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Letter from the publisher

All around us are parents who are questioning the effects of things like vaccines, years of food additives, medications, and the environment's possible contributions to their children's learning and developmental issues. What they're wondering is, if they have had an effect, and if, as parents, we should be more skeptical than we are when dealing with professionals making policy.



It's difficult to know. What we are aware of is that with earlier identification of issues, we are finding more issues. Sometimes the issues themselves are being questioned, like a woman I heard the other day on a radio call-in program. Her son has been diagnosed with ADHD and she was saying that what we are asking children to do in our structured education system and in our quest for achievement and conformity is contributing to these diagnoses. She said, quite reasonably, that it is unnatural for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old boys to sit still in one place and concentrate with rare exception. Little boys have ants in their pants and we're asking them to sit down and pay attention.

She brought up her own childhood and in looking back was able to remember that most of us were not in school/structured situations in those years of our lives, but were out playing and/or running around, napping, snacking, and being a little kid.

Her claim that our demand on children to conform and learn earlier and earlier is what is causing much of the issues is certainly debatable. Her memories of childhood's yesterdays as being more simplistic and less demanding and controlled are undoubtedly accurate. My kindergarten classes were loaded with play, nap, snack and then home, just like she remembered. We didn't learn or have homework but sang songs, painted pictures, were read to, and had a good time learning social skills.

It's something to think about and talk about and certainly to debate. Perhaps there is validity and we should reevaluate some of our choices and see if more unstructured play will more naturally allow growth and development. That is one argument for one or two issues, and we should give strong consideration to the questions posed.

There is no doubt, however, that we have more answers and more therapies that are making a difference for a great many children. I, for one, want to salute the thousands of professionals and experts who assist families in coping with issues from A to Z, but most of all, I want to praise and celebrate the millions of parents who search for answers, care for their children and do the work.

Here's to you. Thanks for reading. Drop me a line.

Susan Weiss

Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher

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School anxiety

Helping special needs kids with the fear and frustration

BY KARI MILLER, PHD, BCET
Educational therapist and director

Some children settle into the school routine easier than others. And children with special needs may have had more than the usual dose of blows to their self-concept, which may lead them to develop a belief that they can't be successful. Naturally, when a child doesn't give school his best effort, he doesn't do well.

He's not being willful or disobedient; he's expecting the worst, and protecting and defending himself from failure and more blows to his ego. As a parent, you can help him by teaching him how to focus on the positive. Teach him how to anticipate enjoyable things in life, rather than disagreeable and unpleasant results.

Help your child stay focused on and excitedly anticipate the people, places and activities he enjoys in school, such as sharing experiences with a good friend, participating in a club, or getting to wear a new outfit.

Chat with your child and vividly paint a picture of the best things about school, encouraging expectation for excellent outcomes. Talk about lunch buddies, how nice the teacher is, and all the cool things to learn in a favorite class. Spend time talking about the fun to come everyday. Being in school will seem more comfortable and exciting the more your child focuses on the pleasurable results!

Using the calendar is a great way to help special needs kids positively anticipate upcoming events. Simply put drawings or pictures of things that symbolize fun to your child on the date of the upcoming event. Everyday, count down the days that are left and vividly discuss all the fun to come!

It is vital to find a few moments everyday to give each of your children undivided special attention. Treat yourself and your child to exclusive, one-on-one time together each day. Develop joint interests and pursue them passionately. If your child expresses an interest in an activity, eagerly embrace the chance to learn it and share the experi-



ence with your child.

It's also critical for parents to make extra efforts to help their special needs child find his own unique talents, passions and abilities. You can help through some of these channels:

- School electives
- School-sponsored, after-school activities
- Community-based activities such as acting, singing, art, and music
- Volunteer experiences, such as mentoring younger children or visiting with seniors
- Part-time jobs in areas of interest

Talk with your child about his talents and express confidence in his skills. Look beyond the traditional definitions of skill, talent and achievement to find the areas in which your child truly excels and give him every opportunity to develop and admire these abilities. Teach him to value everything he does well, and he will grow the seeds of self-confidence that will guide him to tackle whatever life has to offer.

One of the most significant ways you can help your child defeat the tendency to anticipate unpleasant results is to stay focused on good things in your own life. Every time a negative thought crosses your mind, make a commitment to changing it to a better-feeling thought. This focus can be a powerful example for your child.

Teaching children who experience repeated failure the technique of expecting positive outcomes is one of the most empowering life-lessons a parent will ever give her child.

Children with special needs can be fearful and uncomfortable with transitions, making it important for parents to give special consideration and care to the back-to-school season. By learning how to plan for the positive, our kids can handle transitions with calm security.

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The only way out is through!

Correcting behavior of special needs children

BY KIMBERLY HERMAN

Being a parent is a difficult job. Being a parent of a child with special needs can be even more challenging. It may feel at times that your child calls the shots based upon his behavior. Now is the time for you to regain control of your house.

In my almost-13 years of working as a clinical social worker in Early Intervention, I have seen my share of behavioral problems. I have worked with numerous children and families to help alleviate negative and unruly behaviors children display both at home and in public settings. You name it, I've seen it! And I've found that the one thing common with all families is that parents do not know how to handle their children's behavioral problems.

My motto is — the only way out is through! You cannot go halfway, you have to give it your all as you forge through your child's tantrums to come out the other side with rules that he will follow. Ask for help and support and know that you are an amazing, courageous and strong caregiver. You are the parent; you set the rules and standards that he will have to follow. Your love for your child and confidence in his success makes all the difference.

Here are 10 simple behavior-modification techniques that, over time and with consistency, can help. The key to that success is consistency — without it, your efforts will not be rewarded.

Always offer a lot of verbal positive reinforcement.

Children hear the word “no” all the time — “I said no,” or “No, you cannot have that.”

It is very important to praise your child when he is listening, playing or behaving well. Praise him by saying, “Thank you for cleaning up your toys,” or “It makes Mommy feel so happy when you sit nicely and play with your toys.”

Give verbal warnings to help children transition from one activity to the next.

Offer a few verbal warnings before you are planning to change an activity (playtime to bath time, dinner time to bath time, bath time to bedtime). It may be helpful for you to warn your child in advance. “In five minutes it will be time to have lunch.”

Although your child may not understand how to tell time, your words and verbal warnings will be enough to allow him to understand that a change is coming. It will give him time to prepare in his mind and body, so as to make the transition easier and to avoid a power struggle.

Say what you mean and mean what you say.

If you make a decision to do something, then do it. If you do not put him in time out for hurting you (if you utilize a time-out method) then your words mean nothing. The child will most likely feel confused, or he may learn that you don't mean business and, therefore, he can do whatever he wants, and get away with it. He will ultimately learn how to manipulate you and certain situations. Make sure your directives are immediate. If you wait too long to follow through on something you have said to your child, it may be too late, and the moment is lost.

All caregivers need to be consistent.

If one parent allows a behavior the other does not, it will confuse your child. When it comes to discipline and following the rules of the home, both parents need to be on board and on the same page. Again, if there is no consistency, the child can feel confused or manipulate both parents. If they are on the same page and send the same clear message, chances are, a negative behavior that the child exhibits can and will become rectified.

Allow a child to correct a negative behavior on his or her own before you intervene.

If he can successfully clean up food he just purposefully threw on the floor, then it is important to praise him verbally. A child's self-esteem and confidence grows when he is praised and given messages about how he is loved, trusted and viewed by his parents. Tell him you are proud of him.

If, or when, a child cannot correct a behavior on his own, then it may require you to intervene, depending on what the behavior is. For example, “I see you are having a hard time listening, so Mommy will help you.” Bend down with the child and help pick up the toys he threw.

Offer reinforcers that appeal to your child to help curb and dismantle negative behaviors.

Figure out what is meaningful to your child — stickers, cards or specific toys — and reward him with it only when he is able to successfully model a desired behavior. It is important to discuss (in child-friendly terms) what the reward is for, and why it is being given. In addition, replace negative behaviors with alternatives. If your child keeps



hitting you, model what appropriate touch is on yourself and the child. Practice what appropriate touch is on your dog or cat or a stuffed animal. If your child throws things she shouldn't, allow her to throw something more appropriate, like a ball, or even a pillow or balloon.

Validate a child's feelings.

Just as important as the validation we seek as adults, children also need their feelings to be validated. It lets them know that you understand and care about how they feel. Tell him you understand he is sad because you took his toy away. Depending on a child's age, he may not have the ability to really make sense of things, and may need your help verbalizing how he feels on the inside. Negative behaviors are often a clue or message to internal conflict that a child cannot verbalize due to his developmental stage. You can provide the words for him, or remind him to use his words instead of acting out.

Use time-out chair or room as needed, only when a child cannot stop himself, all other interventions failed and the behavior escalates.

Make sure the amount of time spent in

the chair or room is the equivalent to the child's age (two minutes for a 2-year-old, three for 3 years). The time-out chair should be located in an area where there is no other stimulation or toys the child can grab at. Establish eye contact while explaining why the child is going into time out. While in time out, limited or no eye contact should be given. Set a timer so the child can listen for the bell to ring. Establish eye contact again, afterward, while age-appropriately discussing why they went into time out, and remind them of the rules. Do not use time out for everything, or any time something goes wrong — pick and choose the extreme cases. Simplify your language and be careful not to go into long discussions of what happened. Be clear, concise and to the point.

Ignore certain behaviors.

Often children will test parents, especially at younger ages when they are trying to figure out what is right and what is wrong, and are establishing their independence and personality. Not all behaviors need immediate intervention. Sometimes, just ignoring a behavior will let a child know that it is not necessary. And by just re-directing a child with something else, a different toy or

activity, you can diffuse the situation and dismantle the negative behavior quickly.

Remember that parents, not children, are in control.

Power struggles, frequent tantrums and outbursts will occur if, or when, children rule the home. Establishing the rules of the house (depending on what negative behaviors the child exhibits) is extremely important to do right away. Write the rules down for yourself and also write them in big letters and place in a location that a child can visually see everyday. Depending on the age, you can glue pictures next to the words so he or she can visualize what no biting or no hurting looks like. The more the child is reminded of the rules, and the more that the parent adheres to managing those rules, the less likely a child becomes the ruler, and the parent becomes overly stressed-out and confused.

Kimberly Herman holds a master's degree and is a licensed clinical social worker who has worked in the Early Intervention program for the last 14 years. She has dedicated her life to helping children with developmental delays and disabilities. Her clinical expertise and passion is in working within the early-childhood education field.

Tick tock, time's up!

Choose to make time for literacy with fun and easy family games

BY SHANNON MELIDEO

As parents and educators, we're always busy and constantly find ourselves running out of time to do the things we want. Or so we believe. Do we really run out of time, or do we choose how to use our time?

There is always time for literacy — if we make it a priority. We just have to be a little creative. Here are some fun, quick and habit-forming suggestions for how your family can fit in practicing sounds, letters, vocabulary words, and even multiplication tables.

Doggie express

Dogs usually work better than cats for this activity, because they are more easily directed. Write notes and send them to the recipient in the next room of the house by means of the dog's collar. This activity employs creativity and writing.

Supersize sticky note sorting

Write spelling words, fun words, family names, or nearly any words that have some sort of association or grouping. Use the whole sliding glass door as the workspace and sort into different categories. This activity employs decoding, reading fluency, comprehension and categorization.

Label the room game

You write — or have your child attempt to write — the names of items that you see in a given room on a sticky note. Grab a timer from a board game. On your mark, get set, go! Label the room in game-like fashion.

This activity employs writing and reading fluency.

Coupon sorter job

When the Sunday newspaper arrives, pull out the comics for some silliness. Then, find scissors and the coupon section. Many children are capable of cutting coupons and sorting them. This activity employs fine motor skills, reading and categorization.

Alphabetize everything!

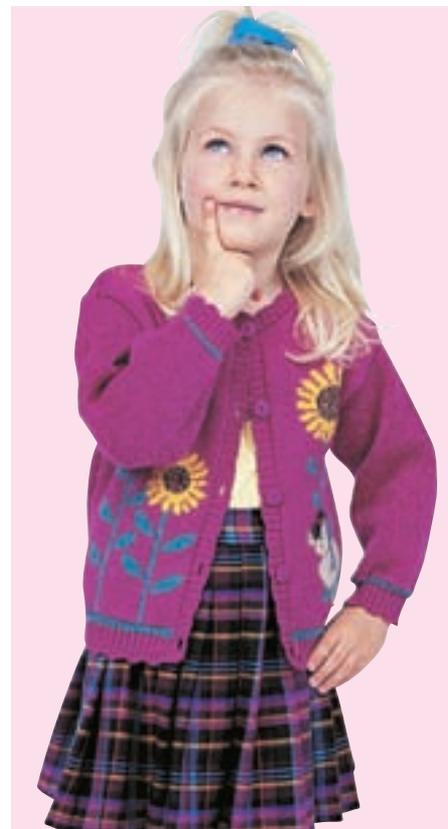
We may not have the desire to alphabetize the spices, movies and books, but some children are challenged by the game of it. This activity employs alphabetic knowledge.

Binder ringo

Any word can be written, hole-punched and strung on a binder ring. Inexpensive binder rings are sold in most office supply stores. The single rings are great for holding a few, or many, word cards. A set could hang somewhere near your child's car or booster seat for a quick review. This activity employs decoding.

Label maker pix

Remember how the old-time pictures all seemed to be labeled with beautiful handwriting on the back? Remember how grateful you were that someone took the time to do that so you would know who was who? Remember all those pictures you recently printed but aren't labeled, and probably won't be in the near future? Why can't your child do that? It would probably be fun to use the label maker to attach names and titles on the loose pictures. It would be a



trip down memory lane, for both of you, and it would get the job done. This activity employs spelling and family knowledge.

Guessing game

This game is perfect for travel. Each participant takes a turn providing clues to a book, movie or person. The opening lines are, "I am thinking of..." then the rest of the sentence is completed by some tricky and interesting clues. Everyone gets a guess. If the correct answer is not given, more clues are provided. Here is an example: "I am thinking of a book that is written in journal format, is a series, and makes Daddy laugh out loud every time we read it." And so on. This activity employs knowledge of the topic, formulation of quality clues and good communication skills.

• • •

Making time for literacy should certainly include the reading of a bedtime story. But it can also be comprised of quick word games, communication activities, educational mind puzzles, and writing endeavors. If parents make literacy a priority in small and large ways, children will always reap the benefits.

Tick, tock. Time to send a note to Sophy on Fido's collar!

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Lead the charge

Creating the best Individualized Education Program for your child

BY CYNTHIA FALARDEAU

I am a big fan of public education, and I wave my pennant, because I am proud to be a product of it. I also shake a big pom-pom to show that I believe in an Individualized Education Program. These programs are game plans to help students with special needs become an educated and independent individual.

What is an Individualized Education Program?

An Individualized Education Program, commonly referred to as an IEP, is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The act requires public schools to develop a program for every student with a disability, who is found to meet federal and state requirements for special education. The program must be designed to provide the child with a Free Appropriate Public Education. The Individualized Education Program refers to the educational program to be provided to the child with a disability, and to the written document that describes the program.

What is great about an Individualized Education Program?

What I love about this approach is that a team of professionals interacts with you and your child and helps develop a customized plan. The team evaluates many factors, including access to the general curriculum, how the student's disability affects

her learning, and it helps develop goals and objectives that make the biggest difference for her. Ultimately, the program helps to decide a placement that is the least restrictive for the student.

What is the role of the parent?

It all starts with you! The reality is that it really doesn't matter how great the school district is, or how wonderful the teachers are, if a parent or guardian is not actively involved. One of the most vital members of the program team is a member of the child's home unit.

Be pushy with a purpose and fight for your kid!

Our son, Wyatt, just turned 7. He started in the public school system's pre-K exceptional student education program at the age of 3. I have to admit, I have made many mistakes in my effort to fight for Wyatt. But during the course of four years (and more than a dozen IEPs), I have learned a lot. I have cried, anguished, and alienated people who tried to help. I still have not mastered it all. Here are a few tips that I hope will help other parents be "pushy with a purpose" for their kids:

- **Imagine what you want for your child.**

What goals do you think need to be set? How will these goals be supported by what you do at home? What support(s) do you think need to be put in place to get there? It's OK to dream big! We longed to hear our



child speak. It took almost four years to make it happen, but we did it!

- **Remember that there is no one cookie-cutter plan for every student,**

Just because a friend was able to secure a one-on-one aide does not mean that you will also be afforded that opportunity. There is no access by association. It is also important to remember that you probably do not have all of the information regarding how other children's needs are being addressed by the school. An IEP is intended to be an individualized process.

- **It pays to have a meeting(s) before the meeting.**

Reality can often be a hard pill to swallow. There is nothing wrong with believing in and pushing for your child's achievement. But you may need to have meetings with your child's teacher, aide(s), and support personnel to gauge what you want for your child's plan, and where she is actually performing.

- **It pays to get a second opinion.**

Even though I am a fan of the IEP struc-



ture, I have not always loved the opinion of the team. We have sought the outside opinions of private testing centers. Often, the centers may use the same tests. However, I found that the way the information was explained at the testing center gave me a greater understanding. It also brought new ideas back to the team. A good team will be open to outside support.

• Calling all troops!

You have a right to bring who you want to the IEP meeting. Don't be afraid to invite therapists, family, and friends. The more input, the better! Of course, you need to let the school know so that it has room for everyone. Participation from everyone makes the IEP more successful.

• Put your cards on the table.

Perhaps it is because I wear my heart on my sleeve that I embrace this tactic. I believe you need to tell the team what you want before the meeting. It could be a phone call, a handwritten list, or even a typed outline. I have discovered that it is helpful to give

the group this information a week or so in advance. This way they can also prepare. I have also found it to be instrumental in making the meeting more productive. It makes it clear what your expectations are prior to the event. My husband, Jim, believes that it also reduces the replies of, "We will get back to you."

• Speak softly and carry a big binder.

I learned this one from another parent: Remember to keep your energy in check. If you can't, then bring someone else who can help remind you. You also need to bring your child's records. If you have all of the reports and documents pertaining to your child's education in a binder, it shows you are organized. It also helps when a statement is made that you don't agree with. You are then able to calmly say, "I was not aware of this. Please show me where this information was documented." Remember that statements about performance must be supported by data.

• It's OK to be pushy with a purpose

Jim always reminds me that it is OK to challenge the team. However, you must keep it realistic and rational. He will always say, "Use your head, not your heart!" For me, this is a challenge as I do everything passionately or not at all.

Fortunately, the great majority of teachers and professionals we work with are happy to have an involved parent. Despite how I may come across, they know I want the very best for our child and appreciate my efforts.

• It's all about your child!

The most important piece of your child's education is you. You need to be her voice, her advocate, and her cheerleader. You must be the one to lead the effort. After all, she can't do it without you!

To learn more about your role, contact your child's teacher or her school's support personnel.

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Guardianship: A basic education for parents

BY HEATH BURCH, CFP, Principal,
The Special Needs Planning Center

As a parent, you make many decisions on behalf of your minor child. However, once your child turns 18, you no longer have the legal authority to do so. But what if your child has special needs and cannot make decisions for herself? What do you do then? You have some difficult decisions to make.

Were you aware that, once your child turns 18, you no longer have the legal authority:

- To continue managing your child's finances or to work with a financial institution on her behalf?
- To obtain insurance information or coordinate care?
- To work with healthcare professionals to make medical decisions or maintain access to her health records?
- Have access to the child's educational records or enroll her in school?

In the event that your child may not be in a position to manage the above on her own, then guardianship may be an appropriate action to take to protect your child. Guardianship is the legal relationship created when a guardian is appointed to care for an adult with a disability, who, by reason of her disability, cannot care for herself.

By establishing guardianship, you have the ability to aid your child in these important decisions. In addition, it allows a parent to protect a child who may unfortunately become a target of others. This can be particularly important in regards to financial matters.

This does not mean that guardianship is always appropriate. For parents of a child with special needs approaching 18, guardianship may be the most hotly debated topic in the home. Why? Because by having a guardian or conservator appointed, some, or even all, of a disabled person's rights are removed. Therefore, guardianship is not a decision to be taken lightly, and, ultimately, it may be one of the most important decisions you make when providing ongoing care for your child.



It could be that a form of limited guardianship, over healthcare or financial matters for example, is more appropriate. This would allow a named guardian to support a child in making good decisions over specific matters, without taking the more absolute step of full guardianship, which, ultimately, may limit the child's independence in ways that are not necessary, such as removing the child's ability to vote.

For others, conservatorship — where a conservator is appointed to manage financial matters — may be a more suitable alternative to address a financial need only. Additional options, such as power of attorney

for financial decisions, or power of attorney for healthcare decisions, can be useful tools in support of the child.

Each of these alternatives has its advantages and disadvantages. It is important for parents to know that they have options, and there is no single answer that is applicable to all situations. Parents must take the time to gain an understanding of these options and make an educated decision on behalf of, or with, their child.

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Great outdoors

The importance of giving your child outside time

BY ANARA MIDGETT

School is hard work for many special needs children. Students are expected to sit in one spot, calmly walk in orderly lines, speak only with permission, use listening ears, and to constantly be prepared to prove they are learning. Children might go straight from a structured classroom to structured after-school activities. Help your child release his energy and stress — and get in a little gross motor fun — by taking the time to play outside.

Keep it simple and fun

Kids leave school mentally fatigued and with pent-up energy. Burning off that extra energy can clear the mind and improve focus for homework and other activities. Try to make room in your family's schedule for 15-30 minutes of daily outside play and to work on physical therapy goals. Treat this as a fun time to reconnect, and you might even start to learn a little about what's really happening at school.

Making daily outside time a priority doesn't mean it will always fit smoothly into a busy lifestyle. Use creativity to make up for a lack of free time on weekdays. Scan your surroundings for gross motor opportunities on the drive home from school or on your way to and from after-school activities. Try a couple of different routes as you hunt for fun outdoor places that might help your child work on goals and get some fresh air. Five minutes walking up and down outdoor steps or on a handicapped ramp will do more for some special needs children than sitting for five minutes in a waiting room.

Making it work for your child's needs

Take your child's stamina and tolerance into consideration when planning for therapeutic play outside. Ask your child's physical therapist for activity sug-



gestions if you feel stuck. Have a plan for handling transitions when squeezing outside playtime into a busy day. Treat this time like an outdoor motor break after a day spent inside. Explain the time limits for playing up front and use a timer or visual schedule to help your child understand that this is not unlimited free playtime. If necessary, start with a short play session so a rocky transition won't throw the rest of the day off schedule. The amount of playtime will naturally increase as less time is needed to end the activity.

Activities don't have to be complicated or over planned, but expect to be at your child's side if you are incorporating therapy goals into the play. Make a game out of raking leaves and kicking the piles across the yard. Play together on the swing set in your backyard so you can direct the play in a way to benefit your child. Go leaf collecting in a neighborhood with mature trees and enjoy the fall ambience. Schedule short after-school play dates at the park. Take your bikes someplace fun and different, even if it's just for a 20-minute riding lesson.

Find variety locally

Become explorers on a mission to discover all the park and playgrounds en route to after-school destinations. Newer playgrounds have some fun equipment that can be used for targeted gross motor work. Ask about potential new play spots whenever talking to someone who lives or works in the area.

Seek out paved walking trails in parks, nature centers, and residential neighborhoods if level ground is needed to work on strengthening or specific skills. Help your child "work out" in the stands or on the track while the high school football team is practicing on the field. Unused baseball diamonds can be fun, level places for gross motor play.

College and university campuses are beautiful and exciting in the fall, and usually have a combination of paved areas, grassy common areas and steps.

Are there public beaches, lakes or rivers in your area? Go walking on uneven shores, on sand or on pebbles. Let your child throw rocks in the water for five minutes before homework or dinner. Areas surrounding dams and dykes can offer a fun mix of level and sloping ground, steps, interesting walkways and picnic pavilions. Even a plain old, dry creek bed can be an exciting place to work on goals outside the gym.

Saturday is make-up day

Set aside time for outdoor gross motor fun on Saturday mornings, if you just can't squeeze it in during the week. Go to the farmer's market before going to the super market. Check your community calendar for listings of pumpkin patches, apple orchards, corn mazes and fall festivals. Let your child dance out the stress of the school week at free outdoor concerts.

Zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens and museums with outdoor exhibits can have interesting opportunities for therapeutic play in addition to the usual exhibits. Look for child-friendly architectural features, statues or landscaping designed to get little bodies moving. Visit the attraction's website and ask around before paying high admission fees. Attendance at these attractions can decline after school starts, so look for special events and reduced rates as the weather gets cooler.

• • •

Going to school is a major part of a child's day. Even children who love to learn and function well in a school setting need to get outside and move after six or more hours of limited physical movement. Get your child outside, work on gross motor goals while blowing off some steam, and enjoy nature's beauty together.

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Get it together!

Tips to conquer your child's organization problems

BY CINDY GOLDRICH, EDM
Parent and teen coach

Have you ever noticed that staying organized — or getting started on a project and seeing it through to completion — are all in a day's work for some people, but for others, they don't know where to begin?

Well, that might be due to executive functions and how well they are working — or not working. Executive functions are the cognitive skills that give us the ability to focus, plan, and act in a goal-directed manner — and current research shows that these functions are responsible for how effective we are at managing ourselves. Basically, these functions are the CEOs of our brains.

For the most part, we don't need to consciously access these skills for day-to-day habits or routines. However, when we face new challenges or stressors, that is when

the CEO must take charge. And when it is not managing effectively, that's when we forget things, can't get organized, can't get started, lose track of time, and lose stream of thought. It's behavior that makes some children look unmotivated, uncaring, and, well, unintelligent — while nothing could be further from the truth. By and large, these children are really suffering from a neurologically-based difficulty, which results from incomplete or immature development of their frontal/prefrontal cortex of their brains. It's not that these kids won't perform, it's that they can't on their own ... yet.

So how can we help? There are two distinct approaches. First, modify the environment. Help structure your child's workspace, modify his work, and provide more prompts. Second, model actions and behaviors, and join in with him as he works on his skills. Don't be concerned that you may enable your child. Before he is ready to be independent, he needs to develop the nec-

essary skills. Once the skills are developed, you will be able to gradually lessen your active involvement with your child.

It is important to recognize that weaknesses in executive functions are real and neurologically based. There is no shortage of strategies and devices to help children — and adults — improve their executive functioning. Children need modeling. The skills they need to be organized and manage their time effectively are not difficult, but they are not necessarily intuitive. Providing support and guidance, either directly or with outside support, will go a long way in helping your child be and feel successful. Here are some tips for your child to organize school materials and remember important information:

Day planner

- Think of an agenda book or day planner as your calendar for your whole life, not just school.

- Write all of your school assignments, after-school activities, and social plans here.
- Use a large paper clip to mark the page you need to be on for quicker entry.

Binders and notebooks

- Use different colors for each subject binder and notebook.
- For each subject, you will have two three-ring binders. One will be the everyday binder, and the second will be the reserve binder, where all of your papers will be moved to after tests. This allows you to straighten out and empty excess papers so you can focus on the current work. (Note: Check with each subject teacher before removing papers from your binder.)
- Both binders for each subject should be the same color (blue for math, green for science, etc.) and have the same labeled dividers.
- Keep one master reference binder with dividers for each subject. Here, you can keep any material that you might need to use in years to come, such as math formulas, social studies facts or periodic tables.
- Perhaps two of your subjects can be combined into one larger binder or notebook for less to carry.
- Be sure to label everything! Big bumper stickers work great. Have fun, and be creative!

Master folder

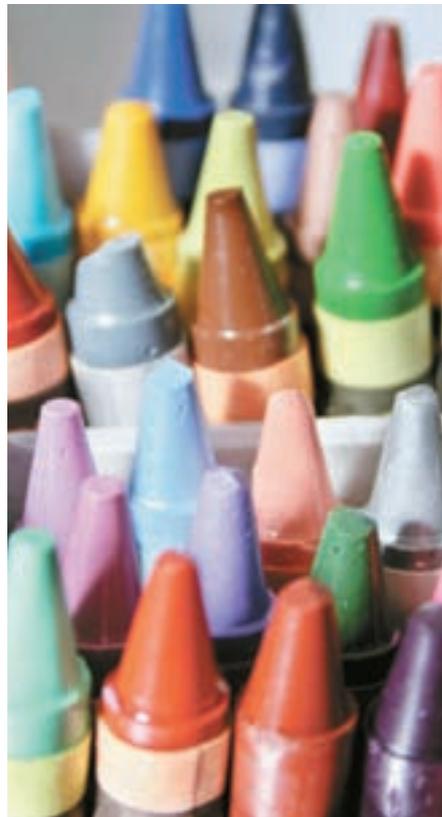
Consider a multi-pocket folder to keep with you all day. It can hold the day's handouts, work to be turned in, and your agenda book. This is an excellent tool for overall organization of papers to go to and from school. It should be cleaned out each week, by transferring the appropriate papers to either binders or the recycle bin. (An excellent sturdy folder can be found at www.nickysfolders.com.)

Locker

- Clean out your locker and/or workspace every week, which lessens the chance of losing papers.
- Consider small trays to keep extra pens, pencils, tissues, erasers, etc.
- Keep a dry-erase board or small notepad for writing reminders.
- Try to keep your backpack on the hook, so there is more room to store items.

Backpack

- Keep an extra pen and pencil inside at all times.
- Look in your assignment book and check your locker's dry-erase board before packing up for the day.
- When you get home, empty the entire bag near your workspace and sort the con-



tents for homework and notes for parents.

- Pack it up before you go to sleep at night, which will decrease the odds of forgetting things.

Alarms

- A kitchen timer is a great tool for keeping you on task and allowing for time-limited breaks. Set it for various intervals to see if you are on task and on track. What works for you? Set a start time or break time on your computer or cellphone alarm, or set a watch with a vibrating reminder (www.watchminder.com) for a discreet nudge. Set an alarm for the time you want to go to sleep as a reminder to pack up, brush teeth, etc.

Lists

- Keep a dry-erase board or small pad of paper by your workspace and use it to jot down things on your mind, so they can be done later and not distract you now. Write out your homework plan for the day — what you will do and in what order? It's a great feeling to cross items off! Use it to plan out long-term projects or for math problems and other quick temporary notes.

Structures

A structure is any device that reminds you, visually, of something important. They work because they interrupt your ordinary mind-flow and grab your attention. Some

of the best structures come from your intuition and may not seem to make sense at first. Be creative — experiment with different ways to jolt your memory! Here are some examples:

- Wear a rubber band on your wrist when you want to remember to do something, such as breathe deeply, speak powerfully, sit up straight, or take home your violin.
 - Put a chair by your door to remind yourself to take along important items tomorrow.
 - Send yourself an e-mail, text or voice mail to request that a certain task be done.
 - Have some friends over once a month. This can be a structure for cleaning your room or keeping up relationships with friends.
 - Devise an intentionally fabricated deadline on the day you start a project — such as scheduling a time to show a friend or family member your completed project.
 - Schedule study time with one friend a week for two months to get you to study a particular subject.
 - Counting is helpful to make you aware of your behavior. For instance, count how often you participate in class and work on increasing the number each day. Counting does not require you to do anything other than notice, but noting every time you do something heightens your awareness.
 - A special slogan on your key chain can be a structure to remember to smile or be positive.
 - A toy lion on your desk can remind you to be ferocious in pursuit of a goal.
 - Put your keys in the refrigerator so you remember your lunch.
 - Make a sign around your work area: "Don't give in to the impulse!"
 - Create a screen saver with one-line, motivational statements.
 - A coach is one of the best structures. Text or e-mail your coach every day when a certain task is done.
 - "To do" lists are not meant as nag lists — just a place to hold important things. Be creative where you put your notes; try to have it somewhere in your field of vision on a regular basis: the refrigerator, your desk, next to your bed. Try to develop a consistent habit of where you write and keep important notes.
- Cindy Goldrich, EdM, is a parent and teen coach with a specialty in Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD) coaching. She helps parents learn specific strategies to help their children thrive independently and successfully. She works directly with teens to help them create the structure, time management and goal-setting skills they need. She also lectures and runs a parent-coaching workshop series. Visit www.ptsc coaching.com for more information.*

Autism support

A Queens group helps families cope with the disorder

BY MARY CARROLL WININGER

When a young child is diagnosed with autism, the amount of therapy and special attention he needs can initially seem overwhelming to his parents. But a new support group in Queens, that's aiming to empower, educate the caregivers of autistic children, just might be the answer for those who feel that they have nowhere to turn.

Autism, a neurodevelopmental disorder, affects the way information is processed by the brain, and it's characterized by delays in social interaction and communication. The exact cause of the disorder is still unknown, although it remains an area of active research. Symptoms of autism can appear in a child as young as six months.

Queens County Parents Autism Coalition is an organization that seeks to strengthen families who have loved ones living with autism through support, education and networking. Group meetings, lectures and the occasional trip to the local park are all part of its support method.

The South Ozone Park-based group grew out of one mother's quest to find local support when her daughter was diagnosed with autism a few years ago.

"[My daughter] Zariah was diagnosed with pervasive developmental disorder on June 13, 2005," explains Cheryl Ocampo. "Back then, I didn't know anyone who had it. I started scouring the Internet to learn more information."

While Zariah's preschool did offer workshops detailing what parents of autistic children could expect, the Queens-based mom found them lacking.

"I didn't think it was enough," says Ocampo. "There needed to be a way to connect with other parents and show them how to cope and adapt."

So, she decided to take matters into her own hands. Ocampo founded the group on Nov. 1, 2006 as an informal support group through meetup.com. Back then, it was called Queens Autism Meetup Group.



Members of the Queens County Parents Autism Coalition celebrate their accomplishments at an awards ceremony.

"At first, it was just two or three of us meeting at a coffee shop to talk about our experiences. Within two years, the group had taken on a mind of its own," explains Ocampo. "In November 2008, we were incorporated as a non-profit [and changed the group's name]. Today, we partner with the Queens Special Education Parent Center to educate and empower parents of children with special needs. [Of course, our group] offers more of a concentration of support for families dealing with autism."

The group allows parents the time and space to vent and talk, but also provides information on caring for children with autism.

"We arrange for meetings and workshops where parents can receive training," explains Ocampo.

One recent workshop involved a board-certified behavioral analyst speaking with

the group about what parents and caregivers should do when autistic children have issues with sensory over-stimulation.

"He broke it down for us and introduced ways in which parents can reinforce good behavior," says Ocampo.

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest have also spoken to members about the legal issues they face. And the group can direct parents to products and services for their children that are free, or for which they could be reimbursed. "There are things that kids with a documented disability are entitled to have," asserts Ocampo.

Members know how to have fun, too.

"We take our kids on outings — movies, parks and zoos — places where we want our kids to develop social skills," she explained.

With all of the programs and support the group offers, it's not difficult to find members who flourished there.

"I can think of one example in particular," muses Ocampo. "[A mother] came to us two weeks after her son

was diagnosed. When she first came to [the group], she just cried. She vented and talked with us. Then, she left for a year to cope and grieve. After that year, she came back with a bang. She started out doing office support for [us] and in January 2011, she will become our treasurer as part of our board of directors. It has been an honor to see the transformation in her, and to see her child progress. She and the other team members [have become] the best advocates for their children."

The knowledgeable and supportive members give Queens families of autistic children a haven, as well as a place to gather strength. For more information, visit www.qcpac.org.

Mary Carroll Wininger is a writer based in New York City. She is a frequent contributor on topics ranging from etiquette to feng shui.

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Brooklyn Autism Center Academy

111 Remsen Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 554-1027

www.info@brooklynautismcenter.org

Services Provided: BAC is a private, not for profit school dedicated to providing high-quality education to children with autism and support to the general autism community.

Association in Metro Area for Autistic Children

25 West 17th Street, Ground Floor
New York, NY 10011
(212) 645-5005 (877) 645-5005

www.amac.org, info@amac.org

Services Provided: Case Manage, Community Education, Information and Referral, Treatment, Vocational Employment

Other: Residential Camp

QSAC, Quality of Life & Services for the Autistic Community

253 W. 35th Street, NY, NY 10001
30-10 38th Street, Astoria, NY 11103
and 2509 Broadway, Astoria, NY 11106
New York 11106
(718) 728-8476

www.QSAC.com, QSACnyc@aol.com

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Residential

Other: After school programs, behavior management, Day Habilitation, Family reimbursement, In-house/overnight respite, parent support group, Parent training, pre-school, Residential Habilitation, Special education itinerant teacher

Autism Society of America

Queens Chapter
188-83 85th Road
Holliswood, NY 11423
(718) 464-5735

Brooklyn Chapter
224 Avenue S
Brooklyn, NY 11223
(718) 336-9533

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

LEGAL ADVOCACY

New York Families for Autistic Children, Inc.

95-16 Pitkin Avenue
Ozone Park, NY 11417
(718) 641-3441

Services Provided: NYFAC serves any family within New York that has a child with a developmental disability. Their doors are open to any family member, friend, professional, or student who wants to learn, to develop and to grow. Their motto: "Helping Parents..Help their children..One family at a time"

BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Jewish Guild for the Blind

15 West 65th Street, New York NY 10023
(212) 769-6200 (800) 284-4422

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case

ADVOCACY

Parents of Blind Children

(National Federation of the Blind)
471 63rd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11220
(718) 567-7821 (212) 222-1705

Individuals Served: Visual Impairments

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

The Lighthouse National Center for Vision and Child Development

111 East 59th Street
New York, NY 10022
(800)829-0500

TTY/TDD: (212) 821-9713

www.lighthouse.org, info@lighthouse.org

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral.

Other: Vision rehabilitation, low vision services, professional continuing education

New York Institute for Special Education

999 Pelham Parkway
Bronx, NY 10469
(718) 519-7000 ext. 315

Services Provided: NYISE supports four quality programs for children who are blind or visually disabled, emotionally and learning disabled and pre-schoolers who are developmentally delayed

CEREBRAL PALSEY

United Cerebral Palsy of New York City

80 Maiden Lane

New York, NY 10038

(212) 683-6700

www.ucpnyc.org

Services Provided: Assistive Tech Equipment, Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Residential, Treatment, Vocational/Employment

Other: Day Treatment, Day Habilitation, Early Intervention

DISABILITY GROUPS

Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled (BCID)

27 Smith Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 998-3000/TTY/TDD
(718) 998-7406

www.bcidi.org

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Vocational Employment

Catholic Charities Office for the Handicapped

191 Joralemon Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 722-6000

www.ccbq.org

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York

841 Broadway
New York, NY 10003
(212) 674-2300
TTY/TDD: (212) 674-5619
www.cidny.org

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy,

LEGAL ADVOCACY

Children's Aid Society

150 E. 45th Street
New York, NY 10017
(212) 949-4800

Services Provided: serves New York's neediest children and their families at more than 45 locations in the 5 boroughs and Westchester County. Provides comprehensive support for children in need, from birth to young adulthood, and for their families, to fill the gaps between what children have and what they need to thrive.

Community Service Society

105 East 22nd Street, Room 303
New York, NY 10010
(212) 254-8900

www.ccsny.org

Services Provided: Case Management, Information and Referral

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Developmental Disabilities Center

St. Luke's Hospital
1000 Tenth Avenue
New York, NY 10019
(212) 523-6230

Other: Developmental assessments and evaluations.

Disabled and Alone/Life Services for the Handicapped

61 Broadway, Suite 510
New York, NY 10006
(800) 995-0066

www.diabledandalone.org

Services Provided: Assistive Tech Equipment, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Individual Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

Early Childhood Direction Center

New York Presbyterian Hospital
435 East 70th Street
New York, NY 10021
(212) 746-6175

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

Other: Preschool programs, transportation, medical, educational and social services, evaluation and assessment services, parent education programs and resources.

Early Childhood Direction Center

1UCP of NYC, Inc, SHARE Center
60 Lawrence Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11230
(718) 437-3794

Services Provided: The Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs) provide information about programs and services for young children, ages birth through 5, who have physical, mental, or emotional disabilities and help families obtain services for their children.

Early Childhood Center

Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center
1731 Seminole Avenue
Bronx, NY 10461
(718) 430-8900

Services Provided: Treatment

Other: Parent Support Groups

EIHAB Children's Services

222-40 96th Avenue
Queens Village, NY 11429
(718)465-8833
Bronx – Jacobi Medical Center Special Needs Clinic
(718) 918-4027

Services Provided: Connects disabled children to service providers, advocates, helps with entitlements, Medicaid wavers, financial assistance, care coordination.

Guild for Exceptional Children

260 68th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11220
(718) 833-6633

www.gecbklyn.com, mikefer@gecbklyn.org

Services Provided: Early childhood Education, Day Habilitation Program

Other specialized services

Heartshare Human Services

12 Metro Tech Center, 29th floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 422-4200

www.heartshare.org

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Residential, Treatment

Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, Inc.

135 West 50th Street
New York, NY 10020

(212)582-9100

(800)523-2769

www.jbfcs.org

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

Korean-American Association for Rehabilitation of the Disabled

35-20 147th Street,
Annex 2F

Flushing, NY 11354
(718) 445-3929

Individuals Served: All Developmental Disabilities

Learning Disabilities Association of New York City

27 West 20th Street, Room303
New York, NY 10128

(212) 645-6730

www.ldanyc.org

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

100 Gold Street, New York, NY 10038
(212) 788-2830

www.nyc.gov/mopd

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

Metro New York Developmental Disabilities Services Office

75 Morton Street,
New York, NY 10014

(212) 229-3000

www.cs.stste.ny.us

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Individual/Case Advocacy, Residential, Treatment, Vocational Employment

New York City Administration for Children's Services

150 William Street
New York, NY 10038
(212) 676-2954

Services Provided: Protects New York City's children from abuse and neglect. Provides neighborhood based services to help ensure children grow up in safe, permanent homes with strong families. Helps families in need through counseling, referrals to drug rehabilitation programs and other preventive services.

New York City Department of Social Services

250 Church Street
New York, NY 10013

Services Provided: Information and Referral

Other: Services vary by county

Partnership with Children

50 Court Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

(212) 689-9500

Services Provided: Partnership with Children is a not-for-profit organization that provides emotional and social support to at-risk children so that they can succeed in school, in society and in their lives.

YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities

460 West 34th Street, 11th floor
New York, NY 10001

(212) 563-7474

TTY/TDD: (212) 290-2787

www.yai.org, link@yai.org

Services Provided: Assistive Tech Equipment, Case Management, information and Referral, Residential Treatment, Vocational/Employment.

OTHER: Early Intervention, preschool, health care, crisis intervention family services, clinical services. Day programs, recreation and camping.

DOWN SYNDROME

Association for Children with Down Syndrome, Inc.

4 Fern Place, Plainview, NY 11803
(516) 933-4700

www.ACDS.org, infor@ACDS.org

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy Treatment

Other: Recreation Program

National Down Syndrome Society

666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012
(212) 460-9330 (800) 221-4602

Services Provided: Advocate for the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down Syndrome.

EDUCATION

Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Legal Services Corp.

1360 Fulton Street

Special Needs

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Brooklyn, NY 11216 (718) 636-1155

Services Provided: Community Education, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

Other: HIV Advocacy and HIV Custody Planning.

Board of Visitors, Staten Island Developmental Center

**1150 Forest Hill Road
Staten Island, NY 10314
(718) 983-5200**

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

Developmental Center

**1150 Forest Hill Road
Staten Island, NY 10314**

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

Brooklyn Bureau of Community Services

**285 Schermerhorn Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217
(718) 310-5600
www.bbcs.org**

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Future Planning, Treatment, Vocational Employment

Other: Job training and placement services, Home and Community-based Waiver Services, Comprehensive Medical Case Management, Parent Support Group

The Bronx Organization for the Learning Disabled in New York

**2885 St. Theresa Avenue
Bronx, New York 10461
(718)430-0981
www.boldny.org**

Services Provided: Education, speech therapy, Occupational therapy, psychological assessments and other services.

Early Childhood Direction Center

**Variety Pre-Schoolers Workshop
47 Humphrey Drive
Syosset, NY 11791
(516) 921-7171, (800) 933-8779
www.vclc.org**

Individuals Served: Children with diagnosed or suspected disabilities

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy,

Other: Preschool programs, transportation, Medical, educational and social services, evaluation and assessment services, parent education programs and resources.

East River Child Development Center

**577 Grand Street
New York, NY 10002**

(212) 254-7300 www.eastrivercdc.org

Services Provided: A Non-Profit, Family Centered, Community based Preschool Program offering an array of Educational and Therapeutic services to children with special need between the ages of 3 and 5.

These special needs include specialized instruction, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, assistive technology, and parent education.

EPILEPSY

Epilepsy Foundation of Metropolitan New York

**257 Park Avenue South, Suite 302
New York, NY 10010
(212) 677-8550
www.epilepsyinstitute.org
epfndny@aol.com**

Services Provided: The Epilepsy Foundation of Metropolitan New York is a non-profit social service organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of people with epilepsy and their families.

GENERAL

Advocates for Children of New York

**151 West 30th Street, 5th floor
New York, NY 10001
(212) 947-9779
www.advocatesforchildren.org**

Other: Advocate for educational rights in the public school

Association for the Help of Retarded Children (AHRC) New York City

**83 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038
(212) 780-2500
TTY/TDD (800) 662-1220
www.ahrcnyc.org/**

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual Case Advocacy Legal Advocacy, Residential, Vocational/Employment

Other: Camps, school and respite

Bronx Children's Psychiatric Center

**1000 Waters Place
Bronx, NY 10461
(718) 239-3639**

Services Provided: Community Day Treatment, Intensive Case Management, Crisis Intervention

Brooklyn Children's Center

**1819 Bergen Street
Brooklyn, NY 11233
(718) 221-4500**

Services Provided: Inpatient Hospital Day, Day Treatment Program, Parent Advocate Services, Family Support Group. The Brooklyn

Children's (BCC) mission is to promote an environment for the development of healthy children and adolescents.

Brooklyn Parent Advocacy Network

**279 East 57th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11203
(718) 629-6299**

Services Provided: Assistive Tech/Equipment, Case Management, Community Education, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy, Residential, Vocational/Employment

Other: HIV/AIDS, homeless housing, food program, respite, after school and day care.

Greater New York Chapter of the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation

**515 Madison Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, NY 10022
(212) 353-8353
www.marchofdimes.com**

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral.

Lawyers for Children, Inc.

**110 Lafayette Street, 8th floor
New York, NY 10013
(800) 244-2540
www.lawyersforchildren.com**

Services Provided: Future Planning, Information and Referral, Legal Advocacy

Legal Aid Society of New York City

**199 Water Street
New York, NY 10038
(212) 577-3346 (347) 245-5132
www.legal-aid.org**

Individuals Served: All Developmental Disabilities

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

Other: Advocacy training, and systems advocacy

Maidstone Foundation

**1225 Broadway, 9th floor
New York, NY 10001
(212) 889-5760
mariette33@aol.com**

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Vocational Employment

Other: Help people with unusual problems seek the proper help that is needed for that problem and also provide education and training.

MFY Legal Services, Inc.

**299 Broadway, 4th floor
New York, NY 10007
(212) 417-3700**

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy.

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Special Needs

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New Alternatives for Children

37 West 26th Street
New York, NY 10010
(212)696-1550

Services Provided: NAC provides real help and real hope to thousands of children with disabilities and chronic illnesses and their families throughout NYC. Through an integrated continuum of health and social services, NAC keeps children safe from abuse or neglect and works with birth, foster and adoptive families to keep children out of institutions and in nurturing, loving homes.

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, Inc.

151 West 30th Street, 11th floor
New York, NY 10001-4007
(212) 244-4664
www.nympi.org

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy.

SKIP OF New York

213 W. 35th Street 11th floor
New York, NY 10001
(212) 268-5999
www.skipofny.org

Services Provided: Skip (Sick Kids Need Involved People) of New York is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide advocacy and support by providing access to all necessary services for families who care for their chronically ill or developmentally disabled children at home.

Queens Children's Psychiatric Center

74-03 Commonwealth Blvd.
Bellerose, NY 11426
(718)264-4500

Services Provided: QCPC serves seriously emotionally disturbed children and adolescents from ages 5-18 in a range of programs including inpatient, hospitalization, day treatment, intensive case management.

Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc.

116 East 16th Street
New York, NY 10003
(212) 677-4650
infor@resourcesnyc.org
www.resourcesnyc.org

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral Case Advocacy

Other: Free workshop series with a focus in issues related to early intervention, preschool, school-age special education, transition to adulthood and community resources.

Also publishes several directories.

Services for the Underserved

305 Seventh Avenue 10th floor
New York, NY 10001

(212) 633-6900

Services Provided: SUS is a non-profit organization that provides housing, services and support for individuals with special needs to live with dignity in the community, direct their own lives and attain personal fulfillment.

Shield Institute for the Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled

144-61 Roosevelt Avenue
Flushing, NY 11354
(718) 939-8700
www.shield.org

Services Provided: Assistive Tech/Equipment, Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Treatment.

Sinergia, Inc.

2082 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10035
(212) 643-2840
www.sinergiany.org
information@sinergia.org
Residential Office:

902 Amsterdam Ave.
New York, NY (212) 678-4700

Services Provided: Case Management, Information and Referral,

Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy, Residential, Vocational/Employment

Staten Island Mental Health Society, Inc.

669 Castleton Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10301
(718) 442-2225

Service Provided: Offers mental health and related services to children and adolescents and their families.

Staten Island Developmental Disabilities Services Office

1150 Forest Hill Road
Staten Island, NY 10314
(718) 983-5200

Services Provided: Case Management, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy, Residential, Treatment

Staten Island Division, March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation

110 McClean Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10305
(718) 981-3000
www.marchofdimes.com

Individuals Served: All Developmental Disabilities

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral

HEARING IMPAIRED

Center for Hearing and Communications

50 Broadway

New York, NY 10004
(917) 305-7700 (917) 305-7999
TTY/TDD: (917) 305-7999
www.chchearing.org
info@chchearing.org

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and referral, Individual case Advocacy

Lexington School for the Deaf Center for the Deaf

26-26 75th Street
East Elmhurst, NY 11370
(718)350-3300
TTY/TDD: (718) 350-3056

www.lexnyc.org, generalinfo@lexnyc.org

Services Provided: Assistive Tech/Equipment, Case Management, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Vocational/ Employment.

Other: Mental Health Services including early intervention program, hearing and speech services and a school for the deaf.

The Children's Hearing Institute

380 2nd Avenue, 9th floor
New York, NY 10010
(646)438-7802
www.childrenshearing.org

Services Provided: The institute provides funding for research, educational support, and other programs relating to the restoration of hearing for infants and children with hearing loss or profound deafness. While CHI currently focuses much of their efforts on children who are deaf and can be helped with cochlear implant technology, they conduct research related to causes of deafness that ultimately can benefit people of all ages.

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

Muscular Dystrophy Association

11 East 44th Street 17th floor
New York, NY 10017
(212) 682-5272
www.mda.org

Services Provided: MDA is the gateway to information, resources and specialized health care for individuals and families coping with muscle disease. MDA's offices serve every community through a vast program of clinics, support groups, summer camps, equipment loans and much more.

TOURETTE SYNDROME

National Tourette Syndrome Association

42-40 Bell Blvd., Bayside, NY 11361-2820
(718) 224-2999
www.tourette-syndrome.com

Services Provided: Community education, information and referral



Spectrum Social Skills Solutions, Inc.

Spectrum Social Skills Solutions, Inc. is committed to better the quality of life for individuals with social skills deficits. We offer interpersonal and social skills seminars for children ages 6 - 18 as well as young adults. Our program is comprised of individualized instruction in a small group seminar.

Dr. Olga Katz, the founding director, is a Board Certified Psychiatrist with over 15 years experience in diagnosing and treating adults, children and adolescents. She has completed specialty training in developmental psychiatry, and supervised a team servicing a patient population of developmentally disabled adults and adolescents.

Who Can Benefit From Social Skills Training?

Children and Young Adults Who Have:

- Asperger's and Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)
- Lack of assertion
- Bullied or has trouble responding to teasing
- Low self-esteem or self confidence
- Depression or anxiety and have trouble engaging in conversation with their peers
- Do not have friends calling to do things or spend the night
- Not invited to birthday parties

Students are offered seminars on weekends & evenings in order to excel in everyday life

(Located right off SI Expressway-exit 12, minutes from Verrazano Bridge)

Social Skills Can Be Learned

What Can Your Child Gain By Learning Social Skills?

- Improvement self-esteem
- Improvement relationships with peers and family members
- Greater academic success
- Interest in new hobbies
- A better understanding of themselves and their environment
- Better coping strategies in the face of future stressful events
- Positive and safe school environment

**Visit Our
OPEN HOUSES
Social Skills Seminars
For The General And
Asperger's Population
For Dates And Times
Go To**

www.spectrumsocialskills.com

or call us 347-944-5900

**38 Winthrop Place
Staten Island, NY 10314**



Spectrum Social Skills Solutions, Inc. does not provide any medical or counseling services.

The Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at Staten Island University Hospital is a recognized leader in rehabilitative therapy for children.

Pediatric Rehabilitation



Our comprehensive approach to care includes:

COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT PLANS developed by a team of health specialists, including:

- Physical Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech Pathologists
- Social Workers
- Neuropsychologists
- Developmental/Behavioral Pediatricians

THERAPY SERVICES for infants through adolescents.

NEO-NATAL INTENSIVE CARE AND NURSERY UNITS...named one of America's top three hospitals for Maternal & Neo-natal Care [Premier 2005]

CONVENIENT AFTER SCHOOL APPOINTMENTS for children that require outpatient therapy.

Pediatric Rehabilitation Center:
256 Mason Avenue

**For information
or referral,
call 718.226.6250**

TOLL FREE Doctor Referral Network 877-SIUH-DRS

North Shore LIJ Staten Island University Hospital



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