



The Parenting Center Groups

Join Us!

Attend one or all the meetings of any group

Parenting Center groups are free of charge and open to all. Groups meet at the Board of Education Building ▪ 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ

(Unless otherwise indicated)

2017-2018 Parent Groups

- **Special Education PTO**
- **2E (Twice Exceptional)**
- **Selective Mutism Support**
- **#HASHTAGS (Highly Able Hub for Talented & Gifted Students)**
- **ADD /ADHD Support Group**
- **Supporting the Anxious Child**
- **Talking to Kids About Gender Identity**

Special Education PTO

Special Education PTO provides parents with tools and information to work collaboratively with the school district, and to be more effective advocates for their children with special educational needs. We generally dedicate the first 45-60 minutes of our monthly meetings to the featured conversation and then open the floor for attendees to ask individual questions, get support, share resources and, connect with other members of the special education community.

Each featured topic is our attempt to get those with similar concerns in the same room at the same time but **all** are always welcome! A representative of SOMA SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advocacy Committee) will give a brief update on their organization's advocacy efforts at each meeting and we will conduct joint meetings at year's beginning and end.

Questions? Email: Ann Leeb, annleeb@optonline.net

Please let us know in advance if you need childcare in order to attend our meetings.

Meetings are on Tuesday evenings (except Monday, November 13th) 7:30-9 PM

September 26	Joint general meeting SPED PTO and SEPAC	February 27	Secondary families
October 24	3 rd Annual Evening of Student Support, hosted by the Special Services Department (Location TBA)	March 27	Out of District families
November 13	Special Services overview with Administrators and Board of Ed members	April 24	IEP workshop
January 23	Pre K & Elementary families	May 22	Taking Care of Yourself as a Parent, followed by joint general meeting SPED PTO and SEPAC

2E (Twice Exceptional) Parent Support Group

2e (*twice exceptional*) students are gifted students whose performance is impaired, or high potential is masked, by a physical and/or learning disability. This group seeks to address the concerns and experiences of South Orange & Maplewood families, and to provide a forum for parents & guardians of 2e learners to connect and share resources.

Meetings run about 1½ hours long. Please email sonyaselig@gmail.com with any questions. We're also on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/soma2e/>

October 5	9:00 AM: How to Help Teachers of 2e Kids	March 8	7:30 PM: Transitions
November 13	7:30 PM: Sp Ed PTO Meeting with District Administrators & BOE Representatives	April 24	7:30 PM: Sp Ed PTO Meeting about IEPs
January 4	7:30 PM: Anxiety, Stress and the 2e Child	May 3	9:00 AM: 2e Resources - for Kids, Parents and Educators
February 1	9:00 AM: Helping 2e Kids Build Peer Relationships		

Selective Mutism Support

A support group for families with SM children to share stories, experiences, support and resources. The goal of the group is to smooth out the journey for parents, teachers, and students in overcoming and dealing with selective mutism.

Questions or can't wait for the next meeting date? Contact Kathleen Hong at kitkathong@earthlink.net.

Meetings will be held 7:00 - 8:30 PM on the third Tuesday of the month (dates listed below).

October 17
November 21
January 16

February 20
March 20
April 17

#HASHTAGS (Highly Able Support Hub for Talented & Gifted Students)

There are many faces of highly able, talented and gifted students. Not all highly able students are immediately successful in school; not all talented students allow their strengths and talents to be seen. This support group aims to provide a hub of information, shared experiences, resources and support for parents, teachers and students. All interested are welcome to attend.

Questions? Contact Alison Brown, alisonbrownj@gmail.com.

Wednesday, October 18 - 10:00 AM

Information on district G & T strategies

Monday, November 20 - 7:30 PM

In-class enrichment strategies

Thursday, January 25 - 7:30 PM

Social & emotional intensity in G & T students

Tuesday, February 27 - 10:00 AM

Underachievement, motivation & organization

Wednesday, March 28 - 7:30 PM

Identification - how and what it means

Thursday, April 26 - 10:00 AM

Topic TBD

Wednesday, May 23 - 7:30PM

Topic TBD

ADD/ADHD Parent Group

The *ADD/ADHD Parent Group* offers parents of elementary and middle school children who have been diagnosed with ADD/ADHD or who have attentional difficulties the opportunity to share information, concerns and solutions. This is a supportive group open to ongoing members and "Drop-ins". "We've all been there" is our motto, so know that we have a welcoming attitude with no judgments. Please join us!

Questions? Contact Alison Steiner at asteiner@somds.k12.nj.us.

Meetings will be held 7:30 - 9:00PM on the third Wednesday of the month (dates listed below).

September 20
October 18
November 15
January 17

February 21
March 21
April 18
May 1

Supporting the Anxious Child

The *Supporting the Anxious Child Group* is for caregivers of students whose worry thoughts can at times get in the way of their school performance and/or relationships. This is an opportunity to connect with other families who are struggling with this issue. We will also work to better understand anxiety and learn new coping strategies. This is a supportive and collaborative community.

Questions? Contact Nicole Banas at nicole.martel.banas@gmail.com.

Meetings will be held on Thursdays at the dates and times listed below.

October 12 ~ 9-10:30 AM
November 2 ~ 7-8:30 PM
December 7 ~ 9-10:30 AM
January 11 ~ 7-8:30 PM

February 8 ~ 9-10:30 AM
March 15 ~ 7-8:30 PM
April 19 ~ 9-10:30 AM
May 10 ~ 7-8:30 PM

Talking to Kids about Gender Identity

Talking to Kids about Gender Identity is a space for parents to come together to discuss how to support the transgender and gender non-binary (T/GNB) young people in our district. Whether you have a child who is or may be transgender/gender non-binary or whether you are a parent who would like to know more about how to talk to your cisgender children about gender and allyship, this group looks to build a community that can support all children around gender. We will share experiences, concerns and look to build affirming school environments from kindergarten through 12th grade for our T/GNB young people. This group is being run in partnership with the Sam and Devorah Foundation for Trans Youth.

Laura Booker, LCSW is a psychotherapist who has worked with T/GNB young people and their families for over twenty years. She is the Director of the Happy Gender Project, which provides trainings and consultations to schools on how to create affirming environments for LGBTQ students. She has provided professional development and consultations to schools in SOMSD and worked with the BOE to develop affirming policy for our transgender students.

Questions? Contact Laura Booker at laurabookerlcsw@gmail.com

Meetings will be held **7:30 - 9:00 PM** on the Mondays listed below.

■ **November 13**

■ **January 8**

■ **March 5**