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## LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

# Continuing to inform

**S**ince 2008 when we first began to publish these magazines for Special Needs Parents, our purpose has been to help inform. We know that having a child with special needs is a daunting experience that is often initially disappointing and potentially alarming. It can send a family into a real panic.

They say that knowledge is power and with that said, becoming more powerful is essential when confronting circumstances that are typically disarming. Finding out your child is different is not easily accepted, and often there is rage and/or guilt. Taking care of yourself and your feelings about things is extremely important, and without it, no parent is able to face the challenges of raising any child.

One woman I know had to confront the reality that her daughter had an eating disorder, a concept as foreign to her as a language that she didn't speak or understand. Her response to this illness of her daughter's left her depressed and angry and also in denial. She was unfamiliar with such a concept and hadn't picked up on the signs until it was more than obvious to everyone.

Her reaction was in fact a healthy one. She reached out, found a good professional and set up therapy for herself. She inherently knew that she had to get herself "together" before she could be of any support to her daughter. In just a few sessions she was ready to navigate the possibilities and find the help her daughter needed, thus they were able to avoid hospitalization and start her daughter on the road to recovery.

Luckily for today's parents there is more information available and issues that used to be hidden and/ or just not addressed are now commanding lots of focus. Conditions have names and research over the past 50 years has taken us to new levels of educating those children who demand specific care and consideration.

Budgets are provided for in most communities to not only address and educate and provide care, but also to research and inspire. Special Needs fairs are commonplace and more and more special needs providers are available to address the spectrum of issues. There is more education for parents and other family members helping the whole family unit to behave in unison towards a common goal.

We are proud of the part we play to lend support, help and connection. Here then is yet another issue of our Special Needs magazine.

Thanks for reading.



Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher



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# The misunderstood CHILD

An organization offers help to those who struggle with nonverbal learning disability

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

**O**ur bodies and brains work in mysterious ways. And even with cutting-edge medical, psychological, and scientific advances, there are still some things we can't yet figure out or fully understand.

A “mystery” condition that has been around for a long time has become less mysterious thanks to groundbreaking research. Experts now know much more about nonverbal learning disability's inner workings than they did 15 or 20 years ago, but valid recognition and an official diagnosis are still in the works.

Children, adolescents, and adults who struggle with nonverbal learning disability have to deal with challenging social and spatial difficulties. It affects the development of social skills, including the ability to form meaningful friendships, and may also affect some aspects of academic performance. In many kids and adults, the disability causes a dizzying range of baffling and seemingly odd behaviors and idiosyncrasies that progressively manifest across almost every facet of their being; in essence, taking over their lives and causing havoc inside and out.

“Nonverbal learning disability is a very complicated and poorly understood disability, and too many people are marginalized in life as a result,” said Dr. Laura Lemle, who founded the NVLD Project — which works to assist people who struggle with this multi-faceted disability — to raise awareness, build support, and further our understanding of the condition.

“The NVLD Project was inspired by my daughter, who was diagnosed with having a nonverbal learning disability at the age of 5,” said Lemle. “My daughter's unwavering determination and courage inspired me to create a special home and a supportive and inclusive community to help others and change lives.”

Experts and the organization have teamed



Dr. Laura Lemle's daughter inspired the NVLD Project.

up to understand the cognitive mechanisms that underlie the social problems that characterize the disability, in order to develop targeted, efficient treatments that improve the social experiences of children with it.

“The NVLD Project is an important collaborator with the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Columbia University Medical Center. Through this collaboration, we are conducting research that will help better understand the symptoms and causes of nonverbal learning disability,” said Dr. Moira Rynn, Division Director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. “We are also providing educational training to school professionals to increase awareness of this learning disability, so that children can be identified and provided the right help.”

## Signs

Youngsters with nonverbal learning disability often struggle with ordinary things, like understanding a person's reactions or gestures.

But 65 percent of meaning is communicated by nonverbal cues, such as tone of voice, facial

expression, posture, and body language.

They also have trouble learning to tell time or the value of coins; display clumsiness due to poor gross motor skills (bikes and skates may be dangerous; younger kids may even avoid slides and jungle gyms); and have difficulty with fine motor skills (this can be detected early), i.e. tying shoelaces, fastening buttons, and using scissors and utensils.

Youngsters with this disability struggle with life skills that require an understanding of spatial relationships (such as recognizing how parts fit together into a whole, completing jigsaw puzzles, or building with Legos). Other issues include poor visual memory, so students may not remember what they've read or seen. This makes copying from a blackboard and recognizing people's faces difficult, and getting lost is very common.

Older students usually struggle with reading comprehension and math, i.e. fractions and ratios, graphs, geometric shapes, and may have problems integrating new information, which makes it difficult for them to cope with new situations. Since more writing and reading are required in middle school, homework takes more time, and a lack of abstract thinking means science isn't their best subject.

## Raising a misunderstood child

Lemle, who is a mother of three, knew only too well the anguish of raising a child with a nonverbal learning disability. But over the years, she has marveled at her daughter's bravery.

“My daughter has faced many substantial challenges growing up, but she has nonetheless persevered. Through a remarkable ability to be both tenacious and resilient, she has managed to succeed in many areas of her life,” said Lemle.

Now in her early 20s, Lemle's smart and feisty daughter has set a great example for others who struggle with the disability.





She is about to graduate college and will be starting a Masters program in the fall.

"She loves to read, listen to music, play guitar, and write," Lemle noted.

But it was not an easy journey. Lemle remembered feeling isolated and lonely, but said she dealt with her daughter's disability by being proactive, and coped by using it to try and do something to make constructive changes in the school culture. She served as chairperson of the learning styles committee for many years.

"When my daughter started preschool, she did not start playing on the roof in physical activities, rather, she initially just observed. Eventually, she became engaged. She had some difficulty entering a group of children to play," said Lemle, adding, "She was very verbal."

There were many challenges, especially in the social area.

"The academic difficulties I could help my daughter to remediate, but I was never truly able to find the right school for her, which was very painful," Lemle recalled. "She had social difficulties and trouble making friends. This was especially true in middle and high school."

Her daughter has spatial difficulties. When she first went out on her own at age 12, she had no sense of direction and constantly got lost, Lemle recalled.

"I was so grateful for the invention of cellphones. This helped me to redirect her, so she could navigate the outside physical world."

## Helping

Kids with nonverbal learning disability can have misperceptions about what they see or hear around them. So, helping them understand body language and those nonverbal cues is a bit complicated, but it can be done, according to experts. You can teach your child that a frown or grimace may not necessarily mean that person is angry, or doesn't like your child; it could just mean that he's had a bad day or is feeling sad. Parents and relatives can help by analyzing people's expressions when they're out and about with the kids or socializing together.

Because they may feel as if other kids don't like them, and they have a tough time expressing themselves well, they don't easily make friends in school. This leads to feelings of rejection, low self-esteem, and depression. Like all kids, these children crave friendships.

Encourage them to pursue self-esteem-boosting interests that will in turn help them relate to other kids and jump-start friendships.

*Continued on page 8*

Continued from page 7

Experts suggest that parents should join in during get-togethers, so they can introduce their son or daughter to a playmate that he or she may have something in common with; get the conversation going and set up a play date or weekly play group. It's also a great way for parents to meet other parents and feel less isolated!

Since these kids experience spatial confusion, experts also suggest parents sit in and guide their kids during group activities. Afterward, have a private chat about how they might improve the way they interact with others. You may also point out that when your child stands too close to other kids, they probably don't feel very comfortable. Then, through role-playing, you can both practice the social skills you talked about.

The challenges of nonverbal learning disability are tough to overcome. For parents, the trick is not to get overwhelmed, but rather to have fun with your kids and maintain a sense of humor as you muddle through your journey together. It's often rocky, but then, life isn't smooth sailing for anyone.

### **Raising awareness and demystifying, the disability**

While these special and loving kids

In many kids and adults, the disability causes a dizzying range of baffling and seemingly odd behaviors and idiosyncrasies that progressively manifest across almost every facet of their being; in essence, taking over their lives and causing havoc inside and out.

may have been given obstacles, many will overcome the challenges, as people in their lives — parents, teachers, and others — gain more understanding of this disability. Thanks to Lemle's vision and work through the NVLD Project, the future looks brighter than ever.

"We are equally focused on creating helpful solutions to give those with nonverbal learning disability the opportunity to live more fulfilling and productive lives where they can become fully integrated into mainstream society," she said. "In just a few short years, we have made considerable strides."

So, if you're a parent of a nonverbal learning disability child, reassure him that he is valued for who he is. And as you guide him through life and nurture his

confidence, encourage others to embrace his idiosyncrasies, and he will soon discover that he can hold on to his unique individuality.

People who struggle with nonverbal learning disability do have a lot to offer!

The NVLD Project envisions a world where they can live their lives to the fullest and are free of any stigmatization. It accomplishes this through a variety of programs, including educational workshops, expert research and ongoing advocacy.

Visit [www.nvld.org](http://www.nvld.org) for a plethora of expert content to help parents, educators, researchers, clinicians, and scientists.

Tammy Scileppi is a Queens-based freelance writer and journalist, parent, and regular contributor to *New York Parenting*.



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# The healing power of therapy pets

BY LISA A. BEACH

**T**alk about making the most of second chances. Two years ago, Maddie, a yellow Labrador, was an abused dog left on the side of the road with her 10 puppies. Taken to Canine Soulmates, a foster group, 4-year-old Maddie got a second chance when she adopted her handler Jane Nolan in March 2014. Rather than just living the good life in her new home, Maddie used this second chance to help others. Maddie and Nolan work together as a therapy dog team through Pet Partners, a national leader in animal-assisted therapy.

"I saw that Maddie had a really good temperament and a very kind heart," explains Nolan. "You can't always find dogs that are mellow, sweet, and approachable."

Dr. Brian Benjamin of Ohio Drive Animal Hospital agrees that a good temperament is key for a therapy animal. He points out that adequate training can bring out the most effective results.

"A therapy animal shouldn't have any trust issues," says Dr. Benjamin. "Plus, you can provide behavioral training, so the animal will be patient, not afraid of loud noises, and not aggressive."

To get her "working papers," Maddie got evaluated and trained through A New Leash on Life, one of dozens of community partners affiliated with Pet Partners.

After a physical, behavior evaluation, and six months of training in obedience, socialization, and manners, Maddie got the green light.

## **Therapy animals work wonders**

Together, Maddie and Nolan visit area hospitals, retirement homes, and other facilities where the healing power of animal-human interaction works wonders.

"We just help give a little bit of normalcy to the day and help them feel better," says Nolan, citing how patients' days





"You can easily see the connection that people have with the dogs. Some patients are nonverbal until the dogs visit, and then they start talking."

are filled with tests, medication, needles, therapies, and exams.

Therapy pets also ease grief, stress, and loneliness, which is why Flora Ellias, Dr. Benjamin's receptionist, takes her 3-year-old Irish wolfhound Sheldon to visit hospice patients.

"You can easily see the connection that people have with the dogs," says Ellias, who's been taking Sheldon on hospice visits three times a month for the past two years. "Some patients are nonverbal until the dogs visit, and then they start talking. Rehab patients with mobility issues will pet and brush the dogs. Even Alzheimer's patients sometimes recall a pet they had from childhood."

Dr. Benjamin understands the therapeutic effects that animals can have on people.

"There have been studies done that show the simple process of petting a dog or hearing a cat purr can release en-

dorphins that benefit a person's state of mind."

Nolan has witnessed this firsthand.

"One 5-year-old boy in oncology had lost his sight and was feeling nauseous," she recalled from a past visit to a children's hospital. "He was petting Maddie, trying to figure out what she looks like. I said, 'Do you trust me and Maddie?' He said, 'Sure.' And I said, 'We're going to play a game. You're going to touch her and tell me what part you're touching.' After he figured out he was touching Maddie's head, he said it felt like her heart because she's so soft, and I thought that was so intuitive of him. It made him calm down and be more relaxed. It was a special moment."

*Lisa Beach is a freelance writer (and cat owner) whose work has appeared in print and online, including Parents; Brain, Child; Orlando Family; Scary Mommy; and more. See more of her writing at [www.LisaBeachWrites.com](http://www.LisaBeachWrites.com).*

## Think your pet has what it takes?

Being a therapy animal isn't just for dogs. A variety of animals have the potential to serve, including cats, pigs, ponies, birds, guinea pigs, and rabbits.

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And check out these New York community partners:

**ASPCA New York** [424 E. 92nd St. between First and York avenues in Yorkville, (212) 876-7700 X 4426, [www.aspcanyc.org](http://www.aspcanyc.org)/nyc/aspcan-animal-assisted-therapy-programs, [aat.department@aspcanyc.org](mailto:aat.department@aspcanyc.org)]

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# Sticks & stones

## Facing insensitive comments as a special-needs parent

BY DANIELLE SULLIVAN

**P**arenting has become a playground for unwanted advice and excessive judgment. When you are parenting a child with special needs, you often encounter more than your fair share. While many people mean well or may just not know what to say, others can be quite insensitive and, often, ignorant.

Unfortunately, many parents of children with special needs have encountered this type of thoughtlessness. In an informal survey of local parents of special-needs children in the New York City area, the same comments kept creeping up when asked about negative statements they regularly hear. Here are just a few:

- “He is just being spoiled.”
- “She is playing you. You need to discipline her.”
- “Are your other kids OK/normal?”
- “He will walk when he’s ready,”
- “Children develop at different rates, but they all catch up.”
- “Oh, there’s nothing wrong with him. He’s a kid, he’ll grow out of it.”
- “God only gives you what you can handle.”
- “You are so much stronger than I could be. I just don’t know how you deal with it.”

When a neighbor, fellow parent, or sometimes, even a family member, offer their harsh two cents, they likely have no idea what the child or parent is battling.

Special needs can range from physical disability to mental or emotional disability and developmental delay, all of which often overlap.

Someone might see a bratty toddler refusing to do what his mother asks, but not the physical and emotional demands that child is dealing with internally, or the exasperated mom who is intentionally allowing the behavior because she knows her child better than anyone else. No one has to put on a show to please those around us. The only person the mother owes her allegiance to is her child.

AnnaMarie, a Brooklyn mom of a 5-year-old boy who has autism spectrum disorder, says the unwanted comments are grating.

“I can’t tell you how many people say ‘Oh,



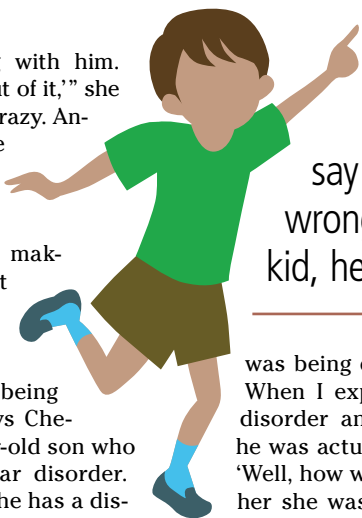
there's nothing wrong with him. He's a kid, he'll grow out of it," she says. "Ugh! Drives me crazy. Another thing is 'He made eye contact. Autistic children don't make eye contact.'"

Often, the person making judgments doesn't know the situation.

"It always amazes me how people assume my child is just being bad or is spoiled," says Cherie, a mom of a 13-year-old son who has early onset bipolar disorder. "Then, when I explain he has a disorder, they say, 'Oh, I didn't know.'"

"The most infuriating situation was at a doctor's office. My son had to take one of those breathing tests where you have to breathe into the tube until your lungs are empty. He had difficulty comprehending what he was supposed to do and was very fidgety. I was in the other room with my other son, but stepping back and forth between both rooms.

"I heard the tone change in the nurse's voice and asked her what the problem was," recalls Cherie. "She told me my son



"I can't tell you how many people say 'Oh, there's nothing wrong with him. He's a kid, he'll grow out of it.'"

was being difficult over this simple task. When I explained he had an emotional disorder and being the end of the day, he was actually doing very well, she said, 'Well, how was I supposed to know?' I told her she was not supposed to assume he was just being a brat.

"Unfortunately, it happens more often than not, especially when your child looks 'normal.'"

Writer and poet Maya Angelou once said, "Words are things," a powerful statement indeed. Words have the power to bring people down, create stress, and foster insecurity. Yet, they also have the ability to uplift, promote positivity, and nurture hope.

All parents appreciate an encouraging word and sincere compliment, but more

so, all parents can use help.

Here are some of the most encouraging statements received by parents of children with special needs:

- "How did your appointment go last week?"
- "What can I do to help you?"
- "I love you."
- "I just wanted you to know that I am thinking about you."
- "Can I watch your children while you take a nap or get some alone time?"
- "You are doing a wonderful job."
- "I'm proud of you."
- "I'm here for you."
- "Do you want to talk?"

Something as small as having a positive and encouraging attitude can brighten a person's day.

"When people acknowledge how far my son has come, or say to me, 'You're a great mom,' it always brings a tear to my eye," says AnnaMarie. "I work hard at being a good mom, and sometimes, it's really a struggle. To have others acknowledge it really makes a difference."

*Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, is a writer and editor living in New York City. She is a rare species called a Brooklyn native and very proud of the fact.*

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# Dyscalculia

## Math dyslexia has a name

BY MEGAN MCGIBNEY

**W**hen Michael was in kindergarten, his mother, Pamela, noticed he had difficulty grasping basic math.

“He couldn’t add, he couldn’t hold on to a string of numbers,” says the Rockland County N.Y. mother. “Money didn’t make sense.”

As her son grew older, things did not improve.

“He would remember [a math problem] one day, but forget the next. He would say 5 plus 5 is 10, then say 5 plus 5 is 4. He wouldn’t see the difference in \$2 or \$20.”

Michael was extremely frustrated, despite having a high IQ. He had been diagnosed as dyslexic, but Pamela could see something else was wrong. She then began doing research to find out why her son was

not understanding math.

In this way, she learned about dyscalculia — a learning disability that some call the “math dyslexia.”

Dyscalculia (pronounced dis-KAHL-koo-LEE-ah) is described as “unexpected difficulty in the acquisition of skills involving quantitative reasoning and arithmetic,” by Renee Newman, a learning disabilities specialist who founded [Dyscalculia.org](http://Dyscalculia.org).

“Kids with dyscalculia do not graduate beyond fingers,” Newman says. “The most severe will never understand what the number 5 represents. They are bright kids. But they consistently can’t be great in math.”

According to Newman, the symptoms of dyscalculia include:

- Difficulty with time, directions, recalling schedules, and sequences of events. Difficulty keeping track of time. Frequently late.
- Mistaken recollection of names. Poor

name-face association. Substitute names beginning with same letter.

- Inconsistent results in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Bad at financial planning and money management. Too slow at mental math to figure totals, change due, tip, tax.

- When writing, reading, and recalling numbers, these mistakes may occur: number additions, substitutions, transpositions, omissions, and reversals.

- Inability to grasp and remember math concepts, rules, formulas, sequence (order of operations), and basic math facts.

- Poor memory (retention and retrieval) of math concepts; they may be able to perform math operations one day, but draw a blank the next! May be able to do book work, but then fails the tests.

- Unable to imagine or “picture” mechanical processes. Poor ability to visualize or



picture the location of the numbers on the face of a clock, the geographical locations of states, countries, oceans, streets, etc.

• **Poor memory for the layout of things.** Gets lost or disoriented easily. May have a poor sense of direction, may lose things often, and seem absent minded.

"It's impaired calculation," says Virginia Berninger, a professor at Washington University who authored a math diagnostic test. "There's a lot of trouble learning math facts."

But even though some students may have trouble with math concepts, Berninger says there are still tactics for parents to do at home to help their children understand them.

"When they're 4 or 5 years old, [have them] count the dishes on the table, count the number of blocks by actually touching the objects," she suggests.

As they get older, Berninger suggests parents purchase a number line or create one. This way, children with math disorders will learn to count forward on a line and understand that numbers are all about going forwards and backwards.

"Three plus 5 means going forward five times, and you get 8," she says. "Subtraction means going backwards, so you count back five times."

Flashcards are also useful, since they involve eyes and ears, along with mouth and hands.

"When your child says the answer, they should also write the answer," Berninger says. "A lot of parents tell me their kids get better."

Another thing that could help dyscalculic children is for them to go outside.

"Being out in nature has shown to improve geometry," says Berninger.

Newman suggests that parents should be creative with their kids, such as using marshmallows to help with their counting skills. But a big part of dyscalculia is understanding direction.

"The brain needs to be programmed for directional awareness," she says. "It's all about spatial sense. There's a part of the brain that specializes in quantitative processing, but that part of the brain does not light up."

Even though dyscalculics may spend their lives struggling with numbers and calculation, that does not mean they cannot hope for a bright future, just like any other child with a learning disability.

"They could do anything that doesn't require math," says Newman. "It's not that you can't become an engineer, you'll just have problems."

As for Pamela, her son Michael, who is now 12, hopes to be a graphic designer. He enjoys art, sports, and acting. He is currently homeschooled, and is working with tutors who understand his disability. Pamela had to take him out of public school, because teachers did not have therapies or strategies to help him manage his dyscalculia.

"The programs were just not working," she says. "He just cannot learn there."

Although dyscalculia is believed to be as common as dyslexia — with seven percent of the population or more having it — there is little attention given to this disability.

"In our culture, we tend to think math is more difficult than reading," Newman says. "It's more socially acceptable to be bad at math. We need to train parents and teachers that is not OK."

Despite his earlier struggles, Michael is doing well.

"He's smart enough to know what he can't do," his mother says. "He does motor activities to put himself in the numbers. Being homeschooled allowed us to give us the time that he needs. He finally feels successful."

*Megan McGibney is a freelance journalist living in New York City, whose work has appeared in the New York Post, Corner News Media, Brooklyn Daily, and Irish Central.*



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# Homework strategies for special-needs children

BY THOMAS C. DAUS

**W**hen a child comes home from a long day at school, the last thing he wants to do is sit down and tackle his homework. And a child with special needs may have an even harder time focusing for extended periods of time. As parents, we need to accept that such difficulties will not go away overnight. Instead, we need to always remain patient and implement strategies to work around our children's weaknesses. Here are some helpful techniques and suggestions that I have seen work firsthand during my professional experiences as a speech-language pathologist:

## Allow time to unwind

After your child has had a long and exhausting day of learning in school, provide him with some immediate downtime. There should be an opportunity to unwind. Allot 30 to 45 minutes for a fun activity before he starts in on his homework. Let him watch television, have a snack, or talk to a relative (i.e. grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.) over the phone or Skype about how his school day went, upcoming special occasions, or favorite hobbies. Then, make sure he starts his homework immediately. Highly structured learning environments are most conducive to learning.

## Get up and move

It has also been well noted that children with special needs may have some component of sensory integration dysfunction. The ability to process information from the senses (touch, movement, smell, taste, vision, and hearing) and respond appropriately may be impaired. These children typically have one or more senses that either over- or under react to stimulation. This problem can be addressed through providing the child with more sensory-based activities; such as playing tug-a-war with heavy objects such as a medicine ball, allowing for increased opportunities of outdoor play, and visiting sensory gyms that specialize in providing specific tactile input for children.

If you notice your child has tantrums frequently, is self-involved with repetitive hand flapping, or becomes overly fixated with specific objects or electronics, allow

for an alternative approach to wean him out of this maladaptive behavior pattern. The use of short periods of exercise (i.e. a five- to 10-minute walk, taking a bike ride, or playing in a park) and also any positive, mini distractions (i.e. reward charts) can help to refocus your child and reduce sensory overload.

## Reward good behavior

Use a reward system to encourage your child to complete his homework. Place a chart on the kitchen refrigerator. Each time your child completes an assignment, have him place a sticker on a chart. After 10 stickers, a trip to Toys "R" Us may be quite rewarding. It is also extremely beneficial to reiterate the reward that he'll get after the homework is successfully completed.

## Learn his learning style

We are all unique in this world, and each of us has varied learning styles. It is important to identify your child's. This understanding will help you fine-tune the way in which information is received, processed, and stored in his memory. Your child's classroom teacher or speech-language pathologist can provide you with the types of learning styles which your child is presently exhibiting.

The three main learning styles are visual, auditory, and tactile/kinesthetic. A visual learner benefits from seeing what she is expected to know. Diagrams, charts, and displays placed on classroom boards are quite beneficial for a visual learner. An auditory learner does his best when learning through listening; depending on primarily hearing and speaking. Tactile and kinesthetic learning occurs while carrying out physical ac-

tivities, rather than specifically listening to a classroom discussion. Many children and adults learn through a combination of styles, but typically a preference is eventually identified. By becoming aware of your child's learning style or styles you'll better be able to help him complete his homework.

## Try mnemonics

Homework is a review of what was most recently taught. Memory plays a large role in retaining newly taught information. Depending on which level your child is presently functioning, some type of mnemonic strategies can be quite useful. Mnemonics refers to a device such as a pattern of letters, ideas, or associations that assist in remembering information.

A very popular mnemonic strategy is to use letter prompts to remember lists of things. For example, if a student is required to remember the specific colors of the rainbow, then a mnemonic letter prompt of "ROY G BIV" will help children to remember the sequence of the hues commonly associated with it (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet). Acronyms such as these are priceless when it comes to remembering information identified within categories.

In a nutshell, the above mentioned strategies and suggestions can truly help your child during homework time. Always remember to practice patience with your children. In time, routines will develop, and the homework experience will develop into very meaningful learning opportunities. For further information on specific strategies to help with your child's learning, visit [www.speakingfromtheheart.org](http://www.speakingfromtheheart.org).

*Thomas C. Daus is a speech-language pathologist.*







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# Finding the right caregiver for your special-needs child

BY KRISTEN J. DUCA

**F**inding the ideal caretaker for your child requires a lot of time and hard work. However, if you put the effort into the search up front, you will be rewarded with the result.

If you have a child with special needs, behavioral issues, or health or medical concerns, you should communicate that to the childcare candidate in the initial conversation. Ask her directly if she is comfortable taking care of a child with certain needs. If she is at all hesitant or expresses concern about her abilities, then she may not be the right fit for your child, so move on to the next candidate.

Depending on your child's situation, you may want to focus on hiring a caregiver with experience in dealing with children with special needs and preferably someone who has taken care of a child with similar issues to yours (realizing that all children are unique). Parents of a special-needs child will want to use extra due diligence to find a childcare provider who could appropriately care for their child with patience, maturity, and compassion.

Additionally, since family safety is important, realize that conducting a background check on the childcare candidate as well as checking references may be a good idea for your piece of mind.

Here are some important things to look out for when hiring a caregiver for your special-needs child:

## **Formal certifications or degrees**

You will want to evaluate whether or not a childcare provider with a medical background or advanced educational degrees is the ideal hire for your situation. If

it is, then target your search accordingly by networking via word of mouth (friends and relatives), referrals from other parents or childcare providers who understand your situation, special-needs support groups, university bulletin boards or college newspapers, local medical or special-needs schools; physicians' offices, birthing centers, nurses, health-care workers, community or religious centers, agencies (be prepared to pay appropriate fees), or online childcare-service providers. Understand that depending on the situation, you may need to pay more for a highly skilled childcare provider.

If you do not feel a childcare provider with a formal educational history is necessary, you should still make sure the candidate is willing to sharpen her basic skills. Some local doctors' offices, hospitals, or community groups offer classes in childcare (sometimes with a focus on special needs), child safety, first aid, or CPR on a regular basis. If the candidate lacks formal training, you should ask her up front if she would attend a class or session and offer to pay her tuition.

If the candidate took childcare, child safety, first aid, or CPR training a long time ago, then see if she would be willing to take a refresher course. Tell her that you would be happy to sign her up and compensate her for any fees. Let her know that the class could be taken at a time that would work with her schedule. Make sure she realizes that refresher classes are a great way to reinforce information and techniques that she might have previously learned.

## **Ability to nurture**

During an interview, it may be hard to judge if the childcare candidate is nurturing. If you have a young baby, then toward

the end of the interview, hand the baby over to the candidate and watch how they both respond. Watch her interact with your baby, and take note of her demeanor. Make sure you feel comfortable with the way the caregiver supported your baby's head and neck. Take note if the caregiver seems gentle or tender. Notice if her movements seem natural.

If you have an older child, you should ask the candidate to interact with him or her by playing a game, doing a project, or participating in a favorite activity with the child. Once again, see how she acts around your child and evaluate whether she would be a good fit. Notice if she tried to engage your child in lively conversation. If the child had questions, think about if she answered them in a clear and pleasant manner. Evaluate if she fully engaged your child in the activity and, if needed, adapted it to better suit your child. Also, you will want to see if she seemed patient as well as encouraging.

## **Gauging common sense**

Good judgment and the ability to make rational, wise decisions can be hard to assess in an interview. You will likely have to go with your gut feeling after meeting the candidate. It is a good idea to make unannounced visits from time to time. Also, ask others who may be around your child and childcare provider how they think the relationship is working. Most likely, you will want a situation that provides structure or predictability for your special-needs child that makes him or her feel comfortable. The childcare candidate must be able to assess the child's abilities and create an ideal environment for him to grow.

## **Communication skills**

You may want to investigate whether or





not the childcare candidate feels comfortable among professionals who may play important roles in the child's life. Depending on the child's specific needs, he or she may be in regular contact with speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, psychologists, nutritionists, teacher aides, and various doctors or medical professionals. Make sure the childcare candidate can work well with various professionals as well as communicate any important information from the child's sessions or interactions back to you.

### **Capacity to deal with difficult situations**

As any parent knows, every day with a child is different, and things do not always go as planned. It is important to discuss your child's disposition with the caregiver. As she spends more time alone with your child, she will learn how your child reacts to certain situations.

You should get an idea of how the caregiver would deal with a difficult and realistic situation involving your child by asking her situational interview questions regarding such topics as discipline, frustration, crying, accidents, and so on. Carefully listen to her responses and evaluate if you believe her answers or reactions make sense. Perhaps she can offer creative solutions that you may not have thought of trying with your child.

### **Safety first**

Asking the childcare candidate a situational question regarding how she dealt with an emergency situation tests her ability to handle situations under pressure. Make sure that you communicate your family's safety rules to the caregiver. Specifically, tell the caregiver what your child can or cannot do inside or outside your home. You should also detail any dietary habits or restrictions or medications that are important for the caregiver to be aware of when watching your child.

Establish a relationship with the caregiver in which she knows she should always ask for help if she needs it. Additionally, remember to always keep your cellphone on and instruct the caregiver to do the same. Make sure the communication lines are always open between you and your caregiver. Raising and caring for your child is a team effort. Safety should always come first.

*New York-based working mother Kristen Duca and her husband are the parents of two girls. She is the author of "Ultimate Nanny: How to Find, Interview, and Manage the Most Important Person You Will Ever Hire – Your Child's Nanny" available on amazon.com now. Get the inside scoop on how develop the right criteria, identify, and select the ultimate nanny.*

# What is a Supplemental Needs Trust?

*What is a Supplemental Needs Trust? How is it different from a Special Needs Trust? What is the difference between a “first-party” and a “third-party” trust?*

**A** Supplemental Needs Trust is a trust created to hold assets for the benefit of a disabled individual in a way that will not interfere with or abate any government benefits that are available to the individual. These benefits include Supplemental Security income and Medicaid benefits. These benefits can be crucial for the disabled individual, both in economic terms but also to the extent that there are community resources available to the disabled beneficiary through Medicaid that would not otherwise be available, even through a private pay mechanism. It is paramount to protect these benefits so that care continues without interruption.

A Supplemental Needs Trust is often referred to as a Special Needs Trust and the two terms are, for general purposes, referring to the same trust vehicle. There are two types of supplemental trusts: a “first-party” and a “third-party.”

In a first-party supplemental trust, the disabled individual is transferring his or her assets into the trust. The individual is the grantor of the trust. This is most commonly found in situations where the disabled beneficiary recovered a settlement in a personal injury or negligence lawsuit. Sometimes the personal injury lawsuit arose out of the injury that caused the individual's disability. The settlement proceeds



## ASK AN ATTORNEY

**ALISON ARDEN  
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— after payment of any Medicaid lien for medical services rendered as a result of the accident — can be deposited into a first-party trust without any interruption in benefits.

The feature that distinguishes a first-party trust from a third-party is that the first-party trust must contain a “payback” provision. This means that when the grantor (the disabled beneficiary) dies, any outstanding Medicaid liens are repaid from the remain-

ing assets in the trust before any money is distributed to the remainder beneficiaries named in the trust. This means that there might not be any remaining trust assets to distribute to the remainder beneficiaries (i.e., family members or even a charity). Any Medicaid lien takes priority, even before funeral expenses. It is prudent to purchase a pre-paid burial from the trust during the beneficiary's lifetime.

A third-party trust does not have a payback requirement, because the funds used to “seed” the trust are not the disabled individual's own funds. They are generally the funds contributed by a third party, whether a parent, grandparent, sibling, or other. The balance in the trust can be distributed or appointed to anyone that the grantor (the person who creates the trust) names as a contingent or remainder beneficiary.

Keep in mind that, under current law, first-party trusts can only be created by a parent, grandparent, or sibling. This pres-



ents a strange nuance under the law because there are disabled beneficiaries who are not necessarily incompetent to create a trust. It also becomes problematic when the disabled beneficiary lacks someone qualified to create the trust on his behalf.

The beauty of Supplemental Needs Trusts is that they enhance and enrich the lifestyle of disabled individuals who would otherwise be faced with a Hobson's choice of available benefits or trust assets that would otherwise be insufficient, on their own, to support the beneficiary. In the past, these individuals were frequently disinherited and impoverished in order to maintain crucial government benefits. Supplemental Needs Trusts result in greater services and products for disabled individuals.

*Alison Arden Besunder is the founding attorney of the law firm of Arden Besunder P.C., where she assists new and not-so-new parents with their estate planning needs. Her firm assists clients in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties. You can find Alison Besunder on Twitter @estatetrustplan and on her website at [www.besunderlaw.com](http://www.besunderlaw.com).*

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# The disability vote

## A voice to be heard

### Easterseals fights to raise awareness among political powers

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

**A**nybody can become disabled. Did you know that one in five Americans is in some way challenged? That's more than 56 million people who have special needs or are living with a disability. And New York City — which isn't very disability-friendly — is home to about one million.

Like everyone else, these people yearn to achieve their potential and lead independent lives despite their limitations. As with all parents, those who have kids with disabilities want to give them every possible opportunity to excel.

New York families must also deal with additional challenges. Most grapple with issues related to healthcare and early intervention services while facing daunting financial woes.

Easterseals is there to advocate for positive change.

For nearly a century, this world-renowned organization has meant hope for millions of Americans. Its mission: redefine disability for the 21st century. Families, as well as veterans, have benefited from Easterseals' ongoing work and dedication to the communities it serves.

And as concerned voters, folks struggling with a disability definitely have something to say and want to be heard. Easterseals' President and Chief Executive Officer Randy Rutta recently wrote an open letter to the presidential candidates and other contenders for public office that included statistics that highlighted what topics matter most to those with, and impacted by, disability.

I spoke with Rutta about the 2016 election and what it means for adults and children with special needs.

**Tammy Scileppi:** Please explain how this election will impact the 56.7 million Americans living with a disability, along with the estimated 62 million eligible vot-

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"The greatest of these issues affecting families with kids living in New York City is healthcare. In a recent study determining the most disability-friendly locations among the 150 most populated cities, New York ranked last in healthcare."

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ers who have a disabled family member.

The greatest of these issues affecting families with kids living in New York City is healthcare. In a recent study determining the most disability-friendly locations among the 150 most populated cities, New York ranked last in healthcare. High costs of doctor visits, costly insurance premiums, the quality of doctors and nurses and public hospitals, and the percentage of uninsured population all factored into this rating.

**TS:** What is each presidential candidate's platform on this topic?

**RR:** Parents of children with disabilities want to know how the candidates feel about ensuring young kids with disabilities can be included in early education programs, how they will be successful in school, and how they will be able to secure the health services their child needs for his overall well-being. Access to these specific services dictates whether children will have the skills to become independent adults.

As a non-partisan organization, we do not engage in electoral activities. However,

Easterseals has been closely watching the policies of each of the presidential candidates. Both of the major candidates have presented policies to make it easier for working families to access early education services. However, the similarities end there. So Easterseals is encouraging all citizens to learn more about the priorities of each candidate and to determine which one will advance policies that increase opportunities for people with disabilities.

**TS:** What was the outcome of your open letter to the presidential candidates and candidates for public office? Please recap for our New York Parenting families what the letter was about and what are some important statistics related to the state and the city?

**RR:** People with disabilities will account for approximately one sixth of eligible voters in the 2016 election, totaling 34.6 million people in all. And their political preferences look similar to those without disabilities both in terms of party affiliation and their distribution across the ideological spectrum.

The open letter to presidential candidates was a way for Easterseals to amplify the issues most important to the disability community in this historic election — ensuring the issues they care about most are heard — now, and long after the polls close.

We reached out to our clients and supporters to learn more about what they face day-to-day and what topics need to be addressed to ultimately make change. Healthcare continues to be a top priority — nationally and locally. Of our survey respondents, 68.9 percent identified affordable healthcare as their most important issue. Access to services, early intervention, and assistive technology rounded out the top four most important issues among respondents.

In addition to healthcare, economic well-being continues to be a concern among



Easterseals' President and Chief Executive Officer Randy Rutta recently wrote an open letter to contenders for public office.

people with disabilities in New York, with the city ranked as one of the worst economies for people living with disabilities (126 out of 150 most populated cities).

Although voting is a right guaranteed by law to people of all abilities, accessibility challenges still arise at the polls. Easterseals teamed up with the American Association of People with Disabilities and RevUp to create an Election Day checklist for voters with disabilities to ensure everyone's voice is heard this election season.

**TS:** Please discuss recent news related to your organization's stance on healthcare, early intervention services, economic well-being, and kindly share with our readers what New York families with special-needs kids should know or be aware of and what they should be asking doctors and specialists, and advocating for.

**RR:** I think the most pivotal news for Easterseals in the past month has been Congress' decision to provide additional funding to address the Zika virus. Children born with microcephaly or adults who contract Guillain-Barre Syndrome as a result of Zika need critical health and related services. As one of the nation's foremost providers of early intervention services to young children, Easterseals knows how critical it is to connect these families to developmental services as soon as possible. These services will help a family gain the skills they need to care for their child as well as to provide a child with physical or speech therapy or other services that ensure the child's health and well-being.

Federal, state, and local governments provide essential support to Easterseals, so we can ultimately make lives better for those facing disability. That is why

this election is so important. When issues arise such as Zika that cause difficult outcomes involving disability, we want a candidate that is on our side and recognizes the importance of what we provide — services that families otherwise would not have access to.

New York City families with special-needs children should ultimately be aware of their child's right to access the same quality of life of others. There are 56.7 million Americans living with disability — nearly one million in New York City alone — proving that disability is not a one-size-fits-all approach. But they don't have to navigate it alone. We want families living with disability to know there is a community waiting for them at Easterseals.

*Tammy Scleppi is a Queens-based freelance writer and journalist, parent, and regular contributor to New York Parenting.*



# Triumphing over dyslexia

**W**hen most people hear the word “dyslexia,” they immediately associate it with a reading problem. The disorder does cause problems with reading from left to right, reversing letters and words, spelling words, reading quickly, writing words, “sounding out” words in the head, pronouncing words when reading aloud, and reading comprehension, but the issue involves much more than reading.

The brains of people with dyslexia are wired differently. The Dyslexia Association explains that the two most important contributors to dyslexia are an underutilized left hemisphere, and an out-of-whack central bridge of tissue in the brain, called the corpus callosum. According to the National Institutes of Health, up to 15 percent of the U.S. population has significant difficulty learning to read.



## HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

“People with a learning difference like dyslexia may have trouble with reading, writing, spelling, math, and sometimes, music,” says the institute.

Three times as many boys as girls have dyslexia.

In preschool-aged children, symptoms include late talking, difficulty in learning nursery rhymes, and rhyming games. In school-aged children, a student may have difficulty following quick instructions, reading at age level, comprehending what is said to him, and problems remembering the sequence of things.

In teens, the symptoms may be the same as in younger children, and also include difficulty summarizing a story, learning a foreign language, memorizing, and understanding jokes and idioms.

Recently, The Child Mind Institute hosted the 13th annual Adam Katz Memo-

Whoopi Goldberg, award-winning comedian, actress, human rights advocate, and host of “The View,” spoke to president of the Child Mind Institute, Dr. Harold Koplewicz, about living and succeeding with dyslexia.

rial Conversation and featured a candid conversation between award-winning comedian, actress, and host of “The View” Whoopi Goldberg and Child Mind Institute President Dr. Harold Koplewicz at the Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College. They shared an in-depth discussion about Goldberg’s struggles and victories surrounding living with dyslexia.

“What I remember about being a kid was that I felt pretty protected, I wasn’t afraid, and I had a mother who understood — after a while — that there was something different about the way I learned things,” she explained. “It takes people a little while to accept that something’s going on, and it’s not that you’re being lazy. It’s not that you’re not trying.”

Many people with dyslexia, like Goldberg, thrive as highly visual learners and creative thinkers who excel in the arts. She says she’s discovered along the way useful methods to overcome her dyslexia while learning scripts. Whenever she’s required to learn a new script, she enlists someone to read the lines out loud with her, so she can memorize them. Similarly, when she wrote her recent book, she dictated each word to an assistant and then afterward, had it read back to her for editing.

“The advantage of dyslexia is that my brain puts information in my head in a different way,” says Goldberg.

One website working to promote the positive aspects of the condition, Dyslexia The Gift, writes, “Our visual and holistic learning style means that we learn best through the creative process, with methods that focus on mastery of the meanings of words and symbols. The true gift of dyslexia is the gift of mastery.”

To learn more about dyslexia, visit:

- International Dyslexia Association, [dyslexiaida.org](http://dyslexiaida.org)
- The Dyslexia Foundation, [dyslexiafoundation.org](http://dyslexiafoundation.org)
- Everyone Reading, [everyonereading.org](http://everyonereading.org)
- National Center For Learning Disabilities, [nclld.org](http://nclld.org)
- Decoding Dyslexia—NY, [decodingdyslexia-ny.org](http://decodingdyslexia-ny.org)

*Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney’s Babble.com. Find Sullivan on her blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.*





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Contact Syreeta Jones at [sjones@pegasustr.org](mailto:sjones@pegasustr.org) or (845) 669-8235 x101 for more information.

[pegasustr.org](http://pegasustr.org)



THE SCHOOL AT THE  
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[mmdg.org/special-kids](http://mmdg.org/special-kids)

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- School Consultations and Advocacy
- Psychiatric Medication Management
- Psychological Diagnosis Assessments
- Social Skills Therapy Groups
- Psychiatry
- Psychological Therapy



### LOCATIONS

#### BROOKVILLE

on AHRC Nassau's campus:  
189 Wheatley Road  
Brookville, NY 11545

Mon-Thurs 8:30 AM-8:00 PM  
Fri 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

#### FREEPORT

230 Hanse Avenue  
Freeport, NY 11520

Mon-Tues 8:30 AM - 6:00 PM  
Thurs 8:30 AM - 8:00 PM

**We provide services regardless of your ability to pay.  
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[www.advantagecaredtc.org](http://www.advantagecaredtc.org) | [www.fayjindnercenter.org](http://www.fayjindnercenter.org)

 [lindnercenter](https://www.facebook.com/lindnercenter)

# New York Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

### ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER

#### The Child Mind Institute

445 Park Ave. (entrance on 56th street)  
(212) 308-3118

[www.childmind.org](http://www.childmind.org)

Services Provided: Education, workshops and support groups for those with ADD, OCD and ADHD

#### Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders

New York City

P.O. Box 133, Manhattan

(212) 721-0007

[www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)

[parent2parent@chadd.net](mailto:parent2parent@chadd.net)

[new-york-city@chadd.net](mailto:new-york-city@chadd.net)

Services Provided: Educating and support groups.

#### HJD-NYU ADD Center

301 E. 17th St., New York, NY 10003

(212) 598-6490

[www.hjd.med.nyu.edu](http://www.hjd.med.nyu.edu)

Services Provided: Diagnostics and Treatment, and Parenting Skills Training

### AUTISM

#### AHA-Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism Association

303 Fifth Ave., Manhattan

(888) 918-9198

[www.ahany.org](http://www.ahany.org)

[pats@ahany.org](mailto:pats@ahany.org)

Services Provided: educating parents of special needs children, support group.

#### Association for Metro Area Autistic Children

25 West 17th St., Ground Floor

New York, NY 10011

(212) 645-5005 (877) 645-5005

[www.amac.org](http://www.amac.org)

[info@amac.org](mailto:info@amac.org)

Services Provided: Case Manage, Community Education, Information and Referral, Treatment, Vocational Employment

Other: Residential Camp

#### Autism Science Foundation

419 Lafayette St., Second Floor

New York, NY 10003

(646) 723-3977

[www.autismsciencefoundation.org](http://www.autismsciencefoundation.org)

[contactus@autismsciencefoundation.org](mailto:contactus@autismsciencefoundation.org)

Services Provided: Information and Provides

Founding for Medical Research

#### Autism Society of America

Queens Chapter

188-83 85th Rd.

Holliswood, NY 11423

(718) 464-5735

Brooklyn Chapter

224 Ave. S

Brooklyn, NY 11223

(718) 336-9533

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

#### Brooklyn Autism Center Academy

111 Remsen St.

Brooklyn, NY 11201

(718) 554-1027

[www.info@brooklynautismcenter.org](http://www.info@brooklynautismcenter.org)

Services Provided: BAC is a private, not for profit school dedicated to providing high-quality education to children with autism and support to the general autism community.

#### Downtown Spectrum Parents, Parents of Individuals with Autism Support Group

363 Greenwich St., Manhattan

(212) 219-1195

#### Eden II Programs

150 Granite Ave., Staten Island, NY 10303

(718) 816-1422

[www.eden2.org](http://www.eden2.org)

Services Provided: Education, Adult day programs, Family Support and Residential Care

#### Gingerbread Learning Center, Inc

80 Woodrow Rd.

Staten Island, NY 10312

(718) 356-0008

[www.gingerbreadlctr.com](http://www.gingerbreadlctr.com)

[gingerbread@gingerbreadlctr.com](mailto:gingerbread@gingerbreadlctr.com)

Services Provided: Group or individual curriculums at your home, preschool or our center.

Diagnostic evaluations and therapy by licensed certified professionals — placement determined by NYC CPSE.

NYS approved preschool evaluation site.

Free tuition and transportation for all eligible children — funding provided through state and local agencies — parent may transport for reimbursement.

Developmental areas: Behavior and socialization, cognitive development, speech and language, hearing loss, physical and occupational therapy.

Two convenient Staten Island locations.

Call or visit our school and pick up a free brochure. For information concerning the Early Intervention Program call 311.

#### New York Families for Autistic Children, Inc.

95-16 Pitkin Ave.

Ozone Park, NY 11417

(718) 641-3441

Services Provided: NYFAC serves any family within New York that has a child with a developmental disability. Their doors are open to any family member, friend, professional, or student who wants to learn, to develop and to grow. Their motto: "Helping Parents ... Help their children ...

One family at a time"

#### North Central Bronx Hospital

3424 Kossuth Ave., room 15A11

FSPDD at North Central Bronx Hospital

(718) 519-4797

[NY-Bronx@autismsocietyofamerica.org](mailto:NY-Bronx@autismsocietyofamerica.org)

Services Provided: Autism support group, provides information and support..

#### The McCarton Foundation and School

331 West 25th St.

New York, NY 10001

(212) 229-1715

[www.mccartonfoundation.org](http://www.mccartonfoundation.org)

Services Provided: Education for children and Research Center

#### QSAC, Quality of Life & Services for the Autistic Community

253 W. 35th St., New York, NY 10001

30-10 38th St., Astoria, NY 11103

and 2509 Broadway, Astoria, NY 11106

(718) 728-8476

[www.QSAC.COM](http://www.QSAC.COM)

[QSACnyc@aol.com](mailto:QSACnyc@aol.com)

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Residential

Other: After school programs, behavior management, Day Habilitation, Family reimbursement, In-house/overnight respite, parent support group, Parent training, pre-school, Residential Habilitation, Special education itinerant Teacher

#### Thursday's Child, Inc.

7676 13th Ave.

Brooklyn, NY 11228

(718) 630-5100

[www.thursdayschildinc.com](http://www.thursdayschildinc.com)

Services Provided: Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech, Special Instruction, Family Support Groups and Parent Workshops

### BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

#### Helen Keller Service of the Blind

57 Willoughby St., Brooklyn

(718) 522-2122

[www.helenkeller.org](http://www.helenkeller.org)

[info@helenkeller.org](mailto:info@helenkeller.org)

Services Provided: Free workshops, all ages for visually impaired.

#### Jewish Guild for the Blind

15 West 65th St., New York, NY 10023

(212) 769-6200 (800) 284-4422

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

#### National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (NAPVI)

c/o New York Institute for Special Education

999 Pelham Pkwy., Bronx, NY

(718) 519-7000

[www.familyconnect.org](http://www.familyconnect.org)

*Continued on page 28*



# AUTISM SERVICES

Your insurance pays, we provide.

**DIRECT BEHAVIORAL SERVICES** provides customized ABA services and social groups (funded by your health insurance) to children and adults with autism in Staten Island, NYC areas & NJ. No waiting list.

We work on social skills, language, play skills, self-help skills and academic skills at home, school and community. Supervised by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). Call 347.559.6131 or email [directbehavioralservices@gmail.com](mailto:directbehavioralservices@gmail.com). [www.directbehavioralservices.com](http://www.directbehavioralservices.com)

Private pay also accepted.



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**718-499-5667**



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or call **212-787-9700, ext. 333**  
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## CHALLENGE

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**Early Intervention Services**  
For children birth - 3 years with special needs

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- Feeding Therapy
- Special Education
- Nutrition Counseling
- Service Coordination
- Family Support/Counseling
- Speech/Language Therapy
- Physical & Occupational Therapy
- ABA Program – Center & Home Services

*Routines Based Interventions & Collaborative Coaching*

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE:**  
649-38th Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11222

**QUEENS OFFICE:**  
72-38 Main Street  
Flushing, NY 11357

**STATEN ISLAND OFFICE:**  
1911 Richmond Avenue  
Staten Island, NY 10314



**TO REFER YOUR CHILD TO THE NYS EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM, CALL 311.**

Challenge is a contractor of the NYS Department of Health, Bureau of Early Intervention, a public program for children under the age of three who are either suspected of having or at risk for developmental delays or disabilities. This program is approved, regulated and funded by NYS Department of Health and the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene. All Services are provided at no cost to parents. Health Insurance may be used for approved services. A child's eligibility for the program can be determined only by state-approved evaluators under contract, and all services must be authorized by the NYC Early Intervention Officials.

For more information about CHALLENGE: T. **718.851.3300** W. **[challenge-el.com](http://challenge-el.com)**



# New York Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*Continued from page 26*

[jaynycnapvi@aol.com](mailto:jaynycnapvi@aol.com)

Services Provided: online forum, support group for parents with visually impaired children.

### **Parents of Blind Children (National Federation of the Blind)**

471 63rd St., Brooklyn, NY 11220

(718) 567-7821 • (212) 222-1705

Individuals Served: Visual Impairments

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

### **The Lighthouse National Center for Vision and Child Development**

111 East 59th St.

New York, NY 10022

(800) 829-0500

TTY/TDD: (212) 821-9713

[www.lighthouse.org](http://www.lighthouse.org)

E-mail: [info@lighthouse.org](mailto:info@lighthouse.org)

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral.

Other: Vision rehabilitation, low vision services, professional, Continuing education

## CAMPS

### **Camp Acorn**

P.O. Box 1383

Paramus, NJ 07653

(973) 471-2911 or [www.campacorn.org](http://www.campacorn.org)

### **Camp Akeela**

3 New King St.

White Plains, NY 20604

(868) 680-4744 or [www.campakeela.com](http://www.campakeela.com)

### **Camp Chatterbox**

Children's Specialized Hospital

150 New Providence Rd.

Mountainside, NJ 07092

(908) 301-5451 [www.campchatterbox.org](http://www.campchatterbox.org)

### **Camp Cold Brook**

Somerset Hills Handicapped Riding Center

P.O. Box 305

83 Old Turnpike Rd.

Oldwick, NJ 08858

[www.shhrc.org](http://www.shhrc.org)

### **Camp Daisy**

Hardenburg Ln. and Riva Ave.

East Brunswick, NJ 08818

(732) 821-5195 or [www.ebrr.org/campdaisy.html](http://www.ebrr.org/campdaisy.html)

### **Camp Haverim**

JCC on the Palisades

411 East Clinton Ave.

Tenafly, NJ 07670

(201) 569-7900 or [www.jcconthepalisades.org](http://www.jcconthepalisades.org)

### **Camp Hope**

(845) 225-2005 X 207 or (866) 223-6369 or

[WWW.CBFNY.ORG](http://WWW.CBFNY.ORG)

### **Camp Horizons**

127 Babcock Hill Rd.

South Windham, CT 06266

(860) 456-1032 or [www.camphorizonsorg](http://www.camphorizonsorg)

### **Camp Huntington**

56 Bruceville Rd.

High Falls, NY 12440

(866) 514-5281 or [www.camphuntington.com](http://www.camphuntington.com)

### **Camp Jotoni**

141 S. Main St.

Manville, NJ 08835

(908) 725-8544 or [www.thearcofsomerset.org](http://www.thearcofsomerset.org)

### **Camp Joy**

250 Nimham Rd., Carmel

(845) 225-2005 X212 or [www.cbfny.org](http://www.cbfny.org)

### **Camp Lee Mar**

805 Redgate Rd.

Dresher, PA 19025

(215) 658-1710 or [www.leemar.com](http://www.leemar.com)

### **Camp Merry Heart**

21 O'Brien Rd

Hackettstown, NJ 07840

(908) 852-3896 or [www.eastersealnj.org](http://www.eastersealnj.org)

### **Camp Nejeda**

P.O. Box 158

910 Saddleback Rd

Stillwater, NJ 07875

(973) 383-2611

### **Camp Northwood**

132 State Route 365

Remsen, NY 13438-5700

(315) 831-3621 or [www.nwood.com](http://www.nwood.com)

### **Camp Oakhurst**

111 Monmouth Rd.

Oakhurst, NJ 07755

(732) 531-0215 or [www.campchannel.com/campoakhurst](http://www.campchannel.com/campoakhurst)

### **Camp Sun N Fun**

1555 Getaway Blvd

West Deptford, NJ 08096

(856) 875-1499 or [www.thearcgloucester.org](http://www.thearcgloucester.org)

### **Camp Sunshine and Camp Snowflake**

1133 E. Ridgewood Ave

Saddle River County Park, Wild Duck Pond

Area

Ridgewood, NJ 07450

(201) 652-1755 or [www.sunsine-snowflake.org/sunshinemain.htm](http://www.sunsine-snowflake.org/sunshinemain.htm)

### **Camp Sunshine and Summer Fun Camp**

Children's Specialized Hospital

150 New Providence Rd

Mountainside, NJ 07092

(888) 244-5373 X 5484

### **Camp Tikvah**

JCC on the Palisades

411 East Clinton Ave.

Tenafly, NJ 07670

(201) 569-7900 or [www.jcconthepalisades.org](http://www.jcconthepalisades.org)

### **Frost Valley YMCA Camps**

2000 Frost Valley Rd

Claryville, NY 12725

(845) 985-2291 or [www.frostvalley.org](http://www.frostvalley.org)

### **Happiness is Camping Inc.**

62 Sunset Lake Rd.

Blairstown, NJ 07825

(908) 362-6733 or [www.happinessiscamping.org](http://www.happinessiscamping.org)

### **Harbor Haven Day Camp**

1155 W. Chestnut St.

Suite G-1, Union NJ 07083

(908) 964-5411 or [www.hhdc.com](http://www.hhdc.com)

### **Kiddie Keep Well Camp**

35 Roosevelt Dr.

Edison, NJ 08837

(732) 548-8542 or [www.kiddiekeepwell.org](http://www.kiddiekeepwell.org)

### **New Jersey Camp Jaycee**

985 Livingston Ave

North Brunswick, NJ 08902

(732) 246-2525 or [www.campjaycee.org](http://www.campjaycee.org)

### **Ramapo For Children**

Rhinebeck Campus

P.O. Box 266 Rt. 52 Salisbury Turnpike

Rhinebeck, NY 12572

(845) 878-8403 or [www.ramapoforchildren.org](http://www.ramapoforchildren.org)

### **Round Lake Camp**

119 Woods Rd.

Lakewood, PA 18439

(570) 798-2551 or [www.roundlakecamp.org](http://www.roundlakecamp.org)

### **Summit Camp & Travel**

322 Route 46 West, Suite 210

Parsippany, NJ 07054

(800) 323-9908 or [www.summitcamp.com](http://www.summitcamp.com)

### **Maplebrook Summer Program**

5142 Route 22

Amenia, NY 12501

(845) 373-8191 or [www.maplebrookschooll.org](http://www.maplebrookschooll.org)

### **Minding Miracles Learning Center**

90 Spring Hill Rd.

Matawan, NJ 07747

732-316-4884 or [www.mindingmiracles.net](http://www.mindingmiracles.net)

### **New Jersey Camp Jaycee**

198 Zeigler Rd.

Effort, PA 18330

(732) 246-2525 X 44 or [www.campjaycee.org](http://www.campjaycee.org)

### **Rainbow Summer Day Program**

(201) 343-0322 X 270 or [www.archbergenpassaic.org/about.html](http://www.archbergenpassaic.org/about.html)

### **Southampton Fresh Air Home**

36 Barkers Island Rd.

Southampton, NY 11968

(631) 283-5847 or [www.sfah.org](http://www.sfah.org)

## CEREBRAL PALSY

### **United Cerebral Palsy of New York City**

80 Maiden Ln.

New York, NY 10038

(212) 683-6700

[www.ucpnyc.org](http://www.ucpnyc.org)

*Continued on page 30*



# STEPS TO SOCIALIZATION

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South Melville, New York 11747

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Fax: (631) 756-6005  
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- Our mission is our promise of family participation and partnership.



**The Quad Preparatory School**  
25 Pine St., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10005  
[www.quadprep.org](http://www.quadprep.org) • [info@quadprep.org](mailto:info@quadprep.org)  
or 646-649-3913

**Preparing Twice-Exceptional Learners To Lead Extraordinary Lives**

Find **Family** online at  
[www.NYParenting.com](http://www.NYParenting.com)

# New York Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*Continued from page 28*

Services Provided: Assistive Tech Equipment, Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Residential, Treatment, Vocational/ Employment

Other: Day Treatment, Day Habilitation, Early Intervention

### DISABILITY GROUPS

#### Adults and Children with Learning & Developmental Disabilities, Inc.

807 South Oyster Bay Rd.  
Bethpage, NY 11714  
(516) 822-0028

Services Provided: Educational Services, Family Support Services, Day Services, Homes and Independent Living and Health Care Providers.

#### Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled (BCID)

27 Smith St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
(718) 998-3000/TTY/TDD  
(718) 998-7406  
[www.bcid.org](http://www.bcid.org)

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Vocational Employment

#### Catholic Charities Office for the Handicapped

191 Joralemon St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
(718) 722-6000  
[www.ccbq.org](http://www.ccbq.org)

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

#### Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York

841 Broadway  
New York, NY 10003  
(212) 674-2300  
TTY/TDD: (212) 674-5619  
[www.cidny.org](http://www.cidny.org)

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

#### Children's Aid Society

150 E. 45th St.  
New York, NY 10017  
(212) 949-4800

Services Provided: serves New York's neediest children and their families at more than 45 locations in the 5 boroughs and Westchester County. Provides comprehensive support for children in need, from birth to young adulthood, and for their families, to fill the gaps between what children have and what they need to thrive.

#### Community Service Society

105 E. 22nd St., Room 303  
New York, NY 10010  
(212) 254-8900

[www.cssny.org](http://www.cssny.org)

Services Provided: Case Management, Information and Referral

#### Developmental Disabilities Center, St. Luke's Hospital

1000 10th Ave.  
New York, NY 10019  
(212) 523-6230

Other: Developmental assessments and evaluations.

#### Disabled and Alone/Life Services for the Handicapped

61 Broadway, Suite 510  
New York, NY 10006  
(800) 995-0066

[www.diabledandalone.org](http://www.diabledandalone.org)

Services Provided: Assistive Tech Equipment, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Individual Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

#### Early Childhood Center Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center

1731 Seminole Ave.  
Bronx, NY 10461  
(718) 430-8900

Services Provided: Treatment  
Other: Parent Support Groups

#### Early Childhood Direction Center

New York Presbyterian Hospital  
435 E. 70th St.  
New York, NY 10021  
(212) 746-6175

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

Other: Preschool programs, transportation, medical, educational and Social services, evaluation and assessment services, parent education programs and resources.

#### Early Childhood Direction Center

1UCP of NYC, Inc, SHARE Center  
60 Lawrence Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11230  
(718) 437-3794

Services Provided: The Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs) provide information about programs and services for young children, ages birth through 5, who have physical, mental, or emotional disabilities and help families obtain services for their children.

#### Easter Seals New York

40 W 37th St., Suite 503  
New York, NY 10018  
(212) 220-2290

[www.ny.easter-seals.org](http://www.ny.easter-seals.org)

Service Provided: Medical Rehabilitation, Inclusive Child Care, Camping and Recreational, Education and Recreational Services.

#### EIHAB Children's Services

222-40 96th Ave.  
Queens Village, NY 11429  
(718) 465-8833

Services Provided: Connects disabled children To service providers, advocates, helps with entitlements, Medicaid waivers, financial assistance, care

coordination.

#### Fisher Landau Center for the Treatment of Learning Disabilities

Rousso Building, Second Floor  
1165 Morris Park Ave.  
Bronx, NY 10461  
(718) 430-3900

[www.einstein.yu.edu/cerc](http://www.einstein.yu.edu/cerc)

Services Provided: Health, Education and Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Guild for Exceptional Children

260 68th St., Brooklyn, NY 11220

#### Gingerbread Learning Center, Inc

80 Woodrow Rd.  
Staten Island, NY 10312  
(718) 356-0008  
[www.gingerbreadlctr.com](http://www.gingerbreadlctr.com)  
[gingerbread@gingerbreadlctr.com](mailto:gingerbread@gingerbreadlctr.com)

Services Provided: Group or individual curriculums at your home, preschool or our center.

Diagnostic evaluations and therapy by licensed certified professionals — placement determined by NYC CPSE.

NYS approved preschool evaluation site.

Free tuition and transportation for all eligible children — funding provided through state and local agencies — parent may transport for reimbursement.

Developmental areas: Behavior and socialization, cognitive development, speech and language, hearing loss, physical and occupational therapy.

Two convenient Staten Island locations.

Call or visit our school and pick up a free brochure. For information concerning the Early Intervention Program call 311.

(718) 833-6633

[www.gecbklyn.com](http://www.gecbklyn.com)  
[mikefer@gecbklyn.org](mailto:mikefer@gecbklyn.org)

Services Provided: Early childhood Education, Day Habilitation Program, Other specialized services

#### Heartshare Human Services

12 MetroTech Center, 29th floor  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
(718) 422-4200

[www.heartshare.org](http://www.heartshare.org)

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Residential, Treatment

#### IAC-

#### Interagency Council of Developmental Disabilities Agencies, Inc.

150 W. 30th St., 15th Floor  
New York, NY 10001  
(212) 645-6360

#### International Center for the Disabled

*Continued on page 32*





LEAKE AND WATTS SERVICES, INC.

## Preschool Special Education Programs

All programs are approved/licensed by the New York State Education Department, and either the Westchester Dept. of Health & Office of Children and Family Services, or the NYC Department of Health and NYC Department of Education

### • DR. KATHARINE DODGE BROWNELL SCHOOL:

Special and integrated classes, Head Start  
450 Castle Hill Avenue, Bronx, NY 10473  
**718-430-7938**

### • MARION AND GEORGE AMES EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTER:

Special class in an integrated setting, UPK,  
Extended Day child care services  
463 Hawthorne Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10705  
**914-375-8820**

### • CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER:

Special class with individualized instructional programming to students presenting on PDD/Autism Spectrum  
1751 Park Avenue, 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10045  
**646-774-3118**

### Our Preschool Special Education Programs provide:

- NYS Certified Teachers and Assistants
- Developmentally Appropriate & Individualized Learning Activities
- Occupational, Physical & Speech Therapy, Counseling
- Nutritious Breakfast and Lunch
- Transportation (provided by school district)
- Outdoor Play Area/Air Conditioned Classrooms

For more information please contact any of our programs directly or visit our website:

**leakeandwatts.org**

## Dental Services for Special Needs and Medically-Compromised Patients

### Many patients with special needs require special care

They may be more susceptible to **tooth decay, gum disease or oral trauma**. Due to their medical diagnosis or behavior therapy they may require medication or a diet that is detrimental to their dental health.



**Mary George, D.M.D./Pediatric Dentist**

**Ralph H. Epstein, D.D.S./Dentist Anesthesiologist**

**Derek Zimbardi, D.D.S./General Dentist**

**Cristina David, D.D.S./General Dentist**

**Gina Sajnani, D.M.D./Pediatric Dentist**

Over 30 years  
experience caring  
for the dental needs  
of children with  
special needs.

Office  
based general  
anesthesia  
available.

Variety of  
treatment  
modalities available  
depending on your  
child's needs.

**DDSNY**

Distinctive  
Dental  
Services  
of New York, P.C.

### OFFICE LOCATION:

173 East Shore Road, Suite 201  
Great Neck, NY 11023  
**516-487-8110**



For more info please visit [www.ddсны.com](http://www.ddсны.com)



## Not invited, *again?*

While it may not be a big deal if your child doesn't get invited once, it is a big deal if it happens repeatedly. Friends get invited. So, if your child isn't being invited to birthday parties and other events, that is a very good indication that he, or she, is struggling socially. The good news is that you can help!

*\*\*For free information, tips, and strategies  
to help your child make friends and keep them  
go to: [WhereICanBeMe.com](http://WhereICanBeMe.com)*

# New York Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*Continued from page 30*

340 E. 24th St.  
New York, NY 10010  
(212) 585-6000  
[www.icdnyc.org](http://www.icdnyc.org)

Service Provided: Medical, Rehabilitation and Mental.

### **Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, Inc.**

135 West 50th St.  
New York, NY 10020  
(212) 582-9100  
(800) 523-2769  
[www.jbfcs.org](http://www.jbfcs.org)

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

### **Korean-American Association for Rehabilitation of the Disabled**

35-20 147th St.  
Annex 2F  
Flushing, NY 11354  
(718) 445-3929

Individuals Served: All Developmental Disabilities

### **Learning Disabilities Association of New York City**

27 W. 20th St., Room 304  
New York, NY 10128  
(212) 645-6730  
[www.ldanyc.org](http://www.ldanyc.org)

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

### **Living Above Disorder Shared Journeys Support group**

Clinton Hill Public Library  
380 Washington Ave., Brooklyn  
(646) 481-6570  
[www.livingabovedisorder.org](http://www.livingabovedisorder.org)  
[info@livingabovedisorder.org](mailto:info@livingabovedisorder.org)

Services Provided: support for special needs children/adults, social workshops.

### **Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities**

100 Gold St.,  
New York, NY 10038  
(212) 788-2830  
[www.nyc.gov/mopd](http://www.nyc.gov/mopd)

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

### **Metro New York Developmental Disabilities Services Office**

75 Morton St.,  
New York, NY 10014  
(212) 229-3000  
[www.cs.stste.ny.us](http://www.cs.stste.ny.us)

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Individual/Case Advocacy, Residential, Treatment, Vocational Employment

### **My Time, Inc.**

9719 Flatlands avenue, Room 103  
Other Location: 1312 E8th street, Brooklyn  
(718) 251-0527  
[www.mytimeinc.org](http://www.mytimeinc.org)

[infor@mytime.org](mailto:infor@mytime.org)

Services provided: Support group for parents of special needs children.

### **National Center for Learning Disabilities**

381 Park Ave. South, Suite 1401  
New York, NY 10016  
(212) 545-7510

Service Provided: Information and Promotes Research and Programs.

### **New York City Administration for Children's Services**

150 William St.  
New York, NY 10038  
(212) 341-0900

Services Provided: Protects New York City's children from abuse and neglect. Provides neighborhood based services to help ensure children grow up in safe, permanent homes with strong families. Helps families in need through counseling, referrals to drug rehabilitation programs and other preventive services.

### **New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**

[www.nyc.gov/health](http://www.nyc.gov/health)

### **New York City Department of Social Services**

250 Church St.  
New York, NY 10013  
(877) 472-8411

Services Provided: Information and Referral

Other: Services vary by county

### **Partnership with Children**

50 Court St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
(212) 689-9500

Services Provided: Partnership with Children is a not-for-profit organization that provides emotional and social support to at-risk children so that they can succeed in school, in society and in their lives.

### **Staten Island Mental Health Society, Inc.**

669 Castleton Ave.  
Staten Island, NY 10301  
(718) 442-2225  
[www.simhs.org](http://www.simhs.org)

Service Provided: Clinical and Education

### **YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities**

460 W. 34th St., 11th floor  
New York, NY 10001  
(212) 563-7474  
TTY/TDD: (212) 290-2787  
[www.yai.org](http://www.yai.org)  
[link@yai.org](mailto:link@yai.org)

Services Provided: Assistive Tech Equipment, Case Management, information and Referral, Residential Treatment, Vocational/Employment.

Other: Early Intervention, preschool, health care, Crisis intervention family services, clinical services. Day programs, recreation and camping.

## DOWN SYNDROME

### **Bronx and Manhattan Parents of Down Syndrome**

1045 Hall Place, No. 3  
Bronx, NY 10459  
(917) 834-0713

### **Down Syndrome Amongst Us**

32 Rutledge St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11249  
[www.dsau.org](http://www.dsau.org)

### **Manhattan Down Syndrome Society**

124 W. 121st St.  
New York, NY 10027  
(646) 261-5334  
[manhattandowns@gmail.com](mailto:manhattandowns@gmail.com)

### **National Down Syndrome Society**

666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012  
(212) 460-9330 (800) 221-4602

Services Provided: Advocate for the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down Syndrome.

## EDUCATION

### **Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Legal Services Corp.**

1360 Fulton St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11216  
(718) 636-1155

Services Provided: Community Education, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

Other: HIV Advocacy and HIV Custody Planning.

### **BOLD – The Bronx Organization for the Learning Disabled in New York**

2885 St. Theresa Ave.  
Bronx, New York 10461  
(718) 430-0981  
[www.boldny.org](http://www.boldny.org)

Services Provided: Education, speech therapy, occupational therapy, psychological assessments and other services.

### **Early Childhood Direction Center Variety Pre-Schoolers Workshop**

47 Humphrey Drive  
Syosset, NY 11791  
(516) 921-7171 (800) 933-8779  
[www.vclc.org](http://www.vclc.org)

Individuals Served: Children with diagnosed or suspected disabilities

Services Provided: Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy,

Other: Preschool programs, transportation, Medical, educational and social services, evaluation and assessment services, parent education programs and resources.

### **East River Child Development Center**

577 Grand St.

# New York Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

**New York, NY 10002**  
**(212) 254-7300**

**www.eastrivercdc.org**

Services Provided: A Non-Profit, Family-Centered, Community based Preschool Program offering an array of Educational and Therapeutic services to children with special need between the ages of 3 and 5. These special needs include specialized instruction, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, assistive technology, and parent education.

### **Shield Institute for the Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled**

**144-61 Roosevelt Ave.**

**Flushing, NY 11354**

**(718) 939-8700**

**www.shield.org**

Services Provided: Assistive Tech/Equipment, Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Treatment.

## **EPILEPSY**

### **ANIBIC (Association for Neurologically Impaired Brain Injured Children)**

**61-35 220th St., Oakland Gardens**

**(718) 423-9550**

**www.anibic.org**

Services Provided: Physical activities for mentally disabled children.

### **Epilepsy Foundation of Metropolitan New York**

**257 Park Ave. South, Suite 302**

**New York, NY 10010**

**(212) 677-8550**

**www.efmny.org**

Services Provided: The Epilepsy Foundation of Metropolitan New York is a non-profit social service organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of people with Epilepsy and their families.

## **GENERAL-MULTIPLE SERVICES PROVIDED**

### **Adoption Crossroads**

**444 East 76th St., Manhattan**

**(212) 988-0110**

**www.adoptioncrossroads.org**

**joesoll@adoptionheling.org**

Services Provided: Educate parents on handling adopted children.

### **Advocates for Children of New York**

**151 W. 30th St., Fifth floor**

**New York, NY 10001**

**(212) 947-9779**

**www.advocatesforchildren.org**

Other: Advocate for educational rights in the public school

### **Board of Visitors, Staten Island Developmental Center**

**1150 Forest Hill Rd.**  
**Staten Island, NY 10314**

**(718) 983-5200**

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy

### **Brooklyn Bureau of Community Services**

**285 Schermerhorn St.**

**Brooklyn, NY 11217**

**(718) 310-5600**

**www.bbcs.org**

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Future Planning, Treatment, Vocational Employment

Other: Job training and placement services, Home and Community Based Waiver Services, Comprehensive Medical Case Management, Parent Support Group

### **Brooklyn Children's Center**

**1819 Bergen St.**

**Brooklyn, NY 11233**

**(718) 221-4500**

Services Provided: Inpatient Hospital Day, Day Treatment Program, Parent Advocate Services, Family Support Group. The Brooklyn Children's (BCC) Mission is to promote an environment for the Development of healthy children and adolescents.

### **Brooklyn Parent Advocacy Network**

**279 E. 57th St.**

**Brooklyn, NY 11203**

**(718) 629-6299**

Services Provided: Assistive Tech/Equipment, Case Management, Community Education, Future Planning, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy, Residential, Vocational/Employment

Other: HIV-AIDS, homeless housing, food program, respite, after school and day care.

### **Bronx Children's Psychiatric Center**

**1000 Waters Pl.**

**Bronx, NY 10461**

**(718) 239-3639**

Services Provided: Community Day Treatment, Intensive Case Management, Crisis Intervention

### **Greater New York Chapter of the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation**

**515 Madison Ave., 20th Floor**

**New York, NY 10022**

**(212) 353-8353**

**www.marchofdimes.com**

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral.

### **Institute for Community Living Brooklyn Family Resource Center**

**2581 Atlantic Ave.,**

**Brooklyn, NY**

**(718) 290-8100, x. 4145**

**(718) 495-8298**

**www.iclinc.net**

**info@iclinc.net**

Services Provided: Clinical consultation, counseling, workshops, and after-school programs for special needs children.

### **Maidstone Foundation**

**1225 Broadway, Ninth floor**

**New York, NY 10001**

**(212) 889-5760**

**mariette33@aol.com**

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral, Vocational Employment

Other: Help people with unusual problems seek the proper help that is needed for that problem and also provide education and training.

### **New Alternatives for Children**

**37 W. 26th St.**

**New York, NY 10010**

**(212) 696-1550**

Services Provided: NAC provides real help and real hope to thousands of children with disabilities and chronic illnesses and their families throughout NYC. Through an integrated continuum of health and social services, NAC keeps children safe from abuse or neglect and works with birth, foster and adoptive families to keep children out of institutions and in nurturing, loving homes.

### **Queens Children's Psychiatric Center**

**74-03 Commonwealth Blvd.**

**Bellerose, NY 11426**

**(718) 264-4500**

Services Provided: QCPC serves seriously emotionally disturbed children and adolescents from ages 5-18 in a range of programs including inpatient, hospitalization, day treatment, intensive case management.

### **Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc.**

**116 E. 16th St.**

**New York, NY 10003**

**(212) 677-4650**

**infor@resourcesnyc.org**

**www.resourcesnyc.org**

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and Referral Case Advocacy

Other: Free workshop series with a focus in issues related to early intervention, preschool, school-age special education, transition to adulthood and community resources.

Also publishes several directories.

### **Services for the Underserved**

**305 Seventh Ave. 10th floor**

**New York, NY 10001**

**(212) 633-6900**

Services Provided: SUS is a non-profit organization that provides housing, services and support for individuals with special needs to live with dignity in the community, direct their own lives and attain personal fulfillment.

### **Sinergia, Inc.**

**2082 Lexington Ave.**

**New York, NY 10035**

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# New York Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*Continued from page 33*

(212) 643-2840  
[www.sinergiany.org](http://www.sinergiany.org)  
[information@sinergia.org](mailto:information@sinergia.org)

**Residential Office:**  
902 Amsterdam Ave.  
New York, NY (212) 678-4700

Services Provided: Case Management, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy, Residential, Vocational/Employment

### **Staten Island Mental Health Society, Inc.**

669 Castleton Ave.  
Staten Island, NY 10301  
(718) 442-2225

Service Provided: Offers mental health and related services to children and adolescents and their families.

## HEARING IMPAIRED

### **Center for Hearing and Communications**

50 Broadway  
New York, NY 10004  
(917) 305-7700 (917) 305-7999  
TTY/TDD: (917) 305-7999  
[www.chchearing.org](http://www.chchearing.org)  
[info@chchearing.org](mailto:info@chchearing.org)

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, Information and referral, Individual case Advocacy

### **Lexington School for the Deaf**

Center for the Deaf  
26-26 75th St.  
East Elmhurst, NY 11370  
(718) 350-3300  
TTY/TDD: (718) 350-3056  
[www.lexnyc.org](http://www.lexnyc.org)  
[generalinfo@lexnyc.org](mailto:generalinfo@lexnyc.org)

Services Provided: Assistive Tech/Equipment, Case

Management, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Vocational/Employment.

Other: Mental Health Services including early intervention program, hearing and speech services and a school for the deaf.

### **The Children's Hearing Institute**

380 Second Ave., Ninth floor  
New York, NY 10010  
(646) 438-7802

[www.childrenshearing.org](http://www.childrenshearing.org)

Services Provided: The institute provides funding for research, educational support, and other programs relating to the restoration of hearing for infants and children with hearing loss or profound deafness. While CHI currently focuses much of their efforts on children who are deaf and can be helped with cochlear implant technology, they conduct research related to causes of deafness that ultimately can benefit people of all ages.

## LEGAL SERVICES

### **Lawyers for Children, Inc.**

110 Lafayette St., Eighth floor  
New York, NY 10013  
(800) 244-2540

[www.lawyersforchildren.com](http://www.lawyersforchildren.com)

Services Provided: Future Planning, Information and Referral, Legal Advocacy

### **Legal Aid Society of New York City**

199 Water St.  
New York, NY 10038  
(212) 577-3346  
(347) 245-5132

[www.legal-aid.org](http://www.legal-aid.org)

Individuals Served: All Developmental Disabilities

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy

Other: Advocacy training, and systems advocacy

### **MFY Legal Services, Inc.**

299 Broadway, Fourth floor  
New York, NY 10007  
(212) 417-3700

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy.

### **New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, Inc.**

151 West 30th St., 11th floor  
New York, NY 10001-4007  
(212) 244-4664

[www.nylpi.org](http://www.nylpi.org)

Services Provided: Community Education, Information and Referral, Individual/Case Advocacy, Legal Advocacy.

## MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

### **Muscular Dystrophy Association**

11 E. 44th St. 17th floor  
New York, NY 10017  
(212) 682-5272

[www.mda.org](http://www.mda.org)

Services Provided: MDA is the gateway to information, resources and specialized health care for individuals and families coping with muscle disease. MDA's offices serve every community through a vast program of clinics, support groups, summer camps, equipment loans and much more.

## TOURETTE SYNDROME

### **National Tourette Syndrome Association**

42-40 Bell Blvd., Bayside, NY 11361-2820  
(718) 224-2999

[www.tourette-syndrome.com](http://www.tourette-syndrome.com)

Services Provided: Community education, information and referral.

# Developmental Disabilities Service Offices

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*The State Office of OPWDD provides services through the following Developmentally Disabled Service Offices (DDSO) of each borough. Services include group home placement, advocacy, respite care, financial planning, estate planning, education, day treatment, children's services, and discharge planning.*

### **Metro NY Developmental Disabilities Service Office — Bronx**

2400 Halsey Ave.  
Bronx, NY 10461  
Voice (718) 430-0478  
Fax (718) 430-0866

### **Metro NY Developmental Disabilities Service Office — Manhattan**

75 Morton St., New York, NY 10014  
Voice (212) 229-3000  
Fax (212) 924-0580

### **Brooklyn Developmental Disabilities Service Office**

888 Fountain Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11208  
Voice (718) 642-6151

### **Queens Developmental Disabilities Service Office**

80-45 Winchester Blvd.

Hillside Complex, Bldg. 12  
Queens Village, NY 11427  
Voice (718) 217-4242  
Fax (718) 217-5835

### **Staten Island Developmental Disabilities Service Office**

1150 Forest Hill Rd.  
Staten Island, NY 10314  
Voice (718) 982-1903

### **Long Island Developmental Disabilities Service Office**

45 Mall Dr., Commack, NY 11725  
Tel: (631) 493-1700  
Fax: (631) 493-1803  
Website: [www.omr.state.ny.us](http://www.omr.state.ny.us)

# New York Special Education Parent Centers

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*There are Special Education Parent Centers across New York State. These centers will provide parents of children with disabilities with information, resources, trainings and strategies.*

### Long Island Parent Center

Center for Community Inclusion  
Brentwood Campus, Long Island University  
100 Second Ave., Brentwood, NY 11717  
(516) 589-4562  
[www.liparentcenterliu.org](http://www.liparentcenterliu.org)  
Covers the following BOCES: Suffolk; Nassau

### Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled

27 Smith St., Suite 200, Brooklyn, NY 11201  
(718) 998-3000  
[www.bcid.org/](http://www.bcid.org/)  
Region served: NYC – Brooklyn

### Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc.

The Manhattan Parent Center Without Walls  
116 E. 16th St, Fifth floor, New York, NY 10003  
(212) 677-4650  
[www.resourcesnyc.org/content/manhattan](http://www.resourcesnyc.org/content/manhattan)  
Region served: NYC – Manhattan

### Parent to Parent NY, Inc.

Staten Island Special Education Parent Center  
1050 Forest Hill Rd., Staten Island, NY 10314  
(718) 494-4872  
[www.parenttoparentnys.org/Regional/statenisland.htm](http://www.parenttoparentnys.org/Regional/statenisland.htm)  
Region served: NYC - Staten Island

### Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc.

The Bronx Parent Center Without Walls  
116 E. 16th St., Fifth floor, New York, NY 10003  
(212) 677-4650  
[www.resourcesnyc.org/content/bronx](http://www.resourcesnyc.org/content/bronx)  
Region served: NYC - Bronx

### United We Stand of New York, LTD

Queens Special Education Parent Center  
Mail to: 91 Harrison Ave.  
Location: 98 Moore St., Brooklyn, NY 11206  
(718) 302-4313  
[www.meetup.com/QueensSpecialEducationParentCenter/](http://www.meetup.com/QueensSpecialEducationParentCenter/)  
Region served: NYC - Queens

### The Westchester Institute for Human Development

Cedarwood Hall, Room A106  
Valhalla, NY 10595  
(914) 493-7665  
[/www.hvsepc.org](http://www.hvsepc.org)

Covers the following BOCES: Dutchess; Orange-Ulster; Putnam-Northern Westchester; Rockland; Southern Westchester; Sullivan; Ulster and Yonkers City School District

See more at: [www.parenttoparentnys.org/education/#sthash.Gm8DbPrI.dpuf](http://www.parenttoparentnys.org/education/#sthash.Gm8DbPrI.dpuf)

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Mamaroneck, NY  
[www.elenakochinrd.com](http://www.elenakochinrd.com)  
(914)721-0660

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our monthly titles, please call  
**718.260.4554**

# Long Island Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

### ADVOCACY

#### AHRC Nassau

Nassau County  
189 Wheatley Rd.  
Brookville, NY 11545  
(516) 626-1000  
[www.ahrc.org/](http://www.ahrc.org/)

Services Provided: Case Management, Community Education, future planning, Information and Referral, residential, treatment, vocational/employment

#### AHRC Suffolk

Suffolk County  
2900 Veterans Memorial Highway  
Bohemia, NY 11716-1193  
(631) 585-0100  
[www.ahrcsuffolk.org](http://www.ahrcsuffolk.org)

Services Provided: Assistive Tech/Equipment, Community Education, Future planning, Information and referral, residential, treatment, vocational/employment

#### Long Island Advocacy Center

999 Herricks Rd.  
New Hyde Park, NY 11040  
(516) 248-2222

Services Provided: Information and referral, Individual/case advocacy, legal advocacy

#### Nassau County Commission on Human Rights

240 Old Country Rd.  
Mineola, NY 11501  
(516) 571-3662  
[www.nassaucountyny.gov](http://www.nassaucountyny.gov)

Services Provided: Community education, Information and referral, individual/case advocacy, legal advocacy

#### Nassau County Department of Social Services

60 Charles Lindbergh Blvd.  
Uniondale, NY 11553  
(516) 227-8000  
[www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/dss/](http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/dss/)  
Services Provided: Information and referral

#### Nassau/Suffolk Law Services, Inc.

Nassau County  
Hempstead Office  
1 Helen Keller Way – Fifth Floor  
Hempstead, NY 11550  
(516) 292-8100  
[www.nslawservices.org](http://www.nslawservices.org)  
Suffolk County  
Islandia Office  
(serves Suffolk West of Route 112)  
1757 Veterans Highway – Suite 50  
Islandia, NY 11749  
(631) 232-2400  
Riverhead Office  
(serves Suffolk East of Route 112)  
400 W. Main St., Suite 301  
Riverhead, NY 11901

(631) 369-1112

### AUTISM

#### Asperger's Syndrome and Higher-Functioning Autism Association of New York

189 Wheatley Rd.  
Brookville, NY 11545  
(888) 918-9198  
[www.ahany.org](http://www.ahany.org)

Services Provided: Provides support and education for families, individuals and professionals affected by Asperger's Syndrome, high-functioning autism and other pervasive developmental disorders.

#### Matt and Debrea Cody Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities

Stony Brook University, 5 Medical Dr., Port Jefferson Station  
(631) 632-8844  
[www.codycenter.org](http://www.codycenter.org)

#### Nassau-Suffolk Services for Autism (NSSA)

80 Hauppauge Rd., Commack, NY 11725  
Tel: (631) 462-0386  
Fax: (631) 462-4201  
Website: [www.nssa.net](http://www.nssa.net)

#### Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC)

56-37 188th St.  
Fresh Meadows, NY 11365  
(718) 357-4650  
[www.qsac.com](http://www.qsac.com)

Services Provided: QSAC is an award winning non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to persons with autism and/or pervasive disorder (PDD) throughout New York City and Long Island.

#### United Supports For Autism

283 Commack Rd.  
Commack  
(516) 848-8551  
[www.unitedsupportsforautism.org](http://www.unitedsupportsforautism.org)  
Contact: Natalia Appenzeller, Ph. D.

### CAMPS

#### Camp Akeela

3 New King St.  
White Plains, NY 20604  
(868) 680-4744 or [www.campakeela.com](http://www.campakeela.com)

#### Camp Horizons

127 Babcock Hill Rd.  
South Windham, CT 06266  
(860) 456-1032 or [www.camphorizonsorg](http://www.camphorizonsorg)

#### Camp Horseability

238 Round Swamp Rd.,  
Melville, NY 11747.  
(631) 367-1646 or [www.horseability.org](http://www.horseability.org)

#### Camp Huntington

56 Bruceville Rd  
High Falls, NY 12440  
(866) 514-5281 or [www.camphuntington.com](http://www.camphuntington.com)

#### Camp Loyaltown

Hunter, NY 12442.  
(518) 263-4242 or [www.camployaltown.org](http://www.camployaltown.org)

#### Camp Northwood

132 State Route 365  
Remsen, NY 13438-5700  
(315) 831-3621 or [www.nwood.com](http://www.nwood.com)

#### Frost Valley YMCA Camps

2000 Frost Valley Rd.  
Claryville, NY 12725  
(845) 985-2291 or [www.frostvalley.org](http://www.frostvalley.org)

#### Helen Keller Summer Camp

Farmingdale State University of New York.  
(516) 485-1235, ext. 617 or [info@helenkeller.org](mailto:info@helenkeller.org).

#### Gersh Academy At West Hills Day Camp

150 Broad Hollow Rd., Ste. 120,  
Melville, NY 11747  
(631) 385-3342 or [www.gershacademy.org](http://www.gershacademy.org)

#### JCC Of The Greater Five Towns Camp Friendship

207 Grove Ave.,  
Cedarhurst, NY 11516. 5  
16-569-6733 or [Gayle.fremed@fivetownsjcc.org](mailto:Gayle.fremed@fivetownsjcc.org)

#### Kehilla Vocation Experience

Henry Kaufman Campgrounds,  
75 Colonial Springs Rd.  
Wheatley Heights, NY 11798  
(516) 484-1545 or [www.sjjcc.org](http://www.sjjcc.org)

#### Mid-Island Y Jewish Community Center Aspire Program

45 Manetto Hill Rd.,  
Plainview, NY 11803  
(516) 822-3535, X 332 or [www.miyjcc.org](http://www.miyjcc.org)

#### My Shine Program

Sweet Hills Riding Center. West Hills Park,  
Sweet Hollow Rd.,  
Melville, NY 11747  
(516) 551-1491 or [www.myshineprogram.com](http://www.myshineprogram.com)

#### NYU Summer Program For Kids

College of New Rochelle,  
New Rochelle, NY  
(516) 358-1811 or [donofd01@nyumc.org](mailto:donofd01@nyumc.org)

#### Our Victory Day Camp

46 Vineyard Lane  
Stamford, CT 06902  
(203) 329-3394 or [www.ourvictory.com](http://www.ourvictory.com)

#### Powerpals Physical Fitness Camp

*Continued on page 38*



## SOMETHING

Liberi Di... Physical Theatre

Sunday, April 2, 5pm

FOR EVERYONE AGES 6+

## MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS

Kenny Wax Family Entertainment & TC Beech

BASED ON THE BOOK

BY RICHARD AND FLORENCE ATWATER

Sunday, October 29, 7pm

BEST FOR AGES 4-7

# THE NEW VICTORY THEATER

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\$25

### ELEPHANT & PIGGIE'S WE ARE IN A PLAY!

Based on the *Elephant & Piggie*  
books by Mo Willems  
Kennedy Center Theater  
for Young Audiences On Tour

Sunday, February 5, 3pm

BEST FOR AGES 4-7

### MOTHER AFRICA: MY HOME

Circus der Sinne

Friday, December 16, 7pm

FOR EVERYONE AGES 5+

(L-R) EVAN CASEY AS  
ELEPHANT GERALD  
AND LAUREN WILLIAMS  
AS PIGGIE



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209 W 42ND STREET  
just west of Broadway

# Long Island Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*Continued from page 36*

4 Cedar Swamp Rd.,  
Glen Cove, NY 11542.  
[www.power-pals.com](http://www.power-pals.com)

### Ramapo For Children

Rhinebeck Campus  
P.O. Box 266 Rt. 52 Salisbury Turnpike  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572  
(845) 878-8403 or [www.ramapoforchildren.org](http://www.ramapoforchildren.org)

### Summit Camp & Travel

322 Route 46 West, Suite 210  
Parsippany, NJ 07054  
(800) 323-9908 or [www.summitcamp.com](http://www.summitcamp.com)

### Southampton Fresh Air Home

36 Barkers Island Rd  
Southampton NY 11968  
(631) 283-5847 or [www.sfah.org](http://www.sfah.org)

### TAPA (Theresa Academy of Performing Arts) for Children with Special Needs

(516) 432-0200 or [www.TheresaFoundation.org](http://www.TheresaFoundation.org)

## CEREBRAL PALSY

### United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Suffolk, Inc.

250 Marcus Blvd.  
PO Box 18045,  
Hauppauge, NY 11788-8845  
(631) 232-0011  
[www.ucp-suffolk.org](http://www.ucp-suffolk.org)

Services Provided: Case management, community education, information and referral, residential, vocational/employment

### United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc.

380 Washington Ave.  
Roosevelt, NY 11575  
(516) 378-2000  
[www.ucpn.org](http://www.ucpn.org)

Services Provided: All developmental disabilities

## DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY SERVICES

### Child Find Program

Suffolk County Department of Health Services

Bureau of Public Health Nursing  
PO Box 6100  
Hauppauge, NY 11788-0099  
(631) 853-3069 (Western Suffolk)  
(631) 852-1591 (Eastern Suffolk)

Service Provided: Children under the Age of three, who have significant health problems or need special health care, may be eligible to receive services from a public health nurse.

The nurse will make home visits to provide support, information and training, as well as periodic screening and assessment of infant development. The program is designed to assist families in their care of babies born with health related issues, monitor and/or identify potential growth and learning problems and provide referrals to other support services (including Early Intervention) when appropriate.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Some examples of children who are eligible are: Children who were born after a pregnancy of less than 33 weeks; Children who weighed less than three pounds at birth; children who spent more than 9 days in a neonatal or special care unit; children who exhibit growth and/or developmental problems; and children with special health problems.

### Children with Special Health Care Needs Program

Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Division of Services for Children with Special Needs  
50 Laser Ct.  
Hauppauge, NY 11788  
(631) 853-3000

Services Provided: Residents of Suffolk County under the age of 21, with chronic or disabling medical conditions may be eligible for diagnostic and/or treatment services through PHCP.

Most children with chronic health problems can obtain a diagnostic evaluation to enable physicians to establish a diagnosis; a qualified family can address care plans for their child which may include surgical procedures, therapies and medications. PHCP may also assist families in securing devices such as braces, wheelchairs, hearing aids and other medical equipment and supplies.

### Feel Better Kids

626 RXR Plaza  
Uniondale, New York 11556  
(866) 257-5437

Services Provided: Feel Better Kids is a not-for-profit children's charity whose primary mission is to help children who are seriously ill or disabled.

### Long Island Infant Development Program

Nassau County  
2174 Hewlett Ave., Suite 105  
Merrick, NY 11566  
Suffolk County  
15 Smiths Lane  
Commack, NY 11725  
(516) 546-2333  
(631) 300-2333

Services Provided: Early Intervention, Preschool, ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) services from birth through age 5

### Nassau County Health Department, Early Intervention Program

106 Charles Lindbergh Blvd.  
Uniondale, NY 11553

(516) 227-8661

Services Provided: Information and referral  
Other: Point of entry into early intervention services

### Nassau Early Childhood Direction Center

Variety Child Learning Center  
47 Humphrey Dr.

Syosset, NY 11791  
(516) 921-7171 or (800) 933-8779  
[www.vclc.org](http://www.vclc.org)

Services Provided: Information and referral, Individual/Case advocacy

Other: Preschool programs, transportation, medical, educational and social services, evaluation and assessment services, parent education programs and resources.

### National Center for Disability Services

201 I.U. Willets Rd.  
Albertson, NY 11507  
(516) 747-5400  
[www.abilitiesonline.org](http://www.abilitiesonline.org)

Services Provided: Assistive tech/equipment, Case management, community education, future planning, information and referral, individual/case advocacy, legal advocacy, vocational employment.

## DOWN SYNDROME

### Alexander's Angel's Inc.

425 North Broadway, #486, Jericho, NY 11753  
(516) 361-7263  
[www.alexandersangels.org](http://www.alexandersangels.org)

### Association for Children with Down Syndrome Inc.

4 Fern Place, Plainview, NY 11803  
(516) 933-4700  
[www.ACDS.org](http://www.ACDS.org)

### Individuals Served: Down Syndrome, Mental Retardation

Counties Served: Nassau, Suffolk, Kings, Queens  
Services Provided: Case management, community education, future planning, information and referral, Individual/Case advocacy, treatment.

### Down Syndrome Advocacy Foundation (DSAF)

P.O. Box 12173  
Hauppauge, NY 11788  
(516) 983-7008  
[www.dsafonline.org](http://www.dsafonline.org)

## EPILEPSY

### EPIC long Island

Extraordinary People in Care  
1500 Hempstead Turnpike  
East Meadow, NY 11554  
(516) 739-7733

# Long Island Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

[www.efli.org](http://www.efli.org)

Serves not only individuals with epilepsy, but also those with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges.

### GENERAL

#### Family and Children Association

180 Broadway, Second Floor, Hicksville  
(516) 935-6858  
175 Nassau Rd., Roosevelt  
(516) 623-1644  
510 Hempstead Tpke, Ste. 202  
West Hempstead

#### LDA of Long Island

44 South Elmwood Ave.  
Montauk, NY 11954  
(631) 688-4858  
[ldalongisland@yahoo.com](mailto:ldalongisland@yahoo.com)

Services Provided: LDANY'S regional affiliates provide a variety of programs and services for children and adults with learning disabilities. Please contact the regional affiliates closest to you for local information and referrals or to find out more about specific services offered.

#### Services for Children with Special Needs

50 Laser Ct., Hauppauge  
(631) 853-3100  
[www.co.suffolk.ny.us/departments/healthservices/children.aspx](http://www.co.suffolk.ny.us/departments/healthservices/children.aspx)  
Contact: Liz Corrao

#### The K.I.S.S. Center (Kids In Special Services)

at the Mid-Island Y Jewish Community Center  
45 Manetto Hill Rd.,  
Plainview, NY  
(516) 822-3535  
[www.miyicc.org](http://www.miyicc.org)

Contact: Joanna M. Diamond, MS. Ed., director

### FINE & CULTURAL ARTS

#### Art without Walls, Inc.

P.O. Box 341  
Satville, New York 11782  
(631) 567-9418  
[www.artwithoutwalls.net](http://www.artwithoutwalls.net)  
[artwithoutwalls3@webtv.net](mailto:artwithoutwalls3@webtv.net)

Services Provided: Art without Walls, Inc. Established in 1985 is an award winning 501c3 NY state arts-health organization that develops original fine art and cultural programs to the disabled community. Art workshops, college portfolios, art therapy, art and cultural trips and exhibitions ages 7-18. Some adult programs are also available.

### MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

#### Muscular Dystrophy Association

11 East 44th St.,

New York, NY 10017

(212) 682-5272

[www.mda.org](http://www.mda.org)

Services Provided: Assistive Tech/equipment, case management, community education, future planning, information and referral, legal advocacy, treatment.

### SOCIAL SERVICES

#### Suffolk County Department of Social Services

3085 Veterans Memorial Highway,  
Ronkonkoma, NY 11779  
(631) 854-9930

Services Provided: Services vary by county

#### Suffolk County Department of Social Services, Family & Children's Services Administration

3455 Veterans Memorial Highway,  
Hauppauge, NY 11779  
(631) 854-9434

Services Provided: Child protective services, foster care placement

### TOURETTE SYNDROME

#### National Tourette Syndrome Association

42-40 Bell Blvd., Bayside, NY 11361-2820  
(718) 224-2999  
[www.tourette-syndrome.com](http://www.tourette-syndrome.com)

Services Provided: Community education, information and referral

### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

#### Nassau County BOCES

#### Rosemary Kennedy School

2850 N. Jerusalem Rd.,  
Wantagh, NY 11793  
[www.staffet@mail.nasboces.org](mailto:www.staffet@mail.nasboces.org)  
(516) 396-2600

Services Provided: Educational services for students with developmental disabilities from age 9-21

#### The Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Nassau County (Nassau BOCES)

Serves the 56 school districts of Nassau County, Long Island, by providing cost-effective shared services, including career training for high school students and adults, special education, alternative schools, technology education, and teacher training, as well as dozens of programs to expand educational opportunity and help districts operate more efficiently.

#### Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)

NYS Education Dept.  
Riverhead office, Plaza 524, East Main St.,  
Riverhead, NY 11901  
(631) 727-6496

Service Provided: Assistive tech/equipment, community education, information and referral, vocational/employment

#### Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)

NYS Education Dept.  
Hauppauge District Office, NYS Office Building,  
250 Veterans Highway,  
Hauppauge, NY 11788  
(631) 952-6357

Services Provided: Assistive tech/equipment, community education, information and referral, vocational/employment.

## March of Dimes

## RESOURCE GUIDE

#### New York Chapter

[www.marchofdimes.org](http://www.marchofdimes.org)  
515 Madison Ave., 20th Floor, New York, NY,  
10022  
(212) 353-8353

#### Long Island Division

325 Crossways Park Dr., Woodbury, NY, 11797  
(516) 496-2100

#### Northern Metro Division

580 White Plains Rd., Suite 445, Tarrytown,  
NY, 10591

(914) 407-5000

#### Staten Island Division

114 McClean Ave., Staten Island, NY, 10305  
(718) 981-3000

#### March of Dimes National Office

1275 Mamaroneck Ave.  
White Plains, NY 10605  
(914) 997-4488



# Westchester and Rockland Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

### AUTISM

**Arc Health Resources of Rockland, Inc.**  
25 Hemlock Dr.  
Congers, NY 10920  
(845) 267-2500

Services Provided: Physical health care, mental health services, and speech, physical, and occupational therapy for people with autism, down syndrome, and other developmental disabilities.

**Cardinal McCloskey Services**

115 E. Stevens Ave., Suite LL-5  
Valhalla, NY 10595  
(914) 997-8000

Services Provided: Group homes, service coordination program, and supported employment for adults. Therapy for people with autism.

**Community Based Services, Inc.**

3 Fields Lane  
North Salem, NY 10560  
(914) 277-4771

Services Provided: Residential and non-residential services for people with autism.

**Hawthorne Foundation**

5 Bradhurst Ave.  
Hawthorne, NY 10532  
(914) 592-8526

Services Provided: Recreational activities and crisis intervention for children and adults with autism. Parent training.

**Rockland County Ald-Yai**

2 Crosfield Ave. Suite 411  
West Nyack, NY 10994  
(845) 358-5700 x125

Services Provided: Independent living, crisis intervention, social skills groups for children on the autism spectrum. Resources and supports workshops and ballet and yoga for children.

**Taconic Innovations, Inc.**

872 Route 376  
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590  
(845) 296-1042

Services Provided: Social skills development, speech and language therapy, occupational and physical therapy, handwriting programs, family therapy, and nutritional counseling for people with autism.

**Westchester Co. Nysarc, Inc.**

265 Saw Mill River Rd.  
Hawthorne, NY 10532  
(914) 428-8330

Services Provided: Family support groups and outreach, transition planning, counseling, recreation, employment services, daily living skills services, residential services, respite. Classes for children with autism.

### BRAIN INJURIES

**Westchester Jewish Community Services**

141 N. Central Ave.  
Hartsdale, NY 10530

(914) 949-7699

Services Provided: Community living, family support, respite, baseball program. Traumatic brain injury services, mental health services. Supper club for people with Asperger's.

### CEREBRAL PALSY

**Cerebral Palsy of Westchester, Inc.**

1186 King St.  
Rye Brook, NY 10573  
(914) 937-3800

Services Provided: Residency and vocational services for adults. School, animal therapy, wheel chair basketball, teen social club, and boy scouts programs for children.

### EPILEPSY

**Capabilities Partnership, Inc.**

450 W. Nyack Rd., Suite #9  
West Nyack, NY 10994  
(845) 627-0627

Services Provided: Education and training, advocacy, vocational services, service coordination, and community independence training for individuals with epilepsy and other neurological, physical, and developmental disabilities and their families.

### HEARING IMPAIRED

**Jawonio, Inc.**

260 North Little Tor Rd.  
New City, NY 10956  
(845) 634-4648

Services Provided: Hearing evaluations for children and adults. Hearing aids. Education about hearing loss and hearing aids.

### LEGAL SERVICES

**Leake and Watts Service, Inc.**

463 Hawthorne Ave.  
Yonkers, NY 10705  
(914) 375-8700

Services Provided: Early childhood learning center, counseling, children and family services, and juvenile justice services.

**Rockland Independent Living Center, Inc.**

873 Route 45, Room 108  
New City, NY 10956  
(845) 624-1366

Services Provided: Assistance with understanding disability rights laws and benefits. Housing, transportation, and employment resources. Help modifying housing for people with disabilities. Financial management services.

### MENTAL HEALTH

**AMIC, Inc.**

480 Albany Post Rd.  
Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510

(914) 941-9513

Services Provided: The Clear View School offers support and therapy for emotionally disturbed children and families. Amic Supportive Families provides residential services for people with developmental disabilities.

**The Guidance Center, Inc.**

256 Washington St.  
Mount Vernon, NY 10553  
(914) 613-0700

Services Provided: Training in education, work, and personal relationships. Mental health treatment, substance use, and housing advisement.

**Mental Health Assoc. of Rockland Co. Inc.**

140 Route 303 Suite A  
Valley Cottage, NY 10989  
(845) 267-2172

Services Provided: Support groups, vocational services, suicide prevention, and recovery services programs for people living with mental illness or addiction.

**St. Dominics Home**

500 Western Highway  
Blauvelt, NY 10913  
(845) 359-3400

Services Provided: Mental health programs. Community and day habilitation for people with developmental disabilities. Service coordination.

### SOCIAL SERVICES

**Special Care for Families & Children Svc.**

1421 E. 2nd St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11230  
(718) 252-3365

Services Provided: Child and individual counselors, community organizations, and social services.

### TRUST SERVICES

**Community Living Corporation**

105 S. Bedford Rd., Suite 300  
Mt. Kisco, NY 10549  
(914) 241-2527

Services Provided: Pooled trust services for individuals to put money in. Arts instruction program.

**Putnam Co. Nysarc, Inc.**

Terravest Corporate Park  
31 International Blvd.  
Brewster, NY 10509  
(845) 278-7272

Services Provided: Trust services, community and day habilitation, employment services, residential services, preschool, Medicaid Service Coordination, recreation, and respite for people with intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities.

**Dutchess Co. Nysarc, Inc.**

84 Patrick Lane  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603  
(845) 635-8084

# Westchester and Rockland Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

Services Provided: Trust services. Employment and living services for adults. Schooling for children ages three to five.

**Rockland Co. Nysarc, Inc.**  
25 Hemlock Dr.  
Congers, NY 10920  
(845) 267-2500

Services Provided: Trust services, guardianship services designed to help people make life decisions, community and day habilitation, preschool, recreation, respite, and prevocational and employment services.

### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

**Crystal Run Village, Inc.**  
601 Stony Ford Rd.  
Middletown, NY 10941  
(845) 692-4444

Services Provided: Personal and domestic skills training for home, service, and work opportunities.

### GENERAL-MULTIPLE SERVICES PROVIDED

**Abbott House**  
100 N. Broadway  
Irvington, NY 10533  
(914) 591-7300

Services Provided: Self-advocacy program, day habilitation, and service projects. Recreational and social activities.

**Ability Beyond Disability, Inc.**  
480 Bedford Rd.  
Chappaqua, NY 10514  
(914) 242-8720

Services Provided: Aging specialties, psychological and behavioral support, social and community integration, vocational services, school to community transitional services for youth, transportation services, service coordination.

**Advocates for the Disabled, Inc.**  
135 Radio Circle Suite 203  
Mt. Kisco, NY 10549  
(914) 244-9688

Services Provided: Home and family care, counseling, and recreation.

**Another Step, Inc.**  
706 Executive Blvd.  
Valley Cottage, NY 10989  
(845) 268-8200

Services Provided: Residential, employment, self-help, and service opportunities.

**Behavioral Solutions of NY, Inc.**  
161 Darin Rd.  
Warwick, NY 10990  
(845) 263-9169

Services Provided: In-home services including Medicaid Service Coordination and HCBS waiver services. Strives to support individuals by decreasing

social stereotypes.

**Child Care Resources of Rockland**  
235 N. Main St., Suite 11  
Spring Valley, NY 10977  
(845) 425-0009

Services Provided: Support parents in searching for child care. Provide development services for families.

**Children of Promise Stable, Inc.**  
135 Convent Rd.  
Nanuet, NY 10954  
(845) 304-9657

Services Provided: Horse-riding activities and therapies for children and adults.

**Children's Rehabilitation Center**  
317 North Ave.  
White Plains, NY 10605  
(914) 597-4000

Services Provided: Physical, occupational, and speech and language therapy.

**Community Programs of WJCS**  
845 North Broadway, Suite 2  
White Plains, NY 10603  
(914) 761-0600

Services Provided: Service coordination, therapeutic social skills, recreational and support groups, clinical services.

**Compass Case Management**  
77 Sundrop Court  
Riverhead, NY 11901  
(631) 886-2332

Services Provided: Assists families through the application process of the Care at Home Program.

**Devereux Foundation**  
40 Devereux Way  
Red Hook, NY 12571  
(845) 758-1899

Services Provided: Family education and professional training, transition to independent life training.

**Ferncliff Manor for the Retarded**  
1154 Saw Mill River Rd.  
Yonkers, NY 10710  
(914) 968-4854

Services Provided: Education program teaches children skills to prepare them for societal living.

**Hamaspik of Rockland County, Inc**  
58 Route 59, Suite 1  
Monsey, NY 10952  
(845) 356-8400

Services Provided: Service coordination, parental retreats, family support for people of Rockland.

**Handicapped Children's Assn.**  
18 Broad St.  
Johnson City, NY 13790  
(607) 798-7117

Services Provided: Children's services, residential services, family support groups, therapy.

**Health Care Advocacy**  
33 Beach Rd.  
Ossining, NY 10562

(914) 762-8815

Services Provided: Help families find resources to maintain medically fragile children at home and work with insurance companies. Medicaid assistance, help finding and working with nursing agencies, getting medical equipment, working with school districts to accommodate children.

**Hero, Inc.**  
2975 Westchester Ave.  
Purchase, NY 10577  
(914) 725-2481

Services Provided: Adaptive tennis, creative arts. Pup program in which certified animals visit children with disabilities in group homes.

**kan, Inc.**  
62 N. Main St.  
Florida, NY 10921  
(845) 508-6298

Services Provided: Medicaid Service Coordination, community habilitation, and respite.

**Inclusive Links, Inc.**  
95-117 Ravine Ave., Suite 6AVC  
Yonkers, NY 10701  
(914) 843-3217

Services Provided: Respite, community activities, arts and creative dramatics, music and dance, sports, education, and day camps.

**Jewish Community Center**  
371 S. Broadway  
Tarrytown, NY 10591  
(914) 366-7898

Services Provided: Preschool, camp, arts and cultural events, and health and fitness centers.

**The Keon Center, Inc.**  
2 John Walsh Blvd.  
Peekskill, NY 10566  
(914) 737-6980

Services Provided: Supported employment, group day habilitation, Medicaid Service Coordination, and vocational services.

**Mount Vernon Recreation Dept.**  
City Hall Room 3  
Mount Vernon, NY 10550  
(914) 665-2437

Services Provided: City parks, juvenile delinquency prevention, and developmental youth programs.

**No. East Westchester Spec. Rec.**  
63 Bradhurst Ave.  
Hawthorne, NY 10532  
(914) 347-4409

Services Provided: Aquatics, Special Olympics training, social activities, weekend trips, and daily outings.

Other: Summer camps, winter group and community programs.

**Opengate, Inc.**  
357 Main St.  
Armonk, NY 10504  
(914) 277-5350

Services Provided: Day habilitation programs

*Continued on page 42*

# Westchester and Rockland Special Needs

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*Continued from page 41*

including computer time and hiking. Medicaid Service Coordination.

### **Progressive Social Services, Inc.**

41 Livingston Ave.  
Yonkers, NY 10705  
(914) 434-5532

Services Provided: Medicaid Service Coordination and respite.

### **Putnam Recreation for Handicapped**

953 South Lake Blvd.  
Mahopac, NY 10541  
(845) 621-5499

Services Provided: Recreational opportunities for children and adults with developmental disabilities who reside in Putnam County.

### **Rayim Of Hudson Valley, Inc.**

149 Elm St.  
Monroe, NY 10950  
(845) 782-7700

Services Provided: Community, residential, and day habilitation. Community transition services, family care, and housing subsidy assistance.

### **Richmond Children's Center**

272 N. Bedford Rd.  
Mt. Kisco, NY 10549-1103  
(914) 471-4100

Services Provided: Community and day habilitation, hourly respite, Medicaid Service Coordination, education and training, self-advocacy, help redesigning homes.

### **SE Consortium for Special Services**

740 West Boston Post Rd., Suite 301  
Mamaroneck, NY 10543  
(914) 698-5232

Services Provided: Physical recreation and sports such as karate or a fit club, expressive and fine arts activities, and daily living experiences such as lunch and a movie or a Friday travel club.

### **Select Human Services, Inc.**

17-19 Marble Ave.  
Pleasantville, NY 10570  
(914) 741-6300

Services Provided: Medicaid Service Coordination, community habilitation, waiver-respite, self-direction, and family support,

### **Share of New Square**

118 Clinton Lane  
Spring Valley, NY 10977  
(845) 354-3233

Services Provided: Hospitality rooms, meals, and transportation.

### **Sparc, Inc.**

3045 Gomer St.  
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598  
(914) 243-0583

Services Provided: School for children and young adults. Therapy, recreation, drama, and music. Other: Summer programs and family events.

### **Special Olympics of NY**

1207 Rte 9, Suite 1C  
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590  
(845) 765-2497

Services Provided: Year-round sports training and athletic competition in Olympic-style sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

### **St. Agnes Hospital**

305 North St.  
White Plains, NY 10605  
(914) 285-8490

Services Provided: Hospital, clinic, and emergency treatment facilities. Occupational and speech therapy.

### **St. Christopher's, Inc.**

71 S. Broadway  
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522  
(914) 693-3030

Services Provided: Residential, educational, therapeutic, recreational, and social services for teens with emotional, behavioral, and learning disabilities.

### **St. Mary's Hospital for Children**

5 Dakota Dr. Suite 200  
New Hyde Park, NY 11042  
(718) 281-8600

Services Provided: Medical services, psychological services, education, rehabilitation, home care, and community programs for children and young adults. Respite and car seat inspections.

### **Steffi Nossen School of Dance**

216 Central Ave.  
White Plains, NY 10606  
(914) 328-1900

Services Provided: Dance classes teaching various types of dance for people of all ability levels.

### **Student Advocacy**

3 W. Main St., Suite 2  
Elmsford, NY 10523  
(914) 347-7039

Services Provided: Educational services for children at risk of dropping out of school, children of immigrant families, and children with disabilities.

### **Tanglewood Acres Adult Home, Inc.**

724 South Pascack Rd.  
Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977  
(845) 623-4780

Services Provided: Community residence for adults with developmental disabilities.

### **The Friends Network, Inc.**

8 Peach Lake Rd.  
Brewster, NY 10509  
(845) 278-0820

Services Provided: Social and recreational activities, life skills classes, and day habilitation for adults. Seminars in trust planning, housing, and Social Security benefits.

### **West St. Daycare Center, Inc.**

96 N. Main St.  
Spring Valley, NY 10977  
(845) 425-2379

Services Provided: Childcare center, home day-

care, nannies, and sitters.

### **Westchester County Dept. Community M H**

112 E. Post Rd., Room 219  
White Plains, NY 10601  
(914) 995-5256

Services Provided: Community day services, recreational transportation, and educational and housing support. Legal, medical, and vocational services. Therapy and sexuality awareness counseling.

### **Westchester Inst for Human Development**

325 Cedarwood Hall  
Valhalla, NY 10595  
(914) 493-3953

Services Provided: Assistive technology, child welfare, community support network. Speech, hearing, and dental services. Behavior psychology and health and wellness programs.

### **Westco Productions, Inc.**

9 Romar Ave.  
White Plains, NY 10605  
(914) 761-7463

Services Provided: Musical adaptations of children's fairy tales, folktales, and legends, and of Broadway musicals, comedies, and dramas, for children aged two years and older. Cast meetings available after shows. Also available for birthday parties and after-school activities.

### **White Plains Recreation**

85 Gedney Way  
White Plains, NY 10605  
(914) 422-1336

Services Provided: Recreational, cultural, and sports programs and activities. Parks, playgrounds, gardens, malls, and a senior center.

### **Yedei Chased**

48 Scotland Hill Rd.  
Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977  
(845) 425-0887

Services Provided: Residential opportunities, day programs, early intervention, respite, behavior management, family support.

### **Yonkers Parks and Recreation**

285 Nepperhan Ave.  
Yonkers, NY 10701  
(914) 377-6441

Services Provided: Day camp for developmentally disabled children, adolescents, and adults. Special Olympics activities, Girl Scouts, bowling, young adult club, art therapy, pet therapy, dance therapy, and theater workshop.

### **YWCA of White Plains**

515 North St.  
White Plains, NY 10605  
(914) 949-6227

Services Provided: Swim classes and piano or guitar lessons. Friday night pizza, movies, and games. Special Olympics training and competition. Dance night, Friday night pizza and Bingo for adults. Other: Holiday camps and summer camps for youth.





# Pediatric Dental, PC & Orthodontics too!

We specialize in treating children with special needs.

We know that you have enough to worry about so let us take the stress and worry out of taking your child to the dentist.

Friendly pediatric dentists and staff that connect with your child



That's why all three of our offices look like theme parks!



**Dr. Marc  
Adelberg**



**Dr. Ericka  
Montalvan**



**Dr. Jeanine  
Pistilli**



**Dr. Marc  
Bennet**



**Dr. Jon  
Schecter**



**Dr. Jenny  
Abraham**



**Dr. Adam  
Postel**

## THREE CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

1000 F Park Boulevard, Massapequa Park, NY

**516.798.1111**

62 Lake Avenue South, Suite A, Nesconset, NY

**631.360.7337**

615 Montauk Highway, West Islip, NY

**631-661-7337**

**Please visit us on the web at [www.AMPediatricDental.com](http://www.AMPediatricDental.com)**



THE MID-ISLAND Y JCC

# Adler Center

## Does your child need social, recreational and vocational support services?

The **Mid-Island Y JCC** offers comprehensive programs and services for **pre-school age children through young adults** with developmental disabilities.



### OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- Pre-vocational and Vocational Training
- Weekly Saturday and Sunday social and recreational programs
- Individual and group swim lessons for all ages
- Parent, grandparent and sibling support
- Teen community outings
- Low child-to-staff ratio
- Art, music and sports specialists on staff
- Peer mentoring
- After school daycare
- Teen exercise and healthy lifestyle classes
- Inclusion and self-contained camp options

*JCC membership not required to obtain services.*

**Questions? Call Sharon Hanover, MSW, Adler Center Director**

MID ISLAND  
**YJCC/60**  
CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

**(516) 822-3535, x332**  
45 Manetto Hill Rd, Plainview | [www.miyjcc.org](http://www.miyjcc.org)



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