



LIVE



LEARN



WORK



PLAY



Access & Ability

Increasing independence and maximizing opportunity

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A publication of Easterseals Eastern Pennsylvania

WINTER 2020

We are thrilled that our array of autism services continues to expand and grow!

A recent increase in funding is allowing us to provide autism diagnostic testing and consultation to 48 children and their families this year through our Autism Diagnostic Clinic. Utilizing telehealth technology, pediatric developmental health care providers at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia observe and assist at testing sessions conducted by Easterseals at our center in Reading. Children, mostly under age 3, are referred to the clinic through Berks County Early Intervention. Offering this to young children meets a critical community need – to provide access to autism diagnosis as early as possible. During the first five years of life, a child’s brain develops more and faster than at any other time in his life, making it crucial to offer therapy and developmental services as early as possible.

In addition, we now offer training for families of children who have received a diagnosis of autism on Applied Behavior Analysis, or ABA, a type of therapy that helps improve communication and social interactions, develop

new skills and support positive behavior. ABA is recommended for children with autism, but because it is expensive and difficult to obtain, there are significant wait times to receive this service. We are offering families a 7-week session of individual training with an ABA therapist at no cost, thanks to the generous support of the United Way of Berks County and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Parents learn how to use ABA to help their children communicate, as well as to help manage difficult behaviors that impede the ability of the family and child to participate in everyday activities, such as eating out, riding in the car, bathing and dressing, going to the grocery store and attending preschool and/or daycare. By helping children develop skills in these essential developmental areas, we are helping them and their families set the stage for greater success as they get older. ABA therapy training is available to all families, not just those who are diagnosed through our clinic. Visit our website for more information.

Members of the Autism Diagnostic Clinic team from CHOP and Easterseals at a recent session



JOIN THE WALK FOR EASTERSEALS

We are excited to be participating in our sixth Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community on Saturday, May 30 and we want YOU to be a part of our Easterseals Eastern PA team. The walk provides a fun and easy way for all of our families, friends and staff to show their support of our mission.

The walk is one of our three major annual fundraising events. And because Highmark underwrites the cost of the walk, 100% of the money donated to Easterseals stays right here in our community where it will positively impact the over 3,600 individuals with disabilities – and their families – we serve annually through our innovative and inclusive programs.

The non-competitive walk is family, wheelchair and dog friendly so everyone can participate. You can register as an individual walker, start your own team and invite your friends and family to join you, or join an existing team. Together, we can not only reach, but also exceed, our \$25,000 fundraising goal!

Check your mailboxes soon for more information about how to sign up and start your own personal fundraising. You can also get updates by following us on Facebook, visiting our website, or contacting Ann Marie Surovy, Director of Advancement, at asurovy@esep.org or 610-289-0114 x205. Corporate sponsorships are also available.



SAVE THE DATE for the 51st Annual Mary Ellen Golf Tournament

The 51st Annual Mary Ellen Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, July 20th at The Valley Country Club in Sugarloaf, PA. Last year, we had a record 136 golfers participate

and raised \$182,611, which was used to provide high-quality, innovative services for local individuals living with disabilities, and their families. Over the past fifty years, the tournament has raised almost \$2.6 million and has made a difference in the lives of thousands. Consider becoming a sponsor of this year's tournament and help Easterseals provide critical supports to local children and young adults with disabilities and their families. For information, contact Ann Marie Surovy, Director of Advancement, at asurovy@esep.org or 610-289-0114 x205.



How many wings would you eat to send a kid to camp?



Don't be chicken! Join us for our 28th Annual Wing Competition Sunday, March 1st at California Bar and Grill in Shillington. Our 2019 event set a fundraising record, allowing every child or young adult who wanted to attend Camp

Lily-Berks the opportunity to enjoy a fun summer experience with friends! For more information on how to register a team or sponsor the event, please visit our website.

MAKE A GIFT

You may have noticed there is no giving envelope included with the newsletter. By eliminating the envelopes, we are reducing paper usage and saving money, but you can still make a gift! Go online to www.easterseals.com/ese, call 610.285-0114 x205 or send your gift to:

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

WILL WE SEE YOU AT CAMP THIS SUMMER?

It might be winter, but it's never too early to start making plans to attend one of our summer camps. 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, outdoor sports, games, science exploration, guests teaching special topics and more.



Growing Green is our week-long overnight camp held in the Pocono Mountains. Overnight camp provides incredible opportunities for growth and development in a safe environment staffed by our trained counselors. Campers age 10 to adult participate in environmentally focused activities while also enjoying hiking, canoeing, sports, and arts & crafts.

Join us for a summer of fun while also developing new skills, making friendships and increasing independence. Visit our website for more information. Registration will open in February. The camp season begins July 5th and runs through August 14th.



LEAP is back in summer 2020!

LEAP is an employment preparation program for youth with disabilities, ages 16-21, who attend school and are eager to work and earn a paycheck. It combines curriculum instruction, paid work experience and service learning to help youth develop work, leadership and teamwork skills, and become more self-determined to transition successfully into adulthood. This summer, three sessions will be offered, each two weeks in duration. Visit easterseals.com/ese for more information.





1501 Lehigh Street, Suite 201
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WALK TO SUPPORT EASTERSEALS

Highmark Walk
for a Healthy Community
May 30, 2020
DeSales University

<http://bit.do/walk2020>



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Story of Hope: MEET CHASITY



Chasity has been attending Growing Green the past two years. At first, she was reluctant to go to camp because she had never stayed away from home by herself. However, Chasity soon discovered that she is more self-sufficient and independent than she realized, and after the first week, she was eager to return to camp again. While spending time away from home, she learned to take care of herself and gained confidence in handling the unknown. Making new friends and getting along in a group required Chasity to practice communication skills, flexibility, cooperation and compromise, critical skills essential to success in work and life. And before long, Chasity was helping her peers adjust to life at camp.

In addition to being away from home, Chasity was also nervous about attending camp in the Poconos and the uncertainty of what she would encounter in the outdoors. She repeatedly said she would not go canoeing or swimming in the lake. But once again, Chasity rose to the challenge and today she is proud of herself for attempting and accomplishing things that she thought she would never do. She draws on these experiences as a reminder of the self-reliance and independence she has developed and takes on challenges at home and work with a new level of confidence.