Welcome to the new and improved DDS South Region Recreation & Resource Newsletter. The newsletter is now divided into specific categories, with towns highlighted in yellow. The categories are as follows:

- Special Events, Activities, Workshops and Conferences
- Dances
- Healthy Living: Sports and Fitness
- New Programs Starting Up
- The Arts & Music
- Respite Weekend & Camps
- Vacations and Trips
- Support and Self Advocacy Groups
- Parks and Recreation Programs
- Private Recreation Programs
- Outdoor Recreation—Parks and Playgrounds
- Did You Know? And Other Resources

Town names are highlighted in yellow. Click on the category to jump to that part of the newsletter.

I would love to hear from you once you have read the Newsletter. Please let me know:

- Did you find it useful?
- Is there something missing that should be in there?
- Is there something incorrect that needs fixing?
- Do you know of an activity that I missed?
- Do you have any suggestions to improve this newsletter?
- Do you have a program you would like help advertising or getting started?

If you would like to respond to these questions or would like to be added to my E-mail list
Please contact me: Pamela Okerblom – Recreation Therapist
Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov or call 860-859-5482
Special Events, Activities, Workshops and Conferences

Ride the Shetucket
Once monthly during the warm weather season, the Town of Sprague, in conjunction with First Light Power Resources, has scheduled water release from Scotland Dam. This will take place allowing a water level high enough to paddle or tube from below Scotland Dam to River Park in Baltic.

**Dates for 2015 are:** June 27, July 25, August 29, September 26, October 10

Water release is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on days of the event.

**Paddlers need to have PFDs and a distress whistle.** Participants can put in any time between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. You can ride the river as many times as water level allows. The ride is 4 miles long and takes approximately 1-2 hours depending on water volume. The Town of Sprague will provide a free shuttle between River Park and Scotland Dam. Since Ride the Shetucket is dependent on water levels and the weather, always check the Town website prior to the event for any cancellation postings. [www.ctsprague.org](http://www.ctsprague.org)

Come enjoy a Summer Evening at Camp Harkness!

**Saturday July 25th**
6:30pm-9:00pm

A $3 donation to Camp Harkness Fund* includes:
- Dancing to live music
- Delicious tastes of the Camp Harkness Garden
- Tours of the Labyrinth Garden
- Singing around the campfire
- Fun surprises!

*The Camp Harkness Fund provides Camperships and camp subsidies and financially supports therapeutic and educational programs and activities at Park.
Special Events, Activities, Workshops and Conferences

Sensory Friendly Day
at the Connecticut Science Center

Tuesday, October 6, 2015
10AM–5PM

Fun, judgment-free atmosphere
No harsh lights or sounds
Hands-on activities
Understanding staff
Quiet Zone available

Sensory friendly activities all day long!

General Admission:
$12 per person in advance
$14.95 per person at the door
1:1 aides are always free

Groups:
Please call for special group rates for K–12 schools and licensed special needs programs. 1 free chaperone per 24 students.

For more information, contact Brit Montmeat, Group Sales Account Manager, at bmontmeat@ctsciencecenter.org or (860) 520-2112.

CTScienceCenter.org
Dances

Dances at the Norwich American Legion Hall
Sponsored by Guide Inc.
Date: September 18 & November 13, 2015
Time: 6:00 to 8:00pm
Location: American Legion Hall, 456 Laurel Hill Ave, Norwich
Cost: $2.00
What: Really fun dances with music videos on the wall, raffle, light dinner & soda too!
Questions: please call 860-887-9383

Barn Dance
Date: September 26, 2015
Time: 1:00 – 3:00
Cost: FREE
Food: Healthy Snack and Juices provided
Location: The beautiful Cranberry Meadow Farm: 80 Grassy Hill Rd, East Lyme, CT
Questions: Call 860-447-9911 for directions or go to our web site at www.buckinghamct.org

East Lyme Community Center Dances
Sponsored by Buckingham Community Services
Time: 7 - 9 PM
Cost: $5.00 (how do they keep it sooooo inexpensive?)

- October 30, 2015 - Halloween Dance
- January 8, 2016 - Holiday Celebration
- February 26, 2016 - Valentines Dance
- March 25, 2016 – Crazy Hat Night
- April 29, 2016 - Team Pride Night
- May 27, 2016 - 70’s, 80’s & 90’s Music
- June 24, 2016 - Hawaiian Luau

Address: East Lyme Community Center, 41 Society Rd, East Lyme, CT
Directions to East Lyme Community Center:
Exit 74 off Rte. 95. Right off exit, onto Flanders Road. Continue thru 2 - 3 lights. Turn right onto Society Road. (There is a Nursery on the corner.) The Community Center is on the right, just past Lillie B. Haynes Elementary School.

Note: Weather related cancellation information can be found @ our website: http://www.buckinghamct.org

Questions, Suggestions or Concerns: Call Donald Barnes 860-447-9911
Community Center Provides: QUIET GAME ROOM AVAILABLE, PIZZA & LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WITH ADMISSION. KITCHEN AREA AVAILABLE FOR SPECIAL DIET PREP NEEDS
Special Olympics Connecticut (SOCT) has provided year-round sports training and athletic competition for children 8 and up with intellectual disabilities. SOCT serves 14,815 athletes and partners throughout the state through local, regional and state programs. To find a program near you or for general information about getting someone involved with Special Olympics go to www.soct.org or you can contact Sue Mohr at (203) 230-1201 ext. 239 or susanm@soct.org.

Special Olympics Local Programs are run by volunteers in the community so transportation to and from practice is the responsibility of the athlete as well as any special chaperoning needs. Any one that accompanies athletes to our events and or volunteers with our local programs must complete our volunteer background process. The local program can assist you with that process should you decide to volunteer.

Also visit this site: http://www.soct.org/sports-and-fitness-programs/special-olympics-unified-sports-school-programs-administered-ciac-connecticut-interscholastic-athletic-conference to learn more about our school based program. If this is something you would like to see in your child’s school, please contact them and they would be glad to help.

If you have any questions, please contact:
Sue Mohr - Manager, Sports and Competition
Special Olympics Connecticut
2666 State Street Suite 1, Hamden, CT 06517
Office 203.230.1201x239 Fax 203.230.1202 Mobile 860.638.7141
susanm@soct.org www.soct.org www.playunified.org

Mission Statement:
The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.”
Bowling in Groton Weekly

Date: Ongoing program that meets every Wednesday

Time: 3:30 to 4:30ish Location: Spare Time Bowling Alley 27 Kings Highway, Groton, CT

Cost: $6.50 for 2 games and shoe rental

What: This is an ongoing social bowling program run by Bob and Pat Garcia (parents) at the Spare Time. If you are interested in joining the group simply show up between 3:00 and 3:30 and let Bob know you are there to bowl. Parents and caregivers are invited to stay and socialize with all the other parents. There is a nice group of parents there every week.

Questions: please call Pam Okerblom: 860-859-5482 or Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov

KC Cats All-Star Cheerleading

If you are interested in cheerleading and willing to travel to Coventry, RI, this may be for you. KC Cats has a Special Needs Cheer Team that meets Sundays 4 – 5 and is Free of charge. It is owned and operated by Head Coach and former New England Patriots Cheerleader Lolita Lipa Roberts. She has USAF Certified Cheer and Gymnastics Coaches.

Check it out at cheerkccats@cox.net or www.kccatsallstars.com or facebook.com/kccatsallstars
1010 Tiogue Ave., Coventry RI
(401) 497-5197

The Miracle League is CT’s only fully accessible Baseball League!

The Miracle League of CT is open to all children from any part of the state ages 4 to 21 who have physical and or cognitive challenges. All games are played on their beautiful rubberized surface baseball field that is fully wheelchair and handicapped accessible in West Hartford. Baseball experience is not required. We welcome players of all abilities. Our goal is that every child who has a desire to play baseball, has the opportunity to do just that. Most importantly, that all of our athletes are able to participate in a safe accessible environment that allows them to enjoy the game of baseball just as their siblings and peers are able to. It is our belief that every child should be able to experience the joy of being part of a team. There are 2 seasons, Spring (April – June) and Fall (Sept. – Oct.) www.miracleleaguect.org
**ASD Fitness Center**

*Look at this new fitness center designed for individuals on the Autism Spectrum Disorder in Orange! It is truly fantastic!*

**ASD Fitness Center** provides a safe, comfortable and structured environment for empowering individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to improve their level of physical fitness. ASD Fitness Center builds confidence, improves social awareness and decreases anxiety. The specialized 5,000 square foot fitness facility features personalized, Individual Fitness Programs (IFP) with options to add nutrition and functional skill goals. They offer one-on-one personal training, in addition to small group classes. Sectioned workout stations are equipped with visual cues to focus on building core, upper body and lower body strength. A tailored “fun” station follows each workout station. There is even a separate workout area for moms and dads to use while waiting.

ASD Fitness Center is located at 307 Racebrook Road in Orange.

For more information, call 203-553-9508 or visit [www.asdfitnesscenter.com](http://www.asdfitnesscenter.com).

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**Yoga at Therapy Works in Old Lyme**

Our instructor is an Occupational Therapist with training in sensory integration and self-regulatory challenges. They will use yoga and sensory techniques to address such issues as anxiety, attention, behavior issues and physical challenges. Individuals will leave this class in a calmer, more peaceful state and have tools to use at home and school. They offer 2 yoga classes:

- For Adults Of All Abilities and/or Special Needs
- Afterschool Yoga for Children of All abilities and/or Special Needs

If you have questions, or would like to register: Please call Becky @ 860-434-5524

Therapy Works, 19 Halls Rd, Suite 204, Old Lyme, CT 06371
FREE Fitness Classes sponsored by BEyond FITness

55 Laura Street New Haven, CT 06512
Phone: 203-285-5393
Email: info@beyondfitnessct.com
www.beyondfitnessct.com

Zumba® Kids & Zumba® Kids Jr. classes
Join our team of licensed Zumba® Kids Instructors ready to party with your precious little ones to age-appropriate music and moves. The program is geared for children ages 4-11 years old. Parents/guardians may also join the fun at no charge. Feel free to share away. Classes are offered free for families every other month. (No registration or call ahead needed).

Dates: Tuesdays, July 7, 14, 21
      Tuesdays, Sept. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
      Tuesdays, November 3, 10, 17, 24

Time: 5:30 pm to 6:00 pm.
Cost: Free

FREE Zumba® Classes for Adults
Appreciation Tuesday! Come enjoy a FREE Zumba® class every Tuesday. What better way to help you get started and a healthier you. Bring a friend and feel free to inspire and motivate others by sharing. No Registration or call ahead needed.

Dates: Every Tuesday
Time: 6:15 pm to 7:00 pm.
Cost: Free

BEyond FITness is dedicated to providing a unique experience in your daily workout, as we strive to help you reach your fitness goals with pure fun, love and dance. We provide classes which are not only effective, but also affordable. We offer a variety of exciting, challenging and invigorating classes for all ages, levels and fitness abilities. Come join a class today and see for yourself.

Feel free to "Like" us on Facebook for a complete schedule, free classes and events.
www.facebook.com/beyondfitnessct
Events at Camp Harkness
301 Great Neck Road, Waterford, CT 06385

Yoga Dance for All

- **When:** Sundays 7-8pm, May 31st—September (no Dance Yoga on Sunday August 2, 2015)
- **Where:** Beach at Camp Harkness, 301 Great Neck Road, Waterford, CT 06385.
- **Cost:** Free for campers, pass holders and individuals who receive services from DDS. $5 suggested donation for community friends.
- Please bring water, a towel and/or mat, and wear comfortable clothing
- For questions or information, call 860-443-7818

Weekly Fitness Night

- **When:** Tuesdays at 5:45-7pm, June 2nd—September
- **Where:** Sensory Garden at Camp Harkness, 301 Great Neck Road, Waterford, CT 06385
- **Cost:** Free
- Includes: Stretching, walking, nutrition discussion, healthy snacks and recipes
- Please wear walking shoes and bring a bottle of water.
- For questions or information, call 860-443-7818

Yoga for All

- **When:** Mondays and Wednesdays at 5-6pm, June 4th - September
- **Where:** Sensory Garden at Camp Harkness, 301 Great Neck Road, Waterford, CT 06385
- **Cost:** Free for campers, pass holders and individuals who receive services from DDS. $5 suggested donation for community friends.
- Please bring water, a towel and/or mat, and wear comfortable clothing. Bug spray is also recommended.
- For questions or information, call 860-443-7818
Walk this Way

A Wellness and Fitness Group for Adolescents Ages 9-13

This group will focus on
- Building Healthy Self Esteem,
- Improving Body Image,
- Learning Healthy Coping Skills,
- Incorporating Fitness into Daily Life.

Group meets Thursdays from 4:00 – 5:00 pm
Child and Family Guidance
226 Dixwell Avenue, New Haven
Husky and Commercial insurances are accepted.

For more information contact:
Sharon Myers LMSW
203-503-3479

Francesca Salzano, LCSW
203-503-3501

Cornell Scott Hill Health Center
www.cornellscott.org
Join us for the 2nd year as we bring you some FREE Healthy Family fun. Suitable for all ages and fitness abilities. No Registration Required, Just show up and dance away.

We are Back for more fun!
Where: Quinnipiac River Park (Grand Ave & Front Street)
When: EVERY Thursday in July
Time: 4:00pm – 4:30pm

New 2015
Where: Lighthouse Park (next to Free Summer Meals Bus)
When: EVERY Wednesday in July
Time: 4:00pm – 4:15pm

Building strong communities, family togetherness and a healthy lifestyle.

Find out where we will be next at @beyondfitnessct

55 Laura Street * New Haven, CT 06512 * 203-285-5393
www.beyondfitnessct.com
New Programs Starting Up

Creative Social Group
New @ The Art House in Norwich
A class for crafty teens and adults with special needs to make art, memories and friends!
$20/Registration – $6-14/class
FRIDAY 6:30-8:30PM  *NO CLASSES 1st Friday of the month.
Call or Text 860-772-8032 to request Registration Form.
Please sign up in advance - space is limited.
All activities unless otherwise noted will be held at The Art House: 88 Sherman St, Norwich, CT 06360.
www.thearchouseofnorwich.com
Contact Carrie if you are interested in having an event or program at the ArtHouse!
thearthouse88@gmail.com

Unified Sports Fitness Club
We are very excited about a new program that Connecticut Special Olympics is offering: the Unified Sports Fitness Club! I am very impressed with the clubs and want to help start up a few in our area!
Please read on, and if you and/or your family are interested in joining a club, improvising your health and making new friends...let's talk!

HERE IS A LITTLE ABOUT THE CLUBS:
The Special Olympics Connecticut Unified Sports Fitness Club brings together people with and without intellectual disabilities, and provides opportunities for regular physical activity to enhance fitness and inspire friendships among participants. Your entire family could even participate together. It focuses on participation rather than competition. Each Club participant receives an individual tracking device, (MOVband wrist-worn activity monitor) which is used to monitor individual and club progress. The club offers fitness activities, as well as nutrition and wellness resources for all members. It usually begins with walking, which is one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways for many people to add physical activities into their lives.
The Clubs meet regularly for walks/fun fitness activities of their choosing, usually weekly or bi-weekly year round. They often also participate in Universal Walks. Universal Walks are large events hosted by Special Olympics Connecticut, 2–4 times per year where all the “Clubs” meet at a designated time and location (much like the State Games). These events incorporate a variety of other fun activities and challenges in addition to walking. They are a highlight that help to keep the enthusiasm flowing! Improving one’s health isn’t the only thing to motivate participants either; they have the chance to earn individual and Club rewards for racking up the “moves” and “miles”!

So if this sounds intriguing, please let me know!

860-859-5482 or Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov

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**Physically Challenged Bowling Group**

There is a new program starting up in Groton for individuals with unique abilities who require more time and assistance to bowl. This program is being designed for individuals who require a smaller/non-rushed program. It will be ideal for individuals with physical challengers, requiring them to use a ramp due to unsteady gait, or other adaptive equipment (walkers, braces, or wheelchair).

**When:** The program is projected to start as early as September 2015 at Spare Time bowling alley in Groton, CT. Date and time will be determined once interest and availability of the program’s participants are determined.

If you want to join, or if you have any questions, contact Pat Garcia at 860-705-3042.
**The Arts & Music**

**Muse**

*A gallery of art and inspiration*

The gallery is planning a full year of events and shows. This year they are having 2 openings:

April 27th, 2015 and October 23rd, 2015.

If you are interested in being one of the Artisans from the DDS community to display your work in the April show: contact Kerry at 860-859-5419 and drop off your pieces by April 17, 2015.

The Muse Art Gallery is located in Campbell Building Lobby, 401 W. Thames Street, **Norwich, CT**

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**Family Drum Circles**

*Brought to you by the Infinity Music Therapy Services*

**Date:** First Friday of each month  
**Time:** 7:00pm – 7:45pm  
**Location:** 1678 Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike, Southington, CT  
**Cost:** $5.00/person, $3.00/children ages 2-5, under 2 Free

To Register: Reservations appreciated, drop-ins welcome, Call (860) 518-5557 or email info@infinitymusictherapy.com

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**Camp Harkness Has Got Talent!**

*Do you have talent you want to share?*

A $3 donation to the Camp Harkness fund includes a night of great entertainment and refreshments!

August 20th at 6:30pm  
Sunset Overlook, 301 Great Neck Road, **Waterford, CT**

Contact Victoria.severin@ct.gov (860-443-7818) for application or more information
Time: 5pm-6:30pm
Auditions: Thursday July 22,

Practices will be held on August 12th and 20th, 2015.
Marrakech Got Talent will be held August 28th, 2015.

Entry Fee: $5.00
Please complete and bring this flyer, along with your entry fee to auditions on July 29, 2015.

Bring your own materials for your audition/act (i.e. music)

Location: 450 Island Lane West Haven, CT

Marrakech Got Talent
Hosted By: Zeno Payton
Entry Form:
Name: ___________________________
Group Home/
Talent/Act: ______________________

Prizes
First Place: $25.00 Visa Gift Card
Second Place: $10.00 Gift Card
Third Place: $5.00 Gift Card
Respite Weekend & Camps

List of camps in and around CT: DDS does not maintain a list since there are two very good lists already in existence.

- **CTFSN (Connecticut Family Support Network)** has many resources including: Specialty Camps, Inclusive Camps both in CT and out of State. Check them out. [http://www.ctfsn.org/#/resources/c1e0x](http://www.ctfsn.org/#/resources/c1e0x)

- **SERC (State Education Resource Center)** has a directory of summer camps and resources at [http://ctserc.org/docs/Summer%20Camps%20Directory%20FINAL.pdf?2fa6f942252db2ec621fe255459617=a385ff7c66733ba59a83c00c9659d97](http://ctserc.org/docs/Summer%20Camps%20Directory%20FINAL.pdf?2fa6f942252db2ec621fe255459617=a385ff7c66733ba59a83c00c9659d97)

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**Respite Weekends**

73 Times Farm Road  
Andover, CT 06232  
860-742-2267

This monthly, weekend program caters to campers’ ages 8 to 25 with both physical and developmental needs. The respite weekend offers a small retreat for campers to engage in activities including arts and crafts, baking, nature walks, team building, games, and more! Respite weekends focus on independence and socialization while allowing families the comfort of knowing their child will be well cared for in a safe and nurturing environment. This program provides 24-hour nursing care along with trained and knowledgeable staff. This program runs once a month from Friday to Sunday with meals and housing included at Channel 3 Kids Camp in Andover, CT. Visit [channel3kidscamp.org](http://channel3kidscamp.org) for more information or call Alycia Williams at 860.742.2267.

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**Weekends in the Country**

Weekends in the Country are offered from September to May. These action-packed, theme-based weekends are developed by our creative team and filled with fun and friendship. Campers arrive on Friday evening and return home Sunday afternoon. Sixteen uniquely themed weekends are conducted through the year with an extended Vacation Week held at year’s end between Christmas and New Year’s. Every Weekend in the Country sees campers enjoying the same variety, camaraderie and opportunities for learning provided by summer camp only in an intimate, joyful two-day span.
Respite Weekend and Camps

www.Horizonsct.org 127 Babcock Hill Rd, South Windham, CT 06266 Phone number: (860) 456-1032

The Miracle League of CT is proud to be the main Sponsors of the iCan Bike camp that is run by the town of West Hartford Leisure Services Department.

The mission of iCan Bike is to teach children with special needs (age 8 and above) to ride conventional two wheel bicycles and become lifelong independent riders. iCan Bike uses adapted bicycles and a specialized instruction program to transition riders onto their own typical two wheel bikes in one weeks' time. [Participants must be 8 or older, and be able to side step and walk without assistance devices.] The camp will be held at Conard High School in West Hartford from July 27 – July 31st. This is offered to anyone in the state at the West Hartford resident rate because of the Miracle League of CT’s sponsorship... only costing $150 per rider. Fee waivers are available through the Miracle League of CT for families with financial hardships.

For more information and to Register go to the West Hartford Leisure Services website: www.westhartfordct.gov/living_here/town_departments/leisure_services/special_need_recreation/icanbike.php

AUTISM SUMMER PROGRAM
(ONLY IN CONNECTICUT)
Ryan Woods Autism Foundation
FIRST CHURCH 190 Court Street, Middletown, CT 06457
860-346-8777 mrwaf@comcast.net
www.ryanwoodsautismfoundation.org
JUNE 22 - SEPTEMBER 4, 2015 • 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. (Mon-Fri)
REGISTER NOW / LIMITED SPACES LEFT!

Description: This program provides positive support to increase social skills, self-advocacy and appropriate assertiveness, personal hygiene, healthy relationships, lowering social anxiety, and building confidence, discovering dislikes/likes.

Population: Medium to high functioning ASDs ages 13-21 who are on the Autism Spectrum, Asperger’s and/or multiple disabilities.

Ryan Woods Autism Foundation is a 501(c) (3) grassroots autism Foundation who supports Autism Speaks; SEPTO; NAMI
**The Guided Tour**
7900 Old York Rd, Elkins Park, PA, Ste. 111-B  
(215) 782-1370 • Fax: (215) 635-2637  
Visit us on the web at: www.guidedtour.com or  
Email: gtour400@aol.com

**DisabledTravelers.com**
A resource dedicated to accessible travel information. This new site will provide you with information on businesses from around the world that specialize in disability travel.
http://www.disabledtravelers.com/

**Disabled Travelers Guide**
See this guide for information on the accessibility of cruise lines, rental cars, buses, trains, airlines and hotels.
www.disabledtravelersguide.com

**Travel Guides**
Everything you want to know or need for traveling worldwide with individuals with disabilities.
http://www.travelguides.org/index.html

**Autism on the Seas**
1-800-516-5247
Cruises for Families, Adults, and Group Homes living with Autism, and/or Developmental Disabilities
www.AutismontheSeas.com

**ASD Vacations LLC**
An affiliate of Travel Planners International  
Alan Day, Special Needs Family Vacation expert  
Alan can help you plan the perfect vacation for families with individuals with special challenges.
Tel: (203) 750-0000  
E-mail: AlanDay@ASDVacations.com  
Web: www.ASDVacations.com

**TSA Helpline for Travelers with Disabilities**
Travelers may call TSA Cares toll free at 1-855-787-2227 prior to traveling with questions about screening policies, procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint.
http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/disabilityandmedicalneeds/tsa_cares.shtm

**Wings for Autism**
Families with children on the autism spectrum or with developmental disabilities are able to take a test run through the airport boarding process.
http://www.charlesrivercenter.org/index.cfm?pid=14828
### Sprout
270 West 96th Street  
New York, NY 10025  
Toll free: 888-222-9575  

Have you heard about our innovative and insightful film programs, including our 13th Annual Sprout Film Festival ([http://gosprout.org/film-festival/](http://gosprout.org/film-festival/)) and our newly redesigned [sproutflix](http://sproutflix.org) film distribution service?

### Adventures Beyond Compare
Planned and staffed day and multi-day events and vacations for individuals with special needs.

144 Vanderbilt Road  
Bristol Connecticut 06010  
Tel: 860-402-2462  
[www.adventuresbeyondcompare.com](http://www.adventuresbeyondcompare.com)

### The National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass or Access Pass
Free pass to national parks for individuals with disabilities

Access Pass information -  
[http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access.html](http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access.html)  
Access Pass Application -  
[http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access_pass_application.pdf](http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access_pass_application.pdf)
Support and Self Advocacy Groups

What is Self-Advocacy and how did it get started?
The self-advocacy movement began in Oregon when a group of people with disabilities went to a conference that was held for them. They were not happy because it was run by professionals. They got together and began to plan a conference run completely by people with disabilities. The first conference was held in October 1974. That was 41 years ago! The name of the conference was “People First” because everyone wanted to be known as a person first, instead of being labeled by their disability. After the conference, small self-advocacy groups were started all over the world.

Self-Advocacy is speaking up for yourself by letting others people know how you feel about issues that affect your life. Self-Advocacy groups help you work together to speak up for what you want.

DDS is honored to have 3 Self-Advocate Coordinators on staff.

Their good work is in many areas. They start and visit Self Advocacy groups around the region, attend Self Advocacy meetings, train self-advocates to be I.P. buddies, teach healthy relationship classes, talk to schools and colleges, help with travel training for individuals, educate the DDS staff on the issues for Self Advocates, write letters to our legislators and newspapers and much more. Contact the Self Advocate Coordinator near you to find out how you can get involved!

The DDS South Region Self Advocate coordinators:
- Carol Grabbe – Wallingford 203-294-5119 carol.grabbe@ct.gov
- Genna Lewis – New Haven 203-974-4232 genna.lewis@ct.gov
- Latasha Linwood – Norwich 860-859-5512 latasha.linwood@ct.gov

New Parent Networking Group

This group is open to families with children diagnosed with autism or other disabilities.

It will provide an opportunity to meet with other families in your area who have similar challenges and concerns. Families will be able to share ideas and information to gain more knowledge and access more support. Educational and resource materials will also be available.

**When:** Every 3rd Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:00p.m.
**Location:** ASRC, 101 North Plains Industrial Rd. Suite 1, Wallingford
**Please RSVP:** Deborah Pagano at dpagano@ctfsn.org 203-430-0242 or Sara Reed at sara@autismconnecticut.org 203-265-7717

This networking opportunity is a collaborative effort and will be facilitated by Autism Services & Resources Connecticut, (ASRC) and the Connecticut Family Support Network, (CTFSN)
Support and Self Advocacy Groups

For more information go to the CTFSN website at www.ctfsn.org

What we do: The Connecticut Family support network is committed to helping families of individuals with disabilities and special health care needs, and the professionals who work with them, find information, resources, and support to improve their lives.

ALL OF OUR SERVICES ARE FREE!

How we help:

We connect one-to-one with parents via telephone, email, and Facebook. We provide information, emotional support, advocacy and guidance.  
We hold workshops and trainings across the state for parents and professionals on the wide variety of topics including special education, transition, recreation and communication.  
We work to empower families to become affective and successful advocates, we encourage individuals with disabilities to become successful self-advocates.  
We offer more than 20 support groups per month. These groups provide parent-to-parent connections, access to resources and guest speakers.  
We share current information on disabilities issues and resources via email, our website and Facebook, so parents can remain updated on how to continue to keep themselves informed.  
We collaborate with local and state agencies, community groups and other non-profit organizations to provide access to resources and support.

CTFSN Support Group Schedule

For more information, go to the CTFSN website at www.ctfsn.org

Southeast Region: April Dipollina, Regional Coordinator 860-271-4371 adipollina@lmhosp.org

L&M Hospital Parent Support Group in New London meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:00pm in conference room 3. L&M Hospital, Montauk Ave, New London (unless there is a special event that month). Please be sure to check our Calendar page for the latest meeting information.

South Central Region: Deborah Pagano, Regional Coordinator 203-430-0242 dpagano@ctfsn.org

A “Parent Partnership” for children with special needs

Parent Partnership is a meeting for families of children with special needs.

- Parents meet to share ideas, concerns and information related to providing the best support and environment for their children.

Support & Self Advocacy
Support and Self Advocacy Groups

- Parents can choose to be as active as they like.
- Speakers, training and resource and educational materials will be provided.

**Morning Parent Partnership** meets on the first and third Tuesday of the month from 9:30-11:00am at the Women & Family Life Center, 96 Fair St., Guilford. Free childcare is provided.

**Evening Parent Partnership** meets on the first Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:00pm at SARAH, Inc., 51 Boston Post Rd., Madison.

You do not need to have attended prior to join us at any of the meetings.

For more information or to register please email or call:

Kathy Fadel at Kidsteps-FCC@sarah-inc.org or 203-453-7592, x108

Deborah Pagano at dpagano@ctfsn.org or 203-430-0242

“Parent Partnership” is facilitated by Deborah Pagano of the Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN) and organized by the Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN) in collaboration with KIDSTEPS, Family and Children’s Center a division of Sarah, Inc.

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**Parent’s (with ID) Group**

Support Group for Parents with Intellectual Disabilities

All are welcome. Kids are welcome.

**When:** 2nd Wednesday of every month

**Time:** 5:00pm – 7:00pm with Potluck dinner

**Location:** The Campbell Building at 401 West Thames Street, Norwich, CT 06360 (Room 339)

For more information: contact Amy at 860-859-5474 or Rhonda at 860-859-5578

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**Rainbow Support Group**

For LGBTQ+ people with ID

(Consumer, Staff and Family are welcome to attend)

**When:** 2nd Sunday of each Month (except May-North Hampton Pride and July- closed)

**Time:** 1 – 2:30pm

**Cost:** Free!

**Where:** New Haven Pride Center

84 Orange St., New Haven, CT

For information email: Rainbowdisability@gmail.com

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**Creative Housing Workgroup**

Concerned about Housing or Residential Supports for someone with a disability? Come and join us.

We are a group of proactive parents, caregivers and self-advocates who are working together to find Solutions, Supports and create Residential Options.

We meet the second Thursday of the month at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook from 6 -8 pm.

**Can’t get to a meeting?** Ask to join our e-mail group.

For more information contact: April Dipollina: adipollina@lmhosp.org 860-271-4371

Or Lauralyn Lewis: lauralynlewis@sbcglobal.net
**Dad’s Night Out**

Join other dads every 1st Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. for a casual night out.

2015 Winter Series Meeting Dates: March 4th

**NEW Location:** Lenny & Joe’s Fish Tale
86 Boston Post Rd., **Westbrook, CT**

Please RSVP to...
Deborah Pagano at dpagano@ctfsn.org or 203-430-0242 or
Kathy Fadel at kidsteps-FCC@sarah-inc.org or 203-453-7592 ext. 2

“Dads Night Out” is organized by the Connecticut Family Support Network in collaboration with Kidsteps, Family and Children’s Center

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**Mom’s Night Out**

They will meet every 3rd Wednesday of the month

There will be a group meeting (optional) from 6:00-7:00pm at SARAH in Madison, 51 Boston Post Rd. #1.

Or join us at 7:00 pm for a casual night out at a local restaurant (restaurant changes quarterly)

2015 Winter Series Meeting Dates: March 18th

**Location:** Chips Pub III, 24 W. Main St., **Clinton**
www.chipspub3.com

Please RSVP to...
Deborah Pagano at dpagano@ctfsn.org or 203-430-0242
Kathy Fadel at kidsteps-FCC@sarah-inc.org or 203-453-7592 ext. 108

“Mom’s Night Out” is organized by the Connecticut Family Support Network in collaboration with Kidsteps, Family and Children’s Center

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**West Haven Autism Family Support Group**

Wednesday, March 4th, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm
Johnson Community Center, 201 Noble St in **West Haven**

Our speaker for March is Lisa Marie Bernardo, a CTA Certified Life Coach who specializes in working with parents, families and caregivers of special needs children. She will address things like our own basic needs, support, prioritization, etc. The better we feel ourselves; the better able we are to help our kids!

Hot refreshments will be served – feel free to bring sweets.

**Please be sure to RSVP for yourselves and, if you need childcare, by Monday, March 2nd to Bob Morton morton@westhaven-ct.gov Childcare registration is mandatory.**

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**The Power of Voices**

*Self-advocacy group*

They meet once a month on the 3rd Thursday at 5pm.

526 Whalley Avenue, **New Haven, CT**
We have a Special Olympics team that competes in Bowling, Athletics, Track and Field, and Basketball.

For Information on how to join contact Corinne Jackson at: (203) 389-2970 ext. 12

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**Join CT KASA!**

**KASA (Kids As Self Advocates)** is a national, grassroots project created by young people with disabilities for young people with disabilities. **CT KASA** is open to anyone with a disability ages 13-26.

**What CT KASA Can Do For You**

**CT KASA** participants learn how to advocate for themselves and take control over their own lives. **CT KASA** helps this happen by teaching young people about their rights and how to change the systems that affect their lives.

**CT KASA Activities Will Include:**

- Monthly meetings (available via face to face, webinar or conference call)
- Working on a personal development plan
- Representing the voice of young people with disabilities at public events
- Group youth leadership projects

Interested?

There will be an informational conference call about **CT KASA** for young people and their parents in March 2015. Kick off meeting will be in April 2015. Details are forthcoming.

**For more information contact:**

PATH Parent to Parent/Family Voices of Connecticut  
800-399-PATH (CT only)  203-234-9554 info@pathct.org  www.pathct.org  
P.O. Box 117, Northford, Connecticut 06472
Support and Self Advocacy Groups

social skills group

A group for adolescents age 13–16
This group is geared toward children with special needs including mild mental retardation, down's syndrome, and children on the autism spectrum.

Topics will include:
Expressing Emotions • Communication Skills • Good Manners • Cooperation

Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center Child and Family Guidance Clinic • 400 Columbus Avenue, New Haven, CT

For more information, please ask your child's clinician or contact
Andrea DellaCorte, MSW Clinical Social Worker at (203) 503-3055 or adellacorte@hillhealthcenter.com

They will also accommodate 10-12 year olds.
Many towns offer recreation programs operated by the town or city and subsided by tax dollars. They often have scholarships available so no one will be excluded due to finances. Please note that this is not a complete list of Recreation Programs in our area. It is simply a list of town programs I am aware of that have adaptive program. Please check with your town to find out what they offer and if your town does not have what you are looking for... let them know. They will not develop a program if they do not know there is a need. Remember to also check out other local towns in your area, they often welcome non-residents in their programs.

**Middletown Recreation Division**

100 Riverview Center #140, Middletown, CT 06457 (860) 638-4500

Middletown Recreation Division offers a diversified Inclusion Program for participants with Special Needs age 8 - 21. For older individuals, Middletown Recreation Division recognizes the value of including people with all levels of ability as a means of strengthening our community and providing a recreational choice. We provide opportunities for people with and without disabilities to experience recreation together. For specific information concerning policy and programming, please call our office at 860.638.4500. Please provide ten days notification to provide significant support.

[http://www.cityofmiddletown.com/content/117/123/159/](http://www.cityofmiddletown.com/content/117/123/159/)

**Groton Parks and Recreation**

www.groton-ct.gov/depts/parksrec/

All are welcome to register; Both Groton Residents and non-Residents alike.

Groton has a wonderful varied program that includes:

- Special Olympics Year Round
- Adaptive Swimming
- Adaptive Rowing
- Adaptive Kayaking
- Adaptive Karate
- Special Recreation
- Cooking For Fun
- Painting
- And Camp Button A Special Needs Summer Camp (Groton Residents Only)

For more information, call Eileen Cicchese at 860-536-5691
The Branford Parks and recreation Department truly has a program to suit everyone’s needs, expanding its already extensive offering with the addition of the adaptive recreation program – Perfect Pals!

Perfect Pals is aimed at teens and young adults ages 13 and older who are interested in participating in recreational activities. They welcome residents and non-residents alike!

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**Milford Recreation Department**

Milford Recreation / Parsons Complex  
70 West River St, Milford, CT  
203-783-3280

Milford Parks and Recreation Department has Adaptive Programs including:

- **Adaptive Ballet** They are now accepting registration for participation in the Adaptive Nutcracker for 2014! It is a wonderful, program to participate in or watch!
- **Adaptive Guitar Lessons**
- iCan Bike
- **Musical Theater**
- **Sing N Sign**

For more information on the Adaptive programs contact:  
Deb Marchese, marchesedebra@optonline.net or call 203-550-2520

You can look up the information at: [http://www.milfordrecreation.com/info/activities/](http://www.milfordrecreation.com/info/activities/)

**Challenger Baseball** for kids ages 7-21. This program is accepting registration now. Every participant will receive a team Jersey and Hat. Games and practices will be on Saturdays. If you would like to join the team, contact Rich Minnix at Milford Parks and Recreation at: (203) 783-3280

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**Wallingford Parks and Recreation Department**

6 Fairfield Blvd, Wallingford, Ct 06492 • Phone (203) 294-2120

Carolyn Lavelle - Adaptive Recreation wifdparksrec@comcast.net

They offer a wonderful variety of Adaptive Recreation programs for all ages, year round including:

- **All ages**  
  - Yoga  
  - Adaptive swimming  
  - Ice Skating

- **Adults**  
  - Rec club 16 – adult  
  - Bowling

- **Kids**  
  - T.O.P.S. Soccer 6 – 11  
  - Funny Muscles 6 – 10  
  - Dance power 15 – 20  
  - Mega Muscles 11 – 16  
  - Teen Scene 13 – 18
And many more! They presently have 11 adaptive activities in their spring catalog. Check it out!

www.town.wallingford.ct.us/Content/Parks_and_Recreation.asp

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**West Haven** (and area towns):

*W.H.I.N.C. WEST HAVEN INTERAGENCY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN LOCAL SYSTEM OF CARE*

(203-937-3633)  
www.whinc.org  and  www.wrapct.org

Check out their website. They host a variety of Support Groups including: Parent Support Group, Autism Family Support Group and a Spanish Support Group for families with Special Needs Children. Once you are an active member of the support group you and your family will be eligible to attend their many wonderful activities (Children with Special Needs Program monthly activities and summer program)

They do offer 2 programs that you don’t have to be a member to participate… that is their karate and duckpin bowling programs. Registration for these two programs will be September 17 & 18 at the Johnson Community Center, 201 Noble Street, from 4:30 to 6:00. The cost is $45.00 for each program.
Private Recreation Programs

These are Recreation & Social programs that are privately owned and run by professionals hired by the company. These programs are paid for by the participants (some receive scholarships or grants). They offer a wide variety of programs and flexibility. Some even offer transportation for an additional cost. They are worth looking into.

The ARC of New London County

ARC of New London County has a wonderful Community Life (Recreation) program that is worth checking out. They plan a variety of activities each month including weekends for their members. Those often have: Dances, Bowling, Special Olympics and much, much more. They are also the only program in our area that offers Transportation to most of their events for a fee.

To find out how to become a member, go to: www.thearcnlc.org or contact Denise Tift at: dtift@thearcnlc.org or call 860-889-4435 x. 110

The ARC of Meriden-Wallingford offers a variety of recreational programs.

Call 203-237-9975 or visit them on the web www.arcmw.org

- Recreation program for its members. The program runs from March – October of each year with activities offered each week. Please contact Maritza Dell at 203-237-9975 ext. 377 or email us at recreation@mwsinc.org if you are interested in more information.

- They also have a program called Opportunities for Older Adults. This is a program for older adults with developmental disabilities that have chosen to retire and wish to experience activities commonly valued by senior citizens. They offer something for everyone whether you are laid back or want to be on the go.

- Individualized services is a versatile program that is designed by and for the individual based upon the individuals, needs, goals, hopes and dreams.

- Individualized Services is a versatile program that is designed by and for the individuals
All towns are welcome, but we tend to attract people from West Haven, New Haven, East Haven, Milford, Orange, Hamden, Trumbull, Shelton, and Bridgeport. The "Oak Tree" events are located in the Waterbury area.

**Evening Fun & Learning (Recreation Activities)**

Evening Fun & Learning (Recreation Activities) Marrakech is dedicated to providing opportunities for the people it serves to access recreational and fitness activities, to learn new hobbies or skills, to make friends and to participate fully in community life. To this end, Quality of Life Services staff coordinates a monthly calendar of events filled with fun and learning opportunities. (They have a ton of activities from Dances, Arts and Crafts, social events... it is truly unbelievable how many activities they have.) Social and recreational activities are open to all... Marrakech consumers and individuals not currently served by Marrakech may also sign up for activities. Nominal fees apply in order to defray the costs of each activity. Contact Denise Stevenson for specific activity locations.

**Weekend Respite Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities**

Marrakech, Inc. has opened its Island Lane Center in West Haven on Saturdays and Sundays as a respite resource to parents/guardians of adults with developmental disabilities. Our center is conveniently located, fully accessible and has many beautiful, functional features for a fun-filled community weekend. We offer weekends that are jam-packed with recreational, social and community activities provided by a knowledgeable, joyful staff and supervised by a recreation professional. Services will be available from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.
Here is an example of their busy evening fun and learning recreation schedule:

If you are not sure if these programs are for you, contact Corinne below and see if you can do a trial period. She is also happy to meet with you before attending any events. Her office is at 450 Island Lane in West Haven.

For more information contact Corinne Jackson at cjackson@marrakechinc.org or call (203) 389-2970 ext. 1203.
**MARC: Community Resources—Leisure Program**

The only Adult Leisure Program of its kind in the area which provides recreational opportunities to over 100 adults (ages 21+) in Middlesex County from Cromwell to Old Saybrook. Programs are offered year-round, Tuesdays thru Saturdays at various times. Programs include: Saturday Morning Fun at MARC in collaboration with Middletown Parks and Recreation, Adult Leisure Program, Guardian Angels Program (Middletown chapter of People First of CT a self-advocacy group)

- Transportation provided to some events
- Fees are low and affordable
- Financial Assistance; no one is turned away due to inability to pay
- Quarterly recreation calendars
- Day, evening and weekend programs

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**ASRC**

101 North Plains Industrial Rd. Harvest Park, Building 1 A, Wallingford, CT 06492
Phone: 203-265-7717


ASRC has a wonderful facility and offers many recreation / social groups specially designed to provide individuals with autism spectrum disorders the opportunity to participate in a variety of social activities throughout their community. The offer groups for: Teens (Guy group and Girls group) Young Adults group (co-ed), Young girls group, and ASRC Supported Social Group. For details on these programs contact Emily@autismconnecticut.org. They also have Adult Game Night and many other activities and special events.

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**Groton Light House Program: Summer Friends**

860-445-7626
Summer Friends
Social Skills Programming
The Light House, Groton

Summer Friends is designed for participants in middle and high school with Asperger’s Syndrome and high functioning autism. (Students must be able to care for themselves and have independence in toileting and feeding)

Social skills that are focused on include, but are not limited to: conversation, perspective taking, problem-solving, reading social cues, and developing a social life in the community.
Summer Friends meets Monday-Friday from 2-5pm July 7th through August 8th.
For more information please contact Vita Rose at 860-445-7626 or by email: vrose@lhcampus.com

SARAH, Inc.’s Recreation and Leisure Connections provides social, leisure and athletic opportunities for people with varying abilities and needs. We help make connections with local community groups and plan activities so that people of all abilities can fully participate. These include: Special Olympics training and competition, art classes, movies, theater and more!

Recognizing the changing needs of families who care for their family members at home, SARAH, Inc. offers an “extended day” respite program. This program offers supervised social and leisure activities in a safe, comfortable environment after the normal school and work day.

Activities available from Recreation and Leisure Connections include, but are not limited to:

**Special Olympics Training & Competition**

**Life Skills and Leisure, Social Activities & Special Events**

Recreation and Leisure Connections also incorporates activities with local park and recreation departments, commercial ventures in recreation and leisure and fosters additional life skill learning opportunities. Participants enjoy: Concerts, Plays, Dances, Spectator Sports, Dining out, Day Trips, weekend Getaways.

Call 203-315-9163 or contact cmones@sarah-inc.org to learn more and to sign up for our current recreation activities.
Outdoor Recreation–Parks and Playgrounds

Boundless Playgrounds
What is a Boundless Playground? More than six million children in the United States have some type of disability that makes it hard or impossible for them to enjoy traditional playgrounds. Boundless Playgrounds projects benefit children with and without disabilities by providing opportunities for all children to play together side by side. There are over 30 boundless playgrounds around CT. For a full list go to: http://placesforkidsct.com/boundless-playgrounds/

Or: http://www.accessibleplayground.net/playground-directory/?cn-s=&cn-cat=21

Or: http://www.bodiesplace.org/parks.php

You may want to check out the "Air Line State Park Trail" Especially if you have any individuals in your group with mobility challenges who would like to ride a bike or hike.

This beautiful park is 50 miles long traveling the route of the old Air line rail Line. It runs from East Hampton Village to Thompson with many access points. It is very flat and smooth; the trail is crushed stone and easily traveled with biking or using a wheel chair or stroller.

To get a better idea of what to expect or where to join up, check out the Airline State Park Trail video http://www.depdata.ct.gov/video/mainpsa.asp?url=http://www.u10videos.com/DEP/Parks/AirLineTrailHighlights.wmv&name=Air

Camp Harkness
Camp Harkness 301 Great Neck Rd, Waterford 06385

Camp Harkness is a Connecticut State Park and Camp designed for people with Special Challenges. The 102-acre park is accessible and is located on Long Island Sound Waterford, CT. There is so much to see and do including: Picnic Pavilions, Accessible Playscape, Cabins, tent sites, Gardening programs, and Special Events,

And it is all free to pass holders and their families.

This is the time to reserve your cabins and campsites for this year!

For information on all Camp Harkness has to offer and for a pass Application: go to the Camp Harkness website at http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2653&q=393150

Or Google: DDS Camp Harkness, If you do not have access to the internet please call Nancy Kogut for Pass Information: (860) 859-5554
New this year: **Camp Harkness publishes a Newsletter.** It is full of news and interesting stories to keep you up to date on all that is happening at the park. To receive your own copy of the newsletter call Camp Harkness at 860-443-7818

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### Accessible Trails

#### Hiking and Cycling Trails

For maps and directions to wheelchair accessible trails near you, go to [www.traillink.com](http://www.traillink.com) and select “wheelchair accessible” under activities for information about these Connecticut trails:

- **Charter Oak Greenway** - East Hartford, 9.8 miles
- **Derby Greenway** - Derby, 1.7 miles
- **Farmington Canal Heritage Trail** – 40 miles from New Haven to Massachusetts state line
- **Farmington River Trail** - Tunxis Meade Park in Farmington to Collinsville, 8.5 miles
- **Housatonic Valley Trail** - Monroe, 4.2 miles
- **Middlebury Greenway** - Middlebury, 4.4 miles
- **Naugatuck River Greenway in Beacon Falls** - Naugatuck, .3 miles
- **Norwalk River Valley Trail** - Norwalk, 2 miles
- **Putnam River Trail** - Putnam, 2 miles
- **Quinebaug River Trail** - Putnam to Danielson, 4 miles
- **Ridgefield Rail Trail** - Ridgefield to Branchville, 2.3 miles
- **Saugatuck Universal Access Trail-Redding**, short, ends in a platform overlooking the reservoir
- **Stratton Brook State Park Trail** - Stratton Brook State Park to Simsbury, 2 miles
- **Sue Grossman Stil River Greenway - Torrington to Winchester**, 2.9 miles
- **Windsor Locks Canal State Park Trail** - Suffield to Windsor Locks, 4.5 miles

#### Accessible Waterfalls

**Kent Falls** - Lower sets of falls are fully viewable and impressive from roadside; paved path leads closer to base of falls; upper falls are out of sight. Located in Kent, CT.


### Did you know a section of the Appalachian Trail is accessible?

Located near Falls Village, CT, a one mile portion of the Appalachian Trail has been covered in packed gravel to allow easy pushing and preserve the beauty of the original trail. The area also features waterfalls and a historic ironworks.

### CT Trails Weekend

Held during the first weekend in June, the CT Trails Weekend includes over 250 events throughout the state. Accessibility is indicated for each event. Check the CT Forest & Park Association website at: [www.ctwoodlands.org](http://www.ctwoodlands.org)

### Family Rambles

Guided family-friendly walks are held on the last weekend of every month at trails throughout Connecticut. Not all Family Rambles are accessible, contact before walk for accessibility information. Sponsored by CT Forest & Park Association. [www.walkct.org](http://www.walkct.org)
Adaptive Hiking Equipment
Try a hiking wheelchair or an all-terrain trike that makes rugged trails accessible to people of all ability levels at the Adaptive Recreation Fair sponsored by the Massachusetts DCR Universal Access program.
www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/accessibility or call 617-626-1294.

Outdoor Recreation Websites:
www.ctwoodlands.org
www.greenway.org/explore-by-state/ct
www.newenglandtrail.org
www.alloutadventures.org
www.nepassage.org
www.waypointadventure.org
www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/accessibility
www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks
www.bikewalksimsbury.org/simsbury-ct-adaptive-cycling.php
www.gaylord.org/why-gaylord/sports-association.aspx

State Parks
1. Connecticut is fortunate to have 107 State Parks and 32 State Forests comprising nearly 300,000 acres of beautiful recreation lands and open space for the use and enjoyment of the public. Most of these areas are available free-of-charge. Of these 139 areas, only twenty six (26) charge a parking fee from the third week in April through the Columbus Day Holiday. Of the twenty-six parking-charge parks, fifteen (15) charge for parking only on weekends and holidays with weekdays free and only eleven (11) charge during the entire week. We are fortunate that all areas of the state offer several no-cost, state-run recreation opportunities.

Please visit the DEEP's State Parks website at:
to locate state parks across the state which do not charge any parking or admission fee, and enjoy them.

(This is truly a great website with tons of information and ideas check out Letterboxing/Geocaching for an activity to do at the park) The State Parks Division issues every public library in the state a State Park Library Pass which can be checked out, similar to a book, and used for free visitation to any park or forest that charges a fee. This program is very popular. We invite your program leaders to pay a visit to your local library to take advantage of this offer.

2. Our agency also offers season passes that can be purchased for $67. It allows an unlimited number of visits to all parks during the busy season.

3. Available for free, are the lifetime Charter Oak Pass for Connecticut residents age 65 or older and the Disabled Veteran Pass for citizens with a service connected disability. As long as the resident is in the vehicle, it can park free of charge. However, only the pass holder enjoys free admission to Gillette Castle, Dinosaur and Fort Trumbull State Parks.

Please visit the following page to learn about alternatives:
http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2716&q=325090&deepNav_GID=1650#SeasonPass
These are great resources!
**Camp Harkness**
A specially designed Connecticut State Park providing accessible facilities including: picnic area and pavilion; ramped playground; beach access with boardwalk and all terrain wheelchairs that can go into the water; tent campground with accessible bathhouse. Cabins are available to families when not being used for residential camping programs. Camp Harkness is only available to people with special needs as well as their family and friends. To request a pass application, call 860-859-5554.

*Camp Harkness, 301 Great Neck Road, Waterford, CT 06385*
*Camp Office: 860-443-7818*

**Hammonasset Beach**
Hammonasset is CT's largest stretch of beach. The area includes trails, beach, and a nature center. Six of the campsites are designed to be used by those with disabilities. They are near accessible restrooms and have access to electricity.

*Reservations: 1-877-688-CAMP*
*1288 Boston Post Road, Madison, CT 06443*

Go to [www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks) to look up directions to any of the parks listed or to check accessibility information of any other parks in Connecticut.

**Beach Wheelchairs**
Beach wheelchairs are available free of charge on a first come/first served basis at a few of the state's beaches to allow all visitors to experience the beach.

- Hammonasset Beach, [Madison](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Rocky Neck State Park, [Niantic](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Sherwood Island, [Westport](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Silver Sands, [Milford](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Squantz Pond State Park, [New Fairfield](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)

**The Great Parks Pursuit**
Families are given free access to a different state park each week for five weeks. Outdoor activities include fishing, canoeing and more! Contact before each event for accessibility information. Registration required. [www.ct.gov/ncli](http://www.ct.gov/ncli)

**Accessible Restrooms**
The majority of state parks in CT have accessible restrooms. The following parks have one large family restroom where a parent can assist their child if needed.

- American Legion State Forest, [Pleasant Valley](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Black Rock State Park, [Thomaston](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Hammonasset Beach State Park, [Madison](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Housatonic Meadows State Park, [Cornwall Bridge](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Kettletown State Park, [Southbury](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Lake Waramaug State Park, [New Preston](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Rocky Neck State Park, [Niantic](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)

**Accessible Fishing Platforms**
- Bigelow Pond and Mashapaug Lake Boat Launch, Bigelow Hollow State Park, Union
- Connecticut River, Haddam Meadows State Park, [Haddam](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Day Pond State Park, [Colchester](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Devils Hopyard State Park, [East Haddam](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Pataconk Lake, Cockaponset State Forest, [Haddam](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Schreeder Pond - Chatfield Hollow State Park, [Killingworth](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Squantz Pond State Park, [New Fairfield](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Stratton Brook State Park, [Simsbury](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)
- Fort Trumbull State Park, [New London](http://www.ct.gov/deep/stateparks)

For more accessible fishing sites, see the Connecticut Angler's Guide on [www.ct.gov/deep](http://www.ct.gov/deep).
Did You Know? And Other Resources

See what is happening in a town near you!

Remember to check out the many events and programs in your area. Go to your Local Library to sign out passes to local attractions and Museums (Mystic Aquarium, Mystic Seaport, etc. each Library has different passes and deals available). Check out the Parks and Recreation departments, Senior Centers or Adult Education programs in your town and your neighboring towns to see what they have to offer. Give them a call and get to know them, and let them know what programs you would like to see.

Mystic Seaport Special Needs Discount

Special needs’ visitors receive a 50% discount on admission: One additional adult attending to the special needs' visitor will also receive a discount of 50% on admission.

Amusement Parks are doing their part to help everyone have fun. Did you know that many amusement parks have special passes available to allow individuals who cannot stand in long lines, bypass the lines thus being able to enjoy the parks?

http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2013/10/10/39-theme-parks-with-access-passes-for-special-needs/

Lake Compounce Theme Park, Bristol CT

Lake Compounce is an award winning park for this. They offer the SAM bracelet or stamp. Just stop by Guest Relations as you enter the park and get one. It makes park personnel aware that the individual has some special needs, so he/she and a companion may enter rides at an accelerated rate, bypassing long lines.

Lake Compounce Theme Park has been chosen as the “Business of the Year 2012” for Autism Day at the State Capitol.

Six Flags New England, Agawam, MA

6 Flags offers 2 different special passes that allows individuals who cannot stand in lines to bypass the lines with one caregiver or friend. Stop at Guest Relations to get the passes.

- The first is the NVP for individuals with non-visible disabilities that prevent them from being able to stand in Long Lines this includes but is not limited to individuals with Autism.
- The Second is the Mobility Pass for individuals who are physically challenged.

Quassy Amusement Park, Middlebury, CT

When I spoke with Quassy, they said they did not have such a program since their park was so small they never got long lines. So if a small park is what you are looking for... they may be what you are looking for.
Transportation Information and Resources

A new Great New Transportation Website is launched... TRANSITNET www.transitnet.info

The Arc Connecticut brings you TransitNet; a website for people with disabilities, older adults, caregivers, and providers who want to learn more about what transportation options are available for them in Connecticut. The site is designed to be accessible and informative—providing transportation links, instructions on how to use those links, and contact information leading directly to individuals who can offer further assistance. Including information on: Mobility Managers, Travel training, Google Trip Planner, CT Transit, Community Choices, 2-1-1 Information and much more.

Go to www.transitnet.info

Please take the short Survey to help them know how to improve transportation in our state!

The Kennedy Center Travel Training is a nationally acclaimed program that teaches people with disabilities and seniors how to properly and safely use the local bus and rail system on a one-to-one basis throughout the state of CT. Since 1991, The Kennedy Center has successfully travel trained more than 3,000 people with cognitive, sensory, and physical disabilities, aged 16-95, to use local buses and trains to access the community. There is no charge for travel training, the program is grant funded by The Connecticut Department of Transportation.

Mobility Managers

A mobility manager is a resource person who offers information about transportation options available to people with disabilities, seniors, and veterans; identifies gaps in service; and helps implement new service where it is most needed. Mobility managers also provide ombudsman services to act as advocates and represent the interests and for individuals who have transportation mobility needs and issues. They do not provide transportation, but help create a “one-stop shop” where individuals can find solutions to their transportation challenges. If you’d like to use a mobility manager please PLAN AHEAD. If you need help getting from point A to B, it’s best to contact them a few days before you need to travel. Other services they promote have an application/interview process and may take more than a few days to finalize.

Connecticut currently has THREE mobility managers.

Know How to Go - Mobility Resources for Southwest, CT:
to go directly to the site http://knowhowtogoct.org/

Contact info:
Name: Margaret Mixon
Phone: 203.365.8522, ext. 263
E-mail: MMixon@kennedycstr.org
TOWNS SERVED: Ansonia, Bridgeport, Darien, Derby, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Milford, Monroe, New Canaan, Norwalk, Seymour, Shelton, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Weston, Westport, Wilton

Eastern Connecticut Transportation Consortium, Inc. (ECTC):
to go directly to the site http://www.ectcinc.com/index.htm

Contact info:
Name: Ginger Morse
Phone: 860.859.5792
E-mail: ectcmobility@yahoo.com


**Way To Go CT:** Northern Central Connecticut
to go directly to the site http://www.waytogoct.org/

**Contact info:**
Name: Danielle Herbert
Phone: 860.667.6207 ext. 17
E-mail: dherbert@waytogoct.org


**South Central MM (Greater New Haven & Middletown)**

A New Mobility Manager was just hired for this position. For more information go to the DOT’s Mobility Manager Website.


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Another New website CTADA.com

We are excited to announce that the website CTADA.com is up and running. CTADA.com is the Connecticut’s NEW central location for information on ADA paratransit services in Connecticut. At CTADA.com you:

- Can print out the state wide ADA paratransit application
- Can complete and send the application on-line
- Find contact information on the ADA paratransit providers in the state
- Find information on the eligibility criteria for ADA paratransit
- Watch the video: “Mobility, Choice, Independence”

Check it out: www.ctada.com
I would love to hear from you once you have read the Newsletter.
Please let me know:

- Did you find it useful?
- Is there something that is missing that should be in there?
- Is there something that is incorrect and needs fixing?
- Do you know of an activity that I missed?
- Do you have any suggestions to improve this newsletter?
- Do you have a program you would like help advertising or getting started?

If you would like to respond to these questions or would like to be added to my E-mail list

Please contact me: Pamela Okerblom – Recreation Therapist

Pamela.Okerblom@ct.gov or call 860-859-5482