

# YMCA joins Roxbury parent's group for special needs classes

**Posted: Friday, May 9, 2014 3:00 am**

The Randolph YMCA and Roxbury Parents for Exceptional Children (PEC) are working with Easter Seals New Jersey to promote a first of its kind exercise program for people with disabilities.

The widespread rise in obesity, and consequential decline in overall health, has received nationwide attention, but has even greater consequences amongst people with disabilities, because they do not receive the same preventive or wellness services that are available to the general population, according to Easter Seals New Jersey.

Responding to this concern, Easter Seals New Jersey launched "Be Well! & Thrive," a health and wellness initiative that will be part of collaboration between Randolph YMCA and Roxbury Parents for Exceptional Children (PEC) that debuts this month.

Easter Seals New Jersey's program is the first inclusive exercise instructor certificate training program to be accredited by the Institute for Credentialing Excellence, upholding the highest of standards for safe and effective exercise.

The structured 45 minute class includes exercises for endurance, strength, posture and spine alignment, gait and balance, flexibility, stress management and peer interaction.

By addressing these issues the program aims to improve quality of life and ability to perform activities of daily living with independence.

"The Y is a diverse organization of people joined together by a shared commitment to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

"The Randolph YMCA is thrilled with the opportunity to collaborate with Easter Seals New Jersey and PEC to deliver the first ever accredited inclusive exercise program, 'Be Well and Thrive'. So much more is accomplished when caring organizations work together to strengthen the community and this is a shining example", said Bill Lamia, chief executive officer of Randolph YMCA.

"Children with special needs experience many difficulties exploring the social, educational and recreational aspects of their lives," said Jodi Cullen, president of PEC.

"The Roxbury PEC is dedicated to developing, funding and implementing programs that address these areas of need as well as promoting awareness, advocating and providing resources and support," she said.

The PEC Gotcha Program aims to inspire and provide people with disabilities the ability to incorporate exercise, movement and general good health into their lifestyles, she said.