



February 26, 2016

Welcome to the new and improved DDS South Region Recreation & Resource Newsletter. The newsletter is now divided into specific categories, with towns highlighted in yellow. The categories are as follows:

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Are you having trouble opening E-mail from DDS or forwarding this to others?

- Set up your account and remember your Password make it a secure password (with at least: 1 lower case, 1 upper case, 1 number and 1 symbol)
- If that does not work... Contact DAS Bess at 860-622-2300 and press option 9 The people there are very helpful and are able to get you back up and running!
- If you want to forward this document to friends. First copy and paste it into another blank document, then save it to your computer. You can then forward that document to others.

If you would like to respond to these questions or would like to be added to my E-mail list
Please contact me: Pamela Okerblom – Recreation Therapist

The information contained in this newsletter does not express or imply endorsement by DDS. Content is copy and pasted from other websites and e-mails and is not spell checked or confirmed. DDS holds no responsibility if an event has been cancelled or moved, always check with the event for more information.

Special Events, Activities, Workshops and Conferences



South Region Advisory and Planning Council (RAC)

Have you heard of the **RAC**? The council consists of a handful of DDS families who have the responsibility of advising the director of the region on the needs of persons with intellectual disabilities. This is a gift to all DDS families from the CT General Assembly and it is the most important meeting for individuals who are served by DDS IN OUR REGION! The meetings are open to all DDS families and the council urges you to attend and share your needs and concerns. DDS is no longer sending newsletters to families, but you can stay informed with the update given by the regional director at each RAC meeting. The first twenty minutes of each meeting is devoted to public comment.

What we do: The DDS South Region Advisory and Planning Council engage in education and advocacy on issues regarding individuals and their families served by the South Region of the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services. We facilitate good communication for dialogue and feedback between ourselves and advisory groups, individuals, family members, local citizens, organizations and the Regional Director of the South Region. We engage in legislative advocacy, foster family-to-family connections, and spur grassroots initiatives, like the Creative Housing Workgroup.

Who we are: We are parents, individuals, and community partners.

Our meetings: We meet the third Wednesday of the months of January, March, May, June, September, and November from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. along the central Connecticut shoreline.

Visit **DDS: DDS South Region Meet Schedule Main Page** for the official schedule of meetings and to view minutes of past meetings. All meetings are open to the public.

**For more information or to connect with a member of the
South Region Advisory and Planning Council, contact**

DDS South Region at #203-294-5053 or ddsct.south@ct.gov

Your Family member needs you to be their voice!

Continued **Big** Cuts are coming to the State Budget...

How big may be up to you!

This is a pivotal time for the State budget and DDS Funding. The people (Legislators) making the decisions on the budget need to be able to make an educated choice... Families First is an Advocacy group doing that! Get involved, help them, there is strength in numbers.. The Legislators need to hear from you!

The mission of CT DDS Families First is to secure all opportunities and supports for Connecticut citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) so that they may live full and productive lives in their communities. Our goal is to educate the legislature and the public about the challenges facing families of persons with I/DD so they understand the need to prioritize this population within the state's budget process.

Families First next event...

Date: They currently are working in Hartford, contact CT DDS Families First to see how to get involved... Call Today!

Time:

Location:

What: Help, get involved, there are lots of ways to get involved... you can even help without leaving your home...

Questions: contact CT DDS Families First at 860-434-3839 or

Check out this family advocacy group that is helping to secure funding for DDS families. They are on Facebook at: CT DDS Families First

And on the web at: www.ctddsfamiliesfirst.org

Schedule of Arc Legislative Meetings

Throughout March, local Arcs around Connecticut will be sponsoring meetings to have families, legislators and providers meet to discuss the crisis in funding for DDS supports.

All families and self-advocates are welcome to attend!

Don't pass up this opportunity to speak directly with legislators in a town near you!

1. March 9, 2016 - MARC Community Resources - 7:30am-9:30am

CT State Capitol Building, Room 310, Hartford Providers will discuss current issues that affect local families, get answers about the confusing network of services & service systems. Families will discuss their issues and legislators will address their stance on issues and answer questions. For more information contact Ben Davies at 860.342.0700

2. March 10, 2016 -Arc New London County - 5:00PM 52 Sacred Heart Drive, Groton

New London County legislators have been invited to hear about local family and provider issues. Secretary of State will also attend to speak about the new voting law which allows people with disabilities to vote from home. For more information contact Meghan Horan at 860.889.4435, ext 116.

10th Annual Autism Education Conference

Acting Social Presents: "Yes, And Using Improv to Improve Social Synchronicity"

with Robin Fox and Dr. Barbara Hughes

Sponsored The Light House

Date: May 6, 2016 Early bird rate until 3/1/16

Time: 8:00 to 3:00pm

Location: Langley's Restaurant 28 Lamphere Road **Waterford**

Cost: EARLY BIRD RATE - \$65.00 (ends 3/1/16) Regular rate \$75. Last day to purchase tickets is 4/29/16

What: All day interactive workshop and luncheon.

Purchase tickets at: lhcampus.com and click on link at the website

Summer Camp Presentation

Sponsored CT Family Support Network

Date: March 2, 2016

Time: 6:00 to ? :00pm

Location: L & M Hospital – Baker Auditorium, 365 Montauk Ave. **New London**

Cost: \$ Free!

What: The presentation will offer parents an opportunity to meet with representatives from local camps, share information with other parents and discuss funding resources.

Questions or to Register please call 860-271-4371 adipollina@lmhosp.org

Secondary Transition Expo “ Moving from High School to Post-school Options”

Sponsored LEARN

Please join us if you or your child is between the ages of 14-21.

It is never TOO early to start planning!!!

Date: March 16, 2016

Time: 6:00 to 8:00pm Consecutive running workshops: start at 6:15

Location: Marine Science High School, 130 Shennecosset Rd **Groton**

Cost: \$Free Admission and Snacks are Free!

What: Students with disabilities, parents, guardians and educators are invited to deepen their understanding of transition planning, learn about community resources including adult service agencies, as well as and options beyond high school. Representatives from colleges, community supports, assistive technology vendors and state and federal agencies will be on hand to answer questions and provide resources for preparing for life after high school.

RSVP and Questions: www.learn.k12.ct.us or contact Lois Eldridge, 860-434-4800 x182 Email l Eldridge@learn.k12.ct.us for more information

Dr. Jody Noé, MS, ND presents a workshop on:

- [body-mind-spirit connection](#)
- [the healing power of nature](#)
- [The nutritional and herbal interventions that can enhance your health and life](#)
- [Lifestyle changes to prevent and heal disease](#)

Sponsored Camp Harkness Fund and APROMA STUDIOS

Date: Saturday March 5th, 2016

Time: 10:00am to 4:00pm

Location: Camp Harkness Dining room, 301 Great Neck Road, **Waterford**, CT

Cost: \$35 includes **lecture, lunch** and (weather permitting) a **guided nature walk**

What: Dr. Jody Noé, MS, ND is *Featured in* **WOMEN HEALERS OF THE WORLD** By Holly Bellebouno

RSVP my March 2nd: call Vicki at 860-443-7818 or Lori at 860-794-0063

DDS Healthy Relationship Series

In Collaboration with Planned Parenthood of Southern New England and DDS Self Advocate Coordinators

Date: March 7, 14, 21, 28, and April 4, 11, 2016

Time: 4:30 – 7:30pm

Location: DDS, 401 West Thames Street, **Norwich**

Cost: \$

What: The Relationship series is a 6 session course on making, developing and having relationships. Individuals need to plan to participate in all 6 sessions. The first session of the series will include an overview of the material to be covered. Support staff or family need to plan on attending and participating in the first session to assist everyone in knowing what to expect in the series.

Questions: Contact: Greg Ph. 203-294-5063 Fax 860-622-2691 Gregory.McMahon@ct.gov

To Register: PLEASE COMPLETE THE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP REFERRAL FORM

- IT IS REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SERIES. **Contact: Greg Ph. 203-294-5063 Fax 860-622-2691** Gregory.McMahon@ct.gov

Nourishing Bites (Nutrition and cooking class by a Holistic Nutritionist)

Sponsored Camp Harkness Fund

The Vital Mama, Holistic Nutritionist, Krystal Ross, will teach us how to prepare easy nourishing meals. The health benefits of food and seasonings (including brain health, anxiety and depression reduction, energy, and focus) will be explained and discussed. Especially for parents, caregivers, or anyone who cooks independently and is interested in learning about nutrition.

Date: March 8, March 15, March 22, 2016

Time: 5:00 to 7:00pm

Location: Camp Harkness Dining room, 301 Great Neck Road, **Waterford**, CT

Cost: \$10.00 per person includes dinner.

Questions: Please RSVP by March 6th for March 8th, March 13th for March 15th and March 20 for March 22nd to the Camp Harkness office at 860-443-7818



Creative Housing Workgroup

Concerned about Housing or Residential Supports for someone with a disability? Come and join us.

We are a group of proactive parents, caregivers and self-advocates who are working together to find Solutions, Supports and create Residential Options.

We meet the second Thursday of the month at the Acton Library in **Old Saybrook** from 6 -8 pm.

Can't get to a meeting? Ask to join our e-mail group.

For more information contact: April Dipollina: adipollina@lmhosp.org 860-271-4371

Or Lauralyn Lewis: lauralynlewis@sbcglobal.net

Movie Nights at Camp Harkness

Date: 2nd Thursdays of the month

Thurs. Mar. 10, 2016

Thurs. April 14 , 2016

Thurs. May 12, 2016

Time: 6:00pm

Location: Camp Harkness Dining room, 301 Great Neck Road, **Waterford**, CT

Cost: Free

What: Movies, and Popcorn and a drink. (feel free to bring your own Dinner to enjoy during the movie)

Questions: for more information, contact Vicki at 860-443-7818

Eary Childhood Community Forum

Sponsored by Middlesex United Way, Westbrook early Childhood Council, westbrook Public schools, and in collaboration with community partners

Date: Wednesday March 16, 2016

Time: 4:45 to 8:00pm

Location: Daisy Ingraham Elementary School, 105 Goodspeed Drive **Westbrook**

Cost: \$25/person, \$35/couple

What: Keynote speaker: Alicia Farrell - Dinner, free childcare and much much more!

Questions and to Register: Alyssa Lindquist (650) 315.0692 weccwellcoordinator@gmail.com

Parent PMT Training

Sponsored PMT Associates Inc.

Date: March 23, 2016

Time: 10:00 to 2:00pm

Location: 100 Riverview Center, Suite 140, **Middletown**

Cost: \$195 incudes Lunch

What: PMT stands for Physical and Psychological Management Training. This type of training focuses on providing an understanding of how to respond to circumstances during a crisis or conflict. And gives helpful and practical knowledge to managing stressful situations.

Questions or to register: please call 860-347-1347 <http://www.pmtassociates.net>

Summer Camp Presentation

Sponsored CT Family Support Network and Glastonbury SEPTA

Date: March 29, 2016

Time: 7:00 to 8:30pm

Location: Glastonbury High School Library, Hubbard St. **Glastonbury**

Cost: \$ Free!

What: The presentation will offer parents an opportunity to meet with representatives from local camps, share information with other parents and discuss funding resources.

Questions or to Register: Amy McCoy amccoy@ctfsn.org or 860-430-9370



Announces 3 Sensory Friendly Days

Date: Wednesday, March 30, Sunday, June 12, Tuesday, October 4, 2016

Time: 10:00 to 5:00pm

Location: 250 Columbus Blvd, **Hartford**

Cost: Tickets can be purchased in advance for the special rate of \$12 per person. Tickets will be available at the door for \$14.95 each. 1:1 aides are always free. K-12 Schools will receive special school pricing.

What: The Science Center is an exciting place; bustling with loud sounds and bright lights... we're lowering the volume and dimming the lights for our Sensory Friendly Day.

Enjoy our newest exhibit, Leonardo da Vinci: Machines in Motion!

Questions: For more information, contact Brit Montmeat, Group Sales Account Manager, at bmontmeat@ctsciencecenter.org or (860) 520-2112. Or go to: <https://ctsciencecenter.org/>

Transition Expo 2016

Sponsored Hamden and Meriden Public schools

Is your son or daughter between the ages of 14 – 21? Are you wondering what's going to happen after high school? Then it's time to start planning.

Date: March 31, 2016

Time: 6:00 to 8:00pm

Location: Four Points by Sheraton, 275 Research Parkway **Meriden**

Cost: \$ Free

What: Please come listen, ask questions, meet other parents, and gather information about transitioning to adulthood!

· Department of Developmental Services (DDS, formerly DMR), · DDS/Division of Autism Spectrum Disorders, · Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), · Department of Mental Health and Addiction

Services (DMHAS), · Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB), · Social Security Administration, · Kennedy Center Travel Training, · College disability services representatives, · Employment service providers, · Probate Judge: Guardianship, etc., · Many more, over 40 vendors!
Questions or for accomodations: please call Stephanie Critch 203-407-2040 x. 5559 or Deborah Kohan 203-235-7962x. 154

Clean up day at Camp Harkness

Sponsored Camp Harkness Fund

Date: April 16th, 2016

Time: 9:30 to 12:30pm

Location: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Norwich

Cost: \$

What: In celebration of Eearth Day, come clean clear and plant at Camp harkness. Bring your own Tools: Gloves, hand toots, Rake, pruners, etc, Refreshments will be provided.

Questions: please call 860-443-7818

“AGING MATTERS: Living Life!” Conference

Sponsored by: The Connecticut Coalition on Aging and *Developmental Disabilities* (CCADD), Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and CT American Association on Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD)

Date: Friday May 6, 2016

Time: 9:00 to 4:00pm

Location: Keeney Center, Old Wethersfield

Cost: \$35 before April 27th... \$40 after April 27th

For more info contact: bethaura.miller@ct.gov or Agatha.Zichichi-Evans@ct.gov

DDS Reunion : Recreation Reunion

Save the Date

Sponsored DDS Recreation

This is an opportunity to see your old friends including the Recreation staff that have retired.

More Information will follow...

Date: Saturday June 18, 2016

Time: 11:00 to 2:00pm

Location: Camp Harkness 301 Great Neck Road, Waterford, CT

Cost: FREE

What: BYOP (Bring your own Picnic) Open house Reunion for anyone who was involved with the Recreation Department in the past 30+ years. Many of the retired Recreation Staff will be there. Bring your friends, families, and a Picnic lunch and spend the day at Camp Harkness with old friends.

Questions: please call 860-859-5482

Dances

East Lyme Community Center Dances

Sponsored by Buckingham Community Services

Time: 7 - 9 PM

Cost: \$5.00 (how do they keep it sooooo inexpensive?)

- o February 26, 2016 - Valentines Dance
- o March 25, 2016 - Crazy Hat Night
- o April 29, 2016 - Team Pride Night
- o May 27, 2016 - 70's, 80's & 90's Music
- o June 24, 2016 - Hawaiian Luau



Address: East Lyme Community Center, 41 Society Rd. East Lyme, CT

DIRECTIONS TO EAST LYME COMMUNITY CENTER:

Exit 74 off Rte. 95. Right off exit, onto Flanders Road. Continue thru 2 - 3 lights. Turn right onto Society Road. (There is a Nursery on the corner.) The Community Center is on the right, just past Lillie B. Haynes Elementary School.

Weather related cancellation information can be found @ our website: <http://www.buckinghamct.org>

Questions, Suggestions or Concerns: Call Donald Barnes 860-447-9911

Community Center Provides: QUIET GAME ROOM AVAILABLE, PIZZA & LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WITH ADMISSION. KITCHEN AREA AVAILABLE FOR SPECIAL DIET PREP NEEDS

"Dancing Queen" Prom Night

Sponsored The Light House

Date: May 21, 2016

Time: 6:00 to 9:00pm

Location: Groton Lodge of Elks. 700 Shennecossett Rd. Groton

Cost: \$10.00 per Guest*, you must register for the dance by April 22, 2016

What: PROM

Questions: please call 860-887-9383

* Support staff receives free admission but must dress appropriately (no sneakers, jeans, hoodies, t-shirts, etc.)

RSVP for the **Prom** by April 22, 2016 (Space is limited)

Name of Prom Guests _____	Admissions (\$10 per guest)
_____	_____ (Total Attending)

_____	x \$10 (admission fee)
_____	= _____ (Amount enclosed)

Total number of staff attending _____

Support Staff receive free admission but must dress appropriately (no sneakers, jeans, hoodies, t-shirts, etc.)

Please complete form and return with your check to: The Light House 46 Plaza Court, Groton,

St. Patrick's Day Party

Sponsored by Groton Parks and Recreation

Date: March 10, 2016

Time: 6:00 to 8:30pm

Location: Groton Municipal Building, 295 Municipal Building, **Groton**

Cost: \$FREE

What: A dance for Teens and Adults...Food and Dancing!

Note: Supervision must be provided with groups

Questions: please call Eileen 860-536-5691

Dances at the Norwich American Legion Hall

Sponsored by Guide Inc.

Date: January 29, 2016

April 29, 2016

July 29, 2016

September 30, 2016

Time: 6:00 to 8:00pm

Location: American Legion Hall, 456 Laurel Hill Ave. **Norwich**

Cost: \$2.00

What: Really fun dances with music videos on the wall, raffle, light dinner & soda too!

Questions: please call 860-887-9383

Healthy Living: Sports and Fitness

Great News...



Unified Sports® Fitness Clubs

The Special Olympics Connecticut Unified Sports Fitness Club brings together people **with and without** intellectual disabilities, and provides opportunities for regular physical activity to enhance fitness and inspire friendships among participants. **(Your entire family could participate together)** It focuses on participation rather than competition. Each **Club participant receives an individual tracking device**, (MOVband wrist-worn activity monitor) which is used to monitor individual and club progress towards earning individual and club **rewards**. The club offers fitness activities (including walking) as well as **nutrition and wellness resources** for all members.

- If you are interested in joining a group contact the Coordinator for Unified Sports Fitness clubs for CT Special Olympics: **Don Conklin** at 203-230-1201 ext. 262 or e-mail him at donc@soct.org

You can also learn a little more by going on www.soct.org/sports-and-fitness-programs/unified-sports-fitness-clubs/

Warm Water Pool with classes and family (open) swim time

Pool Location: the Kramer Building, 322 Prospect Street, **Willimantic**

Cost: Facility Pass is Required. Facility passes will be good towards any open gym hours or any open pool hours. Passes will allow 5 members per household during Family swim hours. A facility pass may be purchased at the Recreation Office. There is no charge for Students in grades 5-12 to use the Gym. Adults may purchase a \$10 pass/ month or \$50 pass for 6 months and the pass may be used for either gym or pool hours. Please call 860-465-3046 or visit our Office at Kramer, 322 Prospect St., Willimantic for full details. **Passes are only sold at the Rec. Office during business hours.**

What: Warm Water Pool (88 degrees) with a life guard on duty

- It is a small pool about 75 feet X 30 feet.
- Depth : 3 feet to 9 feet deep
- There are 3 ways to enter the water... a ladder, stairs and a Hoyer Lift (similar to the old one in Mystic)
- There was a communal shower room and one private shower available in the women's locker Room. (I could not enter the men's room but I would assume it has the same.)
- They have all the usual swim equipment available: Water noodles, kick boards, bubbles for non-swimmers.

Questions: 860-465-3046 or visit our Office at Kramer, 322 Prospect St., Willimantic for full details

www.windhamrec.org/passes.htm?show=programs_menu

Bowling in Groton Weekly

Date: Ongoing program that meets every Wednesday

Time: 3:30 to 4:30ish Location: Spare Time Bowling Alley 27 Kings Highway, **Groton**, CT

Cost: \$6:50 for 2 games and shoe rental

What: This is an ongoing social bowling program run by Bob and Pat Garcia (parents) at the Spare Time. If you are interested in joining the group simply show up between 3:00 and 3:30 and let Bob know you are there to bowl. Parents and caregivers are invited to stay and socialize with all the other parents. There is a nice group of parents there every week.

Questions: please call Pam Okerblom: 860-859-5482 or Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov

KC Cats All-Star Cheerleading

If you are interested in cheerleading and willing to travel to **Coventry, RI**, this may be for you. KC Cats has a Special Needs Cheer Team that meets Sundays 4 – 5 and is Free of charge. It is owned and

operated by Head Coach and former New England Patriots Cheerleader Lolita Lipa Roberts. She has USAF Certified Cheer and Gymnastics Coaches.

Check it out at cheerkccats@cox.net or www.kccatsallstars.com or facebook.com/kccatsallstars
1010 Tiogue Ave., Coventry RI
(401) 497-5197

Walk this Way

A Wellness and Fitness Group for Adolescents

AGEs: 9 – 13

When: Group meets Thursdays from 4:00 – 5:00pm

Where: Child and Family Guidance, 226 Dixwell Ave., **New Haven**

For more information contact:

Sharon Myers LMSW 203-503-3479 or Francesca Salzano, LCSW 203-503-3501



The Miracle League is CT's only fully accessible Baseball League!

The Miracle League of CT is open to all children from any part of the state ages 4 to 21 who have physical and or cognitive challenges. All games are played on their beautiful rubberized surface baseball field that is fully wheelchair and handicapped accessible in **West Hartford**. Baseball experience is not required. We welcome players of all abilities. Our goal is that every child who has a desire to play baseball, has the opportunity to do just that. Most importantly, that all of our athletes are able to participate in a safe accessible environment that allows them to enjoy the game of baseball just as their siblings and peers are able to. It is our belief that every child should be able to experience the joy of being part of a team. There are 2 seasons, **Spring (April – June)** and **Fall (Sept. – Oct.)** www.miracleleaguect.org

District 10 &11 Challenger League Division District 10 &11

We are looking for Volunteers to help run the League.

Please call if interested!

Check Us out at <http://www.eteamz.com/district10challengerleague?cmp=125>

The Challenger Division is open to all physically and mentally challenged youth ages 5 and up. Players wear the same uniforms and safety equipment as all Little League players.

Teams are set up according to abilities, rather than age and players participate in one of three levels: Tee-Ball, Coach-Pitch or Player Pitch (depending on number of participates).

Everyone participates! Each Challenger player is in the batting order and plays defense the entire game.

The Challenger Division encourages the use of "buddies" for the Challenger players in the Tee Ball and Coach- Pitch divisions. The buddies assist the Challenger players on the field but whenever possible, encourage the players to bat and make plays themselves. However,

the buddy is always nearby to help when needed. This system has proven very rewarding for both Challenger Players and their Buddies.

District 10 Challenger League Registration for Players and Buddies

Registration is open now and will Close on April 1st

You Can Register Online at

<http://www.eteamz.com/district10challengerleague?cmp=125>

Player Fee is \$40.00

An Important Reminder

A parent or adult authorized to make medical decisions MUST be present and remain at the complex for each player during all games and practices.

While the Challenger Division of Little League is open to ALL kids, this registration information applies specifically to players residing within the Little League District 10 & 11 boundaries. District 10 includes the communities of Bozrah, East Lyme, East Haddam, Groton, Ledyard, Lyme, Montville, Mystic, New London, Old Lyme, Pawcatuck, Salem, Stonington, & Waterford. District 11 includes the communities of: Jewett City, Killingly, Lebanon, Mansfield, Moosup, Norwich, Plainfield, Preston, Putnam, Willimantic and Woodstock.

Challenger ages for players- 5 and up. There is no age limit this season.

Players must provide a copy of their birth certificate for league files along with 2 forms of proof of residency such as driver's license, utility bill, report card, etc.

Questions?: Contact Kimberly Rouisse- krou7@sbcglobal.net 860-303-2551

ASD Fitness Center Monthly OPEN HOUSE

<http://asdfitnesscenter>

Date: Monthly, Call to see when the next open House is scheduled. **203-553-9508**

Time: 7:00pm

Location: 307 Racebrook Rd. Orange Ct. 06477

Cost: Free

What: Come take a tour of our unique facility and see what we have to offer.

Questions and to RSVP : Keatingcb@gmail.com or call **203-553-9508**

ASD Fitness Center provides a safe, comfortable and structured environment for empowering individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to improve their level of physical fitness. ASD Fitness Center builds confidence, improves social awareness and decreases anxiety. The specialized 5,000 square foot fitness facility features personalized, Individual Fitness Programs (IFP) with options to add nutrition and functional skill goals. They offer one-on-one personal training, in addition to small group classes. Sectioned workout stations are equipped with visual cues to focus on building core, upper body and lower body strength. A tailored "fun" station follows each workout station. There is even a separate workout area for moms and dads to use while waiting.

ASD Fitness Center is located at 307 Racebrook Road in Orange.

For more information, call 203-553-9508 or visit www.asdfitnesscenter.com.



www.soct.org

Special Olympics Connecticut (SOCT) has provided year-round sports training and athletic competition for children 8 and up with intellectual disabilities. SOCT serves 14,815 athletes and partners throughout the state through local, regional and state programs. To find a program near you or for general information about getting someone involved with Special Olympics go to www.soct.org or you can contact Sue Mohr at (203) 230-1201 ext. 239 or susanm@soct.org

Special Olympics Local Programs are run by volunteers in the community so transportation to and from practice is the responsibility of the athlete as well as any special chaperoning needs. Any one that accompanies athletes to our events and or volunteers with our local programs must complete our volunteer background process. The local program can assist you with that process should you decide to volunteer.

Also visit this site: <http://www.soct.org/sports-and-fitness-programs/special-olympics-unified-sports-school-programs-administered-ciac-connecticut-interscholastic-athletic-conference> to learn more about our school based program. If this is something you would like to see in your child's school, please contact them and they would be glad to help.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Sue Mohr - Manager, Sports and Competition
Special Olympics Connecticut

2666 State Street Suite 1, Hamden, CT 06517

Office 203.230.1201x239

Fax 203.230.1202

Mobile 860.638.7141

susanm@soct.org

www.soct.org

www.playunified.org

FREE Fitness Classes sponsored by BEyond FITNESS

55 Laura Street New Haven, CT 06512

Phone: 203-285-5393

Email: info@beyondfitnessct.com

www.beyondfitnessct.com

Zumba® Kids & Zumba® Kids Jr. classes

Join our team of licensed Zumba® Kids Instructors ready to party with your precious little ones to age-appropriate music and moves. The program is geared for children ages 4-11 years old. Parents/guardians may also join the fun at no charge. Feel free to share away. Classes are offered free for families every other month. (No registration or call ahead needed).

Dates: Tuesdays, March 1 – March 29, 2016

Tuesdays, May 3-May 31, 2016

Time: 5:30 pm to 6:00 pm.

Cost: Free

BEyond FITness is dedicated to providing a unique experience in your daily workout, as we strive to help you reach your fitness goals with pure fun, love and dance. We provide classes which are not only effective, but also affordable. We offer a variety of exciting, challenging and invigorating classes for all ages, levels and fitness abilities. Come join a class today and see for yourself.

Feel free to "Like" us on Facebook for a complete schedule, free classes and events.

www.facebook.com/beyondfitnessct

Yoga at Therapy Works in Old Lyme

Our instructor is an Occupational Therapist with training in sensory integration and self-regulatory challenges. They will use yoga and sensory techniques to address such issues as anxiety, attention, behavior issues and physical challenges. Individuals will leave this class in a calmer, more peaceful state and have tools to use at home and school. They offer 2 yoga classes:

- For Adults Of All Abilities and/or Special Needs
- Afterschool Yoga for Children of All abilities and/or Special Needs

If you have questions, or would like to register: Please call Stephanie @ 860-434-5524
Therapy Works, 19 Halls Rd, Suite 204, Old Lyme, CT 06371

New Programs Starting Up

Shoreline Open Playgroup

MEETS EVERY SATURDAY 9:30 -11:30

Winter Groups Beginning Saturday January 23rd 2016

Open Playgroup is a family support group that meets every Saturday in **Madison**. This **free, drop-in** group is open to families with children of **all ages and abilities, siblings included**. Children will have the opportunity to meet with other children and participate in activities and games with volunteer student mentors. Parents can socialize, make connections, access information and receive support from other parents and staff.

For first time registration or more information contact
Deborah Pagano at dpagano@ctfsn.org or call 203-430-0242
Kathy Fadel at kfadel@sarah-inc.org or call 203-453-7592x108

Location and Dates: SARAH-in-Action, 51 Boston Post Rd. #, **Madison**,

January 23rd Madison
January 30th Madison
February 6th Madison
February 13th Madison

February 20th Madison
February 27th Madison
March 5th Madison
March 12th Madison

THIS IS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT OF:
~ THE GROVE SCHOOL, MADISON
~ KIDSTEP'S FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S CENTER
~ CTFAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK (CTFSN)

Social Skills Groups

CONNEC-TO-TALK, 145 Durham Road Suite 9, **Madison** CT, 06443

What: Erika Hockings from the Social Stop is teaming up with Connect-to-talk in Madison and starting new Social skills Groups:

- **Social Thinking Groups**

Groups follow Michelle Garcia Winner's Social Thinking Curriculums to improve flexibility, self-awareness, self-regulation, Executive Functioning and Perspective Taking

- **Peer Sessions**

Peer sessions are utilize typical peer models to focus on the acquisition, execution, and fine turning of critical social skills

- **One to One Instruction**

Individual instruction is offered using a blended and Social Thinking approach for students who are not yet ready to join groups

Questions: CONNEC-TO-TALK, (203)779-5916 WWW.connect-to-talk.com

Experience Niantic “A social group for men with developmental disabilities”

Sponsored Norwich Recreation

Experience Niantic is a men's social group for people with developmental disabilities built around the small town character and accessibility of Niantic, CT. Walks on the boardwalk, visiting local businesses, restaurants, joining local events and sports, are only a few possibilities to explore while participating in the group. Experience Niantic will have two trained staff who offer direction and guidance. The participants will make choices as a group to elect what the evening's activity will be. The group will meet Thursday evenings from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm beginning and ending at the Light House Annex, located at 58 Pennsylvania Ave, Niantic. The fee for this group is \$45.00 per month. Participants will need additional money for the evening's outings. If you are interested in learning more about the group please contact William Robinson at Wrobinson@lvecenter.com or call 860-445-7626 ext. 118

Physically Challenged Bowling Group

There is a new program starting up in Groton for individuals with unique abilities who require more time and assistance to bowl. This program is being designed for individuals who require a smaller/non-rushed program. It will be ideal for individuals with physical challengers, requiring them to use a ramp due to unsteady gait, or other adaptive equipment (walkers, braces, or wheelchair). When: The program is projected to start as early as September 2015 at Spare Time bowling alley in Groton, CT. Date and time will be determined once interest and availability of the program's participants are determined.

If you want to join, or if you have any questions, contact Pam Okerblom at 860-859-5482 or Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov

Norwich Social Group

Sponsored Norwich Recreation

Date: every other Monday Night Ongoing programs

Time: 6:00 to 6:00pm

Location: Norwich Rec Hall, 75 Mohegan Rd. **Norwich**

Cost: \$ 25 (\$35 non-resident) for 6 months + activities fees

What: Social Group for individuals with special needs.

Questions: please call 860-823-3791

The Arts & Music

Muse Norwich


A gallery of art and inspiration

Due to some updates and repairs that need to be made to our gallery. We are delaying the next art opening until Spring 2016 when we will come back stronger and better than before. If you are one of the talented artists, who has shown their work in Norwich, please contact Kerry (at 860-859-5419) to schedule a time to pick up your artwork.

Date of spring show is yet to be determined but we are looking forward to January!

If you are interested in being one of the Artisans from the DDS community to display your work in the show: Contact Kerry at 860-859-5419

The Muse Art Gallery is Located in Campbell Building Lobby, 401 W. Thames Street, **Norwich**, CT

VISTA is hosting 

The Pirates of Penzance will take the stage May 20th through 22nd at The Kate in Old Saybrook. This production is funded in part through a grant from the Community Foundation of Middlesex County and the Kate Katharine Hepburn cultural arts Center.

Muse – Wallingford – Art Gallery opening

A gallery of art and inspiration

The Muse Art Gallery is Located at: 35 Thorpe Ave, 3rd Floor, Wallingford, CT

Family Drum Circles

Brought to you by the Infinity Music Therapy Services

Date: First Friday of each month

Time: 7:00pm – 7:45pm

Location: 1678 Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike, Southington, CT

Cost: \$5.00/person, \$3.00/children ages 2-5, under 2 Free

To Register: Reservations appreciated, drop-ins welcome, Call (860) 518-5557 or email info@infinitymusictherapy.com

Autism Theatre Initiative Making Theatre Accessible to Individuals with Autism

What makes it autism-friendly?

Each show is performed in a friendly, supportive environment for an audience of families and friends with children or adults who are diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder or other sensitivity issues. Slight adjustments to the production are made, including the reduction of any jarring sounds or strobe lights focused into the audience. Plus, in the theatre lobby there are quiet and activity areas, staffed with autism specialists, for those who need to leave their seats during the performance.

Downloadable social narratives (in Word format), with pictures of the theatres and productions, are available several months in advance of the performances. These are designed to personalize the experience for each attendee with autism spectrum disorders. TDF also produced a video social narrative that describes how best to navigate Times Square.

To Sign up to get notification about tickets for our Autism-Friendly performances go to:

<https://secure2.tdf.org/event/ati.html>

Aladdin March 6, 2016 at 1pm

Additional Shows May Be Announced Soon

Respite Weekend & Camps

List of camps in and around CT: DDS does not maintain a list since there are two very good lists already in existence.

- **CTFSN (Connecticut Family Support Network)** has many resources including: Specialty Camps, Inclusive Camps both in CT and out of State. Check them out.
<http://www.ctfsn.org/#!/resources/c1e0x>
- **SERC (State Education Resource Center)** has a directory of summer camps and resources at
<http://ctserc.org/docs/Summer%20Camps%202015%20directory%20-%20FINAL.pdf?2fa6f942252db2ec6c621fe255459617=a385ffd7c66733ba59a83c00c9659d97>

Respite Weekends



73 Times Farm Road
Andover, CT 06232
860-742-2267



This monthly, weekend program caters to campers' ages 8 to 25 with both physical and developmental needs. The respite weekend offers a small retreat for campers to engage in activities including arts and crafts, baking, nature walks, team building, games, and more! Respite weekends focus on independence and socialization while allowing families the comfort of knowing their child will be well cared for in a safe and nurturing environment. This program provides 24-hour nursing care along with trained and knowledgeable staff. This program runs once a month from Friday to Sunday with meals and housing included at Channel 3 Kids Camp in Andover, CT. Visit channel3kidscamp.org for more information or call Alycia Williams at 860.742.2267.

Weekends in the Country

Weekends in the Country are offered from September to May. These action-packed, theme-based weekends are developed by our creative team and filled with fun and friendship. Campers arrive on Friday evening and return home Sunday afternoon. Sixteen uniquely themed weekends are conducted through the year with an extended Vacation Week held at year's end between Christmas and New Year's. Every Weekend in the Country sees campers enjoying the same variety, camaraderie and opportunities for learning provided by summer camp only in an intimate, joyful two-day span.

www.Horizonsct.org 127 Babcock Hill Rd, South Windham, CT 06266 Phone number: (860) 456-1032

If you would like to respond to these questions or would like to be added to my E-mail list
Please contact me: Pamela Okerblom – Recreation Therapist
Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov or call 860-859-5482

Vacations and Trips

The Guided Tour

7900 Old York Rd, Elkins Park, PA, Ste. 111-B
(215) 782-1370 • Fax: (215) 635-2637
Visit us on the web at: www.guidedtour.com or
Email: gtour400@aol.com

DisabledTravelers.com

A resource dedicated to accessible travel information. This new site will provide you with information on businesses from around the world that specialize in disability travel.

<http://www.disabledtravelers.com/>

Disabled Travelers Guide

See this guide for information on the accessibility of cruise lines, rental cars, buses, trains, airlines and hotels.

www.disabledtravelersguide.com

Travel Guides

Everything you want to know or need for traveling worldwide with individuals with disabilities.

<http://www.travelguides.org/index.html>

Autism on the Seas

1-800-516-5247

Cruises for Families, Adults, and Group Homes living with Autism, and/or Developmental Disabilities

www.AutismontheSeas.com

ASD Vacations LLC

An affiliate of Travel Planners International
Alan Day, **Special Needs Family Vacation expert**

Alan can help you plan the perfect vacation for families with individuals with special challenges.

Tel: (203) 750-0000

E-mail: AlanDay@ASDVacations.com

Web: www.ASDVacations.com

TSA Helpline for Travelers with Disabilities

Travelers may call TSA Cares toll free at 1-855-787-2227 prior to traveling with questions about screening policies, procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint.

<http://www.tsa.gov/press/releases/2011/1222.shtm>

http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/disabilityandmedicalneeds/tsa_cares.shtm

Wings for Autism

Families with children on the autism spectrum or with developmental disabilities are able to take a test run through the airport boarding process.

<http://www.charlesrivercenter.org/index.cfm?pid=14828>

Sprout

270 West 96th Street

New York, NY 10025

Toll free: 888-222-9575

www.GoSprout.org or go to http://issuu.com/gosprout/docs/sprout_brochure_2016 to see the 2016 online SPROUT Brochure .

Have you heard about our innovative and insightful film programs, including our 13th Annual [Sprout Film Festival](http://gosprout.org/film-festival/) (<http://gosprout.org/film-festival/>) and our newly redesigned [sproutflix](http://sproutflix.org) (sproutflix.org) film distribution service?

Adventures Beyond Compare

Planned and staffed day and multi-day events and vacations for individuals with special needs.

144 Vanderbilt Road

Bristol Connecticut 06010

Tel: 860-402-2462

www.adventuresbeyondcompare.com

Trips R Us

508-405-0999

mike@tripsrus.org

Trips R Us

42 Eden St

Framingham, MA 01702

The National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass or Access Pass

Free pass to national parks for individuals with disabilities

Access Pass information - <http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access.html>

Access Pass Application - http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access_pass_application.pdf

If you would like to respond to these questions or would like to be added to my E-mail list
Please contact me: Pamela Okerblom – Recreation Therapist
Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov or call 860-859-5482

Support and Self Advocacy Groups

10 Reasons why Special Needs Parents should Join a Support Group

As a parent to a child with special needs one of the best things you can do for yourself and your child is to join a support group. [Support groups](#) can be rich in information that can be helpful for you while raising a child with special needs. You can learn from the experiences of parents who have been there before. There are opportunities for emotional and social support for you and your child. Here are some reasons to consider for joining a support group:

1. Schools, Teachers and IEPs

A support group will likely be people who likely live in the same community and neighbourhood. This is helpful because, there are other families who have shared experiences about making decisions for their child's education. This includes making decisions about special education classes, requesting additional school supports and educational assistants.

2. What Do You Know About....?

Everyone is always looking for a good doctor, dentist, therapy programs, recreational programs, and summer camps. Where can you get a good haircut for your child? What about asking each other about what they have heard and experienced about medications and special diets?

3. How Did They Get That?

Speak with other parents about the strategies and the wording that they used to access certain services, funding, and programs. While it would be nice if services were available to everyone equally, this is not so in reality. Are there key words or ways of requesting services?

4. Strength in Numbers

Parents often share that it can be difficult and intimidating to influence changes in programs and services. However if families come together and are all voicing concerns and feedback together, this can help to get the attention of decision makers. Many of the changes of programs and legislation have come from parent advocates.

5. Sounding Board

Outside of your family unit, other parents in a support group can be a sounding board for you to talk through key decisions or ideas that you want to try with your child. Other parents may be able to help you give input about what to do. They can problem solve with you.

6. Understanding Without a Monologue

Some parents will share that connecting with other parents of children with special needs is a huge area of support. Whether your families and friends are supportive or not, sometimes it is nice to connect with people who live in similar circumstances, because they know because they have lived it and you don't need to explain it.

7. Let's Go Play

In support groups, there is a possibility that you will meet other families who have children with similar interests. It can be a lot easier to set up family outings and play dates with another child with similar needs and adults who are comfortable with being around you and your child. There is less reason to feel self-conscious or worried about how your child will do in a social situation.

8. Go Online

Now more than ever, families are finding support groups online through Facebook, Twitter, chat groups, and blogs (just like this one). This is one of the fastest ways information gets shared and effective if time, travel and child care can be a challenge.

9. OMG, You Like to Watch The Bachelor Too?

Outside of supporting each other and advocating for your children, you may discover that you have more in common especially on a social level. Sometimes it's just nice to make new friends.

10. Pass It On

Whether you realize it or not, the experiences that you have had will be helpful to someone else. Sharing your story gives hope, insight, tips and encouragement to others.

What is Self-Advocacy and how did it get started?

The self-advocacy movement began in Oregon when a group of people with disabilities went to a conference that was held for them. They were not happy because it was run by professionals. They got together and began to plan a conference run completely by people with disabilities. The first conference was held in October 1974. That was 41 years ago! The name of the conference was “**People First**” because everyone wanted to be known as a person first, instead of being labeled by their disability. After the conference, small self-advocacy groups were started all over the world.

Self-Advocacy is speaking up for yourself by letting others people know how you feel about issues that affect your life. Self-Advocacy groups help you work together to speak up for what you want.

DDS is honored to have 3 Self-Advocate Coordinators on staff.

Their good work is in many areas. They start and visit Self Advocacy groups around the region, attend Self Advocacy meetings, train self-advocates to be I.P. buddies, teach healthy relationship classes, talk to schools and colleges, help with travel training for individuals, educate the DDS staff on the issues for Self Advocates, write letters to our legislators and newspapers and much more. Contact the Self Advocate Coordinator near you to find out how you can get involved!

The DDS South Region Self Advocate coordinators:

Carol Grabbe – Wallingford 203-294-5119 carol.grabbe@ct.gov

Genna Lewis – New Haven 203-974-4232 genna.lewis@ct.gov

Latasha Linwood – Norwich 860-859-5512 latasha.linwood@ct.gov



New Parent Networking Group

This group is open to families with children diagnosed with autism or other disabilities.

It will provide an opportunity to meet with other families in your area who have similar challenges and concerns. Families will be able to share ideas and information to gain more knowledge and access more support. Educational and resource materials will also be available.

When: Every 3rd Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:00p.m.

Location: ASRC, 101 North Plains Industrial Rd. Suite 1, Wallingford

Please RSVP: Deborah Pagano at dpagano@ctfsn.org 203-430-0242 or Sara Reed at sara@autismconnecticut.org 203-265-7717

This networking opportunity is a collaborative effort and will be facilitated by Autism Services & Resources Connecticut, (ASRC) and the Connecticut Family Support Network, (CTFSN)



For more information go to the CTFSN website at www.ctfsn.org

What we do: The Connecticut Family support network is committed to helping families of individuals with disabilities and special health care needs, and the professionals who work with them, find information, resources, and support to improve their lives.

ALL OF OUR SERVICES ARE FREE!

How we help:

We connect **one-to-one** with parents via telephone, email, and Facebook. We provide information, emotional support, advocacy and guidance.

We hold **workshops and trainings** across the state for parents and professionals on the wide variety of topics including special education, transition, recreation and communication.

We work to **empower** families to become affective and successful advocates, we encourage individuals with disabilities to become successful self-advocates.

We offer more than **20 support groups** per month. These groups provide parent-to-parent connections, access to resources and guest speakers.

We **share current information** on disabilities issues and resources via email, our website and Facebook, so parents can remain updated on how to continue to keep themselves informed.

We **collaborate** with local and state agencies, community groups and other non-profit organizations to provide access to resources and support.

CTFSN Support Group Schedule

For more information, go to the CTFSN website at www.ctfsn.org

Southeast Region: April Dipollina, Regional Coordinator 860-271-4371 adipollina@lmhosp.org

L&M Hospital **Parent Support Group** in **New London** meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:00pm in conference room 3. L&M Hospital, Montauk Ave, New London (unless there is a special event that month). Please be sure to check our Calendar page for the latest meeting information).

South Central Region: Deborah Pagano, Regional Coordinator 203-430-0242 dpagano@ctfsn.org

A “Parent Partnership” for children with special needs

Parent Partnership is a meeting for families of children with special needs.

Support & Self Advocacy

- Parents meet to share ideas, concerns and information related to providing the best support and environment for their children.
- Parents can choose to be as active as they like.
- Various trainings and informational speakers, as well as resource and educational materials are provided.
- You do not need to have attended prior to join us at any of the meetings.

Morning Parent Partnership meets on the **first and third Tuesday** of the month from 9:30-11:00am at the Women & Family Life Center, 96 Fair St., **Guilford**.

- **Free childcare** is available upon request. Please call Monday by 2pm if you're planning to attend the next day's meeting and need childcare.

Evening Parent Partnership meets quarterly on the **first Wednesday** of the month from 6:30-8:00pm at SARAH, Inc., 51 Boston Post Rd., Madison. Meeting Dates: 11/4/15, 2/3/16, 5/4/16

You do not need to have attended prior to join us at any of the meetings.

For more information or to register please email or call:

Kathy Fadel at kfadel@sarah-inc.org or 203-453-7592, x108

Deborah Pagano at dpagano@ctfsn.org or 203-430-0242



“Parent Partnership” is facilitated by Deborah Pagano of the Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN) and organized by the Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN) in collaboration with KIDSTEPS, Family and Children’s Center a division of Sarah, Inc.



Dad’s Night Out

Sponsored by Guide Inc.

Join other Dads who have children with special needs for a casual night out. They will meet quarterly on the **1st Wednesday** of the month at **7pm**

Date: 2016 Meeting Dates:

Jan 6th 2016 Moxie, 52 Wall St., Madison www.moxie-bar.com

April 6th 2016 Location T/B/A

Please RSVP to... Deborah Pagano at dpagano@ctfsn.org or 203-430-0242

Kathy Fadel at kfadel@sarah-inc.org or 203-453-7592 x108

“Dads Night Out” is organized by Deborah Pagano of the Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN) and organized by the Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN) in collaboration with KIDSTEPS, Family and Children’s Center a division of Sarah, Inc.

Parent's (with ID) Group

Support Group for **Parents with Intellectual Disabilities**

All are welcome. Kids are welcome.

When: 1st Tuesday of every month

Time: 5:00pm – 7:00pm with Pot luck dinner

Location: The Campbell Building at 401 West Thames Street, **Norwich**, CT 06360 (Room 339)

For more information: contact Amy at 860-859-5474 or Rhonda at 860-859-5578

Rainbow Support Group

For LGBTQ* people with ID

(Consumer, Staff and Family are welcome to attend)

When: 2nd Sunday of each Month (except May-North Hampton Pride and July- closed)

Time: 1 – 2:30pm

Cost: Free!

Where: New Haven Pride Center
84 Orange St., **New Haven**, CT

For information email:

Rainbowdisability@gmail.com



Creative Housing Workgroup

Concerned about Housing or Residential Supports for someone with a disability? Come and join us.

We are a group of proactive parents, caregivers and self-advocates who are working together to find Solutions, Supports and create Residential Options.

We meet the second Thursday of the month at the Acton Library in **Old Saybrook** from 6 -8 pm.

Can't get to a meeting? Ask to join our e-mail group.

For more information contact: April Dipollina: adipollina@lmhosp.org 860-271-4371

Or Lauralyn Lewis: lauralynlewis@sbcglobal.net

Support Group for Fathers of Children with Special Needs

Social/support group for fathers of children with special needs meets once a month at a local eating establishment usually around the **New Haven**, **Hamden**, or **North Haven** area. Monthly gatherings provide an opportunity for Dads to share their thoughts and ideas about their children in order to benefit themselves and others within the group. This group is very informal and relaxed.

Call for meeting time and location: 203-974-7265 or email ted.pappas@yale.edu

Shoreline Parent Chat Support Group

Women and Family Life Center

96 Fair St **Guilford**, CT

Tuesdays 9:30-10:30am

Free childcare provided.

Kathy Fadel at kidsteps-FCC@sarah-inc.org 203-453-7592 Ext. 2

Deborah Pagano dpagano@ctfsn.org 203-430-0242

Special Parents, Special Kids of Milford, CT

Woodruff Family YMCA in **Milford**
Third Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm
Childcare provided and light supper for adults
spskofmilfordct@gmail.com

The Dad Connection

Family Centered Services of CT 235 Nicoll St., **New Haven**, CT
Mondays 3-5pm
Juan 203-624-2600 Ext. 224 or Galit 203-624-2600 Ext. 207

Challenge to Victory Support Group

1175 State St. Suite 217, **New Haven**, CT
Fridays 6:30-7:30pm
Activities provided to pre-registered children and a light supper provided
203-889-2872

Round -2 Just When you thought you were finished

(grandparents and relatives raising family members children)

Milford YMCA 631 Orange Ave. **Milford** CT 06460
Second Tuesday of each month 6:30-8:30pm
Co-chairs Maryellen Schoonmaker 203-701-8411 or mellens1228@optonline.net
And Christine Surel 203-306-5254 or christine.surel@ct.gov
Childcare is provided and there is a lounge for teens. There is no fee for this but you need to register.

Grandparents on the Move

Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. Call to register
East Rock Global Studies Magnet School, 133 Nash Street, **New Haven**, CT 06511
(203) 946-7444
Louis Campbell 203-946-7443
Louis.Campbell@new-haven.k12.ct.us

[West Haven Family Support Group](#)

The West Haven Parent Support Group meets the second Monday of each month at City Hall in the basement, 355 Main Street, **West Haven**, CT from 6:00 PM TO 8:00 PM. For more information contact Karen Muro, karenmmuro@aol.com or 203-937-3565

Remember child care is available, but you MUST call and let us know that you will be using this service.

The Local System of Care, Parent Support Group is for parents, guardians, care givers, family members and friends of children with various special needs.

Remaining 2015 meeting dates: September 14, October 12, November 9

[West Haven Autism Support Group](#)

West Haven Johnson Community Center, 201 Noble Street Upper Floor
First Wednesday of each month 6:00-8:00pm
Open to any family with a child on the spectrum
Co- chairs: Angela Potter, potter_a@subway.com, Catherine Edwards
Childcare provided at no fee

[The Power of Voices](#)

Self-advocacy group

They meet once a month on the 3rd Thursday at 5pm.

526 Whalley Avenue, **New Haven**, CT

We have a Special Olympics team that competes in Bowling, Athletics, Track and Field, and Basketball.

For Information on how to join contact Corinne Jackson at: (203) 389-2970 ext. 12

[Join CT KASA!](#)

KASA (Kids As Self Advocates) is a national, grassroots project created by young people with disabilities for young people with disabilities. **CT KASA** is open to anyone with a disability ages 13-26.

[WHAT CT KASA CAN DO FOR YOU](#)

CT KASA participants learn how to advocate for themselves and take control over their own lives.

CT KASA helps this happen by teaching young people about their rights and how to change the systems that affect their lives.

[CT KASA ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE:](#)

- Monthly meetings (available via face to face, webinar or conference call)
- Working on a personal development plan
- Representing the voice of young people with disabilities at public events
- Group youth leadership projects

Interested?

There will be an informational conference call about **CT KASA** for young people and their parents in March 2015. Kick off meeting will be in April 2015. Details are forthcoming.

For more information contact:

PATH Parent to Parent/Family Voices of Connecticut
800-399-PATH (CT only) 203-234-9554 info@pathct.org www.pathct.org
P.O. Box 117, **Northford**, Connecticut 06472

H.O.P.E. Helping Our People Excel

Support group for families with children with any special needs including behavioral, mental, ID, physical, etc.

Meets at the **Meriden** Public Library in the Griffin room. They meet once per month, on a Tuesday. Refreshments are served, and children are welcome to play in the child activity area.

For more information contact Sandra Jackson at 203-715-0430 or Hope.Sandra2014@gmail.com or Lydia at 860-919-5882

Other support groups in Meriden include a Spanish-speaking group similar to the one above called INSPIRATION. For information on INSPIRATION, contact Sandra Jackson at 203-715-0430 or Hope.Sandra2014@gmail.com or Lydia at 860-919-5882

Parent Support Group Lower Naugatuck Valley

Parent Child Resource Center
30 Elizabeth St., 3rd Floor, **Derby**, CT

Tuesdays 5-7:30pm

For info:

Natine Haley 203-345-1836 (before 5pm) msj32361@yahoo.com

Lori Parise 203- 954-0543 Ext. 181 or lparise@invpcrc.org

North Star Support Group

31 Hill Street, **Ansonia**, CT

For more information, contact Cathy Adamczyk at 203-735-6098 or 203-751-2417
<http://www.northstarsupportgroup.com> cathy@northstarsupportgroup.com

Parent Support Group For Parents and Family Members

Guilford Community Center, 32 Church Street

Third Thursday 7:00pm

For Parents and family members of a child with autism.

Maureen Belden 203-458-2410 or ASCONN at info@asconn.org

Rompiendo Barreras (Breaking Barriers)

Spanish-speaking support group

Savin Rock School, 50 Park Street, **West Haven**

Last Thursday of each month 6:30-8:30pm

Open to any family with special needs children-primary language of parents-primary language of parents- Spanish

Co- Chairs: Rosalyn Diaz 203-931-6850 and Ms. Melissa Martinez-Baez

Childcare provided. No fee

Social Skills Group

Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center 400 Columbus Avenue, **New Haven**, CT

A group for adolescents age 13 – 16 (they will also accommodate 10-12 year olds)

This group is geared toward children with special needs including mild intellectual disabilities, Down's syndrome, and children on the autism spectrum.

- Topics will include:
 - Expressing emotions
 - Communication skills
 - Good Manners
 - Cooperation

For more information, please ask your child's clinician or contact

Andrea Dellacorte, MSW Clinical Social Worker at 203-503-3055, adellacorte@hillhealthcenter.com

If you would like to respond to these questions or would like to be added to my E-mail list

Please contact me: Pamela Okerblom – Recreation Therapist

Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov or call 860-859-5482

Parks and Recreation Programs

Many towns offer recreation programs operated by the town or city and subsidized by tax dollars. They often have scholarships available so no one will be excluded due to finances. Please note that this is not a complete list of Recreation Programs in our area. It is simply a list of town programs I am aware of that have adaptive program. Please check with your town to find out what they offer and if your town does not have what you are looking for... **let them know**. They will not develop a program if they do not know there is a need. Remember to also check out other local towns in your area, they often welcome non-residents in their programs.

Middletown Recreation Division

100 Riverview Center #140, **Middletown**, CT 06457 [\(860\) 638-4500](tel:8606384500)

Middletown Recreation Division offers a diversified Inclusion Program for participants with Special Needs age 8 – 21. For older individuals, Middletown Recreation Division recognizes the value of including people with all levels of ability as a means of strengthening our community and providing a recreational choice. We provide opportunities for people with and without disabilities to experience recreation together. For specific information concerning policy and programming, please call our office at 860.638.4500. Please provide ten days notification to provide significant support.

<http://www.cityofmiddletown.com/content/117/123/159/>

Groton Parks and Recreation

www.groton-ct.gov/depts/parksrec/

All are welcome to register; Both **Groton** Residents and non-Residents alike.

Groton has a wonderful varied program that includes:

- Special Olympics Year Round
- Adaptive Swimming,
- Adaptive Rowing
- Adaptive Kayaking
- Adaptive Karate
- Special Recreation
- Cooking For Fun
- Painting
- And Camp Button A Special Needs Summer Camp (Groton Residents Only)

For more information, call Eileen Cicchese at 860-536-5691

[Branford Parks and Recreation](#)

46 Church Street, **Branford**, CT
Phone 203-488-8304
recreation@brnford-ct.gov

The Branford Parks and recreation Department truly has a program to suit everyone's needs, expanding its already extensive offering with the addition of the adaptive recreation program – Perfect Pals!

Perfect Pals is aimed at teens and young adults ages 13 and older who are interested in participating in recreational activities. They welcome residents and non-residents alike!

[Milford Recreation Department](#)

Milford Recreation / Parsons Complex
70 West River St. **Milford**, CT
203-783-3280

Milford Parks and Recreation Department has [Adaptive Programs](#) including:

- [Adaptive Ballet](#) They are now accepting registration for participation in the Adaptive Nutcracker for 2014! It is a wonderful, program to participate in or watch!
- [Adaptive Guitar Lessons](#)
- iCan Bike
- [Musical Theater](#)
- [Sing N Sign](#)

For more information on the Adaptive programs contact:

Deb Marchese, marchesedebra@optonline.net or call 203-550-2520

You can look up the information at: <http://www.milfordrecreation.com/info/activities/>

[Challenger Baseball](#) for kids ages 7-21. This program is accepting registration now. **Every participant will receive a team Jersey and Hat. Games and practices will be on Saturdays.** If you would like to join the team, contact Rich Minnix at Milford Parks and Recreation at: **(203) 783-3280**

[Wallingford Parks and Recreation Department](#)

6 Fairfield Blvd, **Wallingford**, Ct 06492 • Phone (203) 294-2120

Carolyn Lavelle - Adaptive Recreation wfdparksrec@comcast.net

They offer a wonderful variety of Adaptive Recreation programs for all ages, year round including:

- All ages
 - Yoga
 - Adaptive swimming
 - Ice Skating
- Adults
 - Rec club 16 – adult
 - Bowling
- Kids
 - T.O.P.S. Soccer 6 – 11
 - Funny Muscles 6 – 10
 - Dance power 15 – 20
 - Mega Muscles 11 – 16
 - Teen Scene 13 – 18

And many more! They presently have 11 adaptive activities in their spring catalog. Check it out!

www.town.wallingford.ct.us/Content/Parks_and_Recreation.asp

West Haven (and area towns):

W.H.I.N.C. WEST HAVEN INTERAGENCY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN LOCAL SYSTEM OF CARE
(203- 937-3633) www.whinc.org and www.wrapct.org

Check out their website. They host a variety of Support Groups including: Parent Support Group, Autism Family Support Group and a Spanish Support Group for families with Special Needs Children. Once you are an active member of the support group you and your family will be eligible to attend their many wonderful activities (Children with Special Needs Program monthly activities and summer program)

They do offer 2 programs that you don't have to be a member to participate... that is their karate and duckpin bowling programs. Registration for these two programs will be September 17 & 18 at the Johnson Community Center, 201 Noble Street, from 4:30 to 6:00. The cost is \$45.00 for each program.

Norwich Recreation Department

Social Recreation Group starting in Norwich

On Monday Sept. 14th A group of interested families met with the Norwich Recreation's Program administrator Victoria Daniels, Representatives from DDS to openly discuss what programs and other recreational services would be most beneficial for them.

During this meeting a Group was formed of individuals/families who are going to work together to develop a variety of programs and activities to provide Social Recreational Opportunities in Norwich.

A second organizational meeting is scheduled for **Monday September 28th at 6:00pm** to meet with other families, brainstorm, plan and get to know each other while working together to start wonderful programs.

Please join us for our next planning / organizational meeting:

Date: Monday September 28, 2015

Time: 6:00

Location: Norwich Recreation Department Office

75 Mohegan Rd, **Norwich**, CT 06360

For more information contact:

Jucenta Walker J81walker@gmail.com 860-389-8933

Private Recreation Programs

These are Recreation & Social programs that are privately owned and run by professionals hired by the company. These programs are paid for by the participants (some receive scholarships or grants). They offer a wide variety of programs and flexibility. Some even offer transportation for an additional cost. They are worth looking into.



The ARC of New London County

ARC of **New London County** has a wonderful Community Life (Recreation) program that is worth checking out. They plan a variety of activities each month including weekends for their members. Those often have: Dances, Bowling, Special Olympics and much, much more. They are also the only program in our area that offers Transportation to most of their events for a fee.

To find out how to become a member, go to: www.thearcnlc.org or contact Denise Tift at: dtift@thearcnlc.org or call 860-889-4435 x. 110

The ARC of Meriden-Wallingford offers a variety of recreational programs.

Call 203-237-9975 or visit them on the web www.arcmw.org

- Recreation program for its members. The program runs from March – October of each year with activities offered each week. Please contact Maritza Dell at 203-237-9975 ext. 377 or email us at recreation@mwsinc.org if you are interested in more information.
 - They also have a program called Opportunities for Older Adults. This is a program for older adults with developmental disabilities that have chosen to retire and wish to experience activities commonly valued by senior citizens. They offer something for everyone whether you are laid back or want to be on the go.
 - Individualized services is a versatile program that is designed by and for the individual based upon the individuals, needs, goals, hopes and dreams.
 - Individualized Services is a versatile program that is designed by and for the individuals
-



6 Lunar Drive
Woodbridge, CT 06525
Phone: 203-389-2970
www.marrakechinc.org

Contact Info:
Denise Stevenson
Senior Vice President of Program
Support Services

(203) 389-2970, ext. 1105
dstevenson@marrakechinc.org

All towns are welcome, but we tend to attract people from **West Haven, New Haven, East Haven, Milford, Orange, Hamden, Trumbull, Shelton, and Bridgeport**. The "Oak Tree" events are located in the **Waterbury area**.

Evening Fun & Learning (Recreation Activities)

Evening Fun & Learning (Recreation Activities) Marrakech is dedicated to providing opportunities for the people it serves to access recreational and fitness activities, to learn new hobbies or skills, to make friends and to participate fully in community life. To this end, Quality of Life Services staff coordinates a monthly calendar of events filled with fun and learning opportunities. (They have a ton of activities from Dances, Arts and Crafts, social events... it is truly unbelievable how many activities they have.) Social and recreational activities are open to all... Marrakech consumers and individuals not currently served by Marrakech may also sign up for activities. Nominal fees apply in order to defray the costs of each activity. Contact Denise Stevenson for specific activity locations.

Weekend Respite Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Marrakech, Inc. has opened its Island Lane Center in West Haven on Saturdays and Sundays as a respite resource to parents/guardians of adults with developmental disabilities. Our center is conveniently located, fully accessible and has many beautiful, functional features for a fun-filled community weekend. We offer weekends that are jam-packed with recreational, social and community activities provided by a knowledgeable, joyful staff and supervised by a recreation professional. Services will be available from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

If you are not sure if these programs are for you, contact Corinne below and see if you can do a trial period. She is also happy to meet with you before attending any events. Her office is at 450 Island Lane in West Haven.

For more information contact Corinne Jackson at cjackson@marrakechinc.org or call (203) 389-2970 ext. 1203.



124 Washington St
Middletown, CT 06457
Phone: 860-342-0700
Fax: 860-342-1492
E-mail: admin@marc-cr.org

MARC: Community Resources—Leisure Program

The only Adult Leisure Program of its kind in the area which provides recreational opportunities to over 100 adults (ages 21+) in Middlesex County from Cromwell to Old Saybrook. Programs are offered year-round, Tuesdays thru Saturdays at various times. Programs include: Saturday Morning Fun at MARC in collaboration with Middletown Parks and Recreation, Adult Leisure Program, Guardian Angels Program (Middletown chapter of People First of CT a self-advocacy group)

- Transportation provided to some events
- Fees are low and affordable
- Financial Assistance; no one is turned away due to inability to pay
- Quarterly recreation calendars
- Day, evening and weekend programs



101 North Plains Industrial Rd. Harvest Park, Building 1 A,
Wallingford, CT 06492
Phone: 203-265-7717

www.autismconnecticut.org/recreation-and-social-programs

ASRC has a wonderful facility and offers many recreation / social groups specially designed to provide individuals with autism spectrum disorders the opportunity to participate in a variety of social activities throughout their community. The offer groups for: Teens (Guy group and Girls group) Young Adults group (co-ed), Young girls group, and ASRC Supported Social Group. For details on these programs contact Emily@autismconnecticut.org. They also have Adult Game Night and many other activities and special events.

Groton Light House Program: Summer Friends

860-445-7626
Summer Friends
Social Skills Programming
The Light House, Groton

Summer Friends is designed for participants in middle and high school with Asperger's Syndrome and high functioning autism. (Students must be able to care for themselves and have independence in toileting and feeding)

Social skills that are focused on include, but are not limited to: conversation, perspective taking, problem-solving, reading social cues, and developing a social life in the community.

Summer Friends meets Monday-Friday from 2-5pm July 7th through August 8th.

For more information please contact Vita Rose at 860-445-7626 or by email: vrose@lhcampus.com



246 Goose Lane, Suite 101
Guilford, CT 06437
(203) 458-4040

SARAH, Inc.'s Recreation and Leisure Connections provides social, leisure and athletic opportunities for people with varying abilities and needs. We help make connections with local community groups and plan activities so that people of all abilities can fully participate. These include: Special Olympics training and competition, art classes, movies, theater and more!

Recognizing the changing needs of families who care for their family members at home, SARAH, Inc. offers an "extended day" respite program. This program offers supervised social and leisure activities in a safe, comfortable environment after the normal school and work day.

Activities available from Recreation and Leisure Connections include, but are not limited to:

Special Olympics Training & Competition

Life Skills and Leisure, Social Activities & Special Events

Recreation and Leisure Connections also incorporates activities with local park and recreation departments, commercial ventures in recreation and leisure and fosters additional life skill learning opportunities. Participants enjoy: Concerts, Plays, Dances, Spectator Sports, Dining out, Day Trips, weekend Getaways.

Call 203-315-9163 or contact cmones@sarah-inc.org to learn more and to sign up for our current recreation activities

Outdoor Recreation--Parks and Playgrounds

Boundless Playgrounds

What is a **Boundless Playground**? More than six million children in the United States have some type of disability that makes it hard or impossible for them to enjoy traditional playgrounds. Boundless Playgrounds projects benefit children with and without disabilities by providing opportunities for all children to play together side by side. There are over 30 boundless playgrounds around CT. For a full list go to: <http://placesforkidsct.com/boundless-playgrounds/>

Or: <http://www.accessibleplayground.net/playground-directory/?cn-s=&cn-cat=21>

Or: <http://www.bodiesplace.org/parks.php>

You may want to check out the "**Air Line State Park Trail**" Especially if you have any individuals in your group with mobility challenges who would like to ride a bike or hike.

This beautiful park is 50 miles long traveling the route of the old Air line rail Line. It runs from **East Hampton Village to Thompson** with many access points. It is very flat and smooth; the trail is crushed stone and easily traveled with biking or using a wheel chair or stroller.

To get a better idea of what to expect or where to join up, check out the Airline State Park Trail video <http://www.depdata.ct.gov/video/mainpsa.asp?url=http://www.u10videos.com/DEP/Parks/AirLineTrailHighlights.wmv&name=Air>

Camp Harkness

Camp Harkness 301 Great Neck Rd, **Waterford** 06385

Camp Harkness is a Connecticut State Park and Camp designed for people with Special Challenges. The 102-acre park is accessible and is located on Long Island Sound Waterford, CT. There is so much to see and do including: Picnic Pavilions, Accessible Playscape, Cabins, tent sites, Gardening programs, and Special Events,

And it is all free to pass holders and their families.

This is the time to reserve your cabins and campsites for this year!

For information on all Camp Harkness has to offer and for a pass Application: go to the Camp Harkness website at <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2653&q=393150>

Or Google: DDS Camp Harkness, If you do not have access to the internet please call Nancy Kogut for Pass Information: (860) 859- 5554

New this year: **Camp Harkness publishes a Newsletter.** It is full of news and interesting stories to keep you up to date on all that is happening at the park. To receive your own copy of the newsletter call Camp Harkness at 860-443-7818

Accessible Trails

Hiking and Cycling Trails

For maps and directions to wheelchair accessible trails near you, go to www.traillink.com and select "wheelchair accessible" under activities for information about these Connecticut trails:

- **Charter Oak Greenway** - **East Hartford**, 9.8 miles
- **Derby Greenway** - **Derby**, 1.7 miles
- **Farmington Canal Heritage Trail** – 40 miles from **New Haven to Massachusetts** state line
- **Farmington River Trail** - Tunxis Meade Park in **Farmington to Collinsville**, 8.5 miles
- **Housatonic Valley Trail** - **Monroe**, 4.2 miles
- **Middlebury Greenway** - **Middlebury**, 4.4 miles
- **Naugatuck River Greenway in Beacon Falls** - **Naugatuck**, .3 miles
- **Norwalk River Valley Trail** - **Norwalk**, 2 miles
- **Putnam River Trail** - **Putnam**, 2 miles
- **Quinebaug River Trail** - **Putnam to Danielson**, 4 miles
- **Ridgefield Rail Trail** - **Ridgefield to Branchville**, 2.3 miles
- **Saugatuck Universal Access Trail- Redding**, short, ends in a platform overlooking the reservoir
- **Stratton Brook State Park Trail** - Stratton Brook State Park to **Simsbury**, 2 miles
- **Sue Grossman Still River Greenway** - **Torrington to Winchester**, 2.9 miles
- **Windsor Locks Canal State Park Trail** - **Suffield to Windsor Locks**, 4.5 miles

Accessible Waterfalls

Kent Falls - Lower sets of falls are fully viewable and impressive from roadside; paved path leads closer to base of falls; upper falls are out of sight. Located in **Kent**, CT.

Mill Pond Falls - Fully viewable from roadside and parking area. Located in **Newington**, CT.

Source:

www.newenglandwaterfalls.com/accessible.php

Did you know a section of the Appalachian Trail is accessible?

Located near **Falls Village**, CT, a one mile portion of the Appalachian Trail has been covered in packed gravel to allow easy pushing and preserve the beauty of the original trail. The area also features waterfalls and a historic ironworks.

CT Trails Weekend

Held during the first weekend in June, the CT Trails Weekend includes over 250 events throughout the state. Accessibility is indicated for each event.

Check the CT Forest & Park Association website at: www.ctwoodlands.org

Family Rambles

Guided family-friendly walks are held on the last weekend of every month at trails throughout Connecticut. Not all Family Rambles are accessible, contact before walk for accessibility information.

Sponsored by CT Forest & Park Association. www.walkct.org

Adaptive Hiking Equipment

Try a hiking wheelchair or an all-terrain trike that makes rugged trails accessible to people of all ability levels at the Adaptive Recreation Fair sponsored by the Massachusetts DCR Universal Access program.

www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/accessibility or call 617-626-1294.

Outdoor Recreation Websites:

www.ctwoodlands.org

www.greenway.org/explore-by-state/ct

www.newenglandtrail.org

www.alloutadventures.org

www.nepassage.org

www.waypointadventure.org

www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/accessibility

www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks

www.bikewalksimsbury.org/simsbury-ct-adaptive-cycling.php

www.gaylord.org/why-gaylord/sports-association.aspx

State Parks

1. Connecticut is fortunate to have 107 State Parks and 32 State Forests comprising nearly 300,000 acres of beautiful recreation lands and open space for the use and enjoyment of the public. Most of these areas are available free-of-charge. Of these 139 areas, only twenty six (26) charge a parking fee from the third week in April through the Columbus Day Holiday. Of the twenty-six parking-charge parks, fifteen (15) charge for parking only on weekends and holidays with weekdays free and only eleven (11) charge during the entire week. We are fortunate that all areas of the state offer several no-cost, state-run recreation opportunities.

Please visit the DEEP's State Parks website at:

http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2716&q=325086&deepNav_GID=1650

to locate state parks across the state which do not charge any parking or admission fee, and enjoy them.

(This is truly a great website with tons of information and ideas check out Letterboxing/Geocaching for an activity to do at the park) The State Parks Division issues **every public library in the state a State Park Library Pass which can be checked out**, similar to a book, and used for **free** visitation to any park or forest that charges a fee. This program is very popular. We invite your program leaders to pay a visit to your local library to take advantage of this offer.

2. Our agency also offers season passes that can be purchased for \$67. It allows an unlimited number of visits to all parks during the busy season.

3. Available for free, are the lifetime Charter Oak Pass for Connecticut residents age 65 or older and the Disabled Veteran Pass for citizens with a service connected disability. As long as the resident is in the vehicle, it can park free of charge. However, only the pass holder enjoys free admission to Gillette Castle, Dinosaur and Fort Trumbull State Parks.

Please visit the following page to learn about alternatives:

http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2716&q=325090&deepNav_GID=1650#SeasonPass

These are great resources!

Camp Harkness

A specially designed Connecticut State Park providing accessible facilities including: picnic area and pavilion; ramped playground; beach access with boardwalk and all terrain wheelchairs that can go into the water; tent campground with accessible bathhouse.

Cabins are available to families when not being used for residential camping programs.

Camp Harkness is only available to people with special needs as well as their family and friends. To request a pass application, call 860-859-5554.

*Camp Harkness, 301 Great Neck Road,
Waterford, CT 06385
Camp Office: 860-443-7818*

Hammonasset Beach

Hammonasset is CT's largest stretch of beach. The area includes trails, beach, and a nature center. Six of the campsites are designed to be used by those with disabilities. They are near accessible restrooms and have access to electricity.

*Reservations: 1-877-688-CAMP
1288 Boston Post Road
Madison, CT 06443*

Go to www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks to look up directions to any of the parks listed or to check accessibility information of any other parks in Connecticut.

Beach Wheelchairs

Beach wheelchairs are available free of charge on a first come/first served basis at a few of the state's beaches to allow all visitors to experience the beach.

- Hammonasset Beach, **Madison**
- Rocky Neck State Park, **Niantic**
- Sherwood Island, **Westport**
- Silver Sands, **Milford**
- Squantz Pond State Park, **New Fairfield**

The Great Parks Pursuit

Families are given free access to a different state park each week for five weeks. Outdoor activities include fishing, canoeing and more! Contact before each event for accessibility information. Registration required. www.ct.gov/ncli

Accessible Restrooms

The majority of state parks in CT have accessible restrooms. The following parks have one large family restroom where a parent can assist their child if needed.

- American Legion State Forest, **Pleasant Valley**
- Black Rock State Park, **Thomaston**
- Hammonasset Beach State Park, **Madison**
- Housatonic Meadows State Park, **Cornwall Bridge**
- Kettletown State Park, **Southbury**
- Lake Waramaug State Park, **New Preston**
- Rocky Neck State Park, **Niantic**

Accessible Fishing Platforms

- Bigelow Pond and Mashapaug Lake Boat Launch, Bigelow Hollow State Park, Union
- Connecticut River, Haddam Meadows State Park, **Haddam**
- Day Pond State Park, **Colchester**
- Devils Hopyard State Park, **East Haddam**
- Pataconk Lake, Cockaponset State Forest, **Haddam**
- Schreeder Pond - Chatfield Hollow State Park, **Killingworth**
- Squantz Pond State Park, **New Fairfield**
- Stratton Brook State Park, **Simsbury**
- Fort Trumbull State Park, **New London**

For more accessible fishing sites, see the

Connecticut Angler's Guide on
www.ct.gov/deep.

Did You Know? And Other Resources

See what is happening in a town near you!

Remember to check out the many events and programs in your area. Go to your **Local Library** to sign out passes to local attractions and Museums (Mystic Aquarium, Mystic Seaport, etc. each Library has different passes and deals available). Check out the **Parks and Recreation** departments, **Senior Centers** or **Adult Education programs** in your town and your neighboring towns to see what they have to offer. Give them a call and get to know them, and let them know what programs you would like to see.

Mystic Seaport Special Needs Discount

Special needs' visitors receive a 50% discount on admission: One additional adult attending to the special needs' visitor will also receive a discount of 50% on admission.

Amusement Parks are doing their part to help everyone have fun. Did you know that many amusement parks have special passes available to allow individuals who cannot stand in long lines, bypass the lines thus being able to enjoy the parks?

<http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2013/10/10/39-theme-parks-with-access-passes-for-special-needs/>

Lake Compounce Theme Park, **Bristol CT**

Lake Compounce is an award winning park for this. They offer the SAM bracelet or stamp. Just stop by Guest Relations as you enter the park and get one. It makes park personnel aware that the individual has some special needs, so he/she and a companion may enter rides at an accelerated rate, bypassing long lines.

Lake Compounce Theme Park has been chosen as the "Business of the Year 2012" for Autism Day at the State Capitol.

Six Flags New England, **Agawam, MA**

6 Flags offers 2 different special passes that allows individuals who cannot stand in lines to bypass the lines with one caregiver or friend. Stop at Guest Relations to get the passes.

- The first is the NVP for individuals with non-visible disabilities that prevent them from being able to stand in Long Lines this includes but is not limited to individuals with Autism.
- The Second is the Mobility Pass for individuals who are physically challenged.

Quassy Amusement Park, **Middlebury, CT**

When I spoke with Quassy, they said they did not have such a program since their park was so small they never got long lines. So if a small park is what you are looking for... they may be what you are looking for.

Transportation Information and Resources

A new **Great New Transportation Website is launched...** TRANSITNET www.transitnet.info

The Arc Connecticut brings you **TransitNet**; a website for people with disabilities, older adults, caregivers, and providers who want to learn more about what transportation options are available for them in Connecticut. The site is designed to be accessible and informative—providing transportation links, instructions on how to use those links, and contact information leading directly to individuals who can offer further assistance. Including information on: Mobility Managers, Travel training, Google Trip Planner, CT Transit, Community Choices, 2-1-1 Information and much more.

Go to www.transitnet.info

Please take the short Survey to help them know how to improve transportation in our state!

The Kennedy Center Travel Training is a nationally acclaimed program that teaches people with disabilities and seniors how to properly and safely use the local bus and rail system on a one-to-one basis throughout the state of CT. Since 1991, The Kennedy Center has successfully travel trained more than 3,000 people with cognitive, sensory, and physical disabilities, aged 16-95, to use local buses and trains to access the community. **There is no charge for travel training**, the program is grant funded by The Connecticut Department of Transportation.

Mobility Managers

A mobility manager is a resource person who offers information about transportation options available to people with disabilities, seniors, and veterans; identifies gaps in service; and helps implement new service where it is most needed. Mobility managers also provide ombudsman services to act as advocates and represent the interests and for individuals who have transportation mobility needs and issues. They do not provide transportation, but help create a “one-stop shop” where individuals can find solutions to their transportation challenges. If you’d like to use a mobility manager please PLAN AHEAD. If you need help getting from point A to B, it’s best to contact them a few days before you need to travel. Other services they promote have an application/interview process and may take more than a few days to finalize.

<http://www.ct.gov/dot/cwp/view.asp?a=1386&q=553940>

Eastern Connecticut Transportation Consortium, Inc. (ECTC):

to go directly to the site <http://www.ectcinc.com/index.htm>

Contact info:

Name: Ginger Morse

Phone: 860.859.5792

E-mail: ectcmobility@yahoo.com

TOWNS SERVED: Ashford, Bozrah, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, Eastford, Franklin, Griswold, Groton, Hampton, Killingly, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, East Lyme, Lyme, Mansfield, Montville, New London, North Stonington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Plainfield, Pomfret, Preston, Putnam, Salem, Scotland, Sprague, Sterling, Stonington, Thompson, Union, Voluntown, Waterford, Willington, Windham, Woodstock

South Central / Know How To Go South Central CT

Website: www.knowhowtogoscct.org

Phone: 475-243-3944

E-mail: cmaguire@kennedyctr.org

Towns Served: Bethany, Branford, Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Haven, Essex, Guilford, Haddam, Hamden, Killingworth, Lyme, Madison, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Orange, Portland, Wallingford, Westbrook, West Haven, Woodbridge

Way To Go CT: Northern Central Connecticut

to go directly to the site <http://www.waytogoct.org/>

Contact info:

Name: Danielle Herbert

Phone: 860.667.6207 ext. 17

E-mail: dherbert@waytogoct.org

TOWNS SERVED: Andover, Avon, Berlin, Bloomfield, Bolton, Bristol, Burlington, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, New Britain, Newington, Plainville, Plymouth, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Somers, Southington, South Windsor, Stafford, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, Windsor Locks

Know How to Go - Mobility Resources for Southwest, CT:

to go directly to the site <http://knowhowtogoct.org/>

Contact info:

Name: Rick Davis

Phone: 203.365.8522, ext. 244

E-mail: rdavis@kennedyctr.org

TOWNS SERVED: Ansonia, Bridgeport, Darien, Derby, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Milford, Monroe, New Canaan, Norwalk, Seymour, Shelton, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Weston, Westport, Wilton

Another New website CTADA.com

We are excited to announce that the website CTADA.com is up and running. CTADA.com is the Connecticut's NEW central location for information on ADA paratransit services in Connecticut. At CTADA.com you:

- Can print out the state wide ADA paratransit application
- Can complete and send the application on-line
- Find contact information on the ADA paratransit providers in the state
- Find information on the eligibility criteria for ADA paratransit
- Watch the video: "Mobility, Choice, Independence"

Check it out: www.ctada.com

If you would like to respond to these questions or would like to be added to my E-mail list

Please contact me: Pamela Okerblom – Recreation Therapist

Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov or call 860-859-5482