

Below please find the July 17th edition of the Fairfield SEPTA Summer Star. Please note new Items are shown in Blue. Also note old issue of the SEPTA Star are now on the Fairfield SEPTA Website [www.fairfieldsepta.org](http://www.fairfieldsepta.org) If you are interested in having something published, please email your copy to [FairfieldSEPTA@gmail.com](mailto:FairfieldSEPTA@gmail.com) no later than Wednesday evening. Your item will run for a max. of three weeks, so send accordingly.

Thank you,  
Joanne Lenz

## **Food of Thought**

"We are like tea bags- we don't know our own strength until we're in hot water." Sister Busche

## **SEPTA Happenings**

### **Update on our President**

Tina asked her husband to let everyone know that she is doing great although very tired. The surgery was successful and the Dr feels that the cancer is all out and no further treatment is required.

She wanted to thank all of you for the calls, e-mails and prayers and looks forward to seeing everyone real soon. As of right now, they do not feel that they need help with meals, but will let us know if that changes.

## **Outside Providers Programs**

### **The Heart of Sailing Foundation**

The Heart of Sailing Foundation, New York-Connecticut Chapters introduces sailing to children with developmental disabilities as a form of education and recreational therapy. On Sunday, July 19 they will have their 1st sail of the season at 10:00, Noon, 2:00 and 4:00pm @ the Pequot Yacht Club in Southport

Our Daysails are completely FREE to join, no registration fees or obligations, except to have a good time. Donations are always welcome, and will help us continue to offer our programs to everyone, regardless of their ability to contribute. Please contact me if you are interested. If you know of anyone else who may enjoy any of these sails, please pass this information on to them. We are working on more dates (and ports) and will let you know as soon as they are posted.

Linda Johnson, Director

The Heart of Sailing Foundation, New York-Connecticut Chapters

a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization

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## **Summer Tutoring Services**

For Elementary, Middle and High School, Educational Coaching and Consulting, Barbara Greenspan, MA, PsyD [greenspancoachingandconsulting@comcast.net](mailto:greenspancoachingandconsulting@comcast.net) , 203 535-5522 , Individual/Group, Tutoring, Coaching and Consultation. See attached flyer for information.

## **Workshops and Conferences**

### **Potential Research Study - "Executive Functioning"**

Dr. Timothy Heitzman, a Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department at Fairfield University is doing some research on executive functioning and needs subjects (elementary age students with disabilities and their families). In order for the district to participate (send letters to parents) he would need BOE approval (he will be seeking it for the fall), but wants to begin this summer with an initial cohort of students and families.

Here is a more specific description of the proposed studies:

First a brief background on the idea. As a developmental neuropsychologist I would be one of the first to note how complicated the term "executive functioning" really is. Despite its complexity, the term is being used by more and more psychologists, providers and parents for a variety of children with special needs. Unfortunately, without the necessary training to understand it, the term quickly becomes ambiguous and less helpful. For example, a deficit in executive functioning is considered to be a principle factor in the behavior of children with ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and some Learning Disorders (e.g., Nonverbal Learning Disorders). How can these children share the same deficit if their behavioral profiles are so different? The answer to this dilemma is that executive functioning is not "one" thing but a collection of overlapping cognitive skills and related behaviors. Many children with ADHD have deficits in some executive functions, while children with ASD or LD have deficits in other functions.

My work is based on identifying these specific functions, understanding how they develop and how this development can be fostered with treatment.

Two general components of executive functioning involve (1) the capacity to control/organize behavior and (2) the capacity to manage/organize planned approaches to tasks. Developmental research with preschool children has recently found a connection between these executive capacities and temperament (i.e., the style of behavior and reacting to stimulation that a child inherits genetically). Some of my own research has extended these theories to the college level, where I have found similar connections in young adult students. What is unknown at this time is the role that temperament has in the development of executive functioning in school-aged children.

The first goal of my research is to study this developmental connection between temperament and executive functioning in school-aged children who are at risk for problems in executive functioning. For this to take place I am proposing a research plan to have parents endorse the behavior of their

child(ren) with two self-report behavior scales. The first is a temperament scale, the second is a brief executive functioning questionnaire. I would mail these scales to interested parents.

Together the scales might take 15-20 minutes to complete. I will score the reports and measure the relationship between them.

The second goal of my research is to measure the effectiveness of a parent workshop tailored to

(a) giving parents information about executive functioning, (b) helping them to identify the specific nature of executive functioning associated with the behavior of their child(ren) and (c) developing home-based programs to address these specific behaviors. This second aspect to my research will branch off of the first goal mentioned above. Parents who describe significant problems with executive functioning in their child(ren) during the first stage will be invited to participate in the second phase, which has multiple steps:

First, participating children will be given additional tests of executive functioning to measure a baseline level. These tests will be computerized and paper-pencil tests that together will take approximately 30 minutes.

Then the parents will participate in small groups (e.g., 3 parents in each group) for eight weekly sessions over the summer. Each session will last approximately 90-minutes. Following these sessions the children will participate in follow-up testing to measure the effectiveness of the program.

Results of each phase could be presented at a meeting for parents and/or teachers at a later time. Dr Tim heitzman can be reached at 254-4000 ext 3395 or at [tim.heizman@gmail.com](mailto:tim.heizman@gmail.com)

### **Wrightslaw Conferences & Training**

July 30, 2009: Dobbs Ferry (Southern Westchester County), NY - Special Education Law and Advocacy Training sponsored by The Children's Hearing Institute. Speaker: Pete Wright.

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/speak/09.07.ny.htm>

### **Free Items need a good home**

I know that the GIANT brand half-wheeler sells for \$350 new, and the Baby-Jogger II - 20 is pretty pricey, too. Hopefully, someone in the SEPTA community can put these to good use and not bear the burden of the expense.

They came from a family in Westport that was moving and their son is now 9 and they were going to 'toss' them. They are in excellent condition and I just had to take them back home with me!

Feel free to have them contact me directly at [pajharvey@aol.com](mailto:pajharvey@aol.com) or my cell phone # is 203-913-9441. If anyone can use either of these, please let me know. I do need to get them out of my garage, so if there isn't anyone interested, I will find another avenue to find a good home for them...

Thanks!

Pam

### **Donation of a Pediatric Wheelchair**

A family is looking to donate a basic pediatric wheelchair. If you know of a child who is in need of a wheelchair, please contact:

Megin Coleman, RN, BSN, Nurse Care Coordinator,  
St. Mary's Children's Health Center, Waterbury, CT  
203-709-7089 or email: [Megin.Coleman@stmh.org](mailto:Megin.Coleman@stmh.org)

who will coordinate with the family if there is someone who is interested.