

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW NATIONAL CENTER FOR PARENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES

Research and resources concerning the 9 million U.S. parents with disabilities

BERKELEY, CA -- October 21, 2008.

A new National Center for Parents with Disabilities and their Families has been established in Berkeley, California under the auspices of Through the Looking Glass, a non-profit organization founded in 1982. The Center will oversee several national research studies concerning parents with disabilities and their families, as well as provide consultations, trainings and publications to parents, family members and professionals.

The research and resources of the Center will address the nearly 9 million U.S. parents with disabilities - 15% of all American families. Parents with disabilities include mothers and fathers in all disability categories - such as parents with physical disabilities, deaf parents, blind parents, parents with psychiatric or cognitive disabilities. The Center is funded by a \$500,000 per year federal grant for three years from the Washington, DC-based National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), U.S. Department of Education.

The new Center will focus its research and resource activities on four critical areas that impact parents with disabilities: custody, family roles and personal assistance; paratransit; and, intervention with parents with cognitive disabilities and their children. One of the notable activities planned over the next three years is a scholarship program for high school seniors and college students whose parents have disabilities. The Center will be staffed by nationally recognized experts regarding parents with disabilities, most of whom have personal or family experience with disability or deafness.

More information about the Center and Through the Looking Glass is available at the organization's website: <http://www.lookingglass.org/>, through two toll-free numbers, 800-644-2666 (voice), 800-804-1616 (TDD/TTY), or by email at *tlg@lookingglass.org* tlg@lookingglass.org

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION. This new National Center will build upon Through the Looking Glass's nationally and internationally recognized expertise and leadership in working with parents with disabilities, their families, and their providers -- 26 years of groundbreaking research, services, training and resource development. Through the Looking Glass (TLG) has trained more than 70,000 professionals regarding parents with disabilities and deaf parents, from all U.S. states and 44 countries. Since 1993 it has provided technical assistance to over 25,000 parents with disabilities, family members and professionals. TLG's expertise has contributed to the passage of legislation in three states to decrease discrimination against parents with disabilities. TLG is one of seven disability organizations that have partnered to build the Ed Roberts Campus at the Ashby BART Station in Berkeley - a national and international model dedicated to disability rights and universal access (see <http://www.edrobertscampus.org/> for more details).

Opening in 2010, the campus will house the offices of the collaborating organizations as well as Through the Looking Glass' new early child development center.

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