Thank You for Your Service, Dog
Staff Spotlight

Rachel Hanzuk - Administrative Assistant

The first voice families often hear when they call Raising Special Kids is Rachel Hanzuk’s. Rachel has a keen ear for finding the right place to start when helping families.

Rachel remembers struggling emotionally when her son Patrick was born. His diagnosis of Down syndrome started the Hanzuk family on a new and unexpected journey.

“I did not know where to turn. I had no idea there was an organization who helped new moms like me. I thought I was destined for despair.” She connected with a support group, and she began to recognize the power of parent-to-parent support.

When Patrick was a toddler, Rachel attended a presentation on inclusion. She recalls, “Most of the stuff was above my head as my son was more than a year away from entering his first preschool classroom. But, the seed was planted; to begin with the end in mind.”

Rachel epitomizes the term ‘team player.’ Since Patrick, now 11, began school, she has worked with the school team to ensure success in the general education classroom.

In her self-described ‘previous life,’ Rachel traveled around the globe leading tours and helping others discover the as yet unknown-to-them treasures of the world’s most iconic locations. Now, it’s no coincidence that she uses those skills to welcome and help guide families on a similar treasure-seeking journey with their children.

“I am a caregiver by nature and I really enjoy being the welcoming face and voice for Raising Special Kids.” She adds, “I find it most rewarding when I receive a frantic call from a parent, and by the end of the conversation I can hear them breathing at a normal rate.”
Thank You for Your Service, Dog.

Human beings have long depended on dogs to provide protection, affection, emotional support, comfort, and companionship. Some dogs are even capable of performing specific functional tasks that benefit an individual with a disability. Known as service animals, these dogs allow greater access to places, help remove barriers to opportunities, and offer a more independent life for an individual with a disability.

Sometimes service animals are identified by the type of work they do, such as ‘guide dog,’ ‘seizure dog’ or ‘mobility dog.’ However, a service animal may provide more than one type of support (such as guidance and seizure detection for a person with vision impairment and a seizure disorder). The generic term ‘service dog’ has replaced the previous usage, providing a level of privacy for the individual that does not disclose their specific disability.

Jen Turrell’s daughters have autism. They also have service dogs. Turrell heard about service dogs for individuals with autism at an event she attended soon after Tallulah, her oldest daughter, was diagnosed with autism. Turrell’s hope was to have a dog trained to help Tallulah stay nearby, explaining that her daughter “is prone to bolting and an expert at hiding.” It wasn’t until Turrell saw their daughter with one of the trained dogs that her eyes were opened to other possibilities. She explained, “Tallulah was not able to put her socks on by herself, although taking them off was a piece of cake for her.” Recalling the events of the day Turrell continued, “She was excited about the dog and brought over every toy she had with her to share. After that, she brought over one of her discarded socks, put it on the dog’s paw, and then put the sock on her own foot for the first time! It was so exciting!”

However, Turrell found both the cost and the training proved to be more challenging than she anticipated. Tallulah’s dog, Dahanna, was trained by an agency before arriving at their home (including water rescue), but the family also had to participate in a ‘boot camp’ to become certified as handlers through the service dog agency, Arizona Goldens LLC.

Turrell’s younger daughter Myffanwy (Myffy for short) was diagnosed with autism around the same time that Tallulah got her service dog. Myffy is more talkative than her sister and was not shy about imitating and interrupting her lessons which made training and bonding difficult for Tallulah and Dahanna. The trainer suggested getting another service dog for Myffy.

Myffy’s dog, Carebear, is a ‘career change dog.’ Carebear had trained to help someone in a wheelchair but never received an assignment. With just a little more training to meet Myffy’s needs, Carebear finally found her human. Dahanna and Carebear can chase and follow the girls if they take off without supervision and circle them until a responsible adult arrives to help. The dogs also allow the girls to have their own room. When the girls wake up, Turrell or her husband are alerted with a wet-nosed nudge.

When visiting with family in the United Kingdom, Carebear traveled with the girls. Turrell recommends families begin planning far in advance to find out if there are different rules your destination may have for service dogs. Because their family will be returning for future visits, they were issued a pet passport for Carebear. (A pet passport requires a visit to a veterinarian licensed in the European Union but makes it much easier to enter countries within the EU.) You can read about Turrell’s family on her blog at http://jenandstew.com/blog.
Service dogs can be very expensive. Estimates are between $15,000 and $35,000 per dog. Some agencies have scholarship or donation programs for people who qualify. When faced with a long waiting list to receive a dog, some parents are starting to train their pets to become service animals.

Jade Whitney is a service dog trainer and handler with Team Canine, Inc. She has worked with families to train their pets to act as service dogs. When asked about how easy it is for dogs to make the switch, she explained, “Although not legally required, specialized vests or leads [leashes] that you only use when your dog is working can help signal to them that they are ‘on the job’ and that they need to act a certain way.” She added, “It’s sort of like a uniform.”

Not every dog is cut out to be a service dog but many different breeds of dogs can be trained to perform jobs for individuals with disabilities. The Assistance Dogs International website notes that many assistance or service dogs are Golden Retrievers and Labradors. Their personalities typically make for a good service dog. However, there are examples of many other breeds that have been successfully trained as service dogs. What is important is matching the needs of the person with the dog’s personality and size. For example, a dog whose job is to provide stability for an individual to stand would need to be sufficiently large and sturdy enough to allow the person to lift or stand safely. A small dog might not be right for that job, but might be perfect for signaling a ringing telephone for a person with a hearing impairment.

Currently, there is no official agency that regulates or certifies service dogs. Several agencies have their own certification processes but there is a movement toward standardized requirements and certifications. Many agencies are affiliated with Assistance Dogs International which provides suggested standards for service dogs performing specific jobs (e.g., guide dog, hearing dog) as well as suggested minimum standards for public appropriateness for any service dog (see box).

Service dogs may go anywhere a member of the public can go. Public places may not exclude service animals even if they have a ‘no pets’ policy. In Arizona it is considered discrimination to require an individual to disclose disability-related information to prove their dog is a service animal. However, it is acceptable for a business to ask someone if their dog is a service animal being used because of a disability, and what tasks the dog has been trained to perform.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, service animals “must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal’s work or the individual’s disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.” Many states have laws against service animal misrepresentation.

Besides performing work for individuals, dogs can provide support in other ways. An emotional support animal (ESA), according to the Michigan State University Animal Legal & Historical Center, “is a companion animal that provides therapeutic benefit to an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability.” One key difference between a service animal an emotional support animal is that an ESA does not require any specific training.

A therapy dog provides affection and comfort to people in places like hospitals, retirement homes and schools. They differ from service dogs and ESAs because they are providing support or therapy to more than one person and those people are not their handlers or owners.

Cindy Ferrante is a Speech Language Therapist in the public school system with more than 25 years of experience and a Masters in Special Education. She believes that “children with special
needs learn more when exposed to a variety of elements, incorporating all five senses.” To assist her students, she works with Gus, her trusty golden retriever, in her classroom and in her private practice as a way to encourage communication. Some children are more willing to have a conversation with Gus than with her and that’s fine with Cindy. Some researchers are collecting data to provide proof that pet therapy is beneficial. The Sam and Myra Ross Institute in Brewster, NY recently began studying what happens when certified therapy dogs are included in therapy sessions with groups of children who have autism. One of the researchers noted the students are more enthusiastic about attending the therapy sessions and may provide a basis for the students to get more out of those sessions.

Whether helping someone safely cross a street, warning of danger, or assisting a little girl with autism to wait patiently and safely near her mom in a crowded store, service animals provide safety, comfort, and convenience. It’s clear dogs can be more than man’s best friend; they can also help people with disabilities to have the same access and opportunities as everyone else.

If you want to speak with another parent who is experienced with service animals, call Raising Special Kids at (800) 237-3007.


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**Standards for Assistance Dogs in Public**


### Public Appropriateness

- Clean, and does not have an offensive odor.
- Does not urinate or defecate in inappropriate locations.

### Behavior

- Does not solicit attention, visit or annoy any member of the general public.
- Does not disrupt the normal course of business or vocalize unnecessarily, i.e. barking, growling or whining.
- Shows no aggression towards people or other animals.
- Refrains from soliciting or stealing food or other items from the general public.

### Training

- Specifically trained to perform three or more tasks to mitigate aspects of the client’s disability.
- Works calmly and quietly on harness, leash or other tether.
- Able to perform its tasks in public.
- Must be able to lie quietly beside the handler without blocking aisles, doorways, etc.
- Trained to urinate and defecate on command.
- Stays within 24″ of its handler at all times unless the nature of a trained task requires it to be working at a greater distance.
Raising Special Kids Helped Me Develop My Toolbox

Jill remembers being in the recovery room the day her son Jon was born. When her husband returned to her side after checking on the baby, she described him as “changed.” The doctor then explained to her what he had already shared with her husband; he had identified a few markers for Trisomy 21. When the doctor used the more common term, Down syndrome, Jill’s limited understanding and experience provided her with a not-so-optimistic vision for her son’s future.

It did not take Jill long to adjust to what she refers to as “the new normal” which included weekly visits from an early interventionist and various therapists. Jill connected with other families of children with Down syndrome and the fears Jill felt the day he was born began to subside.

Life went along smoothly until Jon was in first grade. His teacher was not as eager or adept at including Jon, as was his Kindergarten teacher who was enthusiastic and creative. Jill reached out to Raising Special Kids. She recalls, “One of the most important things I’ve learned from Raising Special Kids is that parents are valuable members of any team decision-making process and their participation is required by law. Parents are powerful when given the right tools and Raising Special Kids helped me develop my toolbox.”

Jill feels Jon has also provided her with a “unique perspective” in her current position as a program advisor with Disability Resources and Services at Estrella Mountain Community College. Jill recognizes the students she works with as “risk-takers and overcomers” and hopes her experience with them will help her help Jon when it is time for him to make post-high school plans. It is a very different and much more fulfilled future than Jill envisioned the day he was born.

Jill has continued to expand her toolbox as Jon has gotten older and other parents often turn to her for advice. “I regularly refer parents to Raising Special Kids and I tell them how much the organization has helped me. I explain that the Family Support Specialists really understand because they are parents, too. And, most importantly, Raising Special Kids never turns anyone away.”

Parent Leaders are the Heart of Raising Special Kids

May-July, 2014. Thank You!

Avondale
Jennifer Priddy

Buckeye
Jill Nico

Cave Creek
Kat Rivera

Chandler
Dawn Bailey
Marti Baio
Martha Burrer
Samantha Flores
Kristina Hunt
Lisa Myers
Cathy Turner

El Mirage
Noelle White
El Mirage
Rosa Ramirez
Natalie Trujillo

Flagstaff
April Judd
Cindy May
Tina Rabe
Jen Turrell

Gilbert
Louise Murphy
Heather Prouty

Glendale
Meriah Houser

Mesa
Cathy Humphrey
Dawn Kurbat
Susan Sunseri

Mesa
Kim Cohill
Cynthia Elliott
Christy Holstad
Kristina Park
Danielle Pollett
Kari Taylor
Erika Villanueva

Peoria
Lisa Aaroe
Sharon Blanton

Phoenix
Tricia Mucklow

Phoenix
Ana Arjona
Jeannie Bremerkamp
Inilda Christensen
Nancy Gunderson
Nicole Kauffman
Maura Knoell
Cynthia Macluskie
Heather Magdelano
Kathy McDonald
Kelly Morris
Gloria Rodriguez
Ched Salasek

Michael Sanderfer
Sherri Scruggs
Paulina Tiffany

Rio Rico
Maria Scholnick
San Tan Valley
Elizabeth Bird
Latasha Whitaker

Scottsdale
Lynn Michels
Katie Petersen

Tempe
Janet Romo
Laurie Shook

raisingspecialkids.org
Phoenix
Disability Empowerment Center
5025 E Washington St #204
Phoenix, AZ 85034
Our office is a fragrance-free environment.

Bully Prevention
Sat, Oct 25, 1-3 pm

High School Transition
Sat, Sep 27, 10 am-12 pm

IEP Training
Sat, Oct 25, 10 am-12 pm
Sat, Nov 15, 1-3 pm
Thu, Dec 4, 6-8 pm

Positive Behavior Support
Tue, Oct 14, 6-8 pm
Thu, Nov 6, 6-8 pm
Sat, Dec 13, 10 am-12 pm

Preschool to Kindergarten
Thu, Nov 6, 6-8 pm
Sat, Dec 13, 1-3 pm

Turning 18 - Legal Options
Sat, Sep 27, 1-3 pm
Tue, Oct 14, 6-8 pm
Sat, Nov 15, 10 am-12 pm
Thu, Dec 4, 6-8 pm

Southern Arizona
Young Adult Transition Conference
Fri, Oct 17, 9am-3:30pm
Goodwill Career Center
3097 S. 8th Avenue
Yuma, AZ 85364
High School Transition
Journey to Adulthood
Turning 18 - Legal Options

IEP Training
Tue, Oct 21, 6-8pm
Flowing Wells School District
4605 N La Cholla Blvd
Tucson, AZ 85705

Positive Behavior Support
Wed, Oct 22, 9-11 am
Van Buskirk Elementary School
725 E Fair St
Tucson, AZ 85714

Northern Arizona
100 N West St #300
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Early Intervention Conference
Sat, Nov 15, 9am-3:30pm
AzEIP to Preschool Transition
Organizing Your Child’s Records
Parent Professional Collaboration

Organizing Your Child’s Records
Wed, Sep 17, 5:30-7:30pm

Understanding 504
Wed, Oct 22, 5:30-7:30pm

Save The Date
March 21, 2015
Celebrate the Fabulous 50s
Phoenix Art Museum
Raising Special Kids’ Party With a Purpose
raisingspecialkids.org
Gracias a los perros de servicio.

Los seres humanos han dependido de los perros desde hace mucho tiempo para que les brinden protección, afecto, apoyo emocional, consuelo y compañía. Algunos perros hasta son capaces de realizar tareas funcionales específicas de las que pueden beneficiarse las personas con discapacidad. Se conocen como animales de servicio. Los perros mejoran el acceso a determinados lugares, ayudan a superar dificultades y le permiten tener una vida más independiente a las personas con discapacidad.

Las hijas de Jen Turrell tienen autismo. También tienen perros de servicio. Turrell se enteró de los perros de servicio para personas con autismo en un evento al que asistió poco después de que se le diagnosticara autismo a Tallulah, su hija mayor. La esperanza de Turrell era tener un perro entrenado para ayudar a Tallulah a mantenerse cerca, porque, como explica, su hija “solía escaparse y era una experta en esconderse”. No fue sino hasta que vio a su hija con uno de los perros entrenados que descubrió un mundo de posibilidades. “Tallulah no podía ponerse los calcetines por sí misma”, indicó Turrell, quien continuó rememorando los eventos del día que llevó el perro a casa: “estaba emocionada por el perro y trajo todos los juguetes que tenía para compartir. Después trajo uno de sus calcetines y se lo puso en la pata al perro... y luego se lo puso en el pie por primera vez en la historia”.

Sin embargo, Turrell descubrió que el costo y el entrenamiento del perro representaban más dificultades de las que esperaba. El perro de Tallulah fue entrenado por una agencia antes de llegar a casa –incluso para rescate en el agua– y la familia también tuvo que participar en un entrenamiento para certificarse como cuidadores a través de la agencia de perros de servicio.

Los perros de servicio pueden ser muy costosos. Algunos estimados están entre 15.000 y 35.000 dólares por perro. Algunas agencias tienen becas o programas de donación para personas que sean elegibles. Al verse en largas listas de espera, algunos padres están comenzando a entrenar a sus mascotas como animales de servicio.

No todos los perros tienen aptitudes para desempeñarse como perros de servicio, pero muchas razas de perro pueden entrenarse para realizar tareas para personas con discapacidad. En la página web de la organización Assistance Dogs International se destaca que muchos perros de asistencia o de servicio son golden retrievers y labradores. Su personalidad hace que sean buenos perros de servicio. Lo importante es que las necesidades de la persona coincidan con la personalidad y tamaño del perro. Por ejemplo, un perro cuyo trabajo sea proporcionarle estabilidad a una persona para que se levante debe ser lo suficientemente grande para que la persona pueda impulsarse o levantarse de forma segura. Un perro pequeño no sería el adecuado para esa labor, pero podría ser perfecto para señalarle a una persona con deficiencias auditivas que el teléfono no está sonando.

En la actualidad, no hay ninguna agencia oficial que regule o certifique perros de servicio. Muchas agencias están afiliadas a la organización Assistance Dogs International, la cual proporciona estándares sugeridos para perros de servicio que realicen tareas específicas y estándares mínimos sugeridos de convivencia pública para perros de servicio.

Los perros de servicio pueden ir a todos los lugares a los que las personas pueden ir. Los sitios públicos no pueden excluir a los animales de servicio aunque tengan una política de no admitir mascotas. En Arizona se considera como un acto de discriminación solicitarle a una persona información sobre su discapacidad para demostrar que el perro es un animal de servicio. Sin embargo, es válido que un comerciante le pregunte si su perro es un animal de servicio que se utiliza por una discapacidad y qué tareas está entrenado para hacer. Conforme a la Ley de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades (Americans with Disabilities Act), los animales de servicio “deben estar con arnés, correa, o atados, salvo que estos implementos interfieran con el trabajo del animal de servicio o que la discapacidad de la persona impida su uso”. Muchos estados tienen leyes contra las declaraciones falsas sobre los animales de servicio.

Además de desempeñar tareas por las personas, los perros pueden ayudar de otras formas. Un animal de apoyo emocional (ESA, por sus siglas en inglés) es un animal de compañía que proporciona beneficios terapéuticos a personas con problemas mentales o psiquiátricos. Una diferencia clave entre un animal de servicio y uno de apoyo emocional es...
que este último no requiere ningún entrenamiento específico.

Cindy Ferrante es terapeuta del lenguaje y trabaja en el sistema de educación pública. Considera que “los niños con necesidades especiales aprenden más cuando están expuestos a una variedad de elementos que incorporen los cinco sentidos”. Para ayudar a sus estudiantes, trabaja con Gus, su confiable golden retriever. Algunos niños están más dispuestos a conversar con Gus que con Cindy.

Ya sea ayudando a alguien a cruzar una calle de forma segura, advirtiendo algún peligro o haciendo que una niña con autismo espere pacientemente y a salvo cerca de su madre en una tienda repleta, los animales de servicio proporcionan seguridad, alivio y ventajas. Está claro que el perro puede ser más que el mejor amigo del hombre. Los perros también pueden ayudar a las personas con discapacidades a tener el mismo acceso y oportunidades.

Si desea comunicarse con Raising Special Kids para hablar con otros padres con experiencia con animales de servicio, llame a nuestra oficina al (800) 237-3007.


### Perros de asistencia en público


**Convivencia pública**
- El perro debe estar limpio y no tener un olor desagradable.
- El perro no debe orinar ni defecar en lugares inapropiados.

**Comportamiento**
- El perro no debe solicitar atención, acercarse ni molestar a ninguna persona del público.
- El perro no debe interrumpir el curso normal del negocio.
- El perro no debe vocalizar innecesariamente, es decir, ladrar, gruñir o gimotear.
- El perro no debe mostrarse agresivo con otras personas o animales.
- El perro no debe pedirle alimentos ni otros artículos ni robárselos a las personas del público.

**Entrenamiento**
- El perro debe estar específicamente entrenado para realizar tres o más tareas que minimicen dificultades de personas con discapacidad.
- El perro trabaja con calma y tranquilidad en el arnés, correa u otra atadura.
- El perro es capaz de realizar sus tareas en público.
- El perro debe ser capaz de permanecer echado en silencio al lado del guía sin bloquear pasillos, puertas, etc.
- El perro está entrenado para orinar y defecar en el comando.
- El perro se queda dentro de las 24 pulgadas de su manejador en todo momento a menos que a naturaleza de una tarea entrenada exige que sea trabajar a una distancia mayor.

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### Talleres y Entrenamiento Sin Costo

Regístrese en línea en www.raisingspecialkids.org o llame al 800-237-3007

**Central Arizona**
Disability Empowerment Center
5025 E Washington St #204
Phoenix, AZ 85034
Somos una oficina libre de fragancias.

**Cumpliendo los 18 - Opciones Legales**
Vie. 9/26/2014, 10-11:30 am
Vie. 10/17/2014, 10-11:30 am
Vie. 11/7/2014, 10-11:30 am
Vie. 12/5/2014, 10-11:30 am

**Entrenamiento del IEP**
Sáb. 9/27/2014, 1-3 pm
Sáb. 10/25/2014, 10 am-12 pm
Sáb. 11/15/2014, 10 am-12 pm
Sáb. 12/13/2014 10 am-12 pm

**El Comportamiento Positivo**
Sáb. 9/27/2014, 10-12 pm
Sáb. 10/25/2014, 1-3 pm
Sáb. 11/15/2014, 1-3 pm
Sáb. 12/13/2014, 1-3 pm

**Southern Arizona**

**El Comportamiento Positivo**
Mié. 10/22/2014, 9-11 am
Van Buskirk Elementary School
Tucson, AZ 85714

**Conferencia sobre Transición para Adultos Jóvenes**
Vie. 10/17/2014, 9am-3:30pm
Goodwill Career Center
3097 S 8th Ave
Yuma, AZ 85364

raisingspecialkids.org
The Dispute Resolution Unit at the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) will be doing some travelling this fall. Early Dispute Resolution Specialists Amy Dill and Jeff Studer will be providing facilitated individualized education program (IEP) trainings at seven school districts in an effort to improve outcomes for IEP teams and the students they serve.

IEP facilitation is a student-focused process in which a trained individual (facilitator) assists the IEP team to develop an IEP that provides a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student.

The two-day trainings will incorporate three components needed to facilitate a successful IEP meeting: standardized meeting practices, knowledge of the IEP process, and the use of meeting management skills that aid in minimizing conflict and maximizing collaboration.

Dill stated, “Through my experience as a complaint investigator for ADE, and more personally, as the parent of a teen with autism, I know how easy it can be for a parent to feel as though they have not been heard at an IEP meeting.” She continued, “I’m convinced that many of the disputes I have assisted with have been caused by the team’s inability to effectively communicate with one another.”

Using their past experience Studer, whose background is in behavioral health, and Dill include techniques for schools to involve parents in the IEP process and to recognize opportunities for providing them with additional resources and training.

Similar to the state’s current Mediation System, facilitated IEPs will be available via parent or school request by the 2015-2016 school year.

Although the trainings are scheduled outside of Maricopa County, spring may bring trainings to the state’s most populous county. School personnel can register to attend any of the currently scheduled trainings by contacting the Arizona Department of Education Dispute Resolution Unit at (855) 383-9801.

Thank You for Referring Families to Raising Special Kids
January-June 2014
To refer a family to Raising Special Kids, please visit our website and download a referral form
WHAT?

I can claim a tax credit and make a difference?
Yes, please!