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COVID-19 Update from the CEO



Dear Members of The Arc Family:

Although the Governor has extended the statewide health emergency for another 30 days, announcements for certain re-openings have recently begun. Happily, The Arc of Essex County has started the planning for programs and services to re-open. This complex strategic plan must work in sync with NJ's plan and absolutely must address the inherent health and safety guidelines and protocols. We continue to implement our comprehensive COVID-19 service and operations response and prevention plan, even as we work on strategies for re-opening.

Updates:

- A 2nd Board sponsored Pizza dinner for residential services was held Friday, June 5
- Stepping Stones School Car Parade graduation & year-end ceremony is scheduled for June 16
- Plans for a modified season for Camp Hope are in the works
- Testing availability for consumers and staff greatly increased; our COVID positive numbers greatly decreased

Current Closures:

- Shapiro Center for Early Intervention: Suspended; modified teleservices began 4/1

- Stepping Stones School: In-school canceled through school year; remote learning continued
- Stepping Stones Early Intervention: Began virtual session, 5/5
- Children and Adult Group Respite and Recreation Programs: In-person activities suspended for consumers until DDD/DCF authorize return; virtual activities initiated
- Adult Day Programs: In-person programs suspended until DDD authorizes return; virtual activities initiated

Ongoing Services:

- Deployment of iPhones to consumers and programs for remote monitoring (Facetime)
- Increased use of telemedicine services with Station MD, the DDC and other medical providers
- Residential Services: No outside visitors; staff only engaged in essential community activities
- Administrative Support: The main office is open with limited hours, staggered and remote staffing; only essential visitors
- Increased screening, including infrared temperature checks, for everyone entering residences
- Program Administration: Staff deployed to Arc locations to support residential services
- Support staff shopping teams continue to pick up and deliver items including groceries to group homes as needed.
- Containment scheduling implemented which assigns staff to work in specific programs only in order to minimize the risk of exposure and spread of COVID-19
- Masks distributed to all locations for staff to utilize during shifts in program and when engaged in essential community activities
- Increased use of video and audio teleservices to assist with social isolation, engagement with families, and other Stay-At-Home challenges.
- Additional supplies of N95 and KN95 masks and isolation gowns have been secured and deployed including donated PPE from United Way and DDD
- Increased and expanded COVID-19 stipends for staff working residential shifts
- Expanded opportunities to spread awareness and appreciation of our DSP's (Jersey 4 Jersey, local, Café Villa pizza lunch, state news articles, and lawn signs throughout Essex County)
- Virtual Clubs, events and activities were rolled out to group home and at-home consumers, and virtual activities calendars continue to increase and expand on www.arcessex.org.
- Increased COVID testing available and encouraged for staff and group home residents

The light appears to be at the end of the tunnel – albeit at the far end of the tunnel. But, here at The Arc of Essex County – we see that light and we are focusing on it. As the Governor announces re-opening plans, The Arc has embraced the opportunity to start re-opening plans of our own. We could not even consider beginning re-opening plans if it were not for the entire Arc family that have stayed positive, strong and together. Thank you to everyone who has helped The Arc of Essex County and its family and friends get to this point. You all continue to amaze me.

Stay safe and be well.



Linda C. Lucas
Chief Executive Officer

Camp Hope to Open for

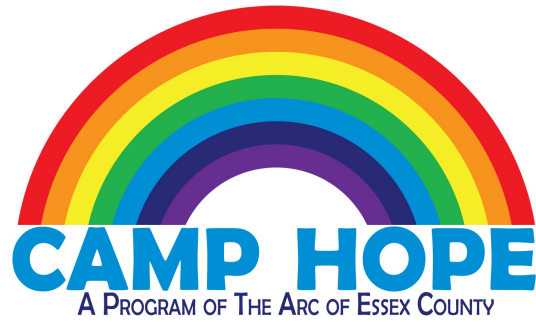


Summer 2020

Significant Modifications in Place

As you may be aware, Governor Murphy announced on Friday May 29, 2020 that youth summer day camps will be able to open this summer beginning July 6, 2020.

The Arc of Essex County is hopeful that this announcement along with the soon to be released NJ Department of Health (DOH) guidelines detailing specific regulatory health and safety requirements, will allow us to operate camp in a modified capacity this summer.



Based on current information released from the CDC and anticipating some of the NJ DOH regulatory requirements for camps, we are aware of some specific modifications that will be necessary in order for camp to operate. We wanted to share this information with you as it may have an impact on your loved one's capacity to attend camp. Please review the information below. Families already registered for camp will receive a call from one of our Camp Hope Staff over the next few days to discuss how this information impacts you and your family.

To date, please note the following preliminary changes to Camp Hope Program for Summer 2020:

- The camp season will start no earlier than July 13, 2020;
- Door to door transportation will not be provided. Families will need to transport their camper to and from camp.
 - NOTE: For families who have NO transportation available, we are exploring establishing multiple pick up and drop off locations throughout the county;
- There will be limited enrollment for each week;
- A modified camp day with staggered start and end times.
- Health screens at the point of drop off will be completed for all campers prior to the start of the camp day;
- A temporary pause on any new camp enrollments due to reduced capacity, shortened camp season and reschedule of weeks.

As the NJ State DOH releases further details regarding camp regulations for this summer season, we will be able to determine health requirements, consumer group sizes, activities, daily schedules and facility accommodations. As we receive more information from the State of NJ or additional regulations are put in place, we will communicate any updates impacting the Camp Hope program for this summer.

At this time, the camp guidance applies to children under 21 years old. For campers 21 and older, we are awaiting further instructions from DDD and will notify you when available.

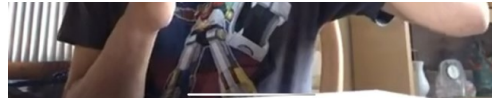
While we understand the Camp Hope Program that is loved by all will be different this summer, we assure you that the quality programming and support from The Arc of Essex County, remains the same.

Virtual Book Club, Cooking Classes, Dance Parties, and More

Make Their Debut!

As The Arc of Essex County continued to roll out virtual offerings throughout the month of May, residents and Day Program and Recreation participants alike flocked to virtual offerings to resume social activities and learn new skills. Activities include a





weekly, virtual book club, cooking classes, virtual paint & sip activities and more. Participants enjoyed the programming so much, they kept chatting well beyond the scheduled hour.

Virtual programming was also made available to children and young adults. One teenager in particular has been actively participating in virtual health and wellness activities. "I have to tell you how great it is to have found a rhythm for this new way of things! Zach is loving "virtual workouts" [with Joe] so much! He Gets his clothes & water ready and everything!" said Kristy Gray.

The Arc of Essex County is committed to providing services and supports to those we serve by leveraging technology and practicing social distancing. If your loved one is interested in joining our Day Programs classes, contact Director of Adult Day Services Angela LoSapio at alosapio@arcsex.org. If your loved one is interested in joining our Adult Recreation & Respite virtual gatherings, contact Director of Community Services, Maureen Murray at mmurray@arcsex.org. If your loved one is interested in Children's Services, contact Director of Children's Services, Erika Zupkus at ezupkus@arcsex.org.

If you would like to make a donation to The Arc of Essex County to ensure we can continue to be agile, responsive, and innovative, especially during difficult times like these, please visit www.arcsex.org/covid19relief.

Community Partners with The Arc to Recognize DSPs

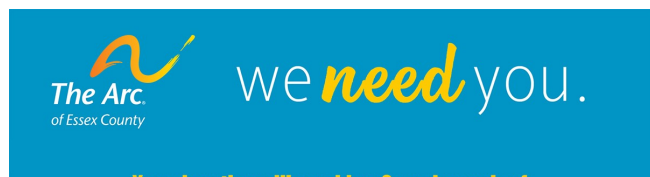
Throughout the month of May, community groups and businesses continued to partner with The Arc to recognize the tremendous contributions and sacrifices of Direct Support Professionals and boost morale among residents during the stay-at-home order. In early May, more than 30 "Direct Support Professionals are our Healthcare Heroes" signs were distributed throughout Essex County, including to each group home operated by The Arc.

Additionally, Project MaskOn, a community-based fundraiser, contributed 700 fabric masks for residents and staff. On Thursday, May 8, long-time friend and Uncorked & Uncapped vendor Glazed and Confused donated 25 donut care packages to the direct support professionals and residents of each of our homes! The next day, on Friday, May 9th The Arc of Essex County's Board of Directors treated each group home to a pizza party. Finally, on Friday, May 22nd another long-time friend, Uncorked & Uncapped vendor, and a partner in our vocational exploration and workplace readiness program, Villa Restaurant Group, treated all of our residents and staff to a Friday pizza party to kick off Memorial Day Weekend!



Would your school, business, or civic organization like to spread cheer to The Arc's residents and frontline staff during this unprecedented time? Email The Arc's Senior Director of Development and Communication, Heather Comstock, at hcomstock@arcsex.org to express your interest in getting involved and discuss ideas and agency needs.

Support The Arc's COVID-19 Relief Efforts Today!



Thanks to the generosity of The Arc's families and supporters during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been able to keep our shelves stocked with vital products to maintain the health and safety of our consumers and staff. Anticipating an ongoing need for such supplies for months to come, and our initial supplies dwindling, **we need your help.**


we need you.

Your donation will provide a 2 week supply of:



\$25
Toilet paper for
1 home



\$50
Disinfecting products
for 4 homes



\$100
Paper towels for
4 homes



\$250
Gloves for
10 homes



\$500
All previous products + hand
sanitizer & soap for 3 homes

Will you make a donation today to help us continue to stock our residential programs with all the supplies they need to maintain clean and healthy homes? When donating, please consider making your gift a recurring donation - options include weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually.

To make a donation to The Arc of Essex County's COVID-19 Relief Fund, please visit www.arcessex.org/covid19relief or mail your donation to 123 Naylon Avenue, Livingston, NJ 07039.

Staff Highlight:

Jamilla Scott

When Governor Murphy announced stay-at-home orders in mid-March, members of The Arc of Essex County's residential team sprang into action, planning activities residents could look forward to. For the Marmon Group Home led by Program Manager Jamilla Scott, this meant taking each residents' personal interests into account.

In addition to utilizing technology to plan social activities, Jamilla and her team also prepared a very special black tie evening at home that allowed the residents to dress in their finest attire while enjoying a special menu complete with a bubbly toast and classy décor.



Jamilla and her team at the Marmon Group Home embody the passion and creativity that drives the mission of The Arc of Essex County. We extend our utmost appreciation to these amazing staff and recognize their unwavering dedication to those we serve.



Spread Joy with Project Sunshine!

The Arc Launches Project Sunshine

to Boost Spirits

The Arc of Essex County launched Project Sunshine in early May as a way to provide encouragement and cheer to our group home residents during the self-quarantine and social distancing period resulting from COVID-19. Rally your family and friends to get involved by sending a note or picture of encouragement to

individuals residing with The Arc of Essex County.

How to get involved:

Write a note, letter, or card, or draw or paint a picture and send it to:

- By mail:
Project Sunshine
c/o Friends at The Arc of Essex County
123 Naylor Avenue
Livingston, NJ 07039
- Send an email to hcomstock@arcessex.org
- Post a photo or record a video and share to The Arc of Essex County's Facebook page and use #ArcofEssexNJ and #ProjectSunshine

Inspire others to help:

- Enlist help from your friends and family
- Ask your volunteer or community groups to participate

This is a great project for children, teens, adults, and seniors! Thank you for helping to spread kindness to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities during this time of uncertainty!

The Arc of Essex County Awarded \$5,700 Grant

to Expand Tele-Medicine

In early May, the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities awarded The Arc of Essex County \$5,710 in grant funds to be used for COVID-19 related needs. The Arc will use these funds to expand its tele-medicine initiatives with StationMD to an additional two group homes.

The tele-medicine services outfit group homes with a laptop hooked up to medical equipment to monitor patient vitals and communicate with doctors in real time via video conferencing.

The Arc of Essex County thanks the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities for their continued support, especially in the face of this unprecedented pandemic.



Day Program Facility Updates

Await Participants

When in-center programming can resume, participants of The Arc's Bridges Day Program will return to a newly renovated space. While everyone has been staying at home, The Arc's facilities team installed new flooring, fiberglass reinforced panel (FRP)



wainscoting, and painted the rest of the walls with new, vibrant colors. They also added additional storage to the multipurpose lunch room.

Additionally, work is wrapping up at the new Studio Arc facility – a creative and performing art space furnished with professional-grade crafting equipment, graphic design tools, and more. The space will be utilized by every program of The Arc to learn new skills, cultivate passions and talents, and enhance their worlds with expressive creativity.

Do you have a loved one interested in The Arc of Essex County's innovative Adult Day Services? Check out our Adult Day Services brochure, [available here](#), then reach out to The Arc of Essex County's Director of Adult Day Services, Angela LoSapio, to learn how you can enroll - alosapio@arcessex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1231.

The Arc of Essex County's Residential Corner

June Openings

For individuals seeking a community living placement, The Arc of Essex County has the following June 2020 openings:



Roseland Group Home (1 Female Vacancy)

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 5-Bedroom Group Home
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large, Ranch-Style, Single-Family Home on a Quiet Suburban Street
- ADA compliant/barrier-free home within walking distance of community parks
- Current roommates are females ranging in age from mid 30's to late 70's. They enjoy shopping with one another, having spa nights, and watching Thursday night wrestling on TV together.



Verona Supervised Apartment (1 Male Vacancy)

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 3-Bedroom Supervised Apartment
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large 2 Family Home with Great Front Porch
- Located near public transportation and within walking distance of Verona's downtown shopping & restaurants and the beautiful Verona Park
- Current roommates are males ranging in age from early 20's to late 40's. They enjoy spending time pursuing their own interests such as reading, watching TV, being active, socializing with friends, and occasionally participating in community activities as a group.



Bloomfield Supervised Apartment (1 Vacancy)

- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Apartment-style living in a multi-family, Arc of Essex County, owned home
- Single bedroom on 1st floor in shared apartment with opportunities to mingle with fellow residents
- Within walking distance to Bloomfield's downtown shopping & restaurants



**South Orange 2 Bedroom / 2 Bathroom
Supportive Living Apartment**

South Orange Supportive Living Apartment (1 Female Vacancy)

- 1 bedroom available in a 2 bedroom apartment
- Minimal community living support needs
- Access to an emergency on-call system for added safety 24 hours a day
- Apartment-style living in 5-floor building with elevator
- Located steps from public transportation and South Orange's vibrant downtown

For additional information about The Arc of Essex County's residential services, [click here](#). If you are interested in pursuing independent living at one of the above properties, please contact The Arc's Senior Director of Residential Services, Rebecca Lorusso via email at rlorusso@arcessex.org or by calling (973)

535-1181 ext. 1270.

Donate Your Unwanted Used Vehicle

to The Arc of Essex County



Donate a Car Today

Call Toll Free 1-877-ARC-CAR-0
Or Donate Online at

www.thearc.org/donate-my-vehicle
Note "NJ The Arc of Essex County" as your beneficiary.

Achieve with us.



Rather than selling or trading in your used car, truck, SUV, motorcycle, RV, or boat on a trailer, consider donating it through The Arc of Essex County's vehicle donation program. Proceeds from the sale of your donated vehicle will fund innovative and essential programs for children and adults living with developmental disabilities.

The car donation program is an excellent way to support the largest service provider for children and adults living with developmental disabilities in Essex County. Donors can rest assured that vehicle donations to The Arc of Essex County will directly aid in these efforts. We work hard to maximize the proceeds of every car donation. Car donation is not only free and easy, but is also tax deductible (please see your tax accountant for further information). Towing is free of charge.

To donate today please call 877-272-2270.

The Arc Remembers Jennifer Bushko

Jennifer Bushko joined The Arc of Essex County family in 2015 when she began attending the Main Street Hub Day Program. She took up residence with The Arc later in 2015 and moved into the Roseland Group Home with two of her three siblings in mid-2016. She transferred to the Community Link Day Program in 2016 and then to the West Caldwell Hub Day Program in 2018.

Jennifer loved the female WWE professional wrestlers, especially AJ Lee. A self-proclaimed girly-girl, she loved doing her hair and makeup and dressing up, particularly for the annual Day Programs Prom. She formed many deep connections with her roommates, peers, and staff all of whom will miss her greatly.

The Arc of Essex County conveys its condolences to the Bushko family and Jennifer's extended Arc family during this difficult time. If you would like to make a donation to The Arc of Essex County in her memory, please visit www.arcessex.org/donate and note that your donation is in memory of Jennifer – an acknowledgement of your tribute will be sent to family members.

Stay Connected!



 **Donate Now**