



CST CHATTERBOX

Holiday time = Family time

The holidays are quickly approaching and the thought of children spending more time at home can seem overwhelming. How do I keep them entertained? What will they want to do? How do I keep them busy? How do I keep them engaged? How do I keep them from being lazy? How do we keep from getting on each others' nerves?!

Some children find too much "downtime" difficult to navigate and manage. Often, our children will resort to what they love the most and stick with that for the majority of their time at home, and often that "thing" is some type of screen (phones, tablets, TV). The research is continually showing how too much screen time can have an adverse effect on brain development and behavior, so what can we do instead? Here are a few examples of alternatives that will make the time spent at home more enjoyable for everyone. As an added bonus, they are activities you can feel good about because they encourage family bonds, self-esteem, more positive behaviors, and communication. Let's all get in the spirit of the holidays by enjoying our time spent together and engage in a little "family self-care".

1. Play a game (e.g., board games, card games, pretend play)
2. Cook/bake together (do theme nights "Taco Tuesday", holiday-themed desserts)
3. Start a family book club! Choose a book the whole family would like to read together and take turns reading to each other. Discuss what is happening in the book and give opinions. This will encourage reading skills, comprehension and conversation skills.
4. Go out together or work on a family project:
 - A. Check out holiday-themed attractions (e.g., Skylands Stadium Christmas Light Show or the Turtle Back Zoo Holiday Light Spectacular)
 - B. Go ice skating!
 - C. Take a trip to NYC to see the window displays
 - D. Check out the local library
 - E. Write thank-you notes for holiday gifts
 - F. Visit a museum
 - G. Volunteer as a family
 - H. Clean out old toys/clothes and make a donation

Self-Care for Families

emotional	physical	spiritual
<input type="checkbox"/> watch a good movie	<input type="checkbox"/> dance party	<input type="checkbox"/> a gratitude list
<input type="checkbox"/> write each other positive notes	<input type="checkbox"/> go for a walk	<input type="checkbox"/> go outside
<input type="checkbox"/> verbalize and talk about feelings	<input type="checkbox"/> family bike ride	<input type="checkbox"/> talk about forgiveness
<input type="checkbox"/> draw self portraits	<input type="checkbox"/> take a hike	<input type="checkbox"/> write thank you's
<input type="checkbox"/> Say "I love you"	<input type="checkbox"/> play kickball	<input type="checkbox"/> volunteer
<input type="checkbox"/> spend time writing	<input type="checkbox"/> tag	<input type="checkbox"/> spend time outside or with nature
<input type="checkbox"/> have a sing-a-long	<input type="checkbox"/> roller skating	<input type="checkbox"/> practice positive self-talk
<input type="checkbox"/> tell jokes	<input type="checkbox"/> go to the pool	<input type="checkbox"/> plant a tree
<input type="checkbox"/> try a new craft	<input type="checkbox"/> jumprope	
	<input type="checkbox"/> kids yoga	
	<input type="checkbox"/> wii fit games	
mental	practical	social
<input type="checkbox"/> read together	<input type="checkbox"/> clean up	<input type="checkbox"/> play in the park
<input type="checkbox"/> draw or write stories	<input type="checkbox"/> declutter old toys	<input type="checkbox"/> call or visit relatives
<input type="checkbox"/> kids meditation	<input type="checkbox"/> assign chores	<input type="checkbox"/> have family dinner
<input type="checkbox"/> find shapes in clouds	<input type="checkbox"/> make a grocery list together	<input type="checkbox"/> play boardgames
<input type="checkbox"/> practice belly breaths	<input type="checkbox"/> learn about money	<input type="checkbox"/> host a sleepover
<input type="checkbox"/> go on a walk to find new things	<input type="checkbox"/> make a weekly budget check-in	<input type="checkbox"/> invite friends over
<input type="checkbox"/> make vision boards	<input type="checkbox"/> make a weekly cleaning check-in	<input type="checkbox"/> plan a bbq
<input type="checkbox"/> try Headspace for kids	<input type="checkbox"/> homework/study	<input type="checkbox"/> join a team
<input type="checkbox"/> create mandalas	<input type="checkbox"/> have a morning & night routine	<input type="checkbox"/> do a neighborhood food drive
<input type="checkbox"/> make mindfulness jars		<input type="checkbox"/> have talks about friendship and how to be a friend.
<input type="checkbox"/> play mind strength games like memory		

Fall 2019

Volume 6, Issue 1

November 2019

Inside this issue:

LGBTQ Support	2
Community Resources	2
Executive Functioning	3
Disability Spotlight	3
Get to Know Your CST-	4

LGBTQ and The Importance of a Supportive Environment

Did you know that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth face a disproportionately high risk of suicide? Studies show that LGB young people are actually 4 times as likely to attempt suicide as their straight peers; and questioning youth are 3 times as likely. Among transgender people, 41% of survey respondents reported attempting suicide (Grant et al., 2011, p.2) Youth who come from highly rejecting families are 8 times more likely to attempt suicide than youth who come from supportive families (Ryan, 2009, p.5)



How can you help? **Listen:** Many youth in crisis feel as though no one understands them and that they are not taken seriously. Show them that they matter by giving you undivided attention. **Validate their feelings:** Avoid making overly positive statements (ex: It will get better!) or trying to manage their emotions (ex: Snap out of it!). **Don't pretend you have all the answers:** It's okay to be honest. **Remind them gently that depressed feelings can change over time.** **Discuss suicide directly and ask about a plan:** Contrary to what some might believe, you will not be putting ideas to their head. If they have details about what they would do, connect them to a helpful resource, and don't leave them alone. If they are in immediate danger, call emergency services. **Point out death is permanent and cannot be undone.** **Develop a safety plan.** **Remind them that they can always call the Trevor Lifeline (866-488-7386).**

Resource: Safer Space Brighter Future: A Guide to Supporting LGBTQ Youth by The Trevor Project

Community Resources!

Parents have expressed interest in events and activities focused on special needs children that are taking place in the area. We hope the following will interest you and/or your child!



HERO!!

Caring Santa by Rockaway Townsquare Mall

When: December 8, 9-10 AM

Caring Santa provides a subdued and welcoming environment for children with special needs and their families.

Dogman: The Musical Autism Friendly Performance

Theaterworks USA | Ages 6 & beyond!

Dog Man: The Musical is a hilarious new production based on the worldwide bestselling series from Dav Pilkey, the creator of Captain Underpants. Best buds George and Harold have been creating comics for years, but now that they're in 5th grade, they figure it's time to level up and write a musical based on their favorite character, Dog Man, the crime-biting sensation who is part dog, part man, and ALL

An Autism-Friendly Performance planned in cooperation with the Paper Mill Autism Advisory Team

MEET YOUR SEAT OPEN HOUSE: Friday, December 6 from 3PM—5PM.

Rogers & Hammerstein's Cinderella Autism Friendly Performance

Paper Mill Playhouse | Ages 4 & beyond

This enchanting, Tony-nominated Broadway adaptation of the beloved musical will put a spell on audiences of all ages. Rodgers +

Hammerstein's Cinderella showcases some of the songwriting duo's loveliest tunes, including "In My Own Little Corner," "Impossible/It's Possible," and "Ten Minutes Ago," as well as some new characters and surprising twists. Add a dash of fairy-tale romance, magical onstage transformations, and the iconic pumpkin and glass slippers—and you're guaranteed to have a ball!

An Autism-Friendly Performance planned in cooperation with the Paper Mill Autism Advisory Team

MEET YOUR SEAT OPEN HOUSE: Friday, December 20 from 3PM—5PM

Family Fun Night at MacKinnon School

Who: Wharton Families

What: Free Family Fun Nights—Fun educational group activities for parents and children. A yummy meal is provided each week.

Time: 6-7:30 PM

Dates: November 14, November 21, December 5, December 12, and December 19

\$100 Gift Card for each family that completes 6 weeks

Contact: Patrice Reilly, preilly@mcpik.org or 973-625-1998 x 114

LET'S SUPPORT EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING BY UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCING!

GO TO [understood.org/en](https://www.ncresa.org/en)

THROUGH YOUR CHILD'S EYES to get a feel for what your child may be experiencing if he/she is struggling with reading, writing, math, attention and/or organization

<https://www.ncresa.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=1893&dataid=998&FileName=Technology%20Tools%20for%20Executive%20Functioning.pdf>

Executive Functioning relates to skills in four categories: Self-organization, Information Management, Time Management and Materials Management. It can involve the following abilities:

GOAL DIRECTED PERSISTENCE- The ability to initiate tasks, plan and organize time and materials, solve problems, sustain effort, and follow through.

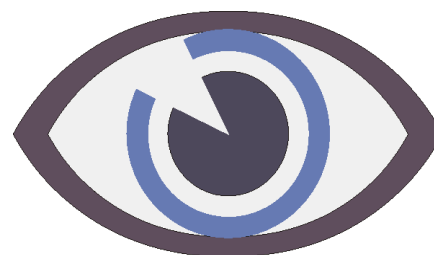
COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY/SHIFT- The ability to take perspectives, make connections, think flexibly and move freely from one situation to another.

SELF CONTROL- The ability to inhibit and regulate emotional and behavioral responses, and read and respond appropriately to social situations.

ATTENTION AND FOCUS- The ability to filter out distractions and sustain concentration in order to think, listen, or watch with interest.

WORKING MEMORY- The ability to mentally store, retrieve, and use information for a task.

METACOGNITION- The ability to analyze, understand, and monitor one's learning and thinking.



Disability Spotlight: Childhood Apraxia of Speech

Childhood apraxia of speech (CAS) is a speech sound disorder. A child with CAS has trouble saying what he or she wants to say correctly and consistently. CAS is a neurological disorder that affects the brain pathways involved in planning the sequence of movements involved in producing speech. The brain knows what it wants to say, but cannot properly plan and sequence the required speech sound movements.

The severity of CAS varies from child to child. It can be so mild that it causes trouble with only a few speech sounds or with pronunciation of words that have many syllables. In the most severe cases, a child with CAS might not be able to communicate effectively by speaking, and may need the help of alternative communication methods.

Some signs of CAS include distorting sounds (especially vowels), making inconsistent speech errors, grasping for the correct sound, and making errors in rhythm and inflection.

Professionals known as speech-language pathologists play a key role in diagnosing and treating CAS. Because there is no single symptom or test that can be used to diagnose CAS, the person making the diagnosis generally looks for the presence of several of a group of symptoms, including those described earlier. Ruling out other conditions, such as muscle weakness or language production problems, can help with the diagnostic process.

Children with CAS will not outgrow the problem on their own. They also do not acquire the basics of speech just by being around other children, such as in a classroom. Therefore, speech-language therapy is necessary for children with CAS. Speech-language pathologists use different approaches to treat CAS, and no single approach has been proven to be the most effective. Therapy is tailored to the individual and is designed to treat other speech or language problems that may occur together with CAS. Frequent, intensive, one-on-one speech-language therapy sessions are needed for children with CAS. (The repetitive exercises and personal attention needed to improve CAS are difficult to deliver in group therapy.) Children with severe CAS may need intensive speech-language therapy for years, in parallel with normal schooling, to obtain adequate speech abilities.

Shared Services Child Study Team

Wharton Borough Schools
973-361-3010

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

Rockaway Borough Schools
973-625-8601



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

Brooke Hanenberg, School Psychologist

Armi Clancy, School Social Worker

Get to Know Your CST

I was born and raised in Medford, New Jersey and spent many weekends exploring Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with my grandmother. I received my undergraduate degree from Loyola University in Baltimore, Maryland and received my graduate degree from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I lived in Philly for the past two years where I became an even more avid Philly sports fan than before and where I adopted my now 2-year old cat, Lola. This is my first year working as a Speech Language Pathologist. I had previous placements within school and adult settings, however; working with children was always my favorite aspect of being an SLP. I moved from Philly to take a position within the Rockaway Borough and Mine Hill school districts and haven't looked back since.

I currently live with my boyfriend, Chandler, cat, Lola, and



Caroline McIntyre, Speech and Language Therapist at Rockaway Borough and Mine Hill Schools

turtle, Maurice. Beyond a love of all things speech and language, I enjoy all things music, animals, baking and being active. I spend a lot of quality time with my family especially my mom, dad, sister, brother-in-law and beautiful niece and nephew.

I could not be more grateful that my first experience as an SLP has been working in Rockaway Borough and Mine Hill. I work with students from pre-k to 6th grade. I am so thankful for the support of fellow staff, administration, and parents. I have appreciated getting to know my students both from a therapy standpoint and as individuals. I enjoy watching my students grow and achieve their goals and seeing the difference that speech and language therapy can make in a student's life both within and outside of the therapy setting. So far, the speech room has been filled with so much laughter, encouragement, and excitement. I cannot wait to keep this momentum going into the rest of our school year!

