

What we do at Ensemble

Family to Family:

Information Resources & Toolkits. Ensemble empowers parents with children who have disabilities by making available to them resources and tools that provide ideas, coping mechanisms, and guidance.

Parent to Parent Support:

Mentor parents: talking to another parent who has been in a similar situation is energizing and healthy. Parents can speak openly and honestly with one another and share in their experiences.

Ensemble will facilitate connections among parents from the same culture so that they can share ideas in their own language. If a parent needs translation of information, Ensemble looks toward the mentor parents and other community resources.

Family Leadership:

Families gain expertise from their situation and Ensemble believes in offering families the opportunity to share their knowledge with others. Families are valued colleagues with professionals and the community to achieve the best possible outcomes for their sons and daughters who have disabilities.

Education and Information Sharing:

Ensemble offers original workshops designed and created by the Ensemble team as well as scheduling guest speakers that provide specific information to families.

*Ensemble Understands
your personal challenges.*

Parents as Partners

"Partners" by definition means those who share. And that's exactly what the Ensemble team does best...we share our stories, our struggles and our joys so that we can empower others to learn about our perspective.

Our goals are...

- To support the resiliency of families
- To strengthen the broader community
- To enhance family leadership
- To create partnerships in policy and decision making
- To foster communication and collaboration among families, educators, health care, business, community services and employers.

Family to Family

As parents of children who have disabilities, we have a personal understanding of the emotional highs and lows that parents, who have had their children diagnosed with a disability, will deal with every day.

Community Partnerships

Ensemble's value to the community is through its efforts to reach out and educate. The Ensemble team and their parent partners can enjoy a more inclusive relationship with the greater population.

Ensemble

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**Making Connections,
Inspiring Strength.**

Parents as Partners

ENSEMBLE - inspiring strength from a parent's perspective.

Our Story

Parenting is full of challenges and rewards. Each and every day brings a new experience and a new lesson learned. There are many handbooks and manuals to guide us through our parenting journey, but the real learning occurs as we go through life from day to day.

We are living in a time when family life can be very hectic and we often struggle to find the right balance in our busy schedules for spending quality time together. Many families feel overworked and stressed and struggle to make ends meet. The demands on families with children who have disabilities or special needs are even greater. Your situation has not been anticipated and requires a great deal of time and energy, way beyond "normal" parenting.
(taken from Special Kids, Special Parents, 2006).

The diagnosis of a child with a disability or special need can drastically change a family's life. Parents find themselves on an unexpected journey and may face tremendous challenges and experience intense emotions and feelings such as loss, anger, guilt, frustration and despair. Parents of children who have disabilities struggle to find balance in their lives so that they can feel some of the same joy and celebrate the lives of their children as do typical parents.

In the year 2000, Ensemble was established by Lisa Raffoul and Marilyn Godard, both parents of children who have disabilities. They decided to "turn their emotions into energy" and promote the expertise of families in supporting other families, strengthening professionals and raising awareness to the community at large. The name "Ensemble" was chosen for its meaning "all together".

Ensemble is guided by an advisory committee and there is currently a team of three parent consultants, Lisa Raffoul, Jackie Barraco and Jane Welsh, who carry out the ongoing and daily activities.

Our mission is to empower parents by assisting them to recognize their strengths, skills, knowledge and wisdom. In addition, we work to increase the inclusive nature of the broader community through collaboration and partnership.

Our vision is that families will feel less isolated and alone and that those around them will have a greater understanding of how to be responsive and supportive.

Our tag line is "Making Connections, Inspiring Strength" and our motto is "Parents as Partners."

"I was really afraid when I was given the diagnosis for my child.

当我得知我孩子的诊断结果时我真很怕。我感到迷茫，孤独而且认为任何人都不会明白。在恩沙贝尔 (Ensemble) 的父母们却明白。

I felt confused and alone and I didn't think anyone else would understand.

The parents at Ensemble did."

لقد شعرت فعلاً بالخوف عندما استلمت التشخيص الذي اجري لولدي، وشعرت بالحيرة والوحدة، وظننت أنه لأحد يمكن أن يفهم مشاعري، لكن الآباء والأمهات في مؤسسة "Ensemble" فهموا.

می گئی تو میں بہت ڈری گئی۔ میں اپنے جب مجھے اپنے بچے سے متعلق تشخیص کی رپورٹ دتی تھی۔ میرا خیال نہیں۔ کوئی اور اس حقیقت آپ کو بہت پریشان حال اور اکیلا محسوس کر رہی سمجھ سکتا ہے۔ اسٹیبل کے والدین نے یہ کام کر دکھایا۔

« J'ai eu vraiment peur lorsque j'ai reçu le diagnostique de mon enfant. Je me sentais déconcertée et seule, comme si personne au monde ne comprendrait notre situation.

Les parents d'Ensemble nous ont compris. »

« Mepreocupé mucho cuando me dieron el diagnóstico de mi hijo. Me sentí confundida y sola, y pensé que nadie me iba a entender.

Los padres de Ensemble sí me entendieron. »

