



For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families since 1948.

# The Guardian

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## *Voting Opens Monday for the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Photo Contest*



Throughout the month of March, friends and family of The Arc of Essex County submitted photos of their loved ones that celebrate their unique personalities and demonstrates their enthusiasm to achieve. The Arc received more than 50 submissions and selected the 10 finalists who will compete to win one of three prizes.

The top 10 finalists are now posted to [Photo Contest Tab](#) on The Arc of Essex County's Facebook Page and the [Photo Contest page](#). Winners will be decided by you! Be sure to visit The Arc's Facebook Page or Photo Contest page April 10 - 14th to vote on your favorite photos. Invite friends and family to vote as well! You can vote once per day.

Winners will be announced on April 17th. For additional information, the prizes that are at stake, and to view the official photo contest rules, [click here](#).

## *Day Program Participants Hold Second Performance at Lyric PAC*

A second group of day program participants began an eight-week performing arts workshop at Lyric Performing Arts Center (PAC) in mid-January. During the eight-week session, attendees worked with hip-hop, vocal, and drum coaches to learn dances, songs, and how to play musical instruments. The attendees celebrated their hard work and showed off their new skills by performing for family and friends on Thursday, March 23 at the PAC in West Orange.

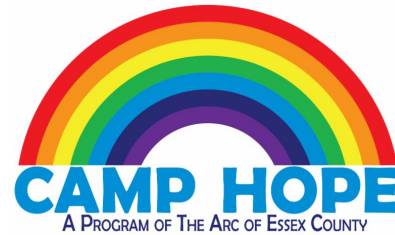


Crowd favorites included various hip-hop performances, a vocal and drum performance, as well as group singing performances featuring an original composition/song about why they love The Arc. Due to overwhelming popularity, The Arc of Essex County and Lyric PAC will begin another series of workshops in the coming weeks.

Do you have a loved one interested in The Arc of Essex County's Adult Day Services? Check out our Adult Day Services brochure, [available here](#), then reach out to The Arc of Essex County's Senior Director of Support Program Services, Melissa Soules, to learn how you can enroll - [msoules@arcessex.org](mailto:msoules@arcessex.org) or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1262.

## *DDD and DCF Funding Available* for 2017 Camp Season

The New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and the Division of Children and Families, Children's System of Care (CSOC/PerformCare) are now accepting requests from families for financial assistance toward the 2017 summer camp session.



Individuals up to age 21 interested in applying for financial assistance to attend The Arc of Essex County's Camp Hope this summer should apply through PerformCare no later than **Sunday, April 30th**. The PerformCare Financial Assistance Application is available here: <http://www.performcarenj.org/families/disability/summer-camp.aspx>.

Adults 21 years of age and older who are interested in applying for financial assistance to attend The Arc of Essex County's Camp Hope this summer should submit a request to the individual's case manager or support coordinator by **Monday, May 1, 2017**.

The Arc of Essex County's 2017 Camp Hope season will run from July 5 - August 18, 2017. The application to attend Camp Hope is available at [www.arcessex.org/camphope](http://www.arcessex.org/camphope). Applications will be processed as they are received. For questions, contact Laurie Best at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1264 or [lbest@arcessex.org](mailto:lbest@arcessex.org).

## *19th Annual Building Tomorrows 5K Run, Family Walk, and Fun Fest* is Less Than One Month Away

Spring is here and the 19th Annual Building Tomorrows USATF-sanctioned 5K Run, Family Walk, and Fun Fest is just a few weeks away on Saturday, April 29th. The increasingly warm, sunny weather is the perfect motivation to create a team, register, recruit members, and start fundraising!

Early-bird run registration rates are in effect until April 18th (use code "EARLY" at registration to save \$5). There is no minimum fee to walk; individual walkers and teams are strongly encouraged to fundraise. All walkers who raise \$25 or more will receive an event t-shirt and FREE Fun Fest admission.

This year's Fun Fest features a variety of new and exciting activities including:

# EVENT SCHEDULE & ACTIVITIES

## SCHEDULE

**5K Registration Opens**  
8 a.m.

**5K Kicks Off**  
9 a.m.

**Walk Registration**  
9:30 a.m.

**5K Awards Ceremony**  
10:00 a.m.

**Walk Kicks Off**  
10:30 a.m.

**Family Fun Fest Opens**  
10:45 a.m.

John Cougar Mellencamp Cover Band  
**Human Wheels**  
10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

Hip Hop Demo  
**Lyric Performing Arts Center**  
12:00 p.m. - 12:20 p.m.

Local High School Musicians Playing Jazz/Rock  
**Super Jam**  
12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

## FUN FEST ACTIVITIES

(OPEN 10:45 A.M. - 1 P.M.)

Emcee & Music (8 a.m. - 11 a.m.)  
**Dancing DJ's**

Face Painting  
**Miss Pattysweetcakes**

Sand Art  
**Prudential**

Kids Cooking Station  
**Community Food Bank of NJ**

Arts & Crafts Projects  
**Lyric Performing Arts Center**

Superhero Appearances  
**Kids Party Characters**

Mascot Appearance  
**New Jersey Jackals**

Princess Appearances  
**Once Upon A Princess Parties**

Interactive Music Experience  
**Tempo! Music Therapy**

For additional details and to register, visit [www.runorwalk.org](http://www.runorwalk.org).

## Stepping Stones Students Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a Leprechaun Hunt

Stepping Stones Students enjoyed dressing up and celebrating St. Patrick's Day on Friday, March 17. Throughout the week, the students learned to cook by making Irish Soda Bread with their classes. Then, on St. Patrick's Day, the students exercised their problem solving skills during a scavenger hunt to find their missing pot of gold. They found it in Principal (and Leprechaun for the day) Marvin Leiken's office!

The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School is a Department of Education approved private school for students with disabilities serving children ages 3-10. Located in Roseland, NJ, the school is designed to meet the developmental and educational needs of children with cognitive impairments such as Down syndrome and other students with similar educational and developmental needs. For more information, or to request a tour and assistance with an out-of-district placement, contact Sue Brand, Director of Early Childhood and Education at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1271 or [sbrand@arcessex.org](mailto:sbrand@arcessex.org).



# Spring/Summer 2017 Adult Recreation Catalog

Now Available

Is your loved one interested in educational programs, community experiences, seasonally-themed events, and weekend group respite programs? If so, The Arc of Essex County's Spring/Summer 2017 Adult Recreation Calendar is now available!

Check out the multitude of adult recreation and respite programs available to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities ages 18 and up in our Spring/Summer 2017 Adult Recreation Calendar. Openings are available in our bowling program, exercise & nutrition classes, Jenkinson's Aquarium and Liberty Science Center day trips, and more.

A registration form is included in the recreation calendar available online at [http://arcessex.org/download\\_file/1338/137/](http://arcessex.org/download_file/1338/137/). For questions or to receive a hard copy of the recreational calendar, contact Dacia King-Sarkodie, Manager of Community Supports Services at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1272 or [dking@arcessex.org](mailto:dking@arcessex.org).



## Calling All Golfers! Susan Wright Memorial Golf Outing Scheduled for May 15

The family of Susan "Sue" Wright, a parent and long-time volunteer of The Arc of Essex County will host a golf outing in her memory in just over a month, on Monday, May 15th at the Montclair Golf Club at Rock Spring. Featuring a full day of golf, lunch, and dinner, the event will raise funds for The Arc of Essex County and its Special Young Adults (SYA) day program. Registration for the full day, dinner only, and sponsorships are available on the event website at [www.susanwrightmemorial.com](http://www.susanwrightmemorial.com).

Sue and her family were first introduced to The Arc of Essex County more than 30 years ago when they enrolled in the Stepping Stones program with their son Billy. Sue would volunteer at Stepping Stones, and later SYA, when bringing Billy to and from program. She was instrumental in the success of The Arc's annual golf outing, running it for many years. The family hopes that funds raised from this golf outing will honor Sue's memory and serve as a thank you to The Arc and SYA for the happiness she found there and the love Billy continues to receive.

To register for the Susan Wright Memorial Golf outing on May 15th at the Montclair Golf Club at Rock Spring, visit [www.susanwrightmemorial.com](http://www.susanwrightmemorial.com).



May 15, 2017

Montclair Golf Club at Rock Spring  
90 Rock Spring Road, West Orange, NJ 07052

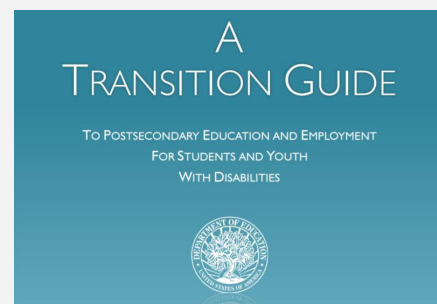
[www.susanwrightmemorial.com](http://www.susanwrightmemorial.com)

Proceeds will benefit The Arc of Essex County, with 25% going directly to their Special Young Adults day program

Event Schedule	Sponsorship Opportunities
10am Check-in with golfer door prizes and gift bags followed by putting contest	Sponsors will be honored with signage featuring business logo & name Cart Sponsor \$100 Tee Sponsor \$150
1pm shot-gun start for 18-hole "shamble" BBQ lunch including beer and wine service	Driving Range Sponsor \$300 Putting Green Sponsor \$300 Cocktail Sponsor \$750 Dinner Sponsor \$1000
Buffet dinner with 2 hour open bar Hole-in-one prizes 50/50 raffle Gift Baskets	
Tickets for the day (\$395 single ticket, \$1500 foursome) or dinner only (\$100) are available.	Email: <a href="mailto:stwrightmemorial@gmail.com">stwrightmemorial@gmail.com</a> Phone: 973-610-3581

# U.S. Department of Education Publishes New Transition Guide to Post-secondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities

*This article was originally published by Friendship Circle on February 7, 2017.*



Transition planning is a mandatory aspect of special education service delivery, according to federal special education law ([IDEA 20 U.S.C. 1400](#)). Federal law requires that school special education teams engage in [transition planning](#) for each student's transition to adulthood - that is, from high school to college or employment.

The law states specific requirements for transition planning. These requirements include timing, assessment, goals, and services. In January 2017, the United States Department of Education published "[A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities](#)," which explains IDEA's requirement for transition planning and its relationship to the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#).

The Transition Guide also highlights the department's values and its recommendations for inter-agency collaboration and for implementation of the laws. The laws and the Transition Guide are complicated and lengthy; in writing this blog entry, the author intends to provide a brief overview of the subject. She invites readers who would like additional information to read the Transition Guide or to contact her at [rachael.wurtman@gmail.com](mailto:rachael.wurtman@gmail.com). You can also visit her website at [www.rwurtman.com](http://www.rwurtman.com)

## Age Requirements for Transition Planning

Parents who have children ages 15 or older are advised to pay attention. The first requirement is that transition planning must occur no later than a specific age; however, special education transition teams have the discretion to engage in transition planning at an earlier date.

Federal law states that a team is required to initiate planning for transition to adulthood when developing the IEP that will be valid on a student's 16th birthday. Some states require districts to participate in transition planning when they develop IEPs that will be in effect when students turn 14. Districts should update students' transition plans on a yearly basis.

## Assessments for Transition Planning

The next requirement for transition planning is assessment. Assessment guides the transition planning process. The law states that transition assessments should be "related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills." Of the multiple means by which to collect data, there are two main categories:

- **Formal assessments** are standardized test, such as achievement tests, the Meyers-Briggs, career inventories, and intelligence tests.
- **Informal assessments** come in many types, including curriculum-based tests, parent observation, interviews, and impressions reported by a sports coach or clergy.

School special education teams are required to develop "[measurable](#)" IEP goals and services based on the assessment results.

Prior to the team meeting for the [IEP](#) that will be in effect during the year in which the student will turn 16, the school team and the student's parents (key members of the team) should assess the student. The data collected should provide a complete picture of the student's skills and areas of challenge.

The team should have started to investigate the student's individual goals with respect to post-secondary education, employment, and independent living. The student should plan to attend that meeting and also subsequent annual transition meetings in order to discuss personal goals. The team should document those goals in a section of the IEP called the "vision statement."

## Developing Measurable Goals

The student's goals, in conjunction with data about aptitude, should guide the team when they formulate measurable goals. Many parents identify self-determination and [self-advocacy](#) as essential transition goals for their students. "Self-determination" refers to the ability to make choices; "self-advocacy" is effectively communicating those desires.

Other goals include obtaining skills necessary to navigate post-high school academic or vocational environments and to live independently. Those skills may be in the academic, social, physical, communication, [self-regulation](#), travel, or other domains. After discussing assessment results and goals, special education teams are required to develop plans for the delivery of transition services.

## End of Eligibility for Special Education

Eligibility for transition planning and all other special education services ends when a student completes the school district's requirements for graduation and accepts a diploma or when a student reaches age 22. Parents and students may not realize that eligibility for public education will end regardless of whether or not the student is ready to transition from high school.

The Transition Guide provides suggested - not mandatory - guidance for school districts and families. It describes the policies of the Department of Education and provides the following recommendations:

- **School districts should start the transition process early**, and the process should be data-driven.
- **There should be coordination between school districts and agencies:** state vocational rehabilitation, colleges, social services, and career centers.
- **School districts should encourage students to attend college and to work.** The Transition Guide suggests many variations on both options, including early college-high school programs and career mentorships.

Students who plan to attend [college](#) are encouraged to prepare while in high school by seeking challenging courses, investigating careers, and [look for colleges that provide support](#) for special needs. The Transition Guide describes the process of requesting [accommodations](#) for special needs. The authors advise school districts and parents to assist students in making their own decisions and to encourage social-emotional growth. One strategy suggested is role-playing.

Transition planning is very complex, because it encompasses the academic, social-emotional, communicative, and other domains of functioning. The "Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities" from January 2017 is a valuable resource in clarifying this subject.

## The Arc of Essex County's Travel Club to Visit Branson, Missouri in November

The Arc of Essex County's Travel Club is busy planning a fun-filled, exciting trip to Branson, Missouri in November 2017. Known for their renowned dinner theaters and music attractions, the trip to Branson will take place November 2nd - 6th. Planned visits and activities include a Branson City Duck Tour, Legends in Concert, Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede, Silver Dollar City, a trip aboard the Showboat Branson Belle, Motown Downtown, and more.

The Arc of Essex County's Travel Club welcomes interested individuals 21 years of age or older. The total cost for the trip including airfare, accommodations, and activities is \$2,100. A [completed registration form](#) and a \$200 deposit are required to hold your place. If your family member is new to traveling with The Arc of Essex County or if you have any questions regarding this trip, contact Maureen Murray at [mmurray@arcessex.org](mailto:mmurray@arcessex.org) or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1228 or Candes Reid at [creid@arcessex.org](mailto:creid@arcessex.org) or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1247.

**Five Day, Four Night  
Trip to Branson, MO** 

**November 2 - 6, 2017**

**Cost: \$2,100/person\***  
\$250 deposit due by April 7, 2017  
Final payment due by September 1, 2017

**Participants will enjoy Branson's well-known dinner theaters and city attractions including:**

- Branson City Duck Tours
- Legends in Concert featuring musical offerings from the Blues Brothers, Michael Jackson, Alan Jackson, Elvis Presley, and Barbra Streisand
- Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede
- Silver Dollar City
- Showboat Branson Belle
- Motown Downtown feature music from the Temptations, The Four Tops, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin, and more
- And more! (See sample itinerary on next page)

If your family member is new to traveling with The Arc or if you have any questions regarding this trip, please contact Maureen Murray at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1228 or Candes Reid at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1247 so we can discuss the program with you. A registration form is included on the next page.

 [www.arcessex.org](http://www.arcessex.org) (973) 535-1181  [www.facebook.com/TheArcofEssexCounty](https://www.facebook.com/TheArcofEssexCounty)  [@ArcOfEssexNJ](https://twitter.com/ArcOfEssexNJ)

## *The Arc Acquires an Additional 6,000 Square Feet in West Caldwell for Day Programs*

During the Fall of 2016 The Arc of Essex County acquired an additional 6,000 square feet of space in the building that houses the Bridges day program. In the months since, The Arc has been busy working with the landlord to retrofit the space to meet the needs of our day program attendees and staff.



The Arc of Essex County's existing day programs are excited to begin utilizing the space in early April. Completed projects include the addition of new restrooms and a lunch area, installation of new flooring throughout the space, expanded rooms to create larger activity spaces, and the creation of administrative offices.

## *The Candle Lighters Raise More Than \$60,000 During Annual Tricky Tray*

The Candle Lighters, a 501c3 organization dedicated to raising money for the unfunded and under-funded programs of The Arc of Essex County, hosted their 23rd Annual Tricky Tray at Mayfair Farms in West Orange on Sunday, March 12. With more than 400 baskets and prizes up for grabs, the event was widely attended by seasoned Tricky Tray veterans and new attendees alike.

In total, The Candle Lighters welcomed nearly 450 attendees to the event and raised more than \$60,000. Funds raised will go toward unfunded and under-funded programs of The Arc of Essex County like Stepping Stones Early Intervention and Camp Hope. The Arc of Essex County would like to recognize the tremendous success and thank all of the attendees and The Candle Lighters for continued support of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



## *Remembering Members of The Arc of Essex County Family*

Ricky Bembridge, a two-year attendee of The Arc of Essex County's Livingston CRC day program, loved music, dancing, and relaxing in his recliner. He could brighten anyone's day with his ear-to-ear smiles, contagious laughter, comedic personality, and big hugs.

Raymond Ciarla, a long-time attendee of The Arc of Essex County's Avenues and Livingston CRC day programs, was a fierce self-advocate and foodie. He enjoyed arts and crafts projects and took pride in showing off his work.

Angie Lado, an attendee of The Arc of Essex County's ARCompany day program and various recreation programs including Camp Hope, was full of energy and enjoyed staying active. She was also an engaged member of The Speakers, The Arc of Essex County's Self Advocacy Club.

If you would like to make a donation in memory of Ricky, Raymond, or Angie, please visit [www.arcessex.org/donate](http://www.arcessex.org/donate). Please note your donation is in memory of these individuals - an acknowledgement of your tribute will be sent to their family members.

▶ Donate Now

## The Arc of Essex County

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

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### Stay Connected

