



# CST CHATTER BOX

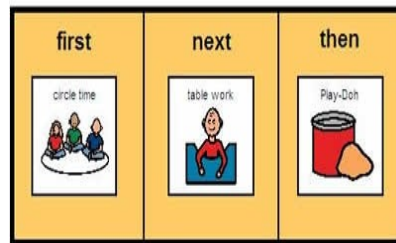
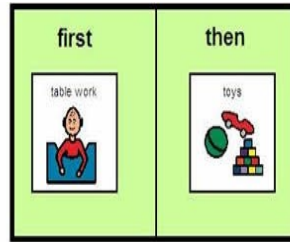
## The Benefits of Visual Supports

Looking to reduce negative behaviors and improve ability to follow routines? Try using a **VISUAL SUPPORT**! Children having difficulty with communication may demonstrate the ability to respond more to a photograph, word, symbol or list. Visual supports help all children, but in particular support those with autism, intellectual disabilities, and other neurological disorders that impact language and ability to stay focused on a task.

Here are some ideas:

### 1. Schedule Boards

Schedule boards can help decrease negative behaviors during transitions such as going from one activity to another. Schedule boards also increase predictability for a child, so they know what they are working on, doing next, etc. It creates an opportunity for choice making and working towards a motivating item.



### 2. Choice Making

Display your child's favorite desired items. This narrows down choices but also increases variety with choice making. It is recommended to use generic symbols (i.e. picture of the word "SNACK" rather than "Goldfish").

### 3. Behavior Supports

Display picture of supports such as "quiet hands", "nice sitting", "wait", "all finished", "write," etc. This minimizes need for verbal reminders (or nagging).

### 4. Reinforcement Boards

This focuses on your child working to obtain a specific desired item. Display it in front of your child to help keep them on task so he/she knows what will be received upon completion of task. It is helpful when trying to complete homework or a specific chore that is less desirable.

### 5. Checklists for Accomplishing a Task

Create a visual list so your child can follow steps for certain tasks (i.e. steps for brushing his/her teeth).

#### Helpful Websites/Resources

[Autism Speaks Visual Support Handout](#)

[Free Printable Visual Supports](#)

[Boardmaker Share](#): (a free subscription based symbol sharing program)

[Boardmaker Online](#): (symbol based subscription)

[Pyramid Educational Consultants](#): Excellent products that include communication books (PECS books), activity books, behavior supports and reinforcement schedules and much more!

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#### Special points of interest:

- ☺ Visual Support Boards
- ☺ Learn about FSIQ
- ☺ April Community Events
- ☺ Apply for Financial Support for Summer Camp
- ☺ Be a Sleep Advocate

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# Understanding Psychological Assessment Results

**Understanding assessments can be overwhelming and confusing. Below is a guide in helping you better understand:**

A **standard score** has a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. If a student earns a standard score less than 100 then the student performed below the mean and if they score above 100 then the student performed above the mean. Standard scores can range from superior to extremely low range. The standard scores measure a variety of things: verbal ability, processing of visual stimuli to solve problems nonverbally, short term memory, and cognitive processing efficiency.

The **Verbal Comprehension Index** (VCI) assesses verbal reasoning, lan-

guage processing, and thinking in words. The **Visual Spatial Index** (VSI) measures the student's ability to solve problems using nonverbal intelligence, and yields information regarding visual processing, attention, and organizational ability. The **Fluid Reasoning Index** (FRI) measures the student's ability to detect underlying conceptual relationships among visual objects and use reasoning to identify and apply rules. The **Working Memory Index** (WMI) measures a student's ability to hold, manipulate, and reproduce information in the short-term memory. The **Processing Speed Index** (PSI) measures how quickly an individual can grasp, retain and utilize information in a limited amount of time. Together, these five subtests compose the **Full Scale IQ**

(FSIQ); which is considered an overall estimate of an individual's general level of intellectual functioning. A student's performance on standardized testing can be compared to other students of the same age (age norms).

There are a variety of factors that can affect a student's performance during the assessments such as behavior, distractions, fatigue, cultural or language contextual, and motivation. Reports will state whether the assessment is a valid estimate.

Resource: Flanagan, D., & Caltabiano, L. (2004). Test Scores: A guide to understanding and using test results. *Helping children at home and school II: Handouts for families and educators*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

## More Community Resources!

There are plenty of resources available for this Spring of 2016 in Morris and Sussex County!

Hopatcong's Woman's Club, Sussex County NAMI, and Family Partners are teaming up to present a special forum: **Addressing Children's Emotional and Behavioral Health Issues**. The presenter will be Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Debra E. Koss, MD, whose private practice is in Sparta. This will take place on Tuesday, March 22, 6-8 PM at Sussex County Library, 21 Sparta-Stanhope Rd., Stanhope, NJ. 973-940-3194

**Mending Art Series: Bullies No More** is a creative, interactive workshop where youth (Grades 5-8) will create anti-bullying campaigns. Meetings take place at 6-8 PM on Tuesdays,



April 5-June 21, 2016. Participants will work with a Drama Therapist and an artist. Applications must be completed and sent to Family Intervention Services by March 25. Contact Allison Zeis, 973-586-5243 ext 320.

The 9th annual **"Sister to Sister" Prom Shop** will be open Monday-Thursday April 4,5,6,7,11, 12,13 and 14 from 3-7 PM. On Fridays, it will be open on April 8th and 15th from 3-6 PM, and on Saturdays, it will be open on April 9-15, from 9-12 PM. In addi-

tion to new and gently used dresses of all lengths and sizes, the Prom Shop will feature accessories like shoes, wraps, hand bags, and jewelry. This takes place at Project Self-Sufficiency at 127 Mill Street in Newton, NJ. 973-940-3500.

**2016 Autism NJ Transition Conference** is designed for caregivers of individuals ages 10-25. This conference will also benefit professionals supporting adolescents and young adults. Workshops and exhibits will all focus on legal, instructional, and services issues specific to this time of life. It will take place at Renaissance Woodbridge Hotel, 515 US Highway 1 South Iselin, NJ 08830 on April 18. For more information, contact Sharon Torpila, 1-800-428-8476.

# Thinking of Summer Camps Already?

The Children's System of Care (CSOC) is pleased to announce that they are able to provide eligible children, youth and young adults under 21 years of age financial support towards Summer Camp Tuition.

A youth is eligible if he or she is deemed eligible for CSOC developmental disability (DD) services. The youth has to be under the age of 21 and will not turn 21 before the end of camp dates selected for reimbursement. The youth must reside in his or her own home, with an uncompensated caregiver. Youth are eligible for CSOC financial support toward summer camp tuition only during the period of time which they are not eligible to attend the extended school year program.

Financial support is for the camp's daily



rate, not to exceed \$80 per day for day camp and not to exceed \$133 per day for overnight camp.

The family must register the youth with the camp before starting the request for CSOC financial Support. The family is required to provide the following documentation to PerformCare:

(1) A completed camp application (<http://www.performcarenj.org/families/disability/summer>

-camp.aspx) and (2) a copy of the camp registration form or letter from the camp indicating registration for a qualified camp. Camps must be from the DCF qualified provider list (<https://apps.performcarenj.org/outpatientproviders/listcampproviders.aspx>).

If a one to one aide is required, the parent/guardian should consult with the camp provider and complete the one to one aide application. Both the applications for financial support and one to one aide must be postmarked or received by PerformCare no later than April 30, 2016. Mail the completed packet to:

PerformCare ATT:Camp Financial Support, 300 Horizon Drive, Suite 306, Robbinsville, NJ 08691

(See <http://www.morrissexresourcesnet.org/news-events/news/the-arc-of-nj-has-created-a-summer-camp-guide-for-families/>)

## Make sleep a priority

With the "Daylight Savings Time" adjusted a few weeks ago, getting your child to bed on time may have become a problem recently with the longer days of Spring. Children ages 6 to 13 need about 9 to 11 hours of sleep, according to the **National Sleep Foundation**.



"Scientific research links heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity with lack of sleep. There's also a study out of the University of Michigan," adds Kurcinka, "that shows that 20 to 25 % of kids with ADHD have sleep disorders." Several studies presented at Sleep 2007 highlighted some of the adverse effects caused by lack of sleep — aggressive behavior and bullying, poor grades, poor attention span, disruptions in cognitive and linguistic function including the skills necessary for reading and language development.

### Seven ways to be your child's sleep advocate

1) Talk to your child about sleep. Have a conversation with your child about the importance of sleep. If he wants to do well in his Soccer game, or on a test, make him aware that he will do better if he gets more sleep.

2) Encourage your child to establish a sleep routine. School-age children need an average of 10 to 11 hours of sleep each night. Insist on a regular bedtime and wake-up time.

3) Say no to late-night TV and computer use. Keep the computer and TV out of your child's bedroom. It's a good way to monitor his screen activities and make sure he doesn't stay up past his bedtime.

4) Check in with your child's teacher. Ask your child's teacher if your child is alert or sleepy in class. If he is frequently sleepy in class, that's a sign that you need to help him get more sleep.

5) A short nap after school (no more than 30 minutes) may be refreshing, but don't let our school-age child sleep for hours during the day as this will throw off her natural sleep schedule.

6) Exercise plays a role in keeping a regular sleep schedule. "Exercise is very important, particularly getting outside and getting morning light," says Kurcinka. "But exercise raises the body temperature so it is not a good idea to exercise right before going to sleep. That means it's important to regulate organized soccer and baseball games so they are not scheduled too late into the evening."

7) Be a role model. Show your child that you make sleep a priority in your own life. Children are more likely to follow your advice if you follow the same rules for yourself.

## Shared Services Child Study Team

Wharton Borough Schools  
973-361-3010

Mine Hill Township School (CAS)  
973-366-0590

Rockaway Borough Schools  
973-625-8605



The Shared Services Child Study Team has made it a goal to increase communication and Special Education knowledge with parents as well as teachers and administration within the three school districts. As part of this goal, you will now be receiving newsletters from the team three times a year filled with information on special education practices/law, community resources, special needs tips, etc. We hope you find this helpful!

Leslie Mozulay, LDTC

Stephanie Dzikowski, LDTC

Stacy McCoy, School Psychologist

Alexa Mignone, School Psychologist

Armi Clancy, School Social Worker

## Get to Know Your CST

Ever wonder who answers the phone when you call the CST office at Wharton Borough? The friendly voices you hear belong to Christine Buehler and Nora Amato.

Christine has been part of the Wharton Borough Public School family since November 28, 2012. She started here as a substitute secretary for the MacKinnon Middle School Principal. After that assignment was completed, she was hired as an aide in the ASTARS program. As much as she loved that position, she really missed working in an office. A position opened up as the Guidance/Attendance Clerical Aide, where she worked for two years. She loved working with the teachers, the students and assisting the Duffy Elementary School secretary. As luck would have it, a position opened up in the Child Study Team office as their secretary. She has been in this position since July 1, 2015 and loves every minute of it. The case managers are amazing,

and there is never a dull moment. She also assists the Curriculum Director with the Extended Day Programs, updating OnCourse and PARCC preparation.

When not busy at work and taking care of her family, Christine loves to read and go to the

Shore. Her favorite vacation spots are Wildwood and Disney World.

Nora Amato lives in Byram, New Jersey with her husband and three teenage children. She started as an aide and substitute teacher in Wharton before getting the job as a clerical aide in the child study team. She has her BFA degree in fine arts which she pursues in her spare time. She also has a part-time job growing organic fruits and vegetables on a farm in Sussex County. She enjoys her duties as a clerical aide in the child study team. She helps to organize the appointments among parents, teachers and other child study team members. She also enjoys interacting with the special needs children. Additionally, she is the SEMI coordinator for Wharton Borough School District.



Wharton CST Secretaries,  
Nora Amato and Christine Buehler

Feel free to say hello to our wonderful Wharton CST secretaries!