

# Families CAN Newsletter

4365 Wheeler St., Room 301  
Houston, Texas 77204-3055

## Frozen this Winter?...Well just let it go!

The warmth of winter is often found in those occasions which bring families and friends together-usually holiday events. Past winter issues have attempted to help families minimize the stress which the season brings and hopefully it has helped. This issue is not just devoted to the holidays but devoted to sharing winter tips collected from families of children and adults with disabilities that have learned to not become frozen over tradition. They have warmed up winter by just letting go. The tips are as follows:

1. Be realistic during the holidays. Don't overspend on your child to compensate for what they can or can't do with toys or gifts. The true gift is giving them what they feel good about, not what makes you feel good.
2. Winter months are planning months. Use the season's stillness to really reflect on what you want to accomplish for your child in the spring and summer. Spring fever is real—who has time to plan then!
3. Take in all the sights and sounds of the holidays. Many events/venues now provide for children and adults with diverse needs.
4. Don't make any New Year's resolutions for yourself in January-make them with or for your child. They must be achievable!
5. Give out Valentines during the winter month of February to everyone who teaches or cares for your child every day!
6. Take a family ski trip-it's therapeutic!
7. Pledge to acknowledge one awareness campaign each month. It instills a sense of humility in everyone!
8. Every child and adult should see the Nutcracker-don't miss it!
9. Make a gingerbread house-the stress is making it and the stress reliever is eating it!
10. When your children are off during winter break-take time off from your job to spend time with them too!

Happy Holidays from our Family to Yours!

WINTER 2015-2016  
(FY16)  
Volume 22, Issue 2

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## Quote for the Quarter

*...Some people are worth melting for*

*Olaf the Snowman*

## “Celebrate You” – Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Please come join us for two hours of Holiday Celebration at Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church, 2353 Rice Blvd. from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.!!! Celebrate You, Moms & Dads!!!



Please contact Families CAN to RSVP at 713-743-5435.

The Transition Workshop is an informational program created to help parents deal with all the areas related to the transition of their teens to adulthood and adult services. The group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every odd month at 6:30 p.m. at Shriners Hospital. Our next meeting will be held on **January 15th**. Our speaker will be Amanda Osteen from Behavior Hospital at Bellaire. She will talk about the services provided to adolescents who are struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues.

Shriners Hospital is located at 6977 Main St., 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Cafeteria area (Just past intersection of Main & Holcombe). Park in their **FREE covered parking garage**. **Pizza and drinks are provided by Texas Children's Health Plan**. Please **RSVP** if possible so that we will have enough pizza for everyone.

**For more information** or to be added to the Transition Workshop email list, contact: Ava Fletcher, Transition Workshop Coordinator at 713-743-0608, [acfletc2@central.uh.edu](mailto:acfletc2@central.uh.edu) or call or email Olga Guerra, [olguerra@central.uh.edu](mailto:olguerra@central.uh.edu), 713-743-5592. See you there!



**Families CAN Offices will be closed from Thursday, December 24th to Friday, January 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**Family Fun Run** presented by Texas Children's Hospital and the Houston Marathon Foundation. Saturday, April 9, 2016. Families with children of all abilities are invited to participate at Texas Children's Hospital West Campus. Located at I-10 and Barker Cypress 18200 Katy Freeway. Registration will open mid-January 2016. Registration will close Monday, March 28 at 5:00 p.m. For questions, Email [funruninfo@texaschildrens.org](mailto:funruninfo@texaschildrens.org).

**FLU SEASON IS HERE, HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO.**



**1. STAY INFORMED**

TexasFlu.org is the DSHS site for flu information in Texas. Bookmark it. Dial 2-1-1 for flu information and vaccination locations or use the Vaccine Locator to find out about vaccine availability in your area.

**2. GET VACCINATED**

Get a flu vaccination now. It's the best way to protect yourself and others.

**3. STOP THE SPREAD**

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer. Cover your coughs and sneezes. Stay home if you're sick. Have a plan to care for sick family members at home.

## Recreational Activities



**Mardi Gras Ball for Special People** on **Sunday, January 31, 2016** at Moody Gardens in Galveston, Texas from **12:00 noon – 4:00 p.m.** The day is filled with fun, food, and dance for the entire family. **FREE** admission for people with special needs, their immediate family and/or caregivers with **RSVP**.

For more information and to **RSVP**, please contact – Ashley Fleeger, 800-582-4673, Extension 4108 or email [volunteers@moodygardens.org](mailto:volunteers@moodygardens.org).



**Dionysus Theatre** is a unique organization, incorporated in 1997 by Deborah Nowinski, bringing the theater experience to teens and young adults who are physically and developmentally disabled as well as able-bodied.

Dionysus Theatre offers classes each year in theater arts for teens and young adults with disabilities that build self-confidence encourage self-expression, socialization and improve life skills.

Classes will begin on January 12, 2016. Location: Salem Lutheran Evangelical Church  
4930 W. Bellfort Street, Houston 77035

### Children's Museum

To the families who receive services from – UH/ PEP - Families CAN program, please email or call your Family Partner (Olga, Ava or Shelley) to request free passes. You can use these passes to visit the Children's Museum of Houston anytime. Each pass admits up to four people for FREE!

**The River**, a program of TUTS Education provides accessible, affordable, fine arts education for individuals who have disabilities ages 4-19. Siblings are welcome. Financial Aid is available. **Classes start on January 23rd** and are for 10 weeks, at the City of Houston Multi-Service Center at 1475 West Gray. For registration and more information, please call The River at 713-520-1220 or visit their website at [www.tuts.com](http://www.tuts.com) or email [education@tuts.com](mailto:education@tuts.com).

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River students partner with students from TUTS Humphreys School of Musical Theater using songs, choreography, and lines from TUTS 2015 - 16 Season. The Winter 2015 Workshop held at The River @ The Metropolitan Multiservices Center @ 1475 West Gray. Call 713-520-1220.

Ages: 7-19 - Cost: \$30

**Date: Saturday, December 21**, Times: 10am-2pm, Showcase: 1:30pm

\*Students must bring a sack lunch and beverage. Dress for comfort - casual clothes and sneakers.



### Sailing Angels – Year Round

Go sailing for the Holidays with Sailing Angels. Sailing Angels teaches sailing to special needs children as a form of education and recreational therapy. They provide sailing adventures at no cost to the participants. For more information, please contact, Captain Dave McCabe at (281) 507-1867, or email Dave at [davemccabe@SailingAngels.org](mailto:davemccabe@SailingAngels.org). Visit website at [www.SailingAngels.org](http://www.SailingAngels.org).

Applications for the **2016 Lennar Life and Work Skills Program** are now being accepted. The Lennar Life and Work Skills Program is a **FREE** program offered to students with intellectual disabilities. It's been in existence since 2006. 160 students have graduated from the program and starting in January, we are looking to include 15 new students.

The program takes place one Saturday a month from 9 AM - 12 PM at our office in the Greenspoint location (I-45 & Beltway 8). We cover a wide range of topics, including:

Dress for Success, Computer Skills, Cooking, Budgeting Skills, Resumes and Interviewing, Office Services Skills and more!

There is no age limit. For an application and more information contact

Amy Floyd, Lennar Corporation, [amy.floyd@lennar.com](mailto:amy.floyd@lennar.com), 281-874-8438. The application deadline is **December 12, 2015**.

**Houston Ballet Adaptive Dance Program**

Houston Ballet is excited to partner with the Down Syndrome Association of Houston and Easter Seals of Greater Houston to offer Adapted Dance, a series of FREE dance classes for children with Down syndrome ages 5-12.

Location: The Little Brown Studio at The Houston Ballet Center for Dance located at 601 Preston Street, Houston, TX, 77002.

Contact them at [Info@dsah.org](mailto:Info@dsah.org) or at 713.682.7237 x201

**Kennedy Dance Theatre**

Kennedy Dance Theatre has opened up its studio for a Special Needs Program as a way to reach out to the community. The classes offered are for students with Down syndrome, autism and other developmental disabilities. Teachers and student assistants involved, volunteer their time each week so the classes can be offered free of charge. – See more at: <http://www.kennedydance.com/special-needs/#sthash.b0wAbt43.dpuf> for more information about the program please call the studio at 281-480-8441.

**Parent Trainings**

The ARC of Texas 23<sup>RD</sup> Annual **Inclusion Works Conference**

**February 7-9, 2016**

Royal Sonesta Houston Galleria  
2222 West Loop South  
Houston, TX 77027

**Registration Fees:**

**Professionals-Regular:** \$255 if registered by Dec 31<sup>st</sup>

**Professionals-Late:** \$280 if registered by Feb 7, 2016

**Parents/ Students** \$105

– call 1-800-252-9729 or visit the website at [www.thearcoftexas.org](http://www.thearcoftexas.org)

**“Navigating Systems for Post School Success “**

The **Texas Transition Conference** is a two – day event focused on providing evidence –based practices that result in a smooth transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities.

When: **February 18-19, 2016**

Where: Westin Dallas Park Central, 12720 Merit Dr., Dallas, Texas 75251

To register visit <http://ttc.tamu.edu>

For more information contact Cheryl Grenwelge, TTC Coordinator. Phone: 979-458-1593. Fax 979-862-1256. Email: [cgrenwelge@tamu.edu](mailto:cgrenwelge@tamu.edu)

“Success for Children with Disabilities”  
11th Annual Special Education and Transition Conference & Resource Fair

**Sponsored by:**  
**Family to Family Network**

Date: **Saturday, March 5, 2016**

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Note: Resource Fair closes at 12:30 p.m.

Location: Houston Community College Northwest College - Spring Branch Campus  
1010 W. Sam Houston Parkway, Houston, TX 77043

For more information, 713-466-6304 or email @ [f2fconference@sbcglobal.net](mailto:f2fconference@sbcglobal.net)

Online Registration begins on January 4, 2016

**The University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL)**  
**Center for**  
**Autism and Developmental Disabilities Speakers Series**

The informative lectures, which are sponsored by Sponsored by Hegwood & Associates, P.C., JSC Federal Credit Union, Jersey Mike's Subs, Endeavor Behavioral, InKids, Gulf Coast Educators Federal Credit Union, and Susie Bean Gives, are provided by the center at no cost. Scheduled speakers include local professionals and graduate students of the university's Behavior Analysis program. A question and answer session follow each lecture.

Presentations will be held at 2700 Bay Area Blvd., Houston, Texas 77058, (Garden Room) Bayou Building, Room 1510 from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. University of Houston-Clear Lake is located at 2700 Bay Area Blvd. There is **no cost** to attend. Call 281-283-3452.

REGISTRATION LINK: <https://apps.uhcl.edu/ORS/CADD/Account/Login>

**Autism Speakers Series 2015-2016**

**December 12th** "Preventing Meltdowns: How to Teach Your Learner To Ask, Wait and Accept No" - (Lauren Phillips)

**January 23rd** "One Bite At A Time:" Manageable Mealtimes for the Fussy Eater " - (Bridgette White)

**February 13th** "Keep Calm and Count Sheep: Stress – Free Bedtime Routines!"- (Courtney Laudont)

**March 12th** "Fostering Independence in Adolescence"- (Patti Shoemaker)

**April 9th** "Tips for Toilet Training Successfully" - (Danielle Duhon)

**REEL ABILITIES Houston Disabilities Film Festival**

**February 14-18, 2016**

**ReelAbilities: Houston Film Festival**, hosted by the JFS Alexander Institute for Inclusion in collaboration with Houston's Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, is a city-wide film and arts festival which uses the arts to promote inclusion and celebrate the lives, stories, and artwork of people with disabilities — making an impact that lasts far beyond the week of the festival. A robust and exciting array of films, special events, and extraordinary speakers from around the country are being featured this year. To sponsor, partner or volunteer, contact us at JFS: 713-667-9336 [www.jfshouston.org](http://www.jfshouston.org)

**A New Resource – Navigate Life:**

An online resource for kids with disabilities and special health care needs

**Website:** [www.navigatelifetexas.org](http://www.navigatelifetexas.org)

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713.743.5592

Families CAN website

[www.uh.edu/pep](http://www.uh.edu/pep)

### **Epilepsy Foundation of Houston**

If you have been diagnosed with epilepsy or a seizure disorder and do not have health insurance, we can help! We do accept Medicare and Medicaid plans.

The Epilepsy Foundation offers specialized medical care and diagnostic testing for adults with epilepsy. We can also help you in obtaining your seizure medication at low or no cost, if you qualify.

Clinic sites are located in Amarillo, Beaumont, Fort Worth, Grapevine, Houston, Lubbock and Lufkin. All of our clinics are funded in part by a grant from the Texas Department of Health Services.

For more information about our clinic program, call us toll-free at 1-888-548-9716 or e-mail us at [clinic@efhx.org](mailto:clinic@efhx.org).

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### **Epilepsy Foundation Texas–Houston/Dallas/Fort Worth Presents Wacky Winter Weekend Houston**

**Friday, January 8–Sunday, January 10, 2016** Camp For All, Burton, Texas.  
Epilepsy Foundation Texas–Houston/Dallas/Fort Worth 2401 Fountain View,  
Suite 900, Houston, Texas 77057, (713) 789-6295 or (888) 548-9716 Fax:  
713-789-5628 [www.efhx.org](http://www.efhx.org) , Camp Coordinator: Rebecca Moreau,  
[camp@efhx.org](mailto:camp@efhx.org)

Children and teens with epilepsy and/or seizure disorder between the ages of 6 and 17 are eligible to apply to attend Wacky Winter Weekend. A sibling or a family member within the same age range is invited to join us as well. Campers are encouraged to register early. Space is limited by many factors. Please have all your information in by the **deadline of January 6, 2016**

Families CAN is part of UH College of Education and is funded by a grant from the Children with Special Health Care Needs Services Program, Texas Dept. of State Health Services.

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### **Families CAN Program**

Parent Education Project

University of Houston

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Houston, Texas 77204-3055