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The Arc's Top 10 Things You Need to Know about the NJ CAT



As the state continues its transition to a fee-for-service model, families must complete an assessment that measures their loved ones needs in the areas of self-care, behavioral, and medical supports. This assessment, called the New Jersey Comprehensive Assessment Tool (NJ CAT), ensures your loved one remains eligible for Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services and directly determines your loved one's tier assignment. The tier assignment, in turn, determines your available budget for services moving forward.

Recognizing the importance of the NJ CAT, and the confusion families may be experiencing, The Arc of Essex County is happy to provide a top 10 list of things you need to know about the NJ CAT:

1. If you are currently receiving Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services and have not yet completed the NJ CAT, do so immediately.
2. If you are an impending graduate or newly presenting to DDD, you will be prompted to complete the NJ CAT as part of the eligibility process.
3. The Developmental Disabilities Planning Institute (DDPI) of Rutgers University conducts the NJ CAT assessment on behalf of DDD. It is completed in only one of two ways:

- **Online** via a password-protected link that is sent to the survey informant from DDPI
- **Over the telephone** with a representative from DDPI

There is no paper version of the NJ CAT, and the NJ CAT cannot be submitted by postal mail or fax.

4. To request your NJ CAT, complete a brief DDPI survey. The survey is available at https://rutgersbcsr.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8Dp2kNNfvxivb3D or call (732) 640-0730. Once this DDPI survey is complete, you will be emailed the password to access your NJ CAT or given further phone instructions. Upon DDPI survey completion, you can request the NJ CAT in other languages.
5. **Families have indicated that the online method is preferred** as it allows them to complete the NJ CAT at their convenience, with no time limits and with the ability to save their progress and revisit the site at another time. The online version also allows families the opportunity to seek input from other members of their support team.
6. If you are currently receiving services from The Arc of Essex County and do not have email and/or access to the internet, The Arc of Essex County can assist you in requesting the online version, giving you access to a computer, and providing assistance from our highly trained staff.
7. When completing the NJ CAT, families should remain as objective as possible about their loved one's abilities and inabilities. The questions are meant to be reflective of **all settings**, not just how they complete tasks at home. For additional information on how to objectively evaluate your loved one, [click here](#).
8. Once the NJ CAT is completed and a tier is established, the Division of Developmental Disabilities will send a Tier Assignment Letter by USPS mail to the individual (and in cases where the individual does not reside with the guardian, the letter will be mailed to the guardian as well).
9. If you are currently receiving services from The Arc of Essex County, provide a copy of the Tier Assignment Letter to Erin Koropsak, Senior Director of Quality Improvement, via email at ekoropsak@arcessex.org or via mail to The Arc of Essex County, 123 Naylor Ave., Livingston, NJ 07039. Your other service providers will also require a copy of the Tier Assignment Letter.
10. The tier assignment from your NJ CAT will remain in place for approximately the next 5 years before another assessment will be prompted. However, if a major life change occurs for your loved one (i.e. medical change, caregiver status change, etc.) a reassessment may be requested.

For more information or questions about the NJ CAT, contact The Arc of Essex County's Senior Director of Quality Improvement Erin Koropsak at ekoropsak@arcessex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1246.

Spooktacular Fun at The Arc of Essex County!

With tricks, treats, and the finest Halloween costumes, children and adults in The Arc of Essex County's programs have been celebrating Halloween all month long!

On Saturday, October 22, The Arc's group homes, Saturday children's respite program, and hotel overnight respite program participated in the Livingston Advisory Committee for Disabilities' annual Halloween Dance. Supported by the Township of Livingston, the Livingston High School Key Club, and Barry Schwartz Entertainment LLC, attendees enjoyed an afternoon complete with



themed music and temporary tattoos, lunch, and dessert. Popular costumes included Elsa from Disney's Frozen, characters from the Wizard of Oz, various super heroes, and the Cheshire Cat from Alice in Wonderland!

The celebrations continued on Thursday, October 26th at the Special Young Adults day program in Nutley. Attendees spent the morning creating witches brooms treats for the staff at The Arc of Essex County's main office which they delivered on Friday the 27th.



Finally, the students at the Stepping Stones School enjoyed their annual Halloween parade and party on Monday, October 31st. Adorable costumes included super heroes, princesses, and Halloween classics!

2017 5K Run/2 Mile Walk Moves to New Location

Save the Date Today!

Mark your calendars! On Saturday, April 29, 2017 The Arc of Essex County will host its 19th Annual 5K Run, 2 Mile Walk, and Family Fun Fest at its NEW location, The Waterfront at South Mountain Recreation Complex in West Orange, New Jersey! The event will once again feature a 5K run, 2 Mile Walk, and Family Fun Fest with games, activities, food, and fun for the whole family.



All proceeds will directly benefit The Arc of Essex County's services that support nearly 1,500 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. If you have never been to an Arc of Essex County event, this is the one to attend! The Run/Walk is a day where program participants, families, friends, staff, and volunteers come together to continue The Arc's mission of enabling people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live full and independent lives.

Don't want to run or walk alone? Create a team with friends or coworkers. Enjoy a day out with your loved ones and support a great cause. Additional event details as well as online registration will be available in early 2017 at www.runorwalk.org.

Let's Make a Difference Together

The Arc Seeks New Winter Apparel for the HAP Program

Throughout the month of November, The Arc of Essex County will collect new (with tags) winter apparel for low income children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Please consider donating new winter coats, hats, gloves, scarves, or blankets. Sizes needed include children's 5T through adult 3XL.



Collected items will go to The Arc of Essex

LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

The Arc of Essex County is collecting winter apparel items for low income children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Please consider donating new winter coats, hats, gloves, scarves, or blankets.

County's Home Assistance Program (HAP) families. The HAP program provides services to families whose child and/or parent has an intellectual or developmental disability and are low income. This program provides supports in the areas of transportation, community resources, housing, navigating school systems, recreation, and, at times, skill trainings. The goal is to assist parents and families in becoming more self-sufficient, economically and personally, to maintain the family unit, and to attain independence.

Items may be dropped off Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. at The Arc of Essex County's Main Office at 123 Naylon Avenue, Livingston, NJ 07039. Thank you for helping us warm up the holidays.

LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

The Arc of Essex County is collecting winter apparel items for low income children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Please consider donating new winter coats, hats, gloves, scarves, or blankets.

NEW ITEMS NEEDED:

COATS | HATS | GLOVES
SCARVES | BLANKETS

SIZES NEEDED:

Children's
5T thru
Adult
3XL

DROP OFF: NOVEMBER 1 - 28 @ THE ARC'S MAIN OFFICE
123 NAYLON AVENUE, LIVINGSTON, NJ 07039



WHO WILL BENEFIT?

The Arc of Essex County's Home Assistance Program provides services to families whose child and/or parent has an intellectual or developmental disability and are low income. This program provides supports in the areas of transportation, community resources, housing, navigating school systems, recreation, and at times skill trainings. The goal is to assist parents and families in becoming more self-sufficient, economically and personally, to maintain the family unit, and to attain independence.

123 Naylon Avenue | Livingston, NJ 07039 | www.arcessex.org | (973) 535-1181

Stepping Stones Graduates Celebrate a Fall Wedding!

On Saturday, October 1st wedding bells rang as former Stepping Stones students Lisa Markey and Stephen Somich pledged their everlasting love to one another during a special marriage ceremony! During the service at St. Pius X Church in Montville, Lisa and Stephen recited their own vows where they expressed that they knew they would get married since their time together at Stepping Stones. The couple then celebrated their union with family and friends at a reception at the Olde Mill Inn in Basking Ridge.

Lisa and Stephen were enrolled in Stepping Stones early intervention and preschool in the early to mid-1980's. They attended primary, middle, and high school in Whippany where they were both members of the drama club. The two enjoyed a honeymoon at Disney following their perfect day. Congratulations Lisa and Stephen!



The Arc Receives Funding for New Boiler

A \$10,000 grant, generously provided by The Hyde and Watson Foundation, has enabled The Arc of Essex County to replace a failing boiler at the Verona supervised apartments in time for the winter season. This is the fifth grant received from The Hyde and Watson Foundation since 2004. Previous grants funded a new boiler at the Crisis/Respite Group Home, a zero-entry pool at Camp Hope, and repairs and improvements to The Arc's administrative building.

The Arc of Essex County's supervised apartments and residential services provide adults with

intellectual and developmental disabilities a fulfilling, independent lifestyle in a nurturing atmosphere and integrated community setting.

Incorporated in 1983 through the consolidation of The Lillia Babbitt Hyde Foundation and The John Jay and Eliza Jane Watson Foundation, The Hyde and Watson Foundation supports capital projects such as hard costs related to construction or purchase of new facilities, building renovations and improvements, purchase of capital equipment and furnishings, one-time capital needs, and limited support for medical research.

Tanzanian Non-Profit Visits The Arc

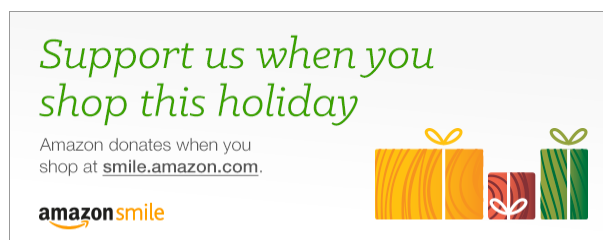
On Friday, October 14th Grace Lyimo, Founder of Connects Autism Tanzania, and The Arc of Essex County's Board member Peter Madonia and his wife Moira Madonia, Founders of EdPowerment, visited The Arc of Essex County. Their goal was to learn more about The Arc's day programs and group homes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Hoping to replicate the structure in place at The Arc, the Connects Autism Tanzania and EdPowerment representatives visited the Bridges Day Program as well as The Arc's newest group home in Roseland.



Connects Autism Tanzania supports people living with autism and co-occurring conditions in Tanzania through capacity building, advocacy, community awareness, and the development of opportunities for success. EdPowerment's mission is to create a path of learning for vulnerable adolescents, young adults, struggling members of the Kilimahewa and surrounding villages, and the larger autistic population in northern Tanzania. EdPowerment works closely with community, educational, and social service leaders to bring quality instruction and holistic support to those they serve. The Arc was excited to share lessons learned with how to lead a grass roots effort that results in wider community acceptance and opportunities for individuals with special needs.

Plenty of Ways to Give to The Arc This Holiday Season

Save the date! Giving Tuesday, an international day of giving, will take place on November 29th. Giving Tuesday is the perfect opportunity to pay it forward to your favorite non-profit, The Arc! Follow The Arc of Essex County on Facebook and Twitter for more information on how your Giving Tuesday donation will impact the lives of more than 1,500 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in Essex County.



Looking for a creative way to give all year long? This holiday season, it's easier than ever to donate to The Arc through Amazon Smile! While you're scouring Amazon for the perfect gift, use The Arc's [custom link](#) and with the click of a button you can donate 0.5% of the price of all your eligible purchases to The Arc at no added cost to you!

Visit <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/22-1546173> for more information.

Board President Brad Hopton Meets the Cast of 'Born This Way'

On Thursday, October 27th, The Arc of Essex County's Board President Brad Hopton had the pleasure of meeting the cast of A&E's hit show 'Born This Way' while attending The Arc's national convention in Orlando, Florida. 'Born this Way' is a show that documents the lives of seven young adults living with Down syndrome. It was recently renewed for a third season!



Weekend Packed with Fun for Hotel Respite Program

The weekend of October 21st was brimming with excitement for ten adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities attending The Arc of Essex County's monthly Hotel Overnight Respite program.



On Friday evening, the group checked into their rooms at the Embassy Suites of Parsippany, then enjoyed dining out at TGIFridays. Saturday was jam packed with fun, beginning with breakfast in the hotel, lunch and an early afternoon of Halloween festivities at the Livingston Advisory Committee for Disabilities Halloween Dance. All of this was capped off with bowling, a movie, and a late dinner at Fuddruckers. Before wrapping up the weekend on Sunday afternoon, the group enjoyed taking advantage of the wealth of amenities at the Embassy Suites of Parsippany including the indoor pool.

The Arc of Essex County's Hotel Overnight Respite program is hosted for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities one weekend per month. Extending from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon, consumers are given flexible choices of community and hotel based activities to fill their weekend. During this time, families are able to take time to relax, recharge, and manage family life.

For additional information regarding The Arc of Essex County's Hotel Overnight Respite program, visit <http://arcessex.org/services/adult-services/respite/overnight-respite/> or contact Senior Director of Supports Program Services Melissa Soules at msoules@arcessex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1262.

Board Member Herb Lev Honored by The Township of Verona



On Monday, October 17th the Township of Verona honored Board member and resident Herb Lev with a certificate of recognition for his recent Lifetime Achievement honors presented by The Arc of Essex County at the 3rd Annual Uncorked & Uncapped - Wine, Beer, and Food Fest.



Verona has been a long-time partner of The Arc of Essex County and is home to one of our 26 residential facilities. Herb has been instrumental in building awareness and acceptance within the community since becoming involved in The Arc of Essex County over 40 years ago.

Remembering Ed Zegler

20-year Member of The Arc Family

Ed Zegler first joined The Arc of Essex County in 1996 when he began attending the Avenues Day Program. He enjoyed his time so much that The Arc of Essex County was at the top of his list for residential services. He spent his final days amongst friends at the Seven Oaks group home in Orange.



In his 20 years with The Arc, Ed evolved into a strong advocate for himself. He was adored by many and he particularly enjoyed hearing from staff how much they loved him! Ed had endless amounts of energy and looked forward to community outings that included food, bowling, and volunteering at the food pantry.

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The Arc of Essex County

123 Naylor Avenue, Livingston, NJ 07039
(973) 535-1181
www.arcessex.org

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