



Medical Home Newsletter

Recreational Therapy for CSHCN

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Welcome

The purpose of this publication is to support health care providers in the establishment and maintenance of Medical Homes for their pediatric patients by providing tools and information for use in their practices.

To offer comments, ideas for future newsletters, or to sign up for email delivery contact us at medhome@utah.gov.

Copies of newsletters may be found on the Utah Medical Home web portal:
<http://medhome.med.utah.edu/>

Recreational Therapy

Recreation and exercise is extremely important for all of us, including children with disabilities. The American Therapeutic Recreation Association summarized the impacts of recreational therapy for children with disabilities:

- **Improvement in Physical Functioning**, including perceptual-motor skill, balance, agility, and athletic skill
- **Improvement in Cognitive Functioning**, including enhanced attention span, problem solving, and decision making skills
- **Improvement in Communication and Social Skills**, such as conversation, assertion, cooperation, and competition.
- **Reduction in Non-Adaptive or Inappropriate Behavior**, including decreases in self-stimulation, stereotypical, and self-abusive behaviors.
- **Increase in Age-Appropriate Behavior in the Community**, including making age appropriate choices and activity participation in the integrated community setting.
- **Enhancement of Friendships and Social Support Networks**, with both developmentally disabled and typically developing peers.

More information may be found at the American Therapeutic Recreation Association's web site, www.atra-tr.org.

A number of programs within Utah that offer recreational programming for children of all abilities are listed at the end of this newsletter. Most of the programs listed are in the Salt Lake area, but some of them will be accessible to children living throughout Utah. For example, Camp Kostopulos offers sleep-away camps for children of all abilities and the National Abilities Center may offer opportunities for children visiting Park City area. **While often unadvertised, many programs offer reduced fees or scholarships when requested.**

Families may find additional programs through their local Department of Parks and Recreation. A few geographic areas have accessible playgrounds. Such a playground was recently completed at Liberty Park in Salt Lake City and ground breaking accomplished for one in Logan.

Inclusion within community-based athletic programs is an option for many children if the family, child, and program are given adequate supports. Interestingly, one study found that inclusion of a child with special needs into a community little league program, with adaptation of the rules and equipment, was met with enthusiasm from the typically developing children in the program. The parents of the typically developing children were "a little wary, but thought it okay." The coaches were the barrier, feeling that it would not be fair to the typically developing children and that the child's inclusion would lead to disadvantages for the team. If a child or family desires participation in community sports programs, the medical home might be key in offering support and guidance, particularly to the coach.

Many children with disabilities want to learn independent leisure athletic skills they can use at home but need adapted equipment or help choosing activities. In some cases, a PT consultation might be obtained specifically to address this issue (e.g., the child who wants a bicycle or tricycle but the family does not know what to purchase, or the selection of a sporting wheelchair). In many cases, readily available athletic equipment and toys can be adapted by the parents to better serve their child's needs.

The National Lekotek Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to making play accessible for children with disabilities (www.lekotek.org). Through their web site, parents can order information packets, relevant to specific conditions, on choosing toys, sources of adapted toys, and instructions for adapting/making toys. For the highly motivated professional or parent, training is offered on how to develop a toy lending library. Families may also call the National Lekotek Center for information at 1-800-366-PLAY. Toys R US publishes a yearly "Toy Guide for Differently Aabled Kids". Their toll free number is (888) 869-7932. **Eparent.com (<http://eparent.com/>) provides information for parents on selecting toys for children with special needs.** (The site requires free user registration.)

Occupational and physical therapists have access to a large number of catalogs offering adapted sports equipment which will allow the child with limitations in strength, coordination, speed, vision or hearing to engage in athletic and recreational physical activities with higher levels of enjoyment and satisfaction. Types of equipment may include adapted mitts, balls, bats, scooters, tricycles, play ground and swimming equipment. Parents should request access to these materials to review available options.

Swimming is an ideal activity for many children. The parents of some children may be unaware that their child's medical condition does not preclude swimming (e.g., the child with a tracheotomy or gastrostomy). Some parents may need training from an adapted swim program or a therapist on how to handle their child safely in the water, to have adapted equipment to help support their child in the water, or to have the medical home advocate for their child to be able

to use the local pool (e.g., the child who wears disposable undergarments which many pools exclude).

Physical education and recess activities at school are also important. The need for adapted PE and/or supports or social structuring on the playground should be addressed in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

2003 Summer Programs

- **Art Access/Very Special Arts of Utah,** www.accessart.org. Call 801-328-0703
- **Camp Kostopolus** provides recreation opportunities for individuals ages 7 and up with mental or physical disabilities. They also have year-round programs after school, evenings, and weekends. Call (801) 582-0700 or go to www.campk.org.
- **Camp Roger** provides a residential summer camp, disability inclusive with counselors trained in the needs of disabled campers. Call (801) 585-7765 for more information.
- **Common Ground Outdoor Adventures, Logan, UT** offers canoeing, river rafting, cycling, rock climbing, destination trips, skiing. Call (435) 713-0288 or visit www.cgadventures.org.
- **Courage Reins Therapeutic Riding Center** offers riding lessons to people of all ages with any type of disability. For reservations and information, call (801) 756-8900 or visit their web site at www.couragereins.org.
- **Easter Seals of Utah** offers a variety of programs including summer and a Saturday Day Camp. Call (801) 486-3778 for more information.
- **Hogle Zoo** offers summer day camps and volunteer activities for children 3-12 years, which may be able to meet the needs of special needs children. Parents desiring more information should contact Linda Middleton 584-1763.
- **Hydrotherapy-Liz Eagan** offers swim programming for children of all abilities at Hartvigsen School, Salt Lake City. Call (801) 685-4571.
- **Jewish Community Center Summer Camps** Summer camps. The JCC enrolls children/teens with adapted needs (e.g., children with autism, down syndrome,

cognitive challenges, and physical needs) into their summer camp programs depending on their ability to meet the needs of the individual child. Families desiring more specific information should contact Camp Director Jerrad Strand at (801) 485-4507.

— **Kindred Spirits** Art programming for children of all abilities. Summer session The Art of Puppetry starts in July. 232-1430 Kindred Spirits Studio 974 East 2100 South, Salt Lake City.

— **Leisure and Recreation for Differently Abled Kids**

(http://www.cpd.usu.edu/projects/view_project.php?pid=1380) is a program of the Center for Persons with Disability at Utah State University. This project works with city and county administrators in the Cache Valley area to insure full inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in community recreation programs such as soccer, T-Ball, and Arts in the Park (www.cpd.usu.edu).

— **Mountain Land Rehabilitation Youth Pool Program.**

A water exercise program designed for kids with JRA, fibromyalgia, chronic pain, chronic fatigue syndrome and related conditions. (801) 562-0066.

— **National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities: Summer Camp Guide.**

Directory of summer camps nationwide. For more information, visit www.nichcy.org/pubs/genresc/camps.htm

— **Palisade Pals Children's Program** will be offering camps at various locations around the state. Call (435) 528-7167 for more information.

— **Parent's Choice Summer Program** is for children ages 6-15 years. This is an eight-week program for kids who have difficulty getting along with others or keeping friends. Depression, anxiety, shyness and teasing are also helped. Call (801) 483-1600.

— **Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation** offers a variety of Adaptive Recreation Programs, such as: swimming, bowling, fitness club, day trips, day camps, track & field, ice sled hockey, outdoor soccer and others. Contact the Adaptive Recreation Program to request more information at (801) 561-0075. (If you live outside the Salt Lake County area, contact your local Parks and Recreation to find out what types of summer and/or adaptive programs they may offer.)

— **SPLORE Accessible Outdoor**

Adventures provides access for people of all abilities to experience outdoor adventure. They offer opportunities for people with diverse backgrounds and abilities, including persons with disabilities, to experience adventures together. Call (801) 484-4128 or visit www.splore.org for more information on upcoming canoeing, cross-country skiing, climbing and white water rafting opportunities.

— **Sports Tours** offers travel opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This is a private company that offers trips to places such as Hawaii, Disneyland, and Zion's. Call (801) 374-8087 or toll-free at (888) 374-8687.

— **Summer Employment Center** will accept kids with disabilities. It is a half-day at a work site and half day in class, Monday through Thursday. Kids have to be self-sufficient with dressing, grooming, and toileting. Call (801) 468-3246 for information on this program.

— **Sunshine Solutions** will be offered through the Utah Boys Ranch for girls and boys ages 5-15 years with emotional and behavioral problems. Call (801) 280-2697 for more information.

— **The Boys and Girls Club** offers a variety of different programs at each center. Call (801) 322-4411 to find the location nearest you or visit www.bgca.org.

— **The National Ability Center in Park City** offers a variety of programs for children and adults with disabilities and their families. For more information call (435) 649-3991 or visit their web site at www.nationalabilitycenter.org.

— **Trips Inc. Special Adventures** provides travel outings to people of various abilities including disabilities that require staff assistance for a safe and enjoyable vacation. To receive a brochure or more information about this program, call (800) 686-1013.

— **UFIT** Evening gym-based programming and swimming at University of Utah for children with special needs requiring one on one support. Minimal registration fee. Programs offered fall and spring. For more information call 587-9713 or visit UFITprogram@yahoo.com.

- **USA Swimming.org** offers information on adapted swimming including support to coaches who need guidance incorporating a child with disability onto a local swim team and printed information for parents. Access information at their web site by going to programs and services and clicking on the tab for “adapted”.
- **Virginia Tanner Creative Dance** Special Population Dance Classes offered fall/spring for children 3-10 years of age. For more information, call 581-7374 or visit www.dance.utah.edu/vtcdt. Minimal registration fee (grant funded).

For More Information

More information about topics contained in this newsletter is available from: Children with Special Health Care Needs Bureau, Transition Specialist, Lynn Pease at (801) 584-8518 or the Utah Parent Center (801) 272-1051.



REMEMBER: [Next issue –Available ONLY on-line at Utah Medical Home web portal: http://medhome.med.utah.edu/](http://medhome.med.utah.edu/)

- **Utah Independent Living Center**
Offers adapted programming including cooking classes, outings, basketball. 466-5565.
- **Wasatch Adaptive Sports** Adapted outdoor activities including a barrier free nature trail, orienteering (cross country exploring) and fishing. Call 933-2188. Also sponsor of Camp Kudos July 18/19 (Overnight camp for children of all abilities ages 8-16 years at Snowbird Resort. For information about Camp Kudos, call Jennifer Samis 536-3668.

This Project is supported by:

- Maternal and Child Health Bureau
- Bureau of Children with Special Health Care Needs
- Department of Pediatrics, University of Utah
- Utah Family Voices
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