



AUTISM ALLIANCE OF MICHIGAN PRESENTS

MiNavigator

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www.AAoMI.org

Help. Hope. Answers. Today

LIVE THEATRE BENEFITS DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN WITH ASD

Contributed by Diane Willcox, Wharton Center for Performing Arts

Wharton Center, located on the campus of MSU in East Lansing, has launched a series of Sensory-Friendly Performances, including the Broadway show, Disney's The Lion King on July 21, 2018.

The known benefits of attending the performing arts include the expansion or creation of empathy, increase in vocabulary, an increase in tolerance, and an increase in social skills. For children, attending live theatre has been proven to lead to better academic performance.



Families enjoying a show at the Wharton Center





Additionally, according to a study by John D. Newman of Utah Valley University, students with autism spectrum disorders who participate in and attend drama and theater learn critical social skills in a safe and structured environment.

Studies have also been done at Brigham Young University, whose Theatre for Young Audiences has found that a few minutes of rich engagement in theater can help children take leaps in their understanding of the world and their place in it.

“We know from the science of the brain that the most powerful learning takes place with an accompanying emotional experience. Live performances provide that emotional experience,” according to Teresa Dayley Love, director/writer/producer with that program.

Studies have shown that people with sensory, social and learning disabilities benefit from live performances as much as, or even more than, the neuro-typical population.

The objective is simply to provide a warm, welcoming, relaxing, comfortable, and non-judgmental environment in which families can enjoy high-quality professional theatre together, and not feel stigmatized in any way.

Wharton Center’s Sensory-Friendly Performances (SFPs) feature adaptations that include lower sound and light levels at the same high-quality performance level that all audiences will experience.

The largest differences are that the audience is fully supported at these performances: there are pre-show crafts and activities for family members run by education volunteers with training and experience, and quiet and calm rooms available throughout the show.

Audience members may use whatever comfort items they may need throughout the performance – ipads, smart phones, etc. Patrons are welcome to bring in their own food if needed.

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Headphones are welcome, and a limited number will also be provided. The audience may stand or sit, move in and out of the theatre, and vocalize as needed.

To learn more visit www.whartoncenter.com/sfp.



Understanding Extended School Year Services (ESY)

Contributed by Barbara Brish, Psy, SP, NCSP, Education Specialist, AAoM

Summer break is just around the corner, and now is the time to obtain clarification from school district staff whether a student will require an Extended School Year (ESY). ESY should be discussed at each Individual Education Planning (IEP) meeting.

Unfortunately, many caregivers assume ESY will be offered to their child. ESY is actually, the exception and not the rule.

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The IEP team must consider the need for ESY services at every meeting. The decision for ESY is based on potential for skill maintenance/deterioration during scheduled breaks in service, in light of the following:

- Many students, whether in general or special education, tend to lose skills over extended breaks.
- Most students, including students with disabilities, recoup skills in a reasonable amount of time with re-teaching.
- Students with disabilities who can recoup skills in a reasonable amount of time would not be eligible for ESY.
- The IEP Team will define what a practical period of recoupment of lost skills is for each student.
- The provision of ESY services are not intended to maximize a student's potential.
- The services are not provided as a means of facilitating child care, for credit recovery, or due to lack of attendance.

In addressing the nature and severity of the disability, the team should also take into account:

- How the student's mental, emotional or physical health may contribute to problems in maintaining skills during a break in program.
- If the student, due to the severity of their disability, may require a highly structured/continuous program to maintain progress.
- Need to develop essential skills to become self-sufficient and independent at critical stages of learning.

If the need for ESY is deemed necessary (based on the above) the IEP team will determine which services need to be provided, based on the student's goals/objectives:

- Instructional programming required and the need for related services / supplemental aids.
- Least restrictive environment (LRE) – school is not required to create new programs.
- ESY must address IEP goal areas of concern.

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ESY may be provided through the following, based on Michigan Department of Education Guidelines (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Traditional classroom setting – school based programs that vary in length of schedule
- Daily instruction in specific IEP goal areas
- Small group instruction
- One or more related services at a community recreation program
- Cooperative programs with other agencies
- Intra-school cooperative programs
- Consultation with a job coach
- Intensive short-term instruction at various points in the summer months to prevent regression
- A week of intensive review just prior to the beginning of the school year
- Home-based programs that include parent training

• Based on Michigan Department of Education “Standards” and “Guidance” for ESY



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MAY AT A GLANCE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy (Wixom) 2018 MACMHB Spring Conference (Novi)	2 Transition to High School and Beyond (Detroit) CMHAM Walk-a-Mile In My Shoes Rally (Lansing)	3 REST (Respite Education and Support Tools) Training (Houghton)	4 Sibshop Facilitator Training and Sibling Workshops (Grand Rapids) 11th Annual Living with Autism Workshop (Troy)	5 Sensory-Friendly Saturday at Greenfield Village (Dearborn) AAoM FREE Autism Caregiver Bootcamp Series (Battle Creek)
6 Super Spark: All Access (Detroit) AAoM FREE Autism Caregiver Bootcamp Series (Grand Rapids)	7 AAoM Professional Development: Autism (Detroit)	8 Positive Behavior Supports (Holland)	9 Rethinking Guardianship (Bellville) NAMI Michigan Annual Conference (Traverse City)	10 Race Relations and the Behavioral Health Professional (Portage)	11 UPACC Spring Conference (Harris) The Fowler Center Open House (Mayville)	12 Sibshops (Escanaba) Around the Park for Autism 5K Run/Walk (Jackson)
13 Sensory Friendly Sunday at Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum by My Turn (Ann Arbor)	14 The Early Start Denver Model Advanced Training (Ann Arbor) PLAY Project Intensive Workshop and Advanced Conference (Ann Arbor)	15 Creating Confident Caregivers (Houghton)	16 Supporting the Educational Needs of Children & Youth with Mental Health Challenges (Marquette)	17 Understanding Your Rights as a Responsible Tenant (Troy)	18 Understanding IEPs (Scottsville) Supporting the Educational Needs of Children & Youth with Mental Health Challenges (Ironwood)	19 Autism 101 (Southfield) Everyday ABA Training for Parents or Guardians of Adolescents and Teens (Rochester)
20 Abrams Planetarium Sensory Friendly Show (East Lansing)	21 Getting Ready for Kindergarten and Beyond (Cheboygan)	22 Annual Peer Conference: "Connections Matter," (Lansing)	23 Project ImPACT Introductory Workshop (East Lansing)	24 Transition to Kindergarten (Bessemer) Pathways Walk-a-Mile Rally (Marquette)	25 Transition to Kindergarten (Houghton)	26 Fuse[FORCE] (Royal Oak)
27	28 Michigan IDEA Law (Port Huron)	29 Mental Health First Aid Course (Traverse City)	30 Mental Health First Aid Course (Traverse City)	31 Indepen-dance (Marquette)		

** For more information on any of these events please contact MiNavigator line at 877-463-AAOM



Sunday July 29th, 2018
The Detroit Zoo

Register today at
www.AAOMWALK.com

Questions? Interested in Sponsorship?
Contact: Info@aaomi.org | 877.463.2266

