

'Ibis Has Been a Game Changer'

Becky and her Mom, Pattie, love 'Ibis!' Ibis is Becky's new "companion" that is helping her gain independence and grow her life skills. Becky is a 16-year old student, cheerleader and pianist, who also has Down syndrome. Ibis is the care station that Becky and Pattie are piloting as part of South Dakota Parent Connection's (SDPC) Community of Care Consortium Sencio Project. The Ibis care stations are being provided to families by SDPC with assistance from the Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities, Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation, and Sencio Systems Inc.

The goal of the Ibis care station is to support activities of daily living, medication



Ibis is the electronic aide in the corner of the living room that has become a valuable part of the household.

What Parents Should Know...

Now Parent Briefs

During the last several years each issue of *Circuit* has centered on a topic around the tag line of What Parents Should Know... We are continuing to provide this in-depth information around this tag line, but these are now known as **Parent Briefs**. *Parent Briefs* are currently available on:

- Behavior Issues at School
- Early Child Development
- Employment
- Evaluations and Re-evaluations
- Health and 504 Plans
- Reaching Age 18
- Services and Support

Additional Briefs are in production. If you have a suggestion for a *Parent Brief*, please let us know by emailing sdpc@sdparent.org. **Parent Briefs** are available from SDPC by calling 800-640-4553 or sdpc@sdparent.org or online as pdfs at www.sdparent.org (Our Resources, Parent Briefs).

management, and promote independence.

Pattie explains, "The opportunity to participate in this pilot program came at a very opportune time for us." Becky is the youngest of seven children. Because Pattie works outside the home, Becky's sister, Anne, had previously helped Becky get ready for school. However, Anne is now away at college.

Pattie confesses, "I was really concerned how we were going to assist Becky in becoming more independent so she could get up, eat breakfast, do her chores and get to school on time on her own. I was thinking I would need to hire a caregiver. Becky is physically able to do all the things to get ready for her day, but she needs to be reminded." Ibis has been the answer for Becky and Pattie. Becky's daily tasks and activities are programmed into Ibis. As Becky completes a task she checks it as "Done" on Ibis. It keeps her on schedule and Pattie can log on remotely to track Becky's progress. Becky completes her morning schedule and sends a text to her Mom

Continued on page 8

Board of Directors Profile

Deb Docken's Commitment to SDPC Began with Patricia and Has Grown Over 20 Years

South Dakota Parent Connection is governed by a Board of Directors that is comprised of parents and individuals who work with children with special needs. At least 50 percent of the Board must be parents of a child with special needs.

This is the first in a series of articles to help you get to know the dedicated board members who volunteer their time, expertise and support to SDPC. Deb Docken of Sioux Falls has been a member of the Board of Directors of South Dakota Parent Connection since 2013.

When did you first become familiar with SDPC? "I became familiar with SDPC when our daughter, Patricia, was in grade school."

How has SDPC helped you and your family as Patricia has transitioned to adulthood? "SDPC has helped Patricia, and our family, transition into becoming an adult by providing resources and training. We regularly read the newsletter, look online at the SDPC website, and attend trainings. In particular, the person centered tools training has been a great help. This has helped prepare for transition. These tools have really helped to identify what will make for a meaningful life for Patricia."

What prompted you to become a Board member at SDPC? "I am very drawn to the mission at South Dakota Parent Connection—to link individuals and families to resources. I am passionate about families and the opportunities available for them and passionate about the possibilities of the changes we can make to improve the lives for individuals and their families with education, advocacy and support."

You have been a family advocate for many different groups, what are some of the biggest issues that families of children with disabilities need to champion?

"For our family I feel we are so blessed to have Patricia as part of our lives. We were told she wouldn't live to be two years old. Most children with her rare syndrome usually pass away before they are born. We were told she probably would never walk because of her low muscle tone and that her intellectual disability would be significant. That was a pretty grim picture.

"Today Patricia is a 26-year-old young lady, that has walked since she was 6 years old, she is healthy, she is strong. She is very, very social and loves music and to dance and loves her nephew and niece. Patricia has the most positive attitude of anyone I know and she is very sensitive to other people's feelings. We are so very proud of the young lady she has become. There were certainly roadblocks along the way, but that has made Patricia a stronger person for it and our family better for it as well. Families need to champion together more than ever to insist that we not accept the status quo and continue to move forward with education, employment opportunities, and surrounding ourselves with an inclusive and accepting community, in which to go to school, to live and to work.



Tim, Deb and Patricia Docken (front)

Parent Connection Welcomes Carla Miller as Executive Director

Carla Miller is SD Parent Connection's new Executive Director. She succeeds Elaine Roberts, who retired after nine years at the helm. "The Board of Directors is very pleased with our choice," said Brad Bartz, Parent Connection's Board Chairman. "Carla has the experience, education, and personal touch to lead Parent Connection going forward."

Carla was an instructor in special education and supervised student teachers at Dakota State University prior to joining Parent Connection. Her career has included work as an early childhood administrator in the Sioux Falls School District, a special education consultant to the former South Dakota Achieve (now LifeScape), and an education program specialist at the former Children's Care Hospital and School (now LifeScape).



continued from previous page

How has SDPC helped families like yours to become advocates for Patricia "There are so many programs and training opportunities that Parent Connection provides to families. Just becoming educated and connected with other individuals and families you ultimately become empowered to try to make a change, to try to make a difference, and to create a vision for the future."

Deb served on the Board at Here4Youth (formerly Liberty Center), the Governor's Taskforce on Employment, and currently serves on the Family Support Council, and the Governor's Financial Workgroup. One of the outcomes of the Financial Workgroup is Conflict Free Case Management.

"I am very excited about this change because I truly believe it will give individuals and families more opportunities for that meaningful life and will open the door to more changes down the road. With Conflict Free Case Management, Community Support Providers may no longer provide case management and direct supports to the same person. Case management will be provided by a case manager chosen by the individual and/or their family. Individuals will have access to high-quality, person-centered planning that keeps the focus on the person. The case manager will advocate for the individual and help facilitate decision-making about support and services available from all providers and resources."

Board of Directors

Brad Bartz, President
Christopher Bordeaux
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Rodney Domke
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Carrie Geppert
Kerry Larson
Dr. Wendy Parent-Johnson

Deb not only supports SDPC as a board member of SD Parent Connection, but also participates in the annual fund drive. "I use the employee match contribution offered by my employer to also support SD Parent Connection. My employer matches my gift up to a certain level as they recognize the importance of giving back to the community in which we live and work. I love to support SDPC with my time and participation and I also love to support the organization as well through a financial gift as the work they do at SDPC is so very important to the families in our state and that is just another way to contribute.

"So often as our daughter was growing up I wanted to do more to network and connect with other families, but honestly most days when Patricia was younger it was an accomplishment just to get her up, get her breakfast, get our other children's needs taken care of and get ourselves to work. Through giving to SDPC in a financial way that allows us to help other children and their families. The great staff at SDPC have walked in the shoes of families and children and youth with special needs. It is easy to give when you know what a difference they make and it is easy to give when you are walking with other families and individuals on this journey together. "



Thanks to You We

South Dakota Parent Connection Honor Roll

September 1, 2015 - August 31, 2016

Connecting families of children with disabilities or special health care needs to information and resources in an environment of support, hope and respect is at the heart of our work.

Thank you to the individuals and business who supported our mission during the last year and made a difference for children.

\$1 - \$249

Dan and Michele Burgers, Sioux Falls
Monical Burgess, Rapid City
Dennis Butheway, Sturgis
Central South Dakota Early Childhood
Advocacy Group, Huron
Cheryl Crase, Beresford
Dave and Connie Daniel, Wentworth
in Memory of Lisa Doyen
Piali de, Harvard, MA
Deb Docken, Sioux Falls
and US Bank Foundation Match
Chuck and Julie Dresbach, Sioux Falls
Sheena and Jim Drey, Sioux Falls
Carmyn Egge, Sioux Falls
Doug and Mary Fast, Omaha, NE
in Memory of Jenneil Watkins
Cheryl Faundeen, Sioux Falls
Julie Fedders, Sioux Falls
with Thrivent Financial

Jim and Jodi Fleming, Rapid City
Rachel Freier, Sioux Falls
Shawn Frewaldt, Garretson
John Gehm, Sioux Falls
Restorative Practices Group
Nancy and Dr. Richard Gowen, Rapid City
Sherron Grote, Aberdeen
Jack and Lucille Green, Sioux Falls
in Memory of Jenneil Watkins
Chris and Connie Haugen, Crooks
Snjezana Ivica, Sioux Falls
and Wells Fargo Community Support
Vicki Kerkvliet, Sioux Falls
In Memory of Jenny Kerkvliet
Tammy Knudtson, Brookings
Jay and Judy Larson, Mitchell
Laura Larson, Sioux Falls
Jeff Little, Sioux Falls
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Patricia Mayrose, Salem

Do You Make Purchases through Amazon? You Can Support SDPC with One Easy Click

Amazon shoppers can support SDPC as they shop. A half percent of most Amazon purchases can be donated to SDPC. Go to the link <http://smile.amazon.com> and choose SD Parent Connection.

Can Do More for Families

Shawn and Erin McCarty, Sioux Falls
Donald Micke, Sioux Falls
in Memory of Janet Micke
Bev Miller, Sioux Falls
Wendy Parent-Johnson, Sioux Falls
Shelly Pfaff, Pierre
in Memory of Jenneil Watkins
Arlene Poncelet, Fort Pierre
Rosebud Sioux Tribe Education Dept., Rosebud
Cindy Schlimgen, Rapid City
Jeff Smith, Sioux Falls
Moberly's Print Shop
SD Rehabilitation Center for Blind, Sioux Falls
Robert & Katherine Talley, Sioux Falls
Colette Wagoner, Pierre
in Memory of Jenneil Watkins
Leon Woods, Lomita, CA

\$250 - \$499

Melissa Dahl, Sioux Falls
Rod Domke, Highmore
Heartland Financial Services
Bill and Judie Roberts, Sioux Falls

Bill and Sharron Watkins, Prescott, AZ
In Memory of Jenneil Watkins

\$500 - \$999

Brad and Nancy Bartz, Sioux Falls
CNA Surety Foundation, Sioux Falls
Kerry Larson, Sioux Falls

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Scheels, Sioux Falls
Midco Foundation, Sioux Falls
Sumption and Wyland, Sioux Falls

Over \$2,500

Fishback Financial Corporation, Brookings
Elaine and Jerry Roberts, Sioux Falls
Lisa and Rod Sanderson, Sioux Falls

Gifts in Kind

Christopher Bordeaux, Pine Ridge
Sioux Falls Ford, Sioux Falls
Sisson Printing, Inc., Sioux Falls

**You Can Support Our Work by Making a Donation
at www.sdparent.org or Calling 1-800-640-4553!**

Attention Thrivent Customers You Can Support SDPC with a Thrivent Donation

SD Parent Connection is a Thrivent Financial approved non-profit. What that means is if you are an eligible Thrivent Financial customer you can ask Thrivent Choice to make a contribution to SDPC on your behalf. The contribution designation does not cost you as Thrivent member anything. It is a benefit you can provide to SDPC just by being an eligible Thrivent member.

To be eligible to participate members need to have \$750 or more in annual premiums of qualifying insurance products, \$20,000 or more in contract value of qualifying products or be in a financial volunteer leadership position.

To designate a contribution to SDPC from Thrivent is easy. Visit www.Thrivent.com (<https://service.thrivent.com/apps/ThriventChoiceMemberWeb/public/organizationSearchHome>), type in South Dakota Parent Connection. When the information on SDPC appears, follow the prompts to designate SDPC as a Thrivent Choice recipient. You may also call 1-800-847-4836, say "Thrivent Choice" at the prompt and you will be directed to a Thrivent Choice representative or visit with your local Thrivent financial representative.

Your Support Makes Sibshops Experience for Siblings of Children with Special Needs Possible

Sibshops acknowledges that being the brother or sister of a person with special needs is for some a good thing, others a not-so-good thing, and for many somewhere in between. They reflect the belief that brothers and sisters have much to offer one another, if given a chance. Sibshops celebrate the many lifelong contributions made by brothers and sisters of people with special health needs or disabilities.

South Dakota Parent Connection is registered with the Sibling Support Project to offer Sibshops with support from partners and contributors. Currently

Parent Connection has in-kind support from Here4Youth, the USD School of Medicine Center for Disabilities and LifeScape.



The program is offered four times a year in Sioux Falls on Saturday mornings from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. for siblings ages 6-12. There is no cost to families for Sibshops, but pre-registration is required. Siblings can, and do, attend Sibshops multiple times, promoting on-going peer support and friendships.

Schedule for 2016-17

<i>When</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>To Register visit:</i>
November 5	Here4YOUth, 1721 W. 51st Street	www.surveymonkey.com/r/GMSBVJB
February 25	Here4YOUth, 1721 W. 51st Street	www.surveymonkey.com/r/GXVHR99
March 25	LifeScape, 2501 W. 26th Street Swimming	www.surveymonkey.com/r/GNKYBV2
April 22	Ramkota, 3201 W. Maple Street In conjunction with Partners in Policymaking Graduation	www.surveymonkey.com/r/GNX9P2Z

Sibshops usually has a craft project, a physical/recreation activity, lunch, and conversation that allows the siblings to talk/reflect on what it is like to be a sibling. Throughout the Sibshops children are having conversations about everyday life—school, cartoons, pets, brothers/sisters, video games, you name it. “We want Sibshops to be a time for siblings to feel comfortable talking about their ups, downs, joys, frustrations, and everything in-between that comes along with being a sibling,” notes Tana Buresch, Project Coordinator.

“The Sibshops program has been a very successful program in Sioux Falls, and we have had requests to expand to other communities,” said Carla Miller, SDPC Executive Director. “It is our goal to be able to fund Sibshops in other communities, but we need additional private funding to meet that goal.”

Important Information About Health Insurance

As South Dakota's Family to Family Health Information Center, SD Parent Connection has a responsibility to make families aware of insurance options available through the Affordable Health Care Marketplace. Whether you are seeking insurance for the first time or considering a change in coverage, open enrollment in the Marketplace begins November 1, 2016 and continues through January 31, 2017. January 1, 2017 will be the first date 2017 coverage can start.

- If you don't have insurance through a job, Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, or another source, the Marketplace helps you find and enroll in a plan that fits your budget and meets your needs
- Most people who apply through the Marketplace qualify for insurance premium tax credits that lower the costs of coverage. Some also qualify for savings on deductibles, copayments, and other costs. All plans cover pre-existing conditions, preventive care and essential health benefits.
- If you don't enroll by January 31, 2017, you can't enroll for 2017 unless you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period due to a life change like marriage, having a baby, or losing health insurance coverage.
- If you don't have health insurance in 2017, you may have to pay a fee. The fee is the higher of these two amounts: 2.5% of your yearly household income or \$695 per person (\$347.50 per child under 18). You'll pay the fee on the federal income tax return you file for the year you don't have coverage.

Important Open Enrollment Dates:

- **November 1, 2016:** Open Enrollment begins. Apply for or change your coverage.
- **December 15, 2016:** Deadline in order to have coverage that begins on **January 1, 2017** (if you apply on December 16 you're coverage will most likely not start until February 1).
- **December 31, 2016:** Coverage ends for 2016 plans. You will be auto-renewed if you don't change your plan.
- **January 31, 2017:** This is the last day you can apply for 2017 coverage before the end of Open Enrollment.

Where to Learn More and/or Sign Up

Get answers to common questions, find local help or enroll in a plan online, by phone or with a paper application by visiting www.healthcare.gov or calling 1-800-318-2596 (TTY: 1-855-889-4325) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Visit www.getcoveredsouthdakota.org to learn about health care and insurance basics; watch videos that answer common questions; find free local help and enrollment events in your area; find out how much help you could qualify for to cover your monthly insurance cost. Get Covered South Dakota is sponsored by the Community HealthCare Association of the Dakotas (CHAD).



NAVIGATOR
PROGRAM

The Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board helps tribal members find, compare and enroll in the most affordable and highest-quality health insurance. Visit the website at <http://navigator.gptchb.org> or call 877-209-1215 to find local enrollment events or free in-person assisters.

**3701 West 49th Street, Suite 102
Sioux Falls, SD 57106-4209**

*Please let us know if you have an
address correction. Thank You.*

IBIS Helping Build Independence for Becky

Continued from page 1

when she is on the bus.

“We spent the summer practicing independence with Ibis and she has been using it every morning since school started. It has worked great. One day she forgot to text me, but I could log into the Ibis care station portal and see that she was up and completing her tasks.

“Since Ibis has become her aide, I can allocate the money I would have spent on a caregiver on other things like companion care or activities that she enjoys.”

Currently, the Ibis care station is a pilot program. “Certainly there are things to add/change about Ibis, like adding a time management function (currently Becky has a printed list of things she must do in the morning and times by which they need to be completed) and the ability to create unique tasks, such as practicing the piano,” notes Pattie. “But this is a pilot and I am confident those bugs can be worked out.”

Signs of Becky’s independence from using Ibis were evident recently when she met with one of her doctors. Pattie was asked for a recap of the medicines Becky was taking. Because she checks off the medicines she takes each day on Ibis, Becky interjected, “Mom I can tell them.” She rattled off her list of medicines correctly.

“I want Becky to have the confidence and skills to live independently. I believe that she can and Ibis is helping her prepare for her future. Ibis has been a game changer for us,” concludes Pattie.

To learn more about the Ibis care station or to become a participant in the program, contact SDPC at sdpc@sdparent.org or call 800-640-4553.



One of Becky’s chores is to take out the trash once a week. That chore is entered into Ibis for Thursday night. Says Pattie, “I don’t need to nag her or tell her to do her chores like the trash. She just does it on Thursday.”