



October Hero Profile 2019



Children's Bill of Rights #10: As the children and youth of San Luis Obispo County, may we each know that adults and peers listen and support us as individuals while we grow, and respect our diverse cultures, backgrounds, circumstances, talents, sparks, and passions.

OCTOBER'S HERO
Sara McGrath

PASSION
Providing strong support for families and caretakers of ALL children

ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE SARA
Inclusive

NOMINATED BY
Parents Helping Parents of SLO

Sara McGrath is a champion for children, offering understanding and invaluable insight to help children with disabilities reach their fullest potential.

For the last 5 years, Sara has been a Resource Specialist at Parents Helping Parents (PHP), an agency that provides information, referrals, training, mutual support and outreach for families of children with special needs. Sara helps parents feel empowered as they navigate the sometimes difficult and confusing path of raising a child who requires very specific and often complex care.

Sara's passion is a personal one. As the parent of a child with Down Syndrome (DS), Sara knows how important it is to have an emotional and physical network to share joys and challenges and learn from others' experiences. She is the creative founder of PHP's gift basket program, which welcomes and encourages every family who has a child born with DS. Sara highlights success stories of children with DS to ease parents' fears that accompany this diagnosis. Sara has helped to unite the broader Down Syndrome community through social media and by regularly scheduling family playdates.

Within the PHP office, Sara enhances events with colorful art, music, and activities that create an atmosphere where parents feel comfortable opening up with each other about their journey as a family. This reduces feelings of uncertainty and loneliness — and gives parents tangible tools to help their children thrive. Sara's inclusive nature is further demonstrated by her prior volunteer work with the SLO Public Library, where she started a Spanish Storytime — helping to break down language barriers and create opportunities. In all that she does, Sara is fervently committed to making sure no population is left out.

Thanks to Sara's efforts, families of children with special needs can feel connected — and truly dream big for their kids!

**Thank you, Sara.
You are a true Hands-On Hero.**

Look for more on all of our Hands-On Heroes on COE-TV Channels 2 and 19!



Hands-On Heroes is a special recognition of dedicated individuals who believe in and support the Children's Bill of Rights, an achievable vision that our children grow up with healthy minds, bodies and spirits that enable them to maximize their potential. This program is coordinated by First 5 San Luis Obispo County in collaboration with local organizations that make a difference in the lives of children in our community. To find out more about First 5 and the Children's Bill of Rights, please visit first5slo.org.



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