_\_\_

## WORDS TO TELL YOUR CHILD DAILY

*INCREDIBLE      FANTASTIC*  
*EXTRAORDINARY      EXCELLENT*  
*MARVELOUS      SUPERB*  
*BRILLANT*

## All About Me



My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

I like to be called \_\_\_\_\_.



My favorite food is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite color is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite sport is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite game is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite book is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite movie is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite TV show is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite musical instrument is \_\_\_\_\_.



My favorite animal is \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite subject in school is \_\_\_\_\_.

What I do best is \_\_\_\_\_.