

**Face Place Theater Project
Carey Services
Marion, IN**

www.careyservices.com

Carey Services program targets the social and communication skill challenges faced by individuals with ASD. Based on the work of Drs. Ramamoorthi and Andrew Nelson, the Founders of the Applied Theatre Research and Autism Network, the program uses acting techniques and applied theater theory to improve these skills in a safe and entertaining venue. The program will serve up to 20 school-aged children with ASD in a studio environment.

**Rolling Thunder Running Team Promoting Inclusion, Fitness, and Social Skills for
Autistic Spectrum Youth and Adults**

Rolling Thunder Special Needs Program (RTSNP)

Shirley, NY

www.rtsnp.org

Rolling Thunder Special Needs Program trains individuals with ASD, ages 3 through adulthood, and their family members, to participate in typical races in inclusive community settings: neighborhoods or parks throughout Long Island. RTSNP offers inclusion activities with typical peers and many opportunities to develop or improve athletic, fitness and social skills. There is never a fee for membership or coaching. No running experience is needed to join the team. All coaches are volunteers and the organization has no paid staff, there is a no wait list policy and individuals with challenging behaviors are welcome. Funding will help with the expansion plans include accepting new members, providing experienced members with new inclusion community practice activities, increasing mainstream competitions and provide uniforms for team members to practice during the winter months.

**After-School Programs at Easter Seals Metropolitan Chicago Autism and Therapeutic
Schools**

Easter Seals Metropolitan Chicago

Chicago, IL

<http://chicago.easterseals.com>

The After School Program at Easter Seals provides high quality, educationally-enhanced programming for their children at the close of the school day. Easter Seals will enhance programming through the purchase of new program equipment and supplies and, more importantly, a partnership with Best Buddies Illinois (BBIL) that will provide a Peer Buddy to each After School Program participant with which he/she can engage in regularly scheduled After School Program activities, communicate via telephone and email, and attend special BBIL social events.

Brandywine Social Club

Autism Delaware – Newark, DE

www.delautism.org

Autism Delaware, Brandywine Social Club, a local YMCA recreation program for adults with disabilities, will include an additional 10 to 15 adults with autism. Very few options exist for Delaware adults with disabilities, particularly options which are autism-friendly, and the BSC has been northern Delaware's leader in recreation by holding a variety of events for 35 years. The emphasis on participant leadership, team work, and community integration, combined with the group's plans to initiate personal development workshops, provide a healthy environment for naturally observing or practicing skills that can be useful in personal relationships and employment while still giving participants a break from the demands of formal service programs or school.

Interactive Social Education Experiences

Millard Public Schools

Omaha, NE

www.mpsomaha.org

Millard Public Schools will conduct a recreation/community activities project to teach social communication skills to high school students with Asperger's Syndrome (AS) and/or High Functioning Autism (HFA). The demonstration project is designed around peer modeling with frequent peer interaction and generalization in the community. Primary beneficiaries will be freshmen and sophomores with AS/HFA who manifest serious deficits in the social communication skills needed to develop effective interpersonal relationships. They will be placed in Friendship Groups consisting of two students with AS/HFA, a typically developing peer who has completed prior ASD awareness training, and one teacher. Friendship Groups will attend weekly social communication skills workshops taught by the teachers in the group, using curriculum tailored for each student. Homework will require personal communication between the students with AS/HFA and the typical peer in each Friendship Group. All Friendship Groups, along with the parents of students with AS/HFA, will attend monthly social outings in the community to generalize their newly learned skills.

Inclusive Summer Camp for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

University of Florida CARD

Gainesville, FL

<http://card.ufl.edu>

This camp project facilitates the inclusion of children with autism into community day camps with support. A Project Manager will recruit campers with autism from the 14 county area served by CARD - Gainesville. CARD staff will work with families to identify goals for the camp so that specific skills may be targeted and training to camp staff members can be tailored to the needs of the children. The Project will support contracted personnel to provide capacity building training sessions for day camp staff members and university and high school volunteers in the community. The Project will offer ongoing support to camp staff and volunteers during the two weeks of camp as they work to include children with autism in camp activities with typical peers. Through this project CARD can build the capacity of day camp sites to offer camp opportunities to children with autism with minimal supports from outside resources.

Expanded Outdoor Recreation Experiences Customized for Children and Adults with ASDs

Outdoors for All Foundation

Seattle, WA

www.outdoorsforall.org

Outdoors for All Foundation will expand the number and quality of outdoor recreation experiences for children and adults living with ASD and their friends and family members. Key measurable objectives of the program will include: to serve 50 additional individuals with disabilities in our year round adaptive recreation programs; increase training hours for all staff and volunteers on issues of autism; design and establish a week-long adventure camp for teens with high functioning autism – benefiting at least ten participants; and obtain and implement sensory regulation equipment into the programs, as well as the design and creation of an Autism Tool Kit which will help staff and volunteers in the field ensure that participants with ASD will have a fun, safe and enriching outdoor recreation experience.

Special Serve - Tennis and Life Skills Program

Arthur Ashe Youth Tennis and Education (AAYTE)

www.asetennis.org

AAYTE has a staff that is trained to utilize various teaching methodologies that are effective with ASD, AAYTE's Special Serve program has become a successful non-traditional recreational and

educational option. Funding from Autism Speaks will enable AAYTE to meet the increasing demands for growth of this successful program. During the daytime school hours, AAYTE has an opportunity to expand programming to its full capacity for ASD students by working with local school districts to provide tennis instruction in a fun and nurturing environment.

Best Buddies LI Middle and High School Expansion Project

New York, NY

www.bestbuddiesnewyork.org

The Best Buddies Long Island Middle and High School Expansion Project will enhance the lives of students with developmental disabilities by providing them with opportunities for one-to-one friendships with their non-disabled peers. The Best Buddies program will strengthen efforts to serve youth with autism through student leadership training, community engagement and public awareness activities. The project will ultimately generate 660 new Best Buddies friendships and raise tolerance and awareness of students with developmental disabilities.

A Summer Camp Promoting Inclusion among Children with ASD and Their Typically Developing Peers

Camp Rising Sun

Albuquerque, NM

www.camprisingsunnm.org

Camp Rising Sun's primary goal is to provide additional opportunities for children with ASD to learn and practice social and communication skills in an inclusive camping environment. Campers will emerge more confident socially, parents will receive much-needed respite, and university students will receive valuable hands on training. Prior to Camp Rising Sun's 2006 inaugural year, the nearest camp for New Mexico's children with ASD was 818 miles away in San Antonio, Texas. In addition to providing children with ASD a positive camping experience, the camp will give them the opportunity to do so along side their typically developing peers. For older campers with autism there is a CIT (counselors in training) program, which is an inclusion model.

After School Program for Children with Autism

Autism Foundation of the Carolinas

Charlotte, N.C.

www.autismcarolinas.org

The need for an after school program for children with autism in Mecklenburg County is great. There are no specialized programs for children with mild to moderate autism spectrum disorder. The Autism Foundation of the Carolinas, in collaboration with the YMCA of Greater Charlotte and the Autism Society of North Carolina, will offer an inclusion based after school program for children with ASD beginning fall 2008. The focus of the program will be to enhance independent functional living skills and self management skills by presenting opportunities for socialization, communication and self directed choice within each activity during the day. Program activities include: recreational play and/or relaxation with independent or inclusion options, and structured enrichment such as music/movement, art, social stories/life scenarios and homework assistance. A pilot program will be offered to a limited number of participants so program efficacy can be ensured before rolling it out countywide.

Social Skills Program for High Functioning Children with ASD

Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital for Rehabilitation

Cleveland, OH

cms.clevelandclinic.org/childrenshospital

The Cleveland Clinic will use social skills training, an inclusive summer camp for generalization, and parent therapeutic support to provide social skills programming for high functioning children with autism. the summer months, typical summer camps will be utilized to foster generalization of skills from a clinic setting to a more natural setting. Here, children with ASD will be

accompanied by a behavior therapist or coach for help in generalizing skills learned through structured social skills training into the inclusive camp setting. The coach will attend with the children to help facilitate social interaction and generalization of skills, and a Board Certified Behavior Analyst will observe the child's social behaviors in their school setting during lunch and recess prior to the start of the group. In addition, parents will be trained in utilized techniques that will result in consistent supports across several different environments.

Awesome Summer Days Camp: Social Skills Training & Peer Coaching Embedded in a Recreational Summer Camp Experience
Upstate Cerebral Palsy, The Kelberman Center
Utica, NY

www.kelbermancenter.org

Awesome Summer Days Camp will take place at The Chadwicks Education Center that is owned and operated by United Cerebral Palsy. The program will work with each family to: (1) evaluate the child's current level of social functioning; (2) identify social skills that need to be learned or practiced; (3) modify and implement curriculum as needed to meet the child's needs; (4) practice skills during inclusion activities with Big Brothers/Big Sisters campers; and (5) test progress at the close of camp. Each week, Monday and Tuesday will combine social skills lessons with horseback riding, dance, art, photography and yoga. Each Wednesday the campers will join campers attending the Big Brothers/Big Sisters camp for a variety of field trips. Thursday will also be a day for inclusion activities spent with kids from Big Brothers/Big Sisters; campers will enjoy fishing and engaging in a variety of outdoor teambuilding exercises. The Center, in addition to using trained specialists, will be able to tap into the university community for program interns, many of whom will be inspired to pursue careers related to autism.

S Rock On!

SPLORE

Salt Lake City, UT

www.splore.org

SPLORE's Rock On program will provide indoor rock climbing to improve outcomes for children with ASDs in a safe and supervised environment. Participation in active recreation promotes inclusion, optimizes physical functioning, and enhances well-being for children with ASDs. Additionally, participation promotes the development of friendships, independence, and creativity. Indoor rock climbing is an individual activity that can occur in a safe and supervised group setting. The Rock On! program works with community partners to identify underserved children and youth with ASDs.

Stepping Out

The Kennedy Center

Trumbull, CT

www.thekennedycenterinc.org

The Kennedy Center will begin a pilot program for children ages 12-15 that offer social skills training including peer modeling and inclusion opportunities. The program will include weekly social skills training with concurrent parent training. In addition there will be tailored seminars on the importance of social skills training in schools. One of the targeted school districts for this project will be an inner city school in the Bridgeport, Connecticut area. As a result of the targeted age of the participants, they will have worked on skills before transition plans are established. The program will teach skills in priority areas critical to self-esteem and independent living options such as job-related components and accessing employment.

Fit for Life

TERI, Inc.

Oceanside, CA

www.teriinc.org

Many children with ASD have difficulty exercising and are therefore overweight and at risk for serious medical conditions such as Type II diabetes. In response to this, TERI will run the Fit for Life fitness programs for children with ASD that will be individually targeted to the breadth of ability each student is capable of achieving. Two specific groups of individuals will participate in the program: (1) 65 children with moderate to severe autism and (2) 35 children with mild to moderate autism. All students will come from TERI's non-public school programs. The Fit for Life program will be run by a Corporate Fitness Director as well as a Recreational Director and will take place at a 5,000 square foot fitness facility. Physical activities such as Climbing Mount Everest Challenge and Walk Across America in addition to obstacle courses on the Fitness Walking Trial will be utilized to engage the students. The goal of the program will be that 100 students will exhibit incremental gains in gait stability, endurance, and weight/body fat loss, while developing life-long exercise skills.

Friendship in Teams (FIT)

Western Reserve Speech and Language Partners

Beachwood, OH

www.wrslp.com

This new program combines social skills intervention with adaptive physical fitness instruction. This project will specifically address the need for recreation/community activities for children on the autism spectrum. FIT is designed to foster in each student confidence in his or her ability to join and interact effectively in groups of typically developing peers. Students ages 4-18 are divided into three groups: Ages 4-7 focuses on social skills and activities that children can use on the playground and at recess; Ages 8-11 focuses on social skills and physical activities that teach and practice skills typically needed in a physical education environment; and Ages 12-18 focuses on social skills and physical activities, as well as age appropriate games involving technology and less traditional sport activities.

Developing Social Cognition Through Theater

Acting Antics

Morgantown, PA

www.actgantics.org

Acting Antics is to use live theater as a means to teach social cognition skills. Students participate in theater games, improvisation activities designed to develop the reading of non-verbal cues, build confidence and stimulate appropriate interaction. Actors participate in short scenes with a partner, in which they must take on the persona of a particular character. Development of that scene requires taking the character's perspective, and provides great opportunity to teach this difficult skill in a fun and non-threatening manner. Six of the twelve Chester County school districts are using the "Acting Antics" program as part of an Extended School Year option. This grant would provide the necessary resources to assist Acting Antics to bring direct instruction of the program to additional school districts during the school year, modeling the techniques and gathering data. To train special educators in the school districts in the techniques, and to provide ongoing consultation for the trained educators in the school district.

Not Far from Par Golf Program

Bergenfield Public School District

Bergenfield, NJ

www.bergenfield.org

"Not Far from Par," a summer golf program for 16 middle and high school students in Bergen County, New Jersey. Based on feedback from parents, students, and the community, the program was a resounding success. Students improved communication, social and physical skills, and formed closer bonds with peers, siblings and parents. The community at large was introduced to the idea that children with autism can be successfully educated within the

community. This project will expand the golf program for next summer to a minimum of 32 students. In addition, the golf program will offer a training program for general and special education teachers, both to help teachers interact more effectively with students on the autism spectrum, and to encourage other New Jersey schools to begin similar programs.

Open Arms: Support for the ASD Community
Garden State Discovery Museum's Center for Learning
Cherry Hill, NJ

<http://www.discoverymuseum.com>

Children's museums aim to further the growth and development of children through hands-on learning, make-believe play and social interaction. Children with autism may miss out on these benefits because they cannot tolerate crowds, or because their families wish to avoid the unwanted attention and comments that the child's behavior in public may provoke. This program arranges exclusive events for children with autism and their families at the Garden State Discovery Museum so that the children can benefit from the museum in a safe, friendly and understanding environment. On Family evenings, the museum is open exclusively for children on the autism spectrum and their parents, siblings and caregivers. On 'Rents and Sibs evenings, parents hear speakers on topics from eating habits to speech development, while siblings enjoy a support group involving crafts, games and discussion.

PALS (Peer Assisted Lunch Social)

Judson Center

Royal Oak, MI

www.judsoncenter.org

Children and teens with autism often do not receive the kind of social skills support they need. To address this issue, the applicant, a provider of services to individuals with autism and their families in the Detroit area, will bring social skills intervention and staff training to ten local schools (elementary, middle and high schools) for one year. The intervention, a "Peer Assisted Lunch Social," will use the research-based model of "integrated play groups" to integrate students with autism with their typically developing peers. School staff members will be trained in this method by the applicant, so that they will be able to continue the intervention without assistance by the end of the year.

Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN)

Washington, DC

www.keengreaterdc.org

Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN) provides recreational and sports programs for children with disabilities. At least 80% of the athletes who participate in KEEN programs are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. Kids with disabilities are at greater risk of leading isolated and sedentary lives. KEEN will match kids with volunteer coaches who help them to be the athletes they aspire to be - kickballer, bowler, swimmer, runner, dancer, tennis player, whatever they want to do. KEEN sessions are non-competitive, flexible, and always free-of-charge. Programs are located in facilities that have access to public transportation. In addition, KEEN sessions take place primarily on Saturdays and Sundays. A Saturday or Sunday session allows a KEEN athlete to get out of the house and be physically active. It also provides much appreciated weekend respite to the athlete's parent or caregiver. KEEN currently operates six locations throughout the country and this grant will provide some of the funding needed for additional locations in Los Angeles, San Francisco, St. Louis, New York City, and Phoenix.

Aspire – A Camping Experience

Mid-Island Y Jewish Community Center

Plainview, NY

www.miyjcc.org

Aspire is a pilot summer camp program, in collaboration with Variety Child Learning Center, using the natural environment for children with autistic tendencies to learn and to be included with their peers. The program will include 20 children across the spectrum, and facilitate inclusion. The components of the program will include a "train the trainer" model, which is based on adult learning theory, which states that people who train others remember 90% of the material they teach, and diffusion of innovation theory, which states that people adopt new information through their trusted social networks. Thus the Train the Trainer Project first develops a cadre of skilled community-based trainers, who in turn train others in their community or within an organization. More specifically, this proposal seeks to develop a pilot preschool program for children with autism spectrum disorders as well as to expand an existing summer camp for school age children and young adults by providing more inclusive experiences.

Camp Exploration
Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Association
Addison, IL

www.nedsra.org

Camp Exploration will serve approximately 12-15 children with autism spectrum disorder, 5 days per week for 7 weeks, beginning in June 2008. Due to the multi-sensory needs and cognitive levels of this population, there was an observed and expressed need by staff and parents to plan programs exclusively for the autistic population. This exclusive program will give these children a more structured environment during the summer months, which provides continuity from school year to school year. Camp Exploration will give children with autism spectrum disorders the opportunity to experience community outings (museum tours, zoo visits, water park exploration, library visits), in-house activities (arts and crafts projects, interactive play, cooking), as well as art and music therapy.

Weekend Respite Services for Young Adults with Autism in a Camp Setting
YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin
Middleville, MI

<http://www.campmanitou-lin.org>

Young adults with autism need opportunities to feel independent and spend time with peers, while their families need a break from caregiving. To meet these needs, YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin will provide 10 weekends of respite care in the camp setting for 20 young adults with autism spectrum disorder, aged 19-26. Camp weekends will be offered once a month, from January through October 2008, from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon. Campers will enjoy recreational activities including hiking, horseback riding, archery, and the like, as well as hayrides and campfires. Activities will be adapted to each camper's needs. Campers will stay in heated, carpeted cabins with restrooms and showers. All meals and supplies will be provided. The camp will be staffed with counselors and volunteers in the campers' age range, at a ratio of two campers for every counselor/volunteer. During meals and activities, campers will interact with other camp groups of typically developing peers. Campers will pay \$20 per weekend, with all other fees to be funded by this grant.