

FOR FAMILIES OF  
CHILDREN AND  
YOUTH WITH  
SPECIAL HEALTH  
CARE NEEDS

# Innovative Approaches Parent Newsletter

Issue 4

Spring 2012

## Innovative Approaches Releases A New Website

We are very excited to announce the Cabarrus Resource CAFÉ website! This website was developed by the Innovative Approaches grant project to provide a compilation of community resources and tools to assist families of children with special needs as well as individuals with special needs. The resource directory includes agencies falling under categories such as Early Intervention, Advocacy, Financial Assistance, and many others. Also, in the Tools section, you will find materials and links related to transitions, special education, financial planning, understanding a diagnosis, and more.

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Visit us at  
[www.ResourceCafe.org](http://www.ResourceCafe.org)



## APRIL IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH



Autism affects 1 out of every 110 children born today, making it the second most common developmental disability. On average, more than two North Carolina families have a child diagnosed with autism every day. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), which includes Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified, is a lifelong developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. Currently, there are nearly 60,000 individuals with autism in North Carolina and more than 1.5 million people with ASD living in the United States.



## Let's Talk About Asthma Triggers

Compiled by Allison Rauch, PharmD, BCPS

Keep your child away from things that worsen or cause your child's asthma symptoms. These things are called triggers and it is important to know what your child's triggers are so your child can try to avoid or control them. Triggers vary from person to person, so talk with your child's doctor if you do not know your child's asthma triggers.

Common triggers and how to avoid them:

- Cigarette Smoke (People around your child should try to quit smoking and should not smoke around your child. If they continue to smoke, ask that they only smoke outdoors and not in an enclosed space such as the family house or car.)
- Pollen (Keep windows closed and avoid going outside in early morning or late afternoon when pollen counts may be highest.)
- Getting Sick (Wash hands often and get a flu shot every year.)
- Strong Cleaning Products (Do not use strong cleaning products such as bleach.)
- Air Pollution (Avoid exercising near busy roads and when air pollution levels are high, stay indoors.)
- Exercise (Before exercising, take an extra dose of your quick-relief inhaler medication, warm up slowly, and do not exercise outdoors if it is very cold out.)
- Cold and Dry Air (Cover mouth and nose with a scarf on cold and dry days.)
- Dust Mites (Use special covers to keep dust mites away on pillows and mattresses. Remove bedroom carpets.)
- Mold (Clean any mold in your home and keep mold from growing by using a humidifier, fixing plumbing leaks, and removing water damaged carpets.)
- Dogs and Cats (Bathe pets weekly and keep pets outside if possible. Use a HEPA air filter and a HEPA vacuum cleaner to vacuum weekly.)
- Cockroach Droppings (Do not let trash or dirty dishes pile up and if you have cockroaches, kill them with traps.)

### References

"Patient Information: Avoid Asthma Triggers (The Basics)." Up To Date. Feb 10 2010. Web.

"Patient Information: Asthma in Children (The Basics)." Up To Date. Aug 13 2010. Web.

### **Asthma Resources:**

Allergy and Asthma Network, Mothers of Asthmatics - [www.aanma.com](http://www.aanma.com)

American Academy of Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology - [www.aaaai.org](http://www.aaaai.org)

The American Lung Association of North Carolina - [www.lung.org](http://www.lung.org)

Healthy Youth: Asthma Web Site - <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/asthma>

North Carolina Healthy Homes - [www.nchealthyhomes.com](http://www.nchealthyhomes.com)

North Carolina Asthma Program - <http://www.asthma.ncdhhs.gov>

## Does Your Child Have An Asthma Action Plan?

Compiled by Allison Rauch, PharmD, BCPS

Everyone with asthma should have an asthma action plan.  
An asthma action plan tells you:

- ◇ What medications your child should be using at home daily.
- ◇ What asthma symptoms to watch for that may mean your child's asthma is getting worse.
- ◇ What medications to give your child if their asthma symptom get worse.
- ◇ When to call the doctor or 911.

Everyone who cares for your child should know about your child's asthma action plan. If your child does not have an asthma action plan, please contact your child's doctor and ask about making one.

### Asthma Fables and Facts

Healthychildren.org from the American Academy of Pediatrics

**Fable:** Asthma comes and goes.

**Fact:** Asthma is often an inflammatory condition that is always in the airways, even when the person is not having trouble breathing. Exposure to an asthma trigger can worsen symptoms, but the underlying condition never goes away, although it can be controlled with medications and environmental control measures. Asthma is an emotional disorder; it's "all in the mind." Asthma is a lung disease; it affects the airways, not the brain. It's true that symptoms may get worse when a person is under emotional stress, but this is probably more marked in adults and less so in children. Changes in the airways in asthma occur through physiological mechanisms, not emotional ones.

**Fable:** People with asthma should use medications only when they have attacks; otherwise, the medications lose their effect.

**Fact:** Regularly using medications is the only way to calm the underlying airway inflammation and prevent asthma flare-ups. Used at the correct dosage, daily medications do not lose their effect or cause uncomfortable side effects. Effective antiasthma medications include inhaled beta-agonists such as albuterol to stop attacks, and inhaled steroids, long-acting beta-agonists, and leukotriene modifiers to prevent attacks from occurring at all.

**Fable:** Children grow out of asthma.

**Fact:** Most people who have asthma are born with a tendency to the condition and keep it for life. It is true many children get much better with age, and their asthma appears to go away completely. However, many have it return in adulthood. Other children who still have asthma are less likely to lose their asthma as they go in to their adult years.

American Academy  
of Pediatrics



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Powered by pediatricians. Trusted by parents.  
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2012  
North Carolina Asthma  
Summit

*Addressing Health Disparities in  
Asthma: Creative Solutions*

May 8th, 2012  
8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
North Carolina Biotechnology Center  
Research Triangle Park, NC

For more information, contact the  
NC Asthma Program:  
(919) 707-5213





## National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is May 9th, 2012!

Studies show that about 1 in 5 children has a mental health problem," said Robert W. Block, MD, FAAP, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics. "We want parents to have the knowledge and tools they need to recognize when their child may be struggling so they can get help, but also to foster their child's emotional and social well-being."



When exposed to a traumatic event, children as young as 18 months can have serious emotional and behavioral problems later in childhood and in adulthood. More than 35 % of children exposed to a single traumatic event will develop serious mental health problems.

~Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration~

By 2020 mental health care will constitute 30% or more of general pediatric practice, which will alter the role of the Primary Care Provider.

~AAP Taskforce on Mental Health~

## Talk To Your Child's Doctor About Mental Health Concerns

*Obtained from web article by Mental Health America*

Children's mental health problems are real, common and treatable. Although one in five children has a diagnosable mental health problem, nearly two-thirds of them get little or no help. Untreated mental health problems can disrupt children's functioning at home, school and in the community. Without treatment, children with mental health issues are at increased risk of school failure, contact with the criminal justice system, dependence on social services, and even suicide.

Parents and family members are usually the first to notice if a child has problems with emotions or behavior. Your observations, along with those of teachers and other caregivers, can help determine whether you need to seek help for your child.

The following signs may indicate the need for professional help:

- Decline in school performance
- Poor grades despite strong efforts
- Constant worry or anxiety
- Repeated refusal to go to school or to take part in normal activities
- Hyperactivity or fidgeting
- Persistent nightmares
- Persistent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums
- Depression, sadness or irritability

Early identification, diagnosis and treatment can help children reach their full potential. If you suspect a problem or have questions, talk with your child's pediatrician or contact a mental health professional.



To read an article entitled "Frequently Asked Questions About The Treatment of Mental Illness in Children" from the National Institute of Mental Health, visit:  
[www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/treatment-of-children-with-mental-illness-fact-sheet](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/treatment-of-children-with-mental-illness-fact-sheet)

## Summer Camps

### Adaptive Water Ski Program

704-716-4400

[www.ymcacharlotte.org/branches/lakenorman/socialresp/ss/adaptive.aspx](http://www.ymcacharlotte.org/branches/lakenorman/socialresp/ss/adaptive.aspx)

Water-skiing program for those with disabilities, provided by the Lake Norman YMCA and Carolinas Rehabilitation

### Arc of Cabarrus-Camp Spencer

704-788-1616

July 2-6 at Camp Spencer for individuals 18 and older with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

### Arc of Rowan's Summer Day Program

704-637-1521

A six-week program (4 days a week) for children ages 5-21 with an intellectual or developmental disability June 25-Aug. 2. Transportation may be available, contact the Arc of Rowan for more information.

### Camp Carefree

336-427-0966

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

Free, one-week overnight camps for kids with chronic health problems and disabilities.

### Camp Horizon

704-366-0167

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

Three-day overnight camp at Camp Harrison in Lenoir for children ages 10-17 with Down Syndrome.

### Camp Luck

704-201-4047

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

A medically supervised camp for children with congenital heart conditions and their siblings, scheduled for early August 2012.



### Camp Royall

919-542-1033

[www.autismsociety-nc.org](http://www.autismsociety-nc.org)

Week long residential summer camp program for individuals ages 4 and up with autism spectrum disorder June 19-Aug.5.

### Challenger Flag Football League and Cheerleading

704-432-0237

<http://tr.charmeck.org>

Carolina Panthers, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation and Pop Warner football program for youth ages 8-21 with disabilities.

### Joni and Friends Charlotte

704-841-1177

[www.charlotte.joniandfriends.org](http://www.charlotte.joniandfriends.org)

A Christian outreach ministry that operates a five-day camp to give families affected by disabilities a chance to refresh and relieve stress. Week 1: July 30-Aug. 3; Week 2: Aug. 6-10.

### Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Therapeutic Recreation Summer Camps

704-432-0237

<http://tr.charmeck.org>

June 18– August 10, 2012

Goal-oriented camps for children with disabilities. Imagination Station (ages 2-5), Natural Wonders (ages 6-8), Summer Express (ages 6-9), World of Adventures (ages 9-10), World of Wonders (ages 11-13), Camp Quest (ages 14-16), and TREC (ages 17-21).

### Wings of Eagles Ranch

704-784-3147

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

Therapeutic horseback riding.

### Victory Junction

336-498-9055

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

Free camps for children with chronic medical conditions and illnesses.

Ages 6-16.

Contact specific camps in order to learn more such as camp fees, camp dates/hours, location, specific disabilities or ages served, registration deadlines, etc.

Visit Charlotte Parent Magazine for more camp listings:

[www.charlotteparent.com/directories/specialneeds/campsrecreation.php](http://www.charlotteparent.com/directories/specialneeds/campsrecreation.php)

**If you are planning for your child to attend a camp or day program over the summer, you should begin looking now!! Camp registrations tend to fill up early, so start researching now for the perfect summer program for your child.**





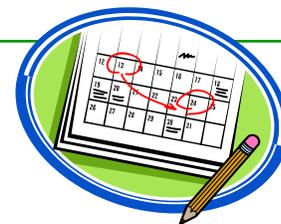
## INNOVATIVE APPROACHES GRANT PROJECT— CABARRUS COUNTY

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**Innovative Approaches is a grant funded project working to improve community-wide systems of care for children and youth with special health care needs up to age 21. The Cabarrus Health Alliance partners with Community Care of Southern Piedmont to carry out this initiative in Cabarrus County. The grant committee also includes additional representation from community organizations providing services to these children and their families, medical providers involved in their care, and most importantly - parents of children and youth with special health care needs.**

### Upcoming Events



#### Parent Network Support Group

For families of children with multiple disabilities, birth to middle school. The next meeting is Thursday, April 19th from 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at the Mary Frances Wall Center in Concord. Child care is available upon request. Please call Carol Cranford at 980-522-8740 for details.

\*\*Typically the Parent Network Support group meets the 2nd Thursday of each month from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. during the school year. The April meeting is an exception due to a specially scheduled presentation by Ryan Platt from A Special Needs Plan.

#### Special Needs Story Time

April 21st - 11:00 a.m. - At the Concord Library  
Contact the Concord Library for more information at 704-920-2050.

#### Sibshops

For boys and girls 3rd-9th grades that have a brother or sister with a disability. The next meeting is Saturday, April 28th from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Triple "S" Arabians Riding Center in Concord. Children must be registered in advance for this event. Please call Carol Cranford at 980-522-8740 for registration information.

#### "Transition Throughout the School Years" Parent Workshop

Monday, April 30th from 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at Epworth United Methodist Church in Concord. This is a free workshop for families of children with special needs. This workshop will be provided in English and Spanish in separate rooms. Limited free childcare will be available with advance registration only. For more information, directions, to register, and/or for childcare, please call Elizabeth Maldonado at 704-920-1228 or Margaret Campbell at 800-962-6817, ext. 317.

#### Sensory Friendly Films at AMC-Concord Mills (for families affected by Autism)

April 7th - Mirror, Mirror  
May 5th - Pirates! Band of Misfits  
June 16th - Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted  
Contact guest services for more information at 704-979-0200.  
All shows are at 10:00 a.m. \*\*Dates and films are subject to change.

#### Wrightslaw Symposium: Special Education Law and Advocacy Training Program

Thursday, May 3 from 8:00 a.m - 4:30 p.m. at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte's Cone Center, McKnight Hall. This event is open to anyone who wishes to register. Registration deadline is April 23. Visit [www.education.uncc.edu/oeo/dsac](http://www.education.uncc.edu/oeo/dsac) to register.

#### Ladies Bunco Night to Benefit Special Olympics Cabarrus County

Friday, May 4th - 6:00 p.m. at McGill Baptist Church in Concord.  
RSVP to Emily Riley at 704-490-8036 or [emily.riley@cabarrus.k12.nc.us](mailto:emily.riley@cabarrus.k12.nc.us). Cost is \$20 and includes dinner.



Community Care  
of Southern Piedmont