

# ASK

About • Special • Kids



Resource Directory



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**ASK E-Newsletter | October 2017**

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## Upcoming ASK Trainings

### My Child is Transitioning to Adulthood: What Now?

[October 18th - Indianapolis](#)  
[6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.](#)

[October 25th - New Albany](#)  
[1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.](#)

[November 27th - Indianapolis](#)  
[10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.](#)

[November 27th - Muncie](#)  
[6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.](#)

### My Child Has Special Needs: Now What?

[November 16th - Linton](#)  
[6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.](#)

[February 17th - Jeffersonville](#)  
[12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.](#)

### A Life with Stress, Balance and a Plan

[January 20th - Jeffersonville](#)  
[12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.](#)

## Enjoying Halloween with Sensory Challenges

Between 5% and 15% of children in the general population demonstrate difficulties with sensory processing—the interpretation of and response to sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and perception of movement and position.

If you are the parent, relative, educator, or friend of one of these children, you know that modifying the activities and the environment can help them enjoy an activity and manage their challenges. But how do you adapt the environment and activities so children can live life to its fullest on Halloween? The following tips are from pediatric occupational therapy practitioners who have experience with addressing sensory challenges.

- Prepare your child for the holiday by discussing some of the associated traditions and activities. Read a book, create a story, or role play.
- Remember that “pretend” does not necessarily involve elaborate costuming. For example, a simple green shirt may suffice to indicate a turtle. Be sure costumes aren’t too scratchy, tight, slippery, or stiff. Consider whether your child will be too warm or too cold in character, and whether he or she will also need a coat. If your child has facial sensitivity, avoid make-up and masks. Masks can also occlude vision.
- Trick or treating is not mandatory: Meaningful participation in Halloween festivities could include helping to roast pumpkin seeds or picking apples. Choose activities that best fit your child’s sensory needs.
- If you want to try trick or treating, focus on a quiet street with sidewalks. Trick or treating while it’s still light out helps to reduce anxiety and increase safety. Practice the sequence of walking to the door, saying “trick or treat,” putting the treat in the bag, and saying “thank you.”
- Limit the duration and number of people and activities. Give your child choices and advance notice of the sequence of events. Know when to stop or disengage from the festivities by recognizing sensory overload—fatigue, hyper excitability, crying, combativeness, etc.—and immediately go to a quieter, smaller space.

To read the entire list of tips, click [here](#).



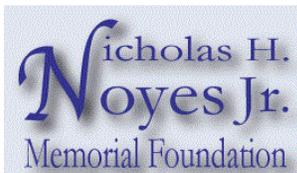
## **Contact Us**

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## **ASK Thanks Our 2017 Sponsors**



Article written by the American Occupational Therapy Association

## **Meet an ASK Founder**

This is About Special Kids 30th year of serving Indiana families of children with special needs. In 1987 we were founded by four individuals under the name Indiana Parent Information Network (IPIN). On November 2nd ASK will be honoring our founders at a fundraising breakfast. Last month we introduced you to Donna Gore Olsen. This month we would like to introduce you to:



**Linda K. Hankins** - Linda was one of the four people who co-founded the Indiana Parent Information Network (IPIN) (now About Special Kids). She served IPIN in many leadership roles on the Board, including President and Treasurer, for many years. Linda was the first Parent Liaison for the Newborn Care Unit for Riley Hospital for Children. In that role, she “invented” what a parent liaison looks like and does to help families and medical staff connect together to communicate and provide care for a child with disabilities. As Coordinator for the

Preschool Assistance Project in Developmental Pediatrics at Riley Hospital, she created training materials and resources to support her education efforts to assist school systems to support preschoolers with special needs.

Linda was one of the original team members for Indiana’s statewide coordinated system of early intervention training led by Maureen Greer from the Family and Social Services Administration. In that role, Linda developed training materials and programs for professionals to support and strengthen them in their roles to work with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with special needs. She also chaired the Public Policy Committee for the Children’s Coalition of Indiana and created the Coalition’s first ever public policy agenda and then led the development of that document to be promoted as the Coalition’s agenda with other advocates and state public policy leaders.

As Assistant Director of Community Education and Child Advocacy at Riley Hospital for Children, she represented the hospital for many years on the National Council on Child Advocacy for the National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions (now the Children’s Hospital Association). She also served as a Board member for Indiana Covering Kids and Families and for Sycamore Services, Inc. Linda has been recognized by many organizations for her contributions. Her awards for her advocacy work and leadership include: The 2012 Distinguished Leadership Award from the Indiana Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities and the 2004 Glenn R. Irwin Experience Excellence Award from Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

**Trending at ASK:  
Parent Cafés**



FUN—FREE—Supportive—Educational—PARENT-LED get-togethers where parents can talk openly with one another about the struggles of parenting and ways to strengthen their families. Parent Cafés provide an opportunity for parents and caregivers to interact with other parents and caregivers about things that are important to building and maintaining strong, healthy families. The Cafés are “hosted” by parents from the community who have been trained on how to help facilitate the conversation and discussion.

More information coming soon on where these are located and/or starting up around the state.

## ***October is National Bullying Prevention Month***

National Bullying Prevention Month is a campaign in the United States founded in 2006 by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. Their website has information and resources for both parents and educators. Visit their [website](#) and help us unite to stop bullying.

About Special Kids | 800-964-4746 | [www.aboutspecialkids.org](http://www.aboutspecialkids.org)

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