For several years, Michelle Meinika saw Easter Seals Arc from the perspective of a board member. Her role shifted recently when she joined the agency as director of behavior solutions, and now she’s looking forward to helping clients and their families address behavior concerns.

“It’s really important to understand why a particular behavior occurs,” Meinika said. “There’s a reason a person reacts in a certain way in a certain situation. By understanding that, we can help our consumers learn to be successful in so many facets of their lives.”

Meinika leads a team of behavior consultants who are ready to take on new clients. Through a behavior consultant, individuals and families will gain:
- A new outlook on challenging behaviors
- An assessment that will identify triggers, behaviors, and the consequences of the behavior
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- De-escalation strategies
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- More information about behavioral services, please contact Airine Green, our intake and transition specialist, at a.green@easterseas.org or 260.456.4534 ext. 278

EXPLORING BEHAVIOR’S CAUSE LEADS TO SOLUTIONS

One concept has been on the minds of all of our staff this year: community integration.

To create more flexibility in planning outings and activities that cater to our consumers’ interests, the agency added a community integration coordinator and a group of Direct Support Professionals dedicated to planning and participating in activities with consumers in group homes and 24-hour supported living. If one individual wants to visit a museum and his roommate are not interested, for example, a community integration DSP can go on that outing while the staff assigned to the house can attend to the roommates.

The result is that clients are advocating for themselves and researching possibilities, and staff in all areas are getting inspired to plan trips and experiences.

Additional examples of efforts to boost community integration include:
- An entirely community-based club in Transitions
- The Shenanigans Club, which features monthly outings led by staff in Hourly Supported Living
- The Family Detective Club in PDL, which uses the Allen County Public Library for genealogy research
A NEWSLETTER FROM EASTER SEALS ARC OF NORTHEAST INDIANA

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is hard to believe fall is here already, Easter Seals Arc had such a busy summer, and the time just flew by. Our Dream Teens summer program was amazing! As part of our weekly schedule, our young adults were able to utilize the wonderful Turnstone facility. We had an active bunch of young adults that really enjoyed community outings, and use of the Turnstone facility was one of their favorites. Our clients and staff had fun trips and outings all summer long!

We have taken time to get feedback from our clients and families, and as you read our newsletter you will discover what we have heard. Our clients want to get out to explore and their community! We have made changes to ensure we are able to give more options to our clients. You will see in the all the smiles, so we believe we have listened and delivered.

You also will see that one of our fastest growing programs is employment. We have really stepped up our efforts to help our clients build skills and gain confidence to find community employment, volunteer opportunities and mentorship experiences.

Easter Seals Arc could not do what we do every day without our dedicated employees, board of directors, community partners and donors. We appreciate all of your support and hope you take pride in what we do every day!

COMING SOON: A REFRESHED EASTER SEALS ARC

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You can be assured that new branding does not mean the work we do every day to support our consumers. It means changing the way we present ourselves to help others understand who we are and what we do.

This newsletter is one of the many things that will get a makeover. If you have thoughts on the newsletter or what you’d like to see, send your ideas to Janet Schotte, director of communications and marketing, at jschotte@easterseals.org.

Highlights of the brand
• A revision of the name: The national organization is now Easterseals, and we will be Easter Seals Arc.
• A fresh logo! Bright colors, clean typography and “rays of hope” replace the outdated starfish logo.
• A new tagline: “Taking on disability together” replaces “Creating solutions, changing lives” and conveys the importance of collaboration.
• A purpose statement (instead of mission): “To change the way the world defines and views disability by making profound, positive differences in people’s lives every day” clearly states why we strive to be a leader in disability services.

GRANTS HELP SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Easter Seals Arc is grateful to the following organizations for recent grant awards:

• St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, $1,250 for the HEALTH Kitchen classes.
• St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, $24,000 for operating support for nurses and health care supplies.
• NIRC Urban Transportation Board, $45,000 for a passenger van with lift.
• Mary Cox Tappan Foundation, $6,250 for operating support.
• Lincoln Financial Foundation, $3,500 for programming services.
• Arts United, the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, $4,445 for a range of artistic opportunities.
• A grant from the Comcast Foundation, in collaboration with The Arc of the States, of $10,000 for Learning Labs sessions to promote the use of assistive technology.
• PNC Foundation, $5,000 for employment services.

Vino, Java & Jazz features great food, fine wine, live music, and silent and live auctions each year, but we’ve added a little extra pizzazz for the 10th anniversary on October 27.

Time and date: 5:30 p.m. Thursday, October 27
Place: Cerdus’s Banquet & Event Center, 6325 Elinos Road
Tickets: $35 per person

Contact:
Sheri Ward
Director of Development
sward@esarc.org
260.456.4534 ext. 267

Alison DeWeert
Special Events Coordinator
aweed@esarc.org
260.456.4534 ext. 235

In addition to having a fresh mix of auction items, we're spikes the silent auction process to feature mobile bidding. Guests will be able to bid on featured and sample food from our featured chefs with a bidding key on their phones. If they’ve been out for a coveted piece, plenty of help will be on hand for those with questions or concerns.

Vino & Jazz
Wine & Jazz features great food, fine wine, live music, and silent and live auctions each year, but we’ve added a little extra pizzazz for the 10th anniversary on October 27.

After hearing from many potential guests who have missed out on Vino, Java & Jazz due to schedule conflicts on our past event, we’ve been hearing from them—have we changed it to a Thursday?

The silent and live auctions will offer some classic favorite items but will also have some new options. The highlight of the live auction will be a luxury Hilton head vacation getaway for two. Enjoy four days and three nights at the Westin Island Resort & Spa, with round trip economy airfare included. Additional auction items include:

• An autographed Andy Luck jersey
• Dinner for 10 prepared in your home by the chef from Biaggi’s
• A helicopter ride to Indianapolis for dinner
• Indiana University basketball tickets
• A hot air balloon ride for 4 people

Easter Seals Arc is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or ineligibility for the services.

Like many young people, Caitlin Fraze had a dream that began in high school—she wanted a career in child care. Today, that dream is a reality.

Fraze recently began a part time job at Little Hands Big Hearts Childcare, after working several years at a local dairy farm and earning a certificate in Early Childhood Development from Ivy Tech Community College.

“I love it,” Fraze said with a smile.

Jaimeen Mintweether, owner of Little Hands Big Hearts, found Caitlin through an webpage that provides special needs employment services to let her know. “The kids loved her,” she wrote.

Easter Seals Arc’s employment services team strives to match job seekers with employers that fit their skills and goals. In Fraze’s case, her placement came about through a personal connection. Mintweether and Thomas Summerville, Easter Seals Arc’s director of employment services, knew each other in high school.

Summerville contacted Mintweether and asked whether she was still looking for help at her daycare and would be open to hiring Fraze.

“I said ‘OK, have her come by,’” Mintweether recalled. “Fraze brought her father along to help make sure

Sommerville asked Mintweether if she was still looking for another worker at her daycare and would be open to hiring Fraze. Mintweether said Fraze could help out at the daycare, especially since the kids were coming from my own books.

Mintweether said Fraze contacted the kids with right away. “The kids clung to her; they love to sit with her and play Barbies.”

REVERSE JOB FAIR WILL SHOWCASE TALENTS OF JOB SEEKERS

Easter Seals Arc of Northwest Indiana will turn the tables on area employers by inviting them to meet job seekers—people with disabilities at a reverse job fair. Easter Seals Arc is partnering with Northeast Indiana Works, Ivy Tech Community College, and Old National Bank to present the reverse job fair November 1 at Ivy Tech.

At a typical job fair, potential applicants navigate through displays and booths set up by employers. At the reverse job fair, 15 to 25 job seekers will set up their own information tables for potential employers to visit.

“A job for these folks of employer tables and hundreds of other job seekers can be overwhelming for people with disabilities,” said Thomas Summerville, director of employment services at Easter Seals Arc.

“On the other hand, many employers recognize that this group is an under-utilized talent pool. A reverse job fair helps both groups by bringing them together in a setting where they can get to know each other a little,” Summerville said.

The job seekers at the reverse job fair will be a variety of skills and experiences gained through training, volunteering, and previous employment. A color-coding system for different skill sets will guide employers to potential applicants that meet their needs.

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We have thought to get feedback from our clients and families, and as you read our newsletter you will discover what we heard. Our clients want to get out more and explore their community! We have made changes to ensure we are able to give the best care to our clients. You will see in the photos all of the smiles, so we believe we have listened and delivered.

You also will see that one of our fastest growing programs is employment. We have really stepped up our efforts to help our clients build skills and confidence to find community employment, volunteer opportunities and mentorship experiences.

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Easterseals Northeast Indiana

Vino, Jazz & Art helps people find success in the workforce, giving them the confidence to find community employment, volunteer opportunities and mentorship experiences.

Easter Seals Arc is grateful to the following organizations for recent grant awards:

- Marion Foundation, $5,000 for employment services
- Lincoln Financial Foundation, $3,000 for employment services
- Arts United, the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, $4,445 for a range of artistic opportunities
- a grant from the Comcast Foundation, in collaboration with The Arc of the United States, of $10,000 for Learning Labs sessions to promote the use of technology
- PMC Foundation, $5,000 for employment services

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Vino, Jazz & Art features great food, fine wine, live music, and silent and live auctions every year, but we’ve added a little extra pizzazz for the 10th anniversary on October 27.

After hearing from many potential guests who have missed out in past years, we have added a new option. The highlight of the live auction will be a luxury Hilton head getaway vacation for two. Enjoy four days and three nights at the Westin Turtle Island Resort & Spa, with round trip economy airfare included. Additional auction items include:

- An autographed Andy Luck jersey
- Dinner for 10 people prepared in your home by the chef from Biggby’s
- A hot air balloon ride for 4 people

In addition to having a fresh mix of auction items, we’re updating the silent auction process to feature mobile bidding. Guests will be able to bid and sample foods from our featured chefs while keeping track of their bids on electronic phones. Many of the items will be available to be picked up after the event, so feel free to bid on those for whom you have questions or concerns about the process.

Our lineup of local chefs includes all of your favorites plus Shug in Pit Barbeque. We’ve also added a beer tasting from Chapman’s Brewing Company. You can view the full list of featured restaurants on our website at www.easterseals.com/vino/vino.

Time and date:
5:30 p.m. Thursday, October 27
Place:
Cerdus’ Banquet & Event Center, 6325 Illinois Road
Tickets:
$35 per person
Contact:
Donna Elbrecht
Director of Development
delbrecht@esarc.org 260.456.4534 ext. 267
Alison DeFeudis
Special Events Coordinator
adefeudis@esarc.org 260.456.4534 ext. 236

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Fraze recently began a part-time job at Little Hands Big Hearts Childcare, after working several years at another day care and earning a certificate in Early Childhood Development from Ivy Tech Community College.

“I love it,” Fraze said with a smile.

Jasmin Merriweather, owner of Little Hands Big Hearts in early childhood programs, met Caitlin through a friend in her hometown.

$4445 for a range of artistic opportunities

A news release on the job fair.

The position was a good fit for everyone. Asked whether they knew it was a good match right away, Merriweather and Fraze both enthusiastically said “yes!”

Fraze said she loves everything about working at Little Hands Big Hearts. “Especially meeting the kids,” she said. “I even brought in some of my own books.”

Merriweather said Fraze connected with the kids right away. “The kids cling to her; they love to sit with her and play Barbies.”

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“A job fair for disenfranchised employer tables and hundreds of other job seekers can be overwhelming for people with disabilities,” said Thomas Summerville, director of employment services at Easter Seals Arc. “On the other hand, many employers recognize that this group is an under-utilized talent pool. A reverse job fair helps both groups by bringing them together in a setting where they can get to know each other a little better.

The job seekers at the reverse job fair will be touting a variety of skills and experiences gained through training, volunteering, and previous employment. A color-coding system for different skill sets will guide employers to potential applicants that meet their needs.
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This newsletter is one of the many things that will get a makeover. If you have thoughts on the newsletter or what you’d like to see in it, send your ideas to Janet Schulte, director of communications and marketing, at jschutte@esarc.org.

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An assessment that will identify triggers, behaviors and de-escalation strategies.

EXPLORING BEHAVIOR’S CAUSE LEADS TO SOLUTIONS

For several years, Michelle Menink saw Easter Seals Arc from the perspective of a board member. Her role shifted recently when she joined the agency as director of behavior solutions, and now she’s looking forward to helping clients and their families address behavior concerns.

“It’s really important to understand why a particular behavior occurs,” Menink said. “There’s a reason a person reacts a certain way in a certain situation. By understanding that, we can help our consumers learn to be successful in so many facets of their lives.”

Menink leads a team of behavior consultants who are ready to take on new clients. Through a behavior consultant, individuals and families will plan:

• A new outlook on challenging behaviors
• An assessment that will identify triggers, behaviors, and the consequences of the behavior
• An individualized Behavior Support Plan
• Techniques to avoid escalating the behavior
• A toolbox of pro-active interventions designed to support behavioral needs

For more information about behavioral services, please contact Aimee Green, our intake and transition specialist, at agreen@esarc.org or 260.456.4534 ext. 276.

Our consumers’ adventures this year have included (clockwise from above) a visit to the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo; trips to Chicago, a painting class; a trip to Michigan to see a lighthouse and ships; and a trip to the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo. Our consumers are interested, for example, in a community integration DSP can go on that won’t bother anyone. If one individual wants to visit a museum and his roommates are not interested, for example, a community integration DSP can go on that outing while the staff assigned to the host can attend to the roommates.

The result is that clients are advocating for themselves and researching possibilities, and staff in all areas are getting inspired to plan trips and experiences.

Additional examples of efforts to boost community integration include:

• An entirely community-based group in Transitions
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YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE ACTION-PACKED SUMMER WITH DREAM TEENS

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One concept has been on the minds of all of our staff this year: community integration.

To create more flexibility in planning outings and activities that cater to our consumers’ interests, the agency added a community integration coordinator and a group of Direct Support Professionals dedicated to planning and participating in activities with consumers in group homes and 24-hour supported living.

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Easter Seals Arc’s Dream Teens program had another successful summer jam-packed full of outings and activities.

Dream Teens provides an opportunity for young people (ages 12 to 22) with intellectual disabilities to be active and continue learning throughout spring, summer and winter school breaks. The 2016 summer program ran from June 6 to August 12 and had about 50 participants.

The campers met at North Christian Church for activities such as the end of summer fire truck spray, but most of their time was spent exploring the Fort Wayne area.

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• An entirely community-based group in Transitions

• The Shenanigans Club, which features monthly outings led by staff in Hourly Supported Living.

Our consumers’ adventures this year have included (clockwise from above) a visit to the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo trips to Chicago, a painting class; a trip to Michigan to see a lighthouse and ships; and a tour of Lucas Oil Stadium.

One concept has been on the minds of all of our staff this year: community integration.

To create more flexibility in planning outings and activities that cater to our consumers’ interests, the agency added a community integration coordinator and a group of Direct Support Professionals dedicated to planning and participating in activities with consumers in group homes and 24-hour supported living.

If one individual wants to visit a museum and his roommate are not interested, for example, a community integration DSP can go on that outing while the staff assigned to the house can attend to the roommate.

The result is that clients are advocating for themselves and researching possibilities, and staff in all areas are getting inspired to plan trips and experiences.

Additional examples of efforts to boost community integration include:

• An entirely community-based group in Transitions

• The Shenanigans Club, which