



Autism Society
of NORTH CAROLINA



CAMP SUMMER 2018 AWESOME CHRONICLE

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The **Camp Awesome Chronicle** is published by the Autism Society of North Carolina for campers, parents, supporters, and the counselors and professionals who work with Camp Awesome.

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Letter from the Director

Greetings, Campers, Families, and Friends,

I am so pleased to present to you the 2018 Camp Awesome Chronicle. With summer 2018 in the books, ASNC has successfully completed our third summer of Camp Awesome down east providing life-changing social recreation opportunities for kids on the autism spectrum.

This summer, we served 192 campers in our five Eastern NC day camps, from age 4 to 20! They came from nine counties, ready to have the best summer ever. We have been so pleased to see these programs continue to evolve and have enjoyed great relationships with the families served and new partners in the community.

Some of our campers joined us for the very first time, like Parker (page 10), who left Camp Awesome with newfound confidence and lasting friendships. We also welcomed back many friends who have been with us before like Jesse (page 4), who discovered his voice and left us all feeling so proud. And Rogan (page 8), who literally took a dive into the deep end this summer as he achieved his goals.

Our awesome campers are supported by about 100 staff members across all locations, some of who are on the spectrum themselves. These outstanding staff members – like Haley and Christian (page 7 and page 9) – are a vital part of our campers' experience, and we thank them for their love, loyalty, and service!

None of this would be possible without Trillium Health Resources, which provided the original investment to open the Social Recreation programs and continues to support the programs. Other community organizations and local companies have also been led to support families with autism. In Winterville, the Aquaventure aquatics facility provides an inclusive environment and welcoming staff outside of our Social Recreation Center. In Newport, local law enforcement came out for a game of wiffle ball with our campers. And in Wilmington, PPD offered employees at its headquarters an opportunity to give back with "casual days," with all profits going to ASNC. (Read more about all of these partners on page 14.)

Whether giving their time, talents, or financial support, members of our community have embraced our Social Recreation programs and our campers, and we thank them! We would love to talk to you about how you can involve your group, place of worship, company, or other organization in supporting our programs. Please feel free to contact me to learn more – we need your support to keep these programs going.

And finally, please be sure you take notice of the great opportunities for you to get involved at our Social Recreation Centers all year long. Check out page 16 for more info on our year-round programs, and we hope to see you soon!

With much camp love and "Enthuuuuusiasm,"

Sara Gage, ASNC Social Recreation Services Director



CAMP AWESOME: NEWPORT

By Nicole Kristal, *Program Director*

We had an amazing eight weeks of Camp Awesome in Newport. This summer, we were able to accommodate even more families by allowing them to share spaces with other families. In total, we were able to serve 47 families. Camp included a variety of traditional summer camp activities, such as arts and crafts, music, outdoor activities, swimming, and even lots of field trips.

One of our most favorite field trips this summer was a visit to the New Bern Aquatic Center – the splash pad and the water slide were particular favorites! Our campers love the water, and trips like this enabled them to be a part of their community and to enjoy so much summer fun.

Camper Highlight: Jesse Dyczewski

Jesse Dyczewski began attending the Newport Social Recreation program in the fall of 2016 when we kicked off the initial Afterschool Program for children with autism on the Crystal Coast. When Jesse first came to us, he spent almost his entire time at the center running back and forth in our backyard. He was minimally verbal, displayed minimal reciprocal interactions with adults or peers, and tended to play repetitively with only one or two toys.

Over the two years that Jesse has been attending our program, we have seen him grow tremendously. He started to discover his voice, especially during the van rides from his school to our center, often narrating what would come next in the route. “Turn right ahead,” he would squeal from the backseat. He also started to narrate the afterschool schedule throughout the day: “10 minutes to snack time.” It was so wonderful to hear his voice!

And then, one very special day that remains burned in my mind, Jesse spontaneously came around the corner, looked at me, and exclaimed “Look, Ms. Nicole,” excitedly holding up a drawing of a rainbow he had just completed. This was the first time I had ever heard him call my name and share something with me.

Now, Jesse participates in every activity, creating art, enhancing his motor skills, singing along with songs in the music room, and interacting with his peers during snack time. He even gives out the best and most cuddly hugs! Jesse is such a delight to the ASNC staff and other campers in Newport.



Program Highlight: Teen Scene

This summer, we added a block of time each morning for our teen group to gather and talk about various teen-related topics. This group really bonded and learned a lot from each other. Their topics included grooming, hygiene, internet and community safety, social skills, dating, and more! The teens really enjoyed the opportunity to connect with one another on a daily basis.



Counselor Highlight: Janessa Henry

Janessa Henry learned at an early age the importance of helping others as she watched her mother provide foster care for children with special needs.

Since Janessa joined the Newport Social Recreation program as a counselor in June 2017, she has raised the spirits of campers, families, and staff. She always comes to work with a smile on her face and a positive attitude.



“She has been willing to adjust to the campers’ needs and offers compassion and flexibility,” said Susan Walker, a Newport Activity Director. “She pays attention to the individual needs of the campers. She builds a relationship first with the camper and then helps them through the activities and through difficult times with something they can connect to.”

Janessa said her role as a counselor is very important to her. “I love my campers. They make my heart happy. I love the fact that I am able to make them feel special and that they belong here. I feel I can make a difference by creating a safe and non-judgmental place where they can enjoy being themselves and not feel bullied or misunderstood.”

Newport Social Recreation Director Karen McGrath said, “Janessa is willing to do what she needs to do to make the experience of the camper the best that it can be. She is very caring to her campers and tries to find the best way to address their needs through interventions such as sign language, individualized visual cards, being a good listener, or just holding their hand. The best part about Janessa is that she looks for the small victories to turn into big triumphs.”

We are excited that Janessa is continuing as a counselor with our afterschool program despite being busy at home with a 2-month-old son and planning her spring wedding! ■





CAMP AWESOME: WILMINGTON

By Melissa Mills, Program Director

As our doors opened each morning this summer in Wilmington, we heard a rush of laughter followed by many greetings. The families dropped off their children and young adults with counselors who were invested in social growth and celebrated each and every daily success. Fun was had by all!

Each week, our Camp Awesome activity directors led the groups in activities based on a theme, including safari, superhero, and outer space. Each Friday, the campers and counselors were encouraged to dress up based on the week's theme. It was so awesome to watch the campers arrive all dressed up and get excited by their counselors' costumes.

Each day included routine activities such as arts and crafts, music and motion, fitness, and social activities along with sensory experiences with water play, swimming at a community pool, and time to relax and enjoy the company of their peers. Most campers would say that they enjoyed the swimming and free choice activities the best. Most counselors would say that they enjoyed seeing their campers begin to trust them and to bond with them.

Camper Highlight: Mikey Borneman

Mikey Borneman has limited verbal language and uses gestures, signs, and body language to communicate. His parents had been unable to find a suitable afterschool program for him until last year, when they heard about ASNC's Wilmington Social Recreation Center. They quickly applied to send Mikey, then in sixth grade. "This has been the most wonderful and rewarding opportunity!" said his mom, Tacey Borneman.

This year, Mikey, now 12, also attended Camp Awesome. Mikey can be shy, but he is attentive. He is oftentimes the kid hiding behind the curtain or behind his counselor when walking down the hall.

Until this summer, Mikey used low-tech ways to communicate. When an app was installed on his iPad, we began to hear his voice. Mikey began to use his device to participate in whole group discussion, games, and conversation. He began to indicate his feelings, his wants, and his needs through his app.

As Mikey used "his voice," we began to see a humorous young man who played tricks, loved to scare his counselors, and sought out the attention of anyone who spoke to him. Mikey began to open up and smile each day as he knew others were listening.



"I have never seen Mikey so happy," Tacey said. "He has become much more social and interactive, and has started to seek out the attention of others for play or just to engage. He came home every day and packed his bag for the next day in anticipation of the fun he knew he would have."

Mikey also would "light up" when asked about his day at camp, and took pride in showing off his artwork.

The family is excited that Mikey will be able to attend Afterschool again this year. "The full-time staff, as well as the counselors, are exceptional," Tacey said.

"Knowing that your child is in a place that they enjoy going, that they are safe, loved, and well cared for is every parent's greatest hope!"

Counselor Highlight: Haley Koehler

When Haley Koehler, 22, joined the Wilmington Social Recreation program, she knew she wanted to go into special education. Since then, Haley has been a counselor with both Camp Awesome and the Afterschool program.

"My work at ASNC was my first real experience working with people with autism, and now I can't get enough of it," she said. Now Haley is starting a master's program in special education with an Autism Spectrum Disorder certification.

"My favorite part of working at ASNC is the connections made," she said. "The kind of relationship and bond you form with a camper is something so entirely different than I had ever experienced. When you work with a kid who might struggle to put two words together, and you're stressing a certain behavior or skill, and then all of a sudden they have the best day and have completely accomplished the skill. It's incredible to see and be a part of."

Haley's commitment to the success of her camper was obvious as she spent each day reflecting on ways to keep her camper engaged and happy during the various activities. Haley bonded with her camper and worked hard to get to know her camper's individual needs. She also focused on ways to encourage verbal communication paired with sign language to improve her camper's ability to advocate for her wants and needs.

Haley also worked closely with other counselors as a trainer during training week and assisted her peers when needed, offering suggestions and advice. "You get to see people grow in a way that sometimes they didn't know they could," she said.

Haley's high energy and passion for all campers helped maintain a positive energy throughout the center. She yearned to see progress and constant improvements, as she refused to believe that they could not achieve all that was put before them. ■



CAMP AWESOME: WINTERVILLE

By Amanda Rissmeyer, Program Director



This summer at Camp Awesome in Winterville was full of learning, growth, and friendship. During the eight weeks of Summer Day Camp, the campers experienced a plethora of activities, engaged with community members, and formed meaningful relationships with their counselors and peers.

Through visual arts, music and motion, outdoor play, daily swimming at our local club Aquaventure, and countless hours of physical activity, our campers have been able to grow stronger, demonstrate leadership skills, and increase their social skills across multiple environments.

The staff who spend a majority of their time in 1:1 pairings or leading small group activities learned a great deal from their campers. They benefited greatly from this experience, demonstrating compassion, dedication, and commitment to our campers every day. Our staff took the content from our intensive training week and put forth a tremendous amount of effort to make the summer an enriching experience for every child and family served. We are immensely proud to come to work every day at the Winterville Social Recreation Program, providing our families and children with an environment where they are all seen, heard, and valued for their unique and lovable characteristics.



Camper Highlight: Rogan Vincent

Who knew an 8-year-old could have such a big heart? As Rogan enters his second year with the Social Recreation Program in Winterville, his immense growth has been noticed by everyone! Upon Rogan's first day of school last year after attending Camp Awesome, his grandmother, Dee Dee Vincent, received notes from his teacher and positive comments from all those who work with him saying how much he had grown over the summer.



Rogan and his counselors have worked very hard to focus on building meaningful friendships with his peers and increasing social emotional skills. Rogan has learned to give his friends personal space when they need it most. He also has learned to express empathy toward his friends when they are sad by offering them his Cheetos, his favorite snack, to cheer them up. Rogan and his counselor have also worked on strategies to help him cope through difficult transitions and unexpected changes.

This young man steals the heart of every counselor who works with him and loves spending as much time at camp as possible. Rogan loves to find ways to learn

new facts about every camper, counselor, and staff member. He has the memory of an elephant; he never forgets a single fact that he has learned. When Rogan is not busy learning new things about his friends, his favorite activities at camp include playing volleyball and rolling dodgeball in the gym, playing soccer outside, battling his counselor in Jenga, and shaking his groove thing while dancing and singing to camp songs every morning.

One of his counselor's fondest memories of Rogan was when he decided to do jump in the deep end of the pool for the first time. Last summer, Rogan was very reserved at the pool and would only hang out in the 3-foot section. But this summer when he arrived at Aquaventure, he was ready to conquer his goal of jumping in the deep end! He jumped in the 5-foot end like a champion, and by the end of summer had taken on the challenge of jumping in the deep end 100 times during each trip to the pool.

When his grandmother was asked what camp means to Rogan and their family, she said, "This program is our home, it gives us hope. I don't know where we would be without them."

Staff Highlight: Christian Sykes



This summer at the Winterville Social Recreation Program, Christian Sykes demonstrated excellence in leadership, camper support, and dedication to families. Christian, who has worked with the program since September of 2016 as both a counselor and activity director, said he has a deep-rooted passion for working with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

When asked what he loves the most about camp, he said, "It is so incredible how fast and how strong of a connection you can make with your camper. You can spend a single day with a child here at camp and feel like your life, as well as theirs, has been shaped in some way."

Christian started out as a Criminal Justice major attending East Carolina University in 2015, but after working in the Afterschool and Summer Day Camp programs in 2016, he changed his major. "It took me three weeks of working with my first camper, Lucas, to realize I needed to transfer into Special Education," he said. "I knew this field was where I needed to spend the rest of my life. Working with Lucas changed everything for me; it was so rewarding and meaningful."

The deep bond Christian created with Lucas is one that has helped them work through some of the biggest challenges and has led them to some of the biggest victories. "I remember one of the greatest moments at camp happened on one of the hardest days. Lucas was not feeling well, and in his time of need, he climbed into my arms and looked to me to calm him when nothing else could. I held him and rocked him and told him that everything would be okay. It was a hard day, but one that means the most to me."

This summer, Christian tested his skills and knowledge of autism by becoming an Activity Director. He helped with the planning and leading of activities, behavioral support, and management of campers and counselors. The campers benefited greatly from such a positive male role model and team player.

"This place has taught me how much a space like this one matters," Christian said. "This place is an escape for our kids – it is safe here for them to be themselves without fear or judgement." ■





CAMP AWESOME: BRUNSWICK

By Courtney Jewell, Program Leader

We enjoyed six weeks of day camp this summer in Brunswick County on the campus of Brunswick County Community College in Bolivia. We served 13 campers during our six weeks and watched them flourish as they took part in a wide variety of camp activities including arts and crafts, music, outdoor play, swimming, group games, sensory play, and so much more.

Our campers and staff truly formed a family this summer!



Camper Highlight: Parker Winston

Parker Winston is a sweet 9-year-old boy who loves to explore and collect frogs and is fascinated by bugs. Parker, who was new to Camp Awesome this summer, came in with lots of apprehension, not knowing what to expect.

Because Parker can struggle with staying on task, his counselor, Austen Sadanaga, and one of the Activity Directors, Ragan Whitesell, collaborated to allow him space and time to explore nature. "Through an adjusted schedule catered to his needs, Parker thrived and revealed his true potential," Austen said. He even became an "activity director helper" to aid in his transitions between activities.

Parker also struggled to engage with others and to express his feelings, but Austen showed him consistent, unconditional love and support. He modeled and taught him how to appropriately communicate with peers and try to better express his own feelings. "Camp Awesome allowed Parker to express himself without fear of ridicule or judgement," Austen said. "Camp taught him the value of friendship and caring for others."

Parker quickly began looking forward to attending camp and especially enjoyed participating in swimming, art, and music. "Parker loved his camp counselors Ragan and Austen!" said Parker's mom, Debra. "Camp Awesome helped him to engage with others and to try to communicate his feelings."

The growth seen in Parker over the course of our six weeks at camp was simply incredible. By the end of camp, Parker was participating in just about every activity and built new and lasting peer friendships.

"Parker is truly one of the most amazing kids, and it was a place like Camp Awesome that gave him a chance to be his truest self," Ragan said. "He learned how to make simple social interactions that allowed him to make so many friends. He has a heart for others and it was apparent every day. Parker never left a picture with empty spots, and he never left our days without color and excitement."



Camper Highlight: Mathew Steve

Mathew Steve, who is 12, joined us at Camp Awesome for his third year this summer. Last year, and at the start of this summer, he didn't usually participate in group activities. Mathew has lots of active energy and is very playful and sweet. He likes to good-naturedly tease others when engaging with them.



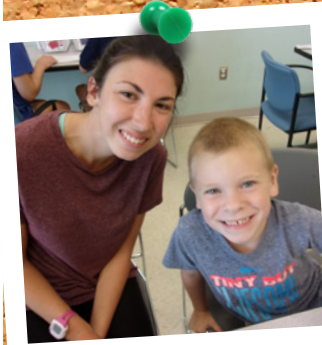
“Our campers and staff truly formed a family this summer!”

Mathew was paired with Counselor Alexandra Grasso, who was filled with enthusiasm and was excited to think outside the box to try new things throughout the summer. “When we first started, Mathew struggled to join in with group activities and games, and since he was nonverbal, camp songs were especially difficult to get him to participate in,” Alex said.

Through adapting activities, modeling appropriate play and peer interactions, and positively rewarding participation, we saw Mathew truly blossom this summer. “It was wonderful to watch Mathew continue to grow in confidence throughout his time at Camp Awesome,” Alex said. She was consistent and supportive during every activity and built a positive bond with Mathew, allowing him to explore new activities and peer relationships.

By the end of the six weeks, Mathew was joining in just about every group game and activity with Alex's encouragement. “He was jumping into the pool with other campers, playing duck-duck-goose and tag, and even singing along with camp songs! Littlest Worm was his favorite,” Alex excitedly shared. “I am so proud of the progress Mathew made in the weeks he spent at camp.”

His mother, Bobbie Steve, said Mathew wants to socialize but doesn't know how to engage others. “Camp Awesome is awesome in this area. He comes out of camp with a little more social skills every year,” she said. “It's the best and he loves it!” ■



CAMP AWESOME: ONSLOW



By Melinda Dunham, *Program Leader*, and Makenzie Lay, *Activity Director*

The second year of Onslow's Camp Awesome was truly incredible! Each day, campers arrived to the Scout Hut in Richlands with excited smiles. The six weeks of camp consisted of routine schedules including music, art, science experiments, swimming, and (highly requested) dance parties! Structured activities and visual supports were used daily, with activities modified to fit the needs of each child.



Our 20 campers had a chance to have fun and be themselves while also being introduced to new experiences. Some challenged themselves to play in the pool, jump off a diving board, taste new foods, and communicate with new friends. The kids loved their time together as well as the time spent with their counselors. We saw many great friendships form this summer.

It was the first time at camp for many of them. "My first-time camper Nico was a little scared, but after he was welcomed with many open arms and smiling faces, he had a wonderful time!" one parent said. "Thank you to each and every counselor for making this summer a memorable one!"

Another parent wrote, "It was MiaGrace's first time at camp ever, and she would wake up every morning and say, 'Daddy, I want to go to camp. I want to go swimming.' She was excited! She felt included. ... Thank you for the time that you have invested into MiaGrace! I honestly don't think I've seen her excited or joyful to go and do events and enjoy time with other peers."

Our campers were exposed to learning opportunities and social development. Most importantly, they all learned that they are each unique, valued, and loved.



Camper Highlight: Ethan Lay

This summer was Ethan Lay's first time at Camp Awesome and his first time being involved in any program specifically for individuals with autism. Before camp, Ethan, 10, was still learning about Autism Spectrum Disorder and was having a difficult time understanding the beauty of autism. Throughout camp he learned that autism is different in everybody, and it is not something to feel ashamed of.

Now he is proud of autism and the fact that it makes him unique. In fact, he makes sure to tell his classmates all about autism! He sees himself as an individual with potential and goals, just like everybody else around him.

"I made a lot of friends at camp who are like me," Ethan said. "Autism is actually really super awesome. I love my autism."



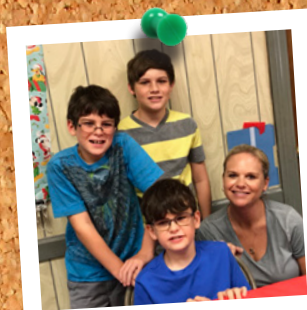
Counselor Highlight: Laura Atienza

Laura Atienza was a brand new counselor to ASNC this summer. Her compassionate nature and genuine love for others made her a perfect addition to the family of counselors.

Laura was always seeking learning opportunities. She had a special connection with her camper and did everything possible to ensure that he had a wonderful day. In addition to giving her camper a fun experience, she implemented strategies and structured techniques to promote communication and learning opportunities. Laura consistently went beyond expectations and put true heart into her position as a counselor.

"I was really nervous that I wasn't going to be able to come out of my shell, but the kids brought out a different side of me," she said. "This experience taught me patience, it taught me perseverance, and it taught me how much structure is important to these kids."

"Camp was one of the best experiences I've had in my life!" ■





PARTNER SPOTLIGHTS:

Trillium Health Resources

Our array of Social Recreation programs in Newport, Winterville, Wilmington, and Brunswick and Onslow counties are made possible by support from Trillium Health Resources.

Trillium Health Resources is a Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) responsible for publicly funded mental health, substance use, and intellectual/developmental disability services and supports for people living in Eastern North Carolina.

In 2016, Trillium directed their reinvestment dollars go to provide supports in a variety of ways in Eastern NC. Trillium and ASNC partnered on an initiative to support children and adults with autism through programs in underserved areas of the state, helping them to improve their social and communication skills, peer networks, and physical well-being.

Since then, the three Social Recreation Centers have increased programming to include summer day camps, afterschool programs, adult programs, and group respite.

“None of this would have happened without the support and ongoing use of reinvestment dollars back into these communities,” said Kerri Erb, Chief Program Officer of ASNC. “Many of these children are accessing services for the first time through these programs. We applaud Trillium for investing and creating these exciting opportunities.”

Law Enforcement in Newport

On the second to last day of Camp Awesome in Newport, several members of the Newport Police and Carteret County Sheriff’s departments met our campers at a local park for a game of wiffle ball! The campers brought their A game and beat the officers with a score of 22-0.

With every swing of the bat, loud roars of applause came from both sides of the dugout. Camper Joshua Day, age 13, took the pitching mound, bringing the fast balls with heat so serious, the officers couldn’t keep up!

Camper Molly Root, age 9, was hit home by Mark Daniels, age 6. When she made it to home plate, her good friend Tyrek Dukes, age 9, greeted her with a freshly picked flower and a hug to congratulate her on her amazing base-running skills.

The game was such a blast for everyone. The police department even requested that we do it again soon. The campers left with huge smiles and pride in their hearts!



PPD in Wilmington

Pharmaceutical Product Development – better known in the Wilmington community as PPD – is a global company that believes in investing in its local communities. This spring, PPD offered employees at its Wilmington headquarters an opportunity to give back with “casual days.” Employees who donated \$3 to the Autism Society of North Carolina were allowed to wear jeans for the day.

With this simple and fun idea, PPD raised over \$5,700 to benefit ASNC’s local supports and services, including our Social Recreation Center. PPD also made an additional donation of \$2,500.



Meredith McCumbee, an associate director of clinical management at PPD, shared with her co-workers how ASNC had supported her son through Camp Awesome, Autism Resource Specialists, and clinical treatment. In a company-wide message, she wrote:

“PPD’s commitment to improve health and your support with The Autism Society campaign has deeply impacted our family directly! The support we receive because of generous donations has truly changed our family and dramatically increased the quality of life for Aaron and hundreds of other families the society helps across the state.

The words THANK YOU are not enough to convey how much your support and participation means to our family!”

Aquaventure in Winterville

For the past two summers, our campers in Winterville have had the opportunity to swim at the Aquaventure aquatics facility twice a day.

Aquaventure provided an inclusive and warm environment outside of our Social Recreation Center. The staff were enthusiastic and welcoming to every one of our campers and support staff. They understood our children and were excited to learn more about their unique personalities and the supports they needed to be successful in the community environment.



“Water is this amazing equalizer,” said Aquaventure Director Mike Godwin. “On land, we see differences with people in the way they move, and limitations they might have. In the water, a lot of that gets stripped away. In the water we are all equals. Within our recreational swim opportunities and in our swim lessons, there is a level playing field for everyone.”

memberships there, because they know that their children will be loved, understood, and supported. The partnership also opened the eyes of other community members to the joy and love our children bring to the world.

Mike said Aquaventure will continue to support ASNC’s Social Recreation as well as offering adaptive swim lessons. “We do this for the overall experience. Being able to see the impact that the water makes on individuals with autism and varying abilities is moving,” he said. “I have been amazed. We love to see that in the water, everyone is able to make progress.”





Year-Round PROGRAMS

Camp Awesome has ended for this year, but we still have plenty going on at our Social Recreation Centers in Winterville, Newport, and Wilmington. Check out our upcoming programs below – we hope to see you soon!

Our Afterschool Programs run each school year starting at the same time as the local school year and ending just before school lets out for summer. We focus on person-centered programming and engage school-age children on the autism spectrum in a variety of recreational and leisure activities. We provide highly qualified staff at a 1:1 or 1:2 ratio. Enrollment for our Afterschool Programs is currently full, but we do keep a waiting list for those interested in attending should any places open up during the school year.

Our Adult Programs have really blossomed in the past year as we strive to provide an environment that supports and encourages adults on the spectrum to spend time participating in skill-building and recreation-based activities. We have served more than 40 adults in our three centers this past year through cooking groups, arts and crafts activities, social skills learning, community outings, and more.

We began **organized group respite opportunities** for children on the spectrum this past year as well. We have monthly opportunities such as date nights, care during ASNC Chapter meetings, Saturday fun days, etc. We also offer respite for teacher workdays and certain holidays. These options serve as an opportunity for children on the spectrum to receive care in our centers and be actively engaged in positive activities while parents receive a break to attend to other needs at home and in the community.

All of our centers also hold holiday parties in December; we hope to see you there!

For more information or to sign up for a program, please go online to www.autismsociety-nc.org/social-recreation/eastern-nc or contact the director for your area:

- **Newport:** SRP_Newport@autismsociety-nc.org
- **Wilmington:** SRP_Wilmington@autismsociety-nc.org
- **Winterville:** SRP_Winterville@autismsociety-nc.org

Please also contact us if you are interested in providing an opportunity for our campers or have a group that wants to come volunteer. We welcome community involvement!





If you want to support our Social Recreation programs through material donations, we would be grateful to receive the following items:

Arts and Crafts:

- Play-Doh
- Bubbles
- Sidewalk chalk
- Shaving cream
- Markers of all types
- Craft paint
- Glue
- Glitter
- Buttons
- Beads
- Googly eyes
- Cardstock
- Paper clips

Toys and sports equipment:

- LEGOs
- Gym balls
- Outdoor toys: wagons, etc.
- Jump ropes
- Current TV character toys
- Word search books
- Crossword puzzle books
- Trains and tracks
- Board games
- Puzzles
- Baby dolls
- Fisher Price toys
- Pool goggles
- Kinetic sand

Home goods:

- Beanbag chairs
- Blankets
- Yoga mats
- Fun throw pillows
- 50-gallon, clear plastic tote bins
- Kitchen pots and pans
- Painter's tape
- Command strips
- Gorilla tape
- Holiday string lights

Paper goods and cleaning supplies:

- Dixie cups
- Baby wipes
- Paper plates
- Clorox wipes
- Lysol
- Hand sanitizer

Snacks and medical supplies:

- Band-Aids
- Spray Neosporin
- Individually packaged snacks
- Juice boxes

Volunteer Opportunities

Our Social Recreation Centers in Newport, Wilmington, and Winterville also offer a variety of volunteer opportunities, including landscaping and facility maintenance, working with campers and families, and fundraising.

We welcome community involvement! Contact us to learn more or sign up at www.autismsociety-nc.org/volunteer.

CAMP AWESOME: Wish List

CAMP AWESOME: You Can Help



How Does Camp Awesome Change Lives?

Camp Awesome provides opportunities for exploration, making friends, trying new and exciting activities, and a time for personal growth in independence and confidence. As a result, campers return home with skills once thought unattainable by their families and the ability to make a friend and be a friend.

What Are Camp Awesome's Needs?

Financial Support: Providing enriching experiences tailored to our campers with autism, as well as specialized staff, is costly. Fundraising for our Social Recreation programs is a year-round focus. Our Run/Walk for Autism events in Greenville, Carteret, and Wilmington each spring are one way we raise funds. We need your help with the races; you can volunteer, donate, sponsor, and fundraise.

Program/Facility Donations: Providing program supplies and maintaining our three facilities is expensive. In-kind and financial donations help offset these costs. Please see our wish list page for some of our current needs.

Planning for Our Future: As we look to the future and the growing number of children and families who depend on our services, we must expand our funding sources. We need partners like you to get involved to help us grow opportunities for the future.

How Can You Help?

More than 89 cents of every dollar we raise is used for services that directly affect people with autism, and every dollar raised stays within North Carolina, helping people who live and work in our local communities. Contact Kristy White to discuss partnership opportunities that include individual gifts, named scholarships, planned giving, connections to corporations or foundations, and other opportunities to get involved.

"I have never seen Mikey so happy. He has become much more social and interactive," one camper's mother said.

"Knowing that your child is in a place that they enjoy going, that they are safe, loved, and well cared for is every parent's greatest hope!"

We are excited about what is happening today as a result of our efforts. We're even more excited about what can happen with your help. ■

Contact Information

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