



LIVE



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Eastern Pennsylvania

Access & Ability

Increasing independence and maximizing opportunity

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A publication of Easterseals Eastern Pennsylvania

SPRING 2021

Get to know our Community Supports program

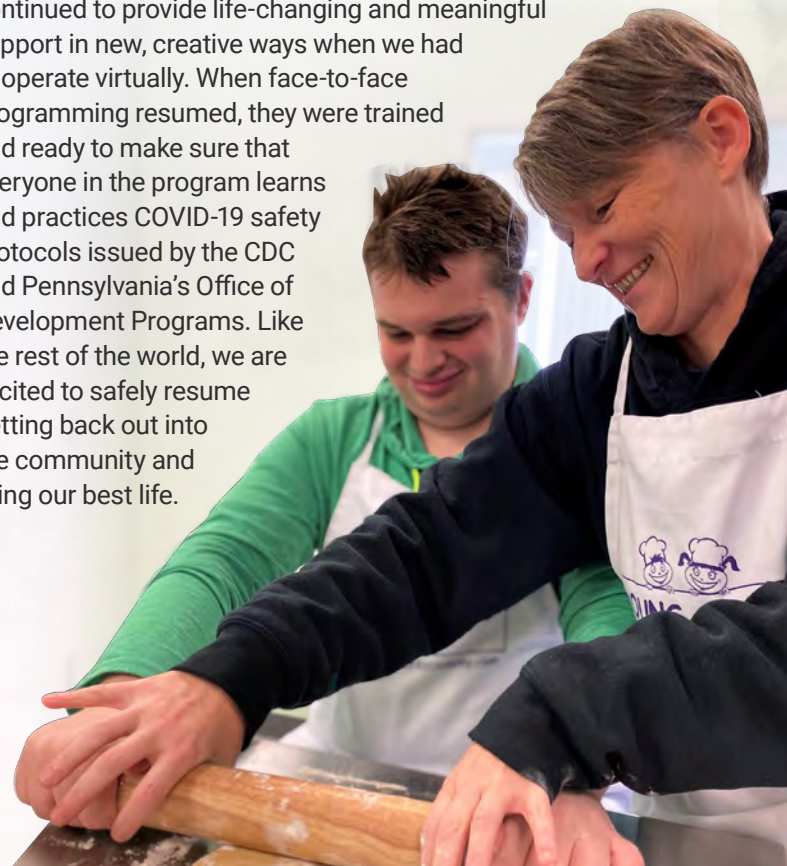
Community Supports/Habilitation offers community-based activities and supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, with the goal of fostering independence and enrichment. Each participant receives individual assistance from a direct support professional to engage in a variety of activities, from performing the functions of daily living (shopping for groceries, attending doctor appointments, cooking and cleaning) to volunteering and pursuing educational, social and recreation opportunities.

A unique feature of our program is the Activity & Enrichment Fund, which removes financial barriers that might prevent consumers from achieving their aspirations or goals, or limit their access to community inclusion and exploration. The only requirement is that they use the fund for activities that will help achieve the personal outcomes established in their Individualized Support Plans.

The Activity & Enrichment Fund has provided support to almost every individual in the program and many have accessed the fund multiple times. There have been activities funded across a wide-spectrum of needs, including cooking lessons, art classes, yoga classes, music lessons, gym memberships, museum admissions, theater tickets and admissions to community events.

We have also used the fund for group activities to facilitate relationship building and socialization with peers. The Activity & Enrichment Fund was established in 2016 with a grant from The Donald B. and Dorothy L. Stabler Foundation. Grants in subsequent years from the foundation have ensured its growth and continuity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the very nature of the program, but our direct support professionals continued to provide life-changing and meaningful support in new, creative ways when we had to operate virtually. When face-to-face programming resumed, they were trained and ready to make sure that everyone in the program learns and practices COVID-19 safety protocols issued by the CDC and Pennsylvania's Office of Development Programs. Like the rest of the world, we are excited to safely resume getting back out into the community and living our best life.



Will we see you at camp this summer?

We hope so! We are planning plenty of fun surprises along with the usual engaging activities. Camp Lily-Lehigh Valley and Camp Lily-Berks are day camps offered in a series of one-week sessions for campers age 8 through young adult. Campers enjoy swimming, arts and crafts, sports, music, educational programs and a variety of other activities that engage, entertain and educate. Camp Lily-Berks is held at our campground on top of beautiful Mt. Penn while Camp Lily-Lehigh Valley is going to be held at an exciting new location this year: the campus of Cedar Crest College, which will allow us to spread out and enjoy more space.

Growing Green is our weeklong overnight camp held in the Pocono Mountains, where campers enjoy a beautiful woodland retreat while having fun with friends. Overnight camp provides incredible opportunities for growth and development in a safe environment staffed by our trained counselors. For campers age 10 to adult, Growing Green features environmentally focused activities, hiking, canoeing, arts & crafts, games, swimming and campfires.

Join us for a summer of fun! The 2021 camp season begins July 4 and runs through August 13. Register early to secure your choice of dates. Visit our website for details.



MAKE A GIFT

Every dollar makes a difference.

You can be a partner in our mission through your gift. Go online easterseals.com/esep, call 610-289-0114 x205 or send your gift to:

Easterseals Eastern PA
1501 Lehigh Street, Suite 201
Allentown, PA 18103

Join us for the annual Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community – VIRTUALLY!

We are excited to participate in the annual Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community this spring. The event will be virtual again in 2021 and we have several fun activities planned throughout May to get you moving and raising money to support Easterseals from wherever you are! Registered participants can join in a fitness tracker challenge, family-friendly scavenger hunt adventure, and live Zoom exercise activity for a chance to win some great prizes. Last year, the event raised \$22,000 for Easterseals Eastern PA. **Register today as a team captain or individual walker at <http://bit.ly/seals2021> and start inviting your friends and family to join you in helping us reach our \$25,000 fundraising goal.** The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community is presented by Highmark Blue Shield, which underwrites the cost of the walk so 100% of the money raised by Easterseals stays local to support the individuals and families we serve right here in our community. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. **For information, contact Ann Marie Surovy, Director of Advancement, at asurovy@esep.org or 610-289-0114 x205. More information can be found at <http://bit.ly/esepwalk2021>. Join Team Easterseals Eastern PA in the Highmark Walk today!**



LEAP is back!

LEAP is an employment preparation experience for youth with disabilities, ages 16-21, who attend school and are eager to work and earn a paycheck. It combines paid work experience with curriculum instruction to provide participants with the skills they need to transition successfully into adulthood. Groups will meet for five Saturdays, May 22 – June 19, from 9am-3pm for interactive curriculum and coaching in the morning followed by an afternoon of paid workplace experience in the community. Each week, participants will complete 3.75 hours of paid work experience and 1.25 hours of curriculum instruction. We have expanded the program to host one group in each of the following regions: Berks County, Lehigh Valley, Luzerne County and Pike County. Work experience locations include OppShop (Reading), Wildlands Conservancy (Lehigh Valley), Valley Country Club (Luzerne County) and Pocono Environmental Education Center (Pike County). LEAP is offered at no cost to participants because it is fully funded by donations made to Easterseals through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. **Visit our website for more information.**

Save the date for the 52nd Annual Mary Ellen Golf Tournament

The 52nd Annual Mary Ellen Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, June 28 at The Valley Country Club, which features a Tillinghast designed championship golf course nestled in the pristine valley of Sugarloaf, PA. Golfers enjoy a challenging round of golf and the unsurpassed hospitality of the club while supporting Easterseals. Last year, the event raised \$144,500, which was used to provide high quality, innovative services for individuals with disabilities and their families right here in our community. Since the first tournament in 1969, the event has raised over \$2.7 million and affected the lives of thousands. Join us as a sponsor of this year's tournament and help Easterseals provide critical services to local children and adults with disabilities and their families. **For information, contact Ann Marie Surovy, Director of Advancement, at asurovy@esep.org or 610-289-0114 x205.**





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Allentown, PA 18103

GET MOVING FOR EASTERSEALS!

Highmark Walk for
a Healthy Community
May 2021

Fun activities from home
all month long!

<http://bit.ly/esepwalk2021>



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Story of Hope: MEET ANTONIO

Antonio has cerebral palsy, which makes it difficult for him to move his arms and legs, but what everyone notices first about him is his charming smile and laugh. He is simply full of joy and determination. Over the past two years, he has benefitted from a variety of programs at Easterseals, including outpatient therapy, neurology and orthopedic clinics, and the equipment loan program. Physical therapy is the area where he is a super star these days. With a lot of hard work, he is achieving the milestones that often come easy to a typical child: rolling over, reaching for toys and giving high fives, sitting up with criss cross legs, scooting across the floor, kneeling and communicating his needs. Antonio is also embracing the challenge of learning to take steps with a gait trainer. Every week he makes progress. His therapist, Denise, states, "I love to see him move more independently and make progress towards his goals! I can't wait to see what he is going to be able to accomplish this year!" All of these developmental gains will make it possible for Antonio to succeed in school and life. As he and his family approach the future with excitement and anticipation, his mother expresses her gratitude, "What Easterseals has done for my family is remarkable, from coordinating outpatient therapy to equipment and neurology and orthopedic appointments. We cannot see our lives without Easterseals."