



CST CHATTER BOX

Make Halloween Fun and Inclusive!

Looking for ideas on how to choose a sensory-friendly costume for a child with [Autism Spectrum Disorder \(ASD\)](#)? How about tips on trick-or-treating and other festive activities? We've got ideas from experts in the ASD field. These ideas are nice for children with sensory issues...or just issues with Halloween.

Making Sensory Friendly Costumes:

- 1) Use comfortable clothes as a base for costumes (sweatpants, t-shirt, any clothes they like).
- 2) Experiment with accessories and makeup before the big event.
- 3) Have a back up plan. Don't force a costume if your child cannot tolerate it. A simple character t-shirt may work!
- 4) Use social narratives and strategies to explain the purpose of a costume.

Preparing for Sensory Triggers:

- 1) Social narratives, visuals, videos, and photos are great tools to help pre-



pare for trick or treating.

- 2) A visual schedule can include when you plan to leave the house, where you are going to trick or treat, and what may happen after. Visiting the neighborhood ahead of time may also help.
- 3) Practice common phrases such as "trick or treat," "thank you," "I need help," and "I need to go to the bathroom."
- 4) Be flexible. Prepare your child for possible changes such as what they will do if the weather is not good.
- 5) If your child is disinterested but there are siblings who are trick or treating, bring snacks, activities, or a change of clothes to keep your

child comfortable while waiting for everyone else to finish.

Giving Sensory Friendly Halloween Alternatives:

- 1) Pumpkin Picking
- 2) A Movie Night with Treats
- 3) Boo-tastic Dinner
- 4) Invite friends over for trick or treating at home. Allow the kids to go from room to room go get treats.

Simply be aware that for special needs kids, especially those with Autism or Sensory Processing Disorders, Halloween can bring social, communication, and sensory issues.

Resource:
<http://www.easterseals.com/explore-resources/living-with-autism/fun-inclusive-halloween-ideas.html>

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Special points of interest:

- ☉ Halloween Tips
- ☉ Balanced Meals
- ☉ Suggested Family Activity
- ☉ Learn about CP

Inside this issue:

Standards on School Meals	2
More Community Resources	2
Water Fun in the Fall	3
Disability Spotlight	3
Meet the CST secretary	4

Standards on School Meals

With the updated standards in place for school meals, children are eating 16% more vegetables and 23% more fruits when they are offered. With the increase in nutritious meals, there are studies indicating good nutrition impacts performance. Eating fruits, vegetables, protein and fiber with less calorie intake from fat increases opportunities for success with academics. Children need to start the day with a good breakfast, one with less sugary items. Refueling during snack time and/or lunch time is very important. When shopping, look at the ingredients label. The fewer the number of ingredients the better, and if you can't pronounce an ingredient, then it's probably not something to be eating. Also, low fat does not mean less sugar. Natural does not always mean wholesome.



MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD HAS ACCESS
TO THE RIGHT FOODS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY!

References: fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday, chicagotribune.com, "Healthy Diet Means Better School Performance," Reuters.com, <http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSTON47353620080414>

More Community Resources!

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

SPECIAL PARENTS AFTERNOON

OUT: On Saturday October 15th, 2016 from Noon – 3:00 pm The Church of the Hills and the Matheny School will sponsor the **14th semi-annual Special Parent's Afternoon Out Event!**

All families in the Northern New Jersey and surrounding area with Special Needs children are welcome and encouraged to take part!

Special needs children (and their sisters and/or brothers) will be cared for and entertained by loving and qualified volunteers while their parents or caregivers enjoy a complimentary afternoon out on the town including lunch for two (2) at the restaurant of their choice in the Chester, Mendham and Bedminster area.

Lunch, music, movies, games, a petting zoo, pony rides, pumpkin painting, canvass painting, face painting, hay rides, video



game truck, fire truck and numerous other activities for the kids will be hosted at The Church of the Hills, 3545 Route 206, Far Hills, NJ.

Child Care supervised by volunteers from Special Needs Schools, Camps and Hospitals. For more information, contact: 908-719-9200.

OUR 'HOOD...NEW RULES!: Join a Mending Art Series for boys & girls, ages 11-14. This group is for pre-teens and teens who want to make a difference within themselves and their community, and connect with an eclectic and creative group of peers. It meets on Mondays 6-9 PM, Oct 17-December 19 at Family Intervention Services at 20 Vanderhoof Ave, Rockaway, NJ. Contact 973-586-5243 x 320.

RANDOLPH YMCA: SPECIAL NEEDS

For more than 30 years, the YMCA's Special Needs Kaleidoscope Program offers children ages 5-17 the opportunity to become more confident in the water through the teaching of basic swimming skills by trained volunteers. For more information, contact Deb Popek, Program Coordinator at 973 366 1120 x13 or debbie@randolphymca.org.

Also check out the other YMCA special needs activities such as GYMFIT Gymnastics and Dolphin Swim which are for children up to 13 years old. These programs use underlying principles of Applied Behavior Analysis in its instruction.

Finally, The Roxbury PEC, Inc., in coordination with the Randolph Y, has started a pilot program for young teens with special needs. It includes social interaction as well as a variety of recreational and fitness activities which will include gymnastics, fitness machines, stretching, music & fun! Tuesdays starting September 13 from 6:45-7:45 pm at the Program House. To register, contact Jodi Cullen at 973 598 0848 or email cul-lens@optonline.net

Water Fun in the Fall

Looking for something fun to do with your child?

Check out Sahara Sam's Oasis: Indoor and Outdoor Water Park.

Sahara Sam's Oasis offers events for special needs individuals. These events allow the families to interact and be in a judgement free zone. The events are hosted on Fridays nights from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The next two events are October 7, 2016 and November 18, 2016.

The modifications they offer are:

lifts to assist with entry into the park, quiet rooms, lighting and sound adapted, whistles used sparingly by the lifeguards, games in the arcade are turned off, comfortable dress code, you can bring your own snack if your child has diet restrictions, and ticket sales are limited. Peanuts or peanut products are not allowed in the park.



In addition to the special needs evenings, they have birthday

packages for your child.

At the park they also have a SAM-BULANCE Safety Squad to help in assisting that everyone is safe while having fun. The SAMBULANCE Safety Squad assists in making these events feasible.

GPS address: 160 Cooper Road, West Berlin, NJ 08091.

Telephone number: 856-767-7580

-website: www.saharasams.com

Disability Spotlight

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is a group of permanent movement disorders that appear in early childhood. Signs and symptoms vary among people. Often, symptoms include poor coordination, stiff muscles, weak muscles, and tremors. There may be problems with sensation, vision, hearing, swallowing, and speaking. Often babies with cerebral palsy do not roll over, sit, crawl, or walk as early as other children their age. Difficulty with the ability to think or reason and seizures each occurs in about one third of people with CP. While the symptoms may get more noticeable over the first few years of life, the underlying problems do not worsen over time.

Cerebral palsy is caused by abnormal development or damage to the parts of the brain that control movement, balance, and posture. Most often the problems occur during pregnancy; however, they may also occur during childbirth, or shortly after birth. Often the cause is unknown. CP is the most common movement disorder in children.

CP is partly preventable through immunization of the mother and efforts to prevent head injuries in children such as through improved safety. There is no cure for CP; however, supportive treatments, medications, and

surgery may help many individuals. This may include physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy. Medications may help relax stiff muscles. Surgery may include lengthening muscles and cutting overly active nerves. Often external braces and other assistive technology are helpful. Some affected children can achieve near normal adult lives with appropriate treatment.



Resources:

United Cerebral Palsy—www.ucp.org

Cerebral Palsy Family Network—www.cpfamilynetwork.org

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

Zorina has been employed at Canfield Avenue School since 2006 filling several different positions through the years including lunch aide and main office aide. In 2010, when the Child Study Team position became available, it seemed like a good fit. Prior to working at Canfield Avenue School, Zorina was raising her 2 children and working part time in the floral business.

Working as part of the Child Study Team can be challenging with keeping track of everyone's busy schedules all in different locations. Student data updates, special education transportation, state reporting and scheduling parent meetings are all a part of the

busy day. Planning for ESY, communicating with related service providers and keeping track of Out of District students rounds out the job.



**Mine Hill CST Secretary
Zorina Munson**

Outside of work, family time is top priority. Zorina enjoys spending time with her husband, 2 children and their dogs. The kids, Rhett-19 and Veronica- 25 are harder to gather these days with being away at college and busy with work, but they all make time to be together whenever they can. Currently Zorina and her husband are busy building a house in their summer spot in Maine where they will one day retire.