

A Message from our CEO

These past three weeks have been the most challenging we have faced as a Summit community. The continued spread of coronavirus and resulting closure of Summit Academy, as well as the suspension of our S.T.E.P.S. and respite programs, has created enormous challenges for all of us – but especially for the more than 1,300 children and adults we serve.

As we navigate these challenging waters, I want to assure you that the Summit team will continue to provide support as best we can. Here's a brief recap of a few of the things we're doing as of today:

- Summit Academy has provided educational materials to all parents, via mail. Teachers and teams are communicating with families at least twice per week and providing additional supports, as needed. We are also regularly updating our website with learning resources for parents to use at home with their child.
- Community Services Supervisors and Direct Service Providers are checking in with the individuals they work with and their families on a weekly basis or more often as needed.
- S.T.E.P.S. (day hab) and prevocational service providers will be delivering packets with activities to homes or via email so program participants can continue to work on structured activities related to their valued outcomes for those services.
- Our Behavioral Pediatrics Clinic and Health Home providers continue to offer services via telehealth.

In addition, our leadership team and many support staff are working remotely monitoring new developments and directives from state and local officials and helping to ensure the continuity of our business and administrative functions. We are in constant communication with each other every day.

Thank you for your on-going cooperation and continued support. Please keep yourselves and your families safe and healthy. Although our doors are closed for now, we are still here to support the people we serve and will continue to be for the duration of this crisis.

Sincerely,



Stephen R. Anderson, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Chief Executive Officer



In This Issue:

We're Here for You (Page 2)
World Autism Awareness Day (Page 3)
2020 Autism Walk Update (Page 5)

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Pro Tips: Maintaining a Routine

Now that your children have been home from school for a few weeks, you might find your family really struggling with the disruption in regular school routines. You might be working from home (as am I) and wondering how you are going to make this work, getting your work done while helping your child stay in a learning routine. If you have not started one already, a change to a daily learning routine might not be easy, especially at first. But if you can get this going now, you will find it easier to stick with for the long haul (and we might be in this for the long haul).



Everyone's daily learning routine will look different, based on individual and family goals. Think about your needs as well as your child's in order to make this successful. Get up every "school day" at the same time. If your child's school is providing distance learning, work that into the schedule as required. If this is not the case, but packets are being sent home, break these packets into reasonable amounts of work. If you know math is particularly difficult for your child, get that done first. Your child's teacher will most likely have ideas and tools to help you be successful in the home. One example is a visual schedule that will help your child know what is coming next.

Some parents might not feel confident in their teaching abilities. Although most parents are not trained teachers, they do have advantages – parents know their children well, parents have control over their household, and parents do not have to teach for a full 6 ½ hours a day. Another advantage we have as parents is that we can choose what our lessons will be at any time! For example – a warm sunny day can lead to a spontaneous nature hike. Classroom teachers are not allowed to do this, and such outings can be a welcome break.

Read the rest of the tips at www.TheSummitCenter.org. Tips provided by Laura Skotarczak, Director of Genesis Community Support Services.

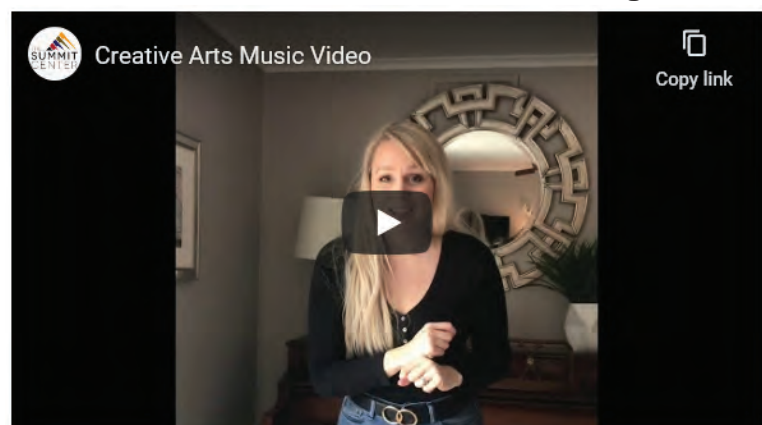
We're Here for You!



Check out these videos created by Summit staff members to inform and support your family while you are at home.

- A compilation "Goodbye" video from staff! (left)
- Ms. Marie from Media at Summit Academy reads "Pete the Cat" from her home. (bottom left)
- Ms. Kelly teams up with Mr. John for a music video. Make your own instrument and play along at home! (bottom right)

For more resources, please visit "Parent Resources" on our website at www.TheSummitCenter.org.





Fast Facts About Autism

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurological disorder characterized by challenges in the areas of communication and socialization and the presence of repetitive or restrictive patterns of behavior or interests.

Approximately **1 in 54** children has been identified with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) according to The Center for Disease Control (CDC).

ASD is **4 times** more common among boys than girls.

Even though ASD can be diagnosed as early as **age 2** most children are not diagnosed with ASD until after age 4.

The first signs of ASD usually appear before the **age of three.**

The **earliest signs** typically include:

- Poor eye contact
- Lack of pointing
- Difficulty in the use and understanding of language
- Unusual play or lack of play



Interventions based on **Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)** are the most researched and commonly used treatments.



Today is World Autism Awareness Day!

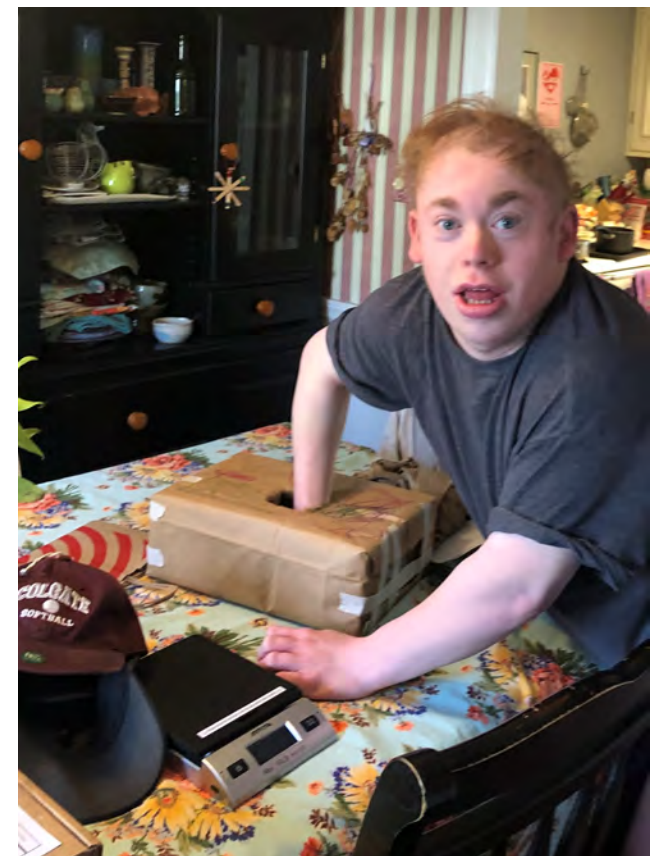
April 2 is World Autism Awareness Day. Established in 2007 by the United Nations, the day's purpose is to bring the world's attention to autism, a pervasive disorder that affects tens of millions. We have compiled a quick fact sheet for you to read and distribute to help you and others better understand autism.

Making Adjustments!

We're so happy to see the individuals we serve and their families doing so well "learning from home."

Sawyer, a Summit Academy student, is a big fan of the "Ned's Head" game, where you look inside a giant cloth head and pull out items inside. Unfortunately, he left his game at school.

"His mom asked if she should buy a new one and I recommended they get creative and make their own out of a box and put items inside it and PRESTO, he loves it!" said Philip Munson, Sawyer's teacher.



2019 Annual Report



The Summit Center's 2019 Annual Report is now available to download and read.
[Click here to download.](#)

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The Summit Center's 2020 Autism Walk Update

Thank you to our sponsors!



Due to the serious nature of the coronavirus, the Summit Center Autism Walk has been postponed. We hope to announce a new plan for the Walk by April 10th.

We are so grateful for the tremendous involvement we've seen thus far, including registered participants, virtual fundraisers, donors, and sponsors. Your commitment to the Autism Walk keeps us all connected. It inspires us to continue making lives better.

Please visit SummitWalk.org for continued updates.

2020 Summer Programs Accepting Applications

The Summit Center offers two specialized summer programs to improve your child's social, emotional, behavioral, and academic skills. These programs run from Monday, July 6 to Friday, August 7 at Willow Ridge Elementary school.

We are closely monitoring the rapidly-evolving situation related to the coronavirus. As of today, we plan to operate the program as scheduled and are actively accepting and reviewing applications. As we continue our planning for the summer, we will follow guidelines from the CDC, governor, and county executive. Should our program be canceled, families will be issued a **full refund**.



Learn more about the Summer Programs at www.TheSummitCenter.org

Is my child eligible?

Community Connections is designed for children and adolescents entering grade 1- age 16 with social interaction difficulties related to high functioning autism spectrum disorders or other disabilities (involving underdeveloped social abilities).

The Summer Treatment Program is open to children and adolescents ages 7-13 with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), learning problems, and related behavior problems.

With a staff of 500 professionals and expertise in autism and social/emotional development, The Summit Center is Western New York's leading provider of evidence-based educational, behavioral health, adult, and community programs to 1,350 children and adults each year with developmental, social, and behavioral challenges.

Visit Our Website: www.TheSummitCenter.org