



**Concord Public and Concord-Carlisle
Regional Schools Special Education
Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
November 2015 Newsletter**

Traveling for the holidays? With the weather turning cooler and the leaves falling off the trees, it's hard to deny that it is truly autumn and Thanksgiving is right around the corner. For those of you planning on traveling this holiday, *Wings for Autism* will be holding a free event on November 7th to help children with autism become familiar with the airport and flight experience. This program will be held at Boston Logan Airport. For more information about this program, visit <http://www.charlesrivercenter.org/what-we-do/wings-for-autism/>.

Did you know?



After providing consent for an evaluation for your child, the school has 30 school days for a trained specialist to conduct the evaluation. For more information about your basic rights and ways to empower yourself with the knowledge to be a strong and effective part of your child's team, join us for a Basic Rights Workshop presented by the Federation for Children with Special Needs on January 14, 2016, from 7-9 P.M. (location TBD).



Science Alert. A recent study* published in *Nature Neuroscience*, a prominent scientific journal, found that learning in a repetitive way may be detrimental to those with autism. Participants in this study were asked to look at a computer screen and find 3 diagonal lines in a sea of horizontal lines. For the first 4 days, the diagonal lines were located in the exact same location on the computer screen. Participants in the autism group and the control group were able to learn the location of the diagonal lines. On days 5-8, the diagonal lines were moved to a new location. Adults with ASD were less able to adapt and took longer to locate their new locations. To further determine whether these findings were due to the influence of repetition during learning, the researchers modified the learning trials on days 1-4 so that they were mixed with an occasional "dummy screen" that did not contain diagonal lines. This time, the group with autism and the control group were able to locate the diagonal lines in their new location on day 5 equally well. Taken together, these results suggest that when the learning instruction is repetitive, it may lead to difficulty and inflexibility adapting to novel circumstances.

**Harris et al. (2015). Perceptual learning in autism: Over-specificity and possible remedies.*

Parents of children who have out-of-district placements can sometimes feel disconnected from the community. We are interested in putting together an informal networking group for parents to come mingle and get to know each other. If you have a child with an out-of-district placement and are interested in connecting with other families, please send an email to Heather (concordsepac@gmail.com) indicating whether day or evening or weekday/weekend times are best for you. We will do our best to accommodate all schedules.



**We hope to see
you soon!**

Upcoming Events. We hope to see you at our future events!

The next **SEPAC business meeting** will be held on November 6th from 9:30-11AM in Concord Library. All SEPAC meetings are open to the public. We encourage parents and caregivers of children with special needs to attend.



Please visit our website (www.concordsepac.org) for a list of our upcoming meetings and agendas, previous meeting minutes, and helpful resources.

CONNECT WITH US

	Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Public Schools SEPAC
	concordsepac@gmail.com
	www.concordsepac.org
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UPCOMING EVENTS

November						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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					

November 6: SEPAC Business Meeting
9:30-11 A.M.
Concord Main Public Library,
Conference Room

For questions, comments, or ideas for future newsletters, please email concordsepac@gmail.com.