



Concord Public and Concord-Carlisle Regional Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) May 2016 Newsletter

Fun in the Sun! Now that the weather is finally getting nicer, it's the perfect time to think about fun outdoor activities! We've compiled a list of some activities that are so fun that your child won't even know that they are also good for them!



- Playing with bubbles: Great fun sensory play! Fill up containers with bubble solutions and experiment using different types of wands. For more fun, twist pipe cleaners into different shapes and use as bubble wands.
- Swinging: A great activity for building strength and coordination, while helping integrate the vestibular system (the sense that helps the body determine where the head is in space) with the rest of the sensory system.
- Swimming: Swimming helps with strength building and coordination. It is also a great activity for kids who have challenges with proprioception (the body sense that is responsible for determining the position of one's body).
- Play outdoor games, such as red light/green light or other stop and go games that strengthen executive function skills (see below for more about this).
- Visit one of Massachusetts' accessible playgrounds, such as Concord's Playscape at Ripley. For a list of accessible playgrounds, visit:

<http://www.accessibleplayground.net/united-states/massachusetts/>

Contact your occupation or physical therapist for more fun summer activities that might be helpful for your child.

Did you know? Executive function allows a person to efficiently allocate their mental resources to perform tasks such as planning, organizing, focusing attention, following instructions, and juggling multiple activities. Impairments can lead to difficulty completing simple tasks like getting dressed in the morning or bringing homework assignments home. Non-medication interventions include neurofeedback (see January 2016 Newsletter at concordsepac.org) and exercise (below).

Science Alert: The benefits of exercise on ADHD symptoms.



A growing body of research suggests that exercise may improve symptoms of ADHD. A 2014 study* published in the Journal of Pediatrics found that 20-minutes of aerobic exercise (relative to seated reading) led to improved performance on a task examining executive function, as evidenced by both behavior and brain activity. Benefits were also found on reading and math assessments, and were shown in both children with ADHD as well as those without ADHD. These findings as well as others** suggest that implementing an aerobic exercise program may increase focused attention and decrease impulsivity.

*Exercise improves behavioral, neurocognitive, and scholastic performance in children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. 2014. *The Journal of Pediatrics*.

**The effects of physical exercise in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. 2015. *Child: Care, Health, & Development*.

Calling all Volunteers. Are you interested in working with a group of smart, dedicated, and fun parents who are interested in making a difference in special education in the Concord/Concord-Carlisle region? The SEPAC is looking to fill the following positions for next year's board: Events Chair, Membership Chair, and Vice President. Descriptions can be found at concordsepac.org. Nominations must be submitted to concordsepac@gmail.com by June 1st. Voting will be held on June 3rd at our monthly meeting (12:30-2PM in the

Fowler Library). Please email Mary or Becky at concordsepac@gmail.com with any questions.

Upcoming Events.



The next **SEPAC meeting** will be held on Thursday, May 5th, from 7-8:30 P.M. in the Hunt Recreation Center. All SEPAC meetings are open to the public. We encourage parents and caregivers of children on IEPs, receiving accommodations (e.g., 504 plan), or with any medical or special need to attend.



If you are a parent or guardian of a child with an out-of-district placement, please join us for our monthly informal networking group. Our next get-together will be on May 19th, from 7-8:30 P.M., at Main Streets Market & Café (42 Main St, Concord).

Thank you to all who participated in our recent survey! Please join us on May 24th when we present our findings to the School Committee!

CONNECT WITH US



Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Public Schools SEPAC



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UPCOMING EVENTS

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

May 5: SEPAC Meeting
7-8:30 P.M.
Hunt Recreation Center

May 19th: Out-of-District Networking Group
7-8:30 P.M.
Main Streets Market & Café

May 24th: SEPAC presentation to School Committee