

The Correspondent

Early Intervention Program

Early Head Start

Wise Adult Day Health

Taunton Area School to Career

Volume 22, Issue 12

December, 2017



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Note from the Executive Director

Welcome to the winter edition of the Correspondent. As usual, everyone has been very productive, and I'd like to tell you about a couple of notable recent accomplishments. The 7,200-square foot addition onto the building is finished! Staff are now settled at new desks, with access to another classroom, a file room, large conference room and lots of natural light. As well as additional parking! This annex makes it possible to better meet the needs of our clients and staff, with some room for expansion. If you haven't seen it, please stop by. Wise has exciting news, as well. The program eagerly anticipates a spring arrival of 3 new vans, built to Wise Adult Day Health's specifications, to transport individuals and wheelchairs. All in all, very exciting. Take a peek inside the newsletter, at all the program updates, to find out more about what's going on!



And, during this Holiday Season, I'd like to thank you for all you do to support Associates for Human Services! As we provide services to infants, toddlers, families, youth, adults and seniors, we encounter many who appreciate and promote the value of our programs. For instance, those of you who attend our fundraisers, welcome our staff into your homes, volunteer to mentor or govern, partner with our staff, entertain clients, advocate on state and federal levels, you demonstrate an affinity for improving lives in the Greater Taunton community. You know who you are. And we are all grateful. Then there are the staffs...we couldn't do it without them, the dedicated, professional, creative, knowledgeable people who enact the agency's mission daily. We know who you are. And we are all grateful.

There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.
 John Holmes

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for a Healthy New Year!

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 TASC Program Director: Daniel LeBrun
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Wise Adult Day Health

by Nancy Pereira

December is National Human Rights' Month

December 10th is National Human Rights' Month. Celebrated annually, this year heralds the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human rights which was a milestone document proclaiming the inalienable rights inherently entitled to all human beings regardless of sex, race, religion, color, political opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, thus setting and committing to a universal and common standard for all peoples and nations. Those of us who work in human services know all too well the struggles and challenges the individuals and families we serve can face each day when these values are abandoned. This day brings light to our shared humanity, empowering us in our right to equality, justice, freedom from violence and in the spirit of a sustainable peace for all people. With the holidays now upon us, it is a wonderful time to reflect upon these tenets, and uphold these values in our hearts. It is a gentle reminder that whoever we are, wherever we are from, it is our duty to one another to stand up for our personal rights and the rights of others.

Wise Dance Party

Dancing is a fabulous way to exercise. No matter your age, shape or size, the benefits of gentle rhythmic movement to music are astounding and bring with it a myriad of health benefits. The entire body is involved in dance, getting the blood flowing to the brain and extremities improving mental functioning, heart and lung capacity, improved muscle tone, muscular strength and endurance, stronger bones, improved balance and coordination. Wise Adult Day Health offers monthly entertainers as part of our activities programming. Performers like Pamela Tietze, the Singing Nurse, a regular here at the Wise program, help to ensure our participants have as many opportunities as possible to shake it up on the dance floor! And the staff are only too happy to join them in the act! It's such a wonderful and joyous way for our folks to socialize with their peers and celebrate friendships and good times!



Parachute Toss

Wise participants enjoy a fun game of parachute toss, a great gross motor activity where they try and keep a balloon afloat by the fluid waving motion of the parachute.



Adult Day Health Services

Wise Adult Day Health is a day support service for adults experiencing health care related issues or whose ability to function independently is limited. Wise is designed to provide quality services, including daily leisure, recreational and preventive health activities to aging or disabled individuals. An R.N. oversees all health-related activities, including restorative and maintenance therapies, nutritional consulting, and participant/caregiver training in preventive health. A nutritious breakfast and lunch is served daily along with two snacks. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, AHS will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. For more information or referrals, please call the Wise Program Director, Nancy Pereira, at 508-880-0202, ext. 327.

Early Childhood Programs

Early Intervention

Early Head Start

EI Staff Spotlight by Zulmira Allcock

Jennie Nelson is December's highlighted Early Intervention (EI) staff person. Jennie came to the Taunton EI Program on November 26, 2012. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Childhood Studies from Plymouth State College. Prior to coming to Associates for Human Services, Jennie worked as a residential counselor, nanny and a Developmental Specialist at a different Early Intervention program for 4 years. Jennie brings to us her expertise in child development and play. She is also certified in infant massage, is part of assessment teams and carries a regular caseload. Jennie is very knowledgeable, creative, and organized, and genuinely enjoys working with children and families. Thank you for your 5 years of service to AHS and EI families!



Safe Toy & Gift Month

This holiday season, please consider the following guidelines for choosing safe toys for all ages:

1. Inspect all toys before purchasing. Avoid those that shoot or include parts that fly off. The toy should have no sharp edges or points and should be sturdy enough to withstand impact without breaking, being crushed, or being pulled apart easily.
2. When purchasing toys for children with special needs try to: Choose toys that may appeal to different senses such as sound, movement, and texture; consider interactive toys to allow the child to play with others; and think about the size of the toy and the position a child would need to be in to play with it.
3. Be diligent about inspecting toys your child has received. Check them for age, skill level, and developmental appropriateness before they play with them.
4. Look for labels that assure you the toys have passed a safety inspection – “ASTM” means the toy has met the American Society for Testing and Materials standards.
5. Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (give a helmet with the skateboard).
6. Keep kids safe from lead in toys by: Educating yourself about lead exposure from toys, symptoms of lead poisoning, and what kinds of toys have been recalled; being aware that old toys may be more likely to contain lead; having your children wash their hands frequently.
7. Do NOT give toys with small parts (including magnets and “button” batteries which can cause serious injury or death if ingested) to young children as they tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If the piece can fit inside a toilet paper roll, it is not appropriate for kids under age three.
8. Do NOT give toys with ropes and cords or heating elements.
9. Do NOT give crayons and markers unless they are labeled “nontoxic”.

Source: <https://www.healthtradition.com/december-is-safe-toys-and-gifts-month/>

Winter Pregnancy Tips

- * Get fresh air.
- * Don't stay in bed, the coziness can be tempting.
- * Avoid saunas and hot tubs
- * Get an influenza vaccine in second or third trimester, when your immune system is weakest, to avoid seasonal viruses.
- * Avoid many winter sports, because of risk of injury.
- * Take pressure off of your back by carrying less; during pregnancy ligaments become softer and looser.
- * Don't shovel or attempt to clear snow, as it requires too much twisting and back use.
- * Enjoy a warm cup of hot chocolate or an herbal tea.
- * Ask for help to cook, clean, or run errands.
- * Take frequent naps.
- * Clear your calendar of all unnecessary activities.

Source: <http://www.parents.com/pregnancy/my-body/pampering/winter-pregnancy-survival-guide/>

Early Childhood Programs ...

Early Head Start Program is a federally funded program that provides comprehensive services to families who are pregnant or have children between the ages of birth to 3 and meet income guidelines. Call Georgianna Ouellette at 508-880-0202, ext. 355 for more information or to make a referral.

Early Intervention Program is an integrated developmental service available to families of children, between birth and three years of age, for whom there are developmental concerns due to identified disabilities, certain birth circumstances, or environmental circumstances (e.g. cerebral palsy, prematurity, homelessness) or show a delay in one or more areas of development. Please call Zulmira Allcock at 508-880-0202, ext. 302 for more information or to make a referral.

Early Childhood Programs

Early Intervention

Early Head Start

The Myth of the “Terrible” Toddler

Toddlers may get nettled more often and quickly than older kids and adults, but do they really deserve the label of “terrible?” When you consider that the major social, emotional, intellectual, and physical developmental tasks of toddlerhood include independence, separation, mastering control of the body, toilet learning, significant acquisition of speech and language, as well as learning to think, solve problems, interact with peers, and more, then “tough” or “tenacious” may be better choices to describe toddlers.

Source: www.earlychildhoodnews.com

Building Up Confidence While Cutting Down Frustration

Toddlers burst with energy, yet they possess far fewer skills than adults, and as a result it’s not surprising that toddlers need help, and lots of it, in managing to grow and develop with ease. You can cut down on toddlers’ frustration while helping to build their confidence and here’s how:

- Greet and meet each toddler’s development separately. Keep in mind that while development follows a predictable pattern that includes regression then growth, each child develops at an individual pace that is impacted by many factors such as individual temperament.

- Play with, supervise, and always keep toddlers in sight. When nearby or actively involved, you can prevent many struggles between toddlers and head off some individual frustrations.

- Set up the environment so that toddlers can move and explore independently, yet safely. Toddlers need space and freedom to practice motor skills, interact with others, use their senses, and learn language by themselves.

- Communicate to toddlers that they are capable. Offer ways to practice skills that are meaningful to them, such as taking toys off and putting toys back on a shelf. Focus on what toddlers can do over and above what they can’t.

- ENJOY toddlerhood. Toddlers say and do the cutest things!

Source: www.earlychildhoodnews.com

Indoor Activities for Toddlers

- * Have a dance party – turn on the music and get up and dance!

- * Bake cookies.

- * Build a blanket fort.

- * Explore a sensory bin. Rice, beans, and pasta are all great things to fill the bin

with. Add a few toys, scoops, and cups and let them at it!

- * Blow up balloons and have fun throwing them around.

Take it up a notch and make tennis rackets with paper plates and popsicle sticks!

- * Make necklaces with beads, macaroni, or fruit loops.

- * Explore a treasure box. Fill a box with interesting things from around the house and let them explore some unfamiliar things.

- * Take silly selfies.

- * Pop popcorn and watch a movie.

- * Lay a blanket down and have a picnic on the living room floor.

- * Have a fun bath with bath paints, bath crayons or bubbles.

- * Color, draw, or paint. We love laying out a big piece of paper on the floor and getting crafty!

- * Play hide and seek using toys. Have your toddler pick out a toy for you to hide and have them try to find it.

- * Make smoothies or milkshakes.

- * Make a sticker book and fill it with stickers.

- * Make hand puppets and shadows using a flashlight.

- * Fill a baby pool or box with balls to make a ball pit

- * Paint snow with colored water. Fill a bin with snow from outside and color water with food coloring. Use a paint brush to paint the colored water onto the snow!

- * Make homemade play dough.

- * Fill empty water bottles with a scoop of rice or water, grab a ball, and go bottle bowling!

- * Line up all the stuffed animals and have a parade.

Source: <http://geneseecounty.citymomsblog.com/family-fun/beat-winter-blues-20-indoor-activities-toddlers/>



Taunton Area School to Career

by Dan LeBrun

Become a Mentor!

Who helped you become the person you are today? Who influenced you? Who was there to model, guide, inform and support you along the way? Chances are there were several people. Maybe for you it was your parent or guardian, spouse, sibling, teacher, boss, or friend. Maybe it was all of them. They are your mentors. Why not pay it forward and become a Career Mentor?

Some young people aren't quite as fortunate. For any number of reasons, their mentor circle is not as strong, able or complete. That's where you come in. Become a Career Mentor! Maybe you've already mentored a few young people yourself. It feels good; doesn't it?

TASC Career Mentoring Program is recruiting mentors for our 2017-18 program. Most of the high school students in our program just need a little support and direction. Pretty much, they don't know what they want to be when they grow up. Most of us can identify with that! Career mentors help them discover the opportunities available to them, explore their options and understand the connection between their education and their goals. Sometimes, it's simply a matter of having someone listen to them. If you think you could be that person; why not become a Career Mentor?

Last year, the TASC Career Mentor Program served 47 high school students from Taunton, Bristol County Agricultural, and Taunton Alternative High Schools. Our new flexible program model has resulted in tremendous demand. We have a greater than 80% increase in students interested this year, and so need mentors to meet this increased demand. Become a Career Mentor!

Students aren't the only ones who reap rewards from the mentoring experience. There is special satisfaction when a mentor learns about the impact he or she has had on a mentee. It's a feeling that can't be measured... So why not become a Career Mentor?

The need for mentors is greater than ever. You can help. Become a Career Mentor! It is a fantastic way to make a positive, possibly life-changing difference in the life of a high school student.

If you think you or someone you know would like to become a Career Mentor, and share in the rewards experienced by mentors, contact Trish O'Brien at Tobrien@ahsinc.org or 508/880/0202 x 409 to learn more about becoming a Career Mentor. You won't regret it!

TASC Business-Education Spelling Bee-next on the Event Agenda

Preparations are being made for the 14th Annual TASC Business-Education Spelling Bee, Tuesday, April 11th at the Taunton HS Auditorium. (Note: A different day and a possible new start time - 5:30pm vs. usual 6pm.)

The Bee aims to benefit students served by the program's three partnership schools: Bristol County Agricultural HS, Taunton Alternative HS, and Taunton HS. Proceeds from the Spelling Bee help support and expand TASC's array of career development activities for our students. It helps us increase the awareness of our non-profit AHS program, as well as the many services we offer to help foster career awareness, exploration and immersion to students in our own back yard. But the Spelling Bee is better known as a great learning experience, and fun for all involved. It is a festive competition, with up to 24 teams each consisting of three representa-

tives from area businesses, along with one high school senior and one eighth-grader. The teams are typically broken down into three divisions:

Business,

Community, and Financial. Each

division participates in a round of ten words to spell, with each division winner playing in a championship round to determine the winner. Adults from the business or organization vie for bragging rights plus the Spelling Bee trophy that they can show off at their site for a year. For student participants on the winning teams, there are valuable prizes: a \$1000 college scholarship for the high school senior on the 1st Place Winning Team, \$500 scholarship for the senior on 2nd place team, and \$250 scholarship for the senior on the 3rd place team. The 8th grade students on winning teams each receive a Kindle device and a \$100, \$50, or \$25 Amazon gift card. (continued on Page 6)



2017 Winners: Taunton High School students Aidan Scully and Fharley Paiva

Taunton Area School to Career is a partnership of employers and school systems in the Greater Taunton area that have made a long-term commitment to exposing students to high quality learning experiences that will prepare them for the careers of tomorrow. The mission of TASC is to ultimately contribute to the economic and social well-being of the community by offering school age youth opportunities to seek and understand the skills and training necessary for living and working in the 21st century. For more information or referrals, please call the TASC Program Director, Daniel LeBrun at 508-821-2846.

Taunton Area School to Career

by Dan LeBrun

TASC Business-Education Spelling Bee

(continued from page 5)

Mayor Tom Hoyer of Taunton has agreed to join us again as MC. While not confirmed, we hope Taunton Schools Superintendent Dr. Julie Hackett can return to handle the

“Pronouncer” role.

Both have been part of the TASC Bee for many years. Also, Carol Sullivan of Carol Sullivan Real Estate has graciously agreed to be Chairperson of the Bee Planning Team for a fourth year.

Carol and TASC staff are already working hard and looking to make this the most fun and successful Business-Education Spelling Bee yet!



Get Your Business Involved with the 2018 TASC Business-Education Spelling Bee

The TASC Spelling Bee is an excellent opportunity for local businesses and organizations to form a team or be a sponsor, and showcase their community involvement. An added benefit is that the Bee is broadcast on local access Cable television, and often rebroadcast several times on local cable, for even more visibility. A team registration fee is \$400; sponsorship levels are \$1,000, \$500, and \$250.

Already, four teams are registered from Bridgewater Savings Bank, Bristol County Savings Bank, Morton Hospital, and Taunton Federal Credit Union! We thank them, as we also offer gratitude to Bristol County Savings Bank and Rockland Trust for their early sponsorships, respectively \$1000 and \$500. Join the fun and be part of the community support! Register a team or become a sponsor by contacting either: TASC Program Director Dan LeBrun, or AHS/TASC Development Coordinator Debbie Howland, at 508-880-0202. Thanks and Happy Holidays!

“BTSE” Program: Preparing Juniors for the Future

Another year is in full swing for over 25 Bridge to STEM Employment (BTSE) students at Taunton HS, as they enter their second year of the program. In the upcoming months, these students will begin looking into different colleges, receive a mentor, and build their leadership skills through community service projects.

A tour of UMass Amherst is already scheduled for April. Students will see the campus, eat lunch among the UMass students and hear from college students who currently attend the school. Also in the Spring, the students will also have a tour of Framingham State University (FSU), which will be a great example of a smaller school setting, as FSU has roughly 4,000 students, while UMass Amherst has over 22,000 students. A majority of students in the BTSE group will be “first generation to attend college” in their family; showing them the different types of schools gives them a sense of where they can see themselves succeeding.

During this second year, BTSE students will be matched with a career mentor who will work with them into their Senior year. TASC believes Career Mentoring will be an important piece of the BTSE experience, providing students the support of an experienced adult, as they begin to piece together their future. We are currently looking for at least 11 career mentors, from a STEM-related background, to work with students. They will take students on pre-planned field trips, help them create a career plan, and offer advice along the way. If you, or someone you know, is interested in becoming a career mentor for a BTSE student - please contact Cheyenne Amaral, camaral@ahsinc.org, the BTSE Coordinator, or TASC’s Career Mentoring Coordinator, Trish O’Brien, tobrien@ahsinc.org.

Our students will also continue to grow their leadership skills by doing community outreach projects, which will be planned and completed by the students. Students will work together to come up with topics and plan the logistics of each of the community service projects they decide to tackle. By the end of their Junior year, it is expected that all BTSE students will feel confident and ready to begin applying for college when they return back to school as Seniors.



Resource/Information Page

It IS Easy Being Green

by Chrissy Collins

Laundry is non-stop and a never-ending task. We can't make this easier but we can make it "greener". Below are some quick tips.

1. Wash in Cold Water

When you switch from using hot or warm water to using cold water, you reduce the energy needed for heating the water. ENERGY STAR estimates that almost 90% of the energy used washing clothes goes to heating water.



2. Reduce / Re-Use Packaging - Use concentrated detergent formulas with reduced packaging and less volume. If you use detergent in a plastic bottle, recycle or reuse the bottle.

3. Only Wash Full Loads - Sounds easy enough, but by simply reducing the number of loads you wash each week, you can save water, energy and money. But, be careful not to overload the machine, which can make it harder to get clothes clean. Most front-load models wash best if the drum is 3/4 full with clothes.

4. Separate Towels - Towels get cleaner if they are washed on their own. Washing towels separately from light weight items can reduce dry time. It also has the benefit of not transferring towel lint to other items.

5. Avoid Chlorine Bleach - Use oxygen bleach instead of chlorine bleach. Oxygen bleach is basically hydrogen peroxide and is better for the environment because it naturally degrades into oxygen and water.

Winter Mood Foods

An estimated 5% of Americans experience seasonal affective disorder (SAD) a type of depression that sets in during the shorter days of winter until spring.

SAD is triggered by the reduced number of daylight hours during the winter months, although other factors, such as cold temperatures and weak daylight, can make symptoms worse.

Consider eating "Winter Mood Foods". Winter is a great time to experiment with tasty mood-boosting soups and stews. Some great fall and winter ingredients to include are squash (a great source of magnesium and potassium), eggplant (which contains fiber, copper, and vitamin B1), sweet potatoes (full of vitamin B6, biotin, and anti-inflammatory flavonoids), and turmeric (which assists with immune-inflammatory and hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis activity).

Source: <https://www.everydayhealth.com/columns/therese-borchard-sanity-break/ways-fight-off-winter-blues/>

Holiday Stress Reliever

Here are some ways to reduce stress for the family:

Remember routines - For parents of small children, this is especially good advice. During the holidays, children will find their routines disrupted.

Say "No" - You don't have to accept every invitation to cookie swaps, parties and gift exchanges.

Family traditions - Many don't realize how important traditions are to themselves and their children. Family traditions offer great comfort and security for children.

Attitude check - Both children and their parents need to have an attitude check before the holiday season begins. Take a deep breath, and have everyone in the family pledge to make the holiday season a time of joy and peace.

Rest and relaxation - Everyone, especially a child, needs to take a "time out" over the holiday season to relax.

Favorite things - If you are traveling for the holidays, bring your child's favorite blanket or stuffed animal. A bit of home will help your child feel more comfortable.

Laugh - Laughter is still the best way to beat stress and change everyone's mood from bad to good. Lighten the mood with funny movies, sledding or cozy chats over hot chocolate (don't forget the marshmallows).

Source: <http://www.aahealth.org/programs/behav-hlth/adolescent/child-holiday-stress>

Gift Ideas for Seniors

As the holidays approach, purchasing a gift for an individual with dementia can become difficult. Below is a list of gift suggestions::

1. Electric coffee pots that turn off after a short time
2. Large desk calendars to mount on the wall
3. Medication holders—with a timer
4. Photo albums with names and dates on each picture
5. Registration in an Alert System
6. Simple-to-manage clothing (less buttons, snaps, etc.)
7. Gift certificates for hair cuts and manicures
8. Older music (especially music from the 30's and 40's)
9. Tapes of sermons or church services
10. Cuddly stuffed animals
11. Tickets to take them to a musical event or circus
12. Trip to a shopping mall and lunch
13. Visit to local senior center for different activities
14. Bird feeders
15. Tapes of bird songs
16. Gift certificates to adult day services
17. Hugs, Hugs, Hugs
18. Short visits often

Source: https://www.alz.org/documents/midlandschapter/holiday_tips_for_caregivers_booklet_web-11.pdf

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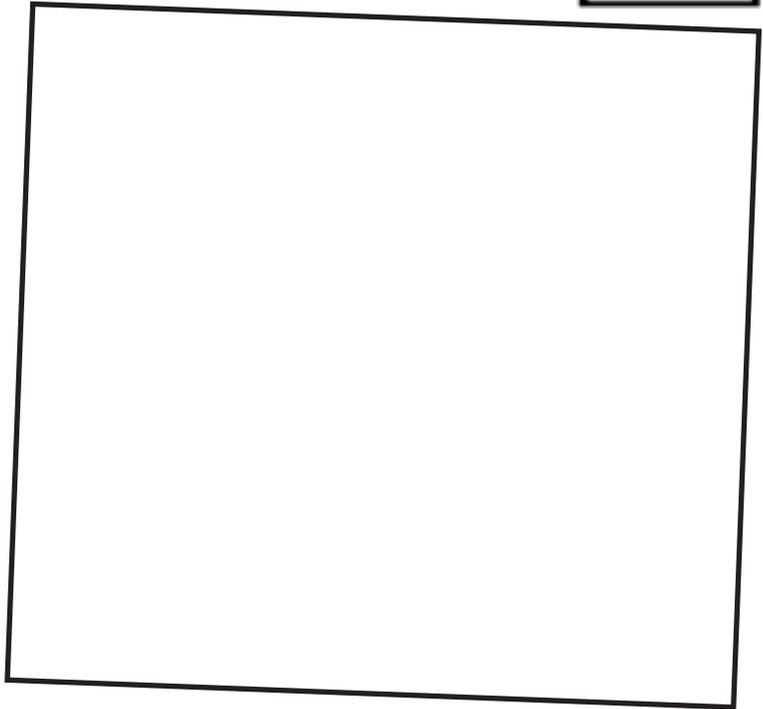
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Cut along the dotted line and include with your donation.

Annual Campaign

Lifelong Learning Fund

The **Lifelong Learning Fund** provides additional support to children, adults and seniors in our community who are enrolled in AHS programs, but may not have access to sufficient resources. Examples of what Lifelong Learning Funds are used for include....Early Intervention Therapeutic equipment, Early Childhood Safety Equipment (car seats, gates, outlet covers), Early Head Start Welcome Bags, and Wise Adult Day Health Therapeutic Programs (Entertainers, Yoga, Music). In addition, Taunton Area School to Career will continue to bridge business and education thus improving tomorrow's workforce.

Please make a tax deductible donation to the AHS Lifelong Learning Fund to help the infants, toddlers, teens, adults, seniors and families we support. Send your donations to:

Associates for Human Services, Inc.
ATTN: Debbie Howland
68 Allison Avenue
Taunton, MA 02780

OR visit our website (www.ahsinc.org) and donate through PayPal!