

# The Parents' Newsletter January 2013

## Voorhees School Social Workers' Newsletter for Parents of Students with Special Needs

This newsletter is to provide parents with helpful information to support their children's learning and achievement in school

### \*\*\*\*\****SPECIAL NOTICE***\*\*\*\*\*

Please mark your calendars now to attend the next Parent Meeting on Thursday March 21<sup>st</sup> 2013 in the Voorhees Middle School 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher's Lounge, from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM. This will be a Transition Open House, geared to parents of current 5<sup>th</sup> graders with special needs who are concerned about what to expect in the way of educational and special services at the Voorhees Middle School. It will be an opportunity to meet some of the staff involved with 6<sup>th</sup> graders, tour the 6<sup>th</sup> grade wing and hear about tentative plans for the 2013-14 school year. We hope to see many of you there.

### Annual Review Meetings

We have begun planning for annual reviews. You are encouraged to review your child's current status and discuss with his/her teacher any concerns that you may have. This will enable all of us to problem solve collaboratively and create a plan for 2013-14 that addresses all identified areas of need. In addition, the district has implemented a new IEP program (IEP Direct) which will be used for the 2013-2014 Annual Reviews. The IEP format will look different than last year, however the content areas remain the same.

### Special Education Parent Advisory Committee Meetings

Our next meeting will be held on April 10<sup>th</sup> in the VMS Lecture Hall at 7:00 pm. All parents are welcome to attend.

### Technology Plan Revision - Participation Needed!

The school district is preparing to revise its current Educational Technology Plan for the years 2013-2016. We will be seeking input from the educational community and are offering parents and community members the opportunity to contribute along with our staff. Please visit district website for additional information-  
[www.voorhees.k12.nj.us](http://www.voorhees.k12.nj.us)

**Social Media Tips for Parents**  
**By: Renee Weaver, Healing Magazine, produced by KidsPeace Institute**

- 1) Schools may not monitor social media sites on a regular basis, although if there is a suspicion of a violation, administrators have options available to determine the necessary disciplinary measure
- 2) There are federal regulations that help protect the privacy of children and use of social media sites, such as Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)
- 3) Know what social media sites your child is utilizing
- 4) Parents should routinely monitor their children's content on social media sites
- 5) Explain to your children that responsibilities accompany the use of social media

**Upcoming Community Activities**

**Garden State Discovery Museum – Open Arms Family Evening** – February 17<sup>th</sup>, May 26<sup>th</sup>, August 4<sup>th</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 from 6:00-8:00pm

A special evening for Families with Children on the Autism Spectrum at the Garden State Discovery Museum. Your entire family is invited for a FREE after hours activity featuring open play and discovery. Meet other children on the spectrum, their caregivers, and siblings. <http://discoverymuseum.com/>

**BounceU – Sensory Rebound** – 6:00-7:30pm

This event is held in both the Cherry Hill and Blackwood (228-2834) BounceU locations on the *first Tuesday* of each month. It is a night of discounted admission and special needs-friendly accommodations.

**Pump It Up – Sensory Jump Night** - 6:15- 7:45pm

This event is held the *first Tuesday* of every month. All Children with Special Needs Welcome! Located at 8 E. Stow Road, Marlton NJ 08053

**AMC Loews Movie Theater (2121 Route 38, Cherry Hill, N.J. 08002 )Upcoming Sensory Friendly Movies;**  
*April 13 2013- JURASSIC PARK*

Approximately one time each month, select area AMC theaters host a Sensory Friendly Film viewing for children with special needs. The theater lights remain brighter, the sound is kept at a lower volume, and outside food and drinks are permitted. Easy access to local event information can be found at [www.autism-society.org/get-involved/events/sensory-friendly-films/](http://www.autism-society.org/get-involved/events/sensory-friendly-films/)

**Walk Now for Autism Speaks** – South Jersey Walk being held on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Mt. Laurel NJ. Visit the website at [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org) for additional information.

**Community Programs**

**SPEAKArts program (Special Needs Parents Educators And Kids)** Join us for a weekly program created to capture the imaginations of children with special needs while providing them the opportunity to learn and to perform! The Spring Session includes visual arts, music, and drama and concludes with a stage production highlighting the historical quest for adventure. For more information go to [www.southjerseyspeak.org](http://www.southjerseyspeak.org) or contact [speak@southjerseyspeak.org](mailto:speak@southjerseyspeak.org)

**SPEAK Abilities Awareness Week**

Will be held in Voorhees School District from April 15<sup>th</sup> through April 19<sup>th</sup> 2013

**Voorhees CER**

The Voorhees CER offers a variety of courses and programs. For information, go to the website at [www.voorheescer.com](http://www.voorheescer.com) or call (856)795-2025 x5232.

**Voorhees Middle School – S.P.O.R.T.**

VMS offers this after-school program once a week. It provides an opportunity for students with special needs to experience physical and non-physical activities that will help improve physical skills such as balance, agility, body awareness, and hand-eye coordination. Students work with typical peers to promote socialization and interaction in a cooperative, supportive setting.

**Evesham Township Recreation Department**

A sports program, including seasonal sports of soccer, basketball and baseball, for children with special needs is available. Visit [www.evesham.nj.gov](http://www.evesham.nj.gov) for quarterly offerings and locations. (856) 985-9792.

**Katz Jewish Community Center- Resource Fair, Wednesday February 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30pm**

Meet representatives from community programs for individuals with special needs.

*Community Conference, Sunday March 17<sup>th</sup> from 2-5pm (10\$)*

Special Siblings; Growing up with a sibling with Special Needs through the Life Cycle.

**Jubilation Creations – Arts and Crafts for the Special Needs Community (on-going)**

Located at 713 Haddon Ave, Collingswood, NJ 08108 (856-240-1558) Beaded jewelry, needle arts and mixed media arts and crafts for all ages. [www.jubilationcreations.org](http://www.jubilationcreations.org)

**Sahara Sam's – Evening Out for Special Needs Children – March 1<sup>st</sup> and May 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 (6-9pm)**

Safe, judgment free event for individuals with special needs and their families. Located at 535 N. Route 73, West Berlin, NJ 08091. <http://www.saharasams.com/index.aspx?page=specialneeds> 856-767-7580

**BounceU - Create and Bounce Program**

Available to all children ages 2-5, this program combines active play with creative play. It is available in both the Cherry Hill and Blackwood locations. Call (856)228-2834 for information.

**Beyond Balance**

This therapeutic riding program is run by volunteers out of a stable in Mount Holly. It teaches children with special needs how to ride a horse, which can have physical, psychological, educational, and social benefits. Rider information packets and forms can be found at [beyondbalance.org/index.html](http://beyondbalance.org/index.html) (609) 969-8899.

**Special Population Achieving Normalcy through Education and Recreation (SPANNER)**

SPANNER is a non-profit organization that connects teens and young adults with disabilities with high school, college, or young professional mentors. The main focus is to encourage community inclusion, while working to enhance social skills and independence, in order to prepare members for the transition to adulthood. For additional information, please refer to the website. <http://www.myspanner.com/home>

**Mt. Laurel United Soccer Association – TOPS Soccer Program**

M.L. United is offering this program for kids with disabilities who would like to learn to play soccer and have fun. For information, visit [www.mlunited.org](http://www.mlunited.org).

**Special Olympics New Jersey – Activities for Special Needs Children and their Families**

For further information please visit their website at [www.SONJ.org](http://www.SONJ.org)

**Camden County Library System-** [www.camden.li.nj.us](http://www.camden.li.nj.us) (click link for events/classes)  
Various classes and on-going programs for children

### **Community Workshops**

#### **Bancroft – *ongoing free workshop series***

Bancroft, a local organization serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and acquired brain injuries, is hosting a free workshop series for parents and professionals. Held monthly, the workshops cover a wide variety of topics related to developmental disabilities. For further information visit Bancroft's web site at [www.bancroft.org](http://www.bancroft.org). To register, please contact Pat Reid at (856) 524-7453 or email [pried@bnh.org](mailto:pried@bnh.org).

#### **Camden County Family Support Organization – *Free workshops for parents/caretakers throughout the year.***

Family Support Organization is located at 23 W. Park Ave, (Suite 103) Merchantville, NJ 08109. Check their website for updated information [www.camdenfso.org/](http://www.camdenfso.org/)

### **Parent Resources**

**Division of Developmental Disabilities** - This division of the NJ Department of Human Services offers a wide range of services for qualified residents with conditions such as cerebral palsy, autism, mental retardation, epilepsy, spina bifida, and neurological impairment. Contact the local intake unit at (856)770-5900 or visit [www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd).

**Department of Children and Families** - This state department is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children, and provides resources and services to this end. Visit <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/>  
*Division of Child Behavioral Health Services:* serves children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral health care challenges. [www.nj.gov/dcf/behavioral](http://www.nj.gov/dcf/behavioral).

**Camden County Family Support Organization** - Assists families with children who have behavioral or mental health issues, through the Behavioral Health System. [www.camdenfso.org](http://www.camdenfso.org) or (856)662-2600.

**Kids' Health** – [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org) provides up-to-date, parent-friendly information on children's health and resources.

**Autism New Jersey** - Autism NJ offers factual information, as well as referral lists for recreational activities, summer camps, and vacation and travel resources. The group also runs free, local workshops and programs, including some designed for siblings. <http://autismnj.org>

**Great Schools** - The Learning Disabilities section of this website offers many sources of information, as well as research-based suggestions for activities that parents can engage their child in at home, in order to reinforce school-based interventions. [www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org)

**LD Online** - This is a leading website on learning disabilities for parents, teachers, and other professionals. [www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)

There are several **hospitals/health care systems** in the area that are valuable resources for information, education, support and medical information.

### **Helpful Services and Contact Information**

<i>Children’s Behavioral Health Services</i> – Crisis, support, and referral services	1-877-652-7624
<i>New Jersey Kid Care</i> – Affordable healthcare for children <a href="http://www.njfamilycare.org">www.njfamilycare.org</a>	1-800-701-0710
<i>Division of Developmental Disabilities</i> – Services for individuals with disabilities	(856)770-5900
<i>Community Services Referral Resource</i> – One easy access point for health and human services, community resources, and government assistance, for both ongoing support and crisis situations <a href="http://www.nj211.org">www.nj211.org</a>	211
<i>Community Crisis Response Center</i> – Camden County center for crisis evaluation	(856)428-4357
<i>Temple Clinic for Anxiety</i> – provides services for children and teens with anxiety <a href="http://www.temple.edu/childanxiety">www.temple.edu/childanxiety</a>	(215)204-7165
<i>2nd Floor</i> - statewide confidential and anonymous helpline for ages 10-24. Open 24/7 <a href="http://www.2ndfloor.org">www.2ndfloor.org</a>	(888)222-2228
<i>Teencentral.net</i> - An award winning, free, safe and anonymous site for teens where they will find help with some of today’s most difficult challenges	
<i>Parentcentral.net</i> - A website that offers parents anonymity, information and professional help with some of the challenges they face in raising their children	