

Alternatives For Children



www.alternativesforchildren.org

SPRING 2015

ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN
CELEBRATES CULTURAL DIVERSITY DURING THE WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD



Tina Cioffi visited her son Miles' class to talk about all things Italian



Trying our hands at making Origami Fortune Teller Games

Children Around the World
Customs & Family Traditions
Holidays, Flags & Foods
Traditional Dress & Clothing
Literature & Games
The ARTS - Art, Music & Dance



Bethann Walker-Rogers reads a book in Welsh to her son Charlie's class

Week of the Young Child is a time to recognize that children's opportunities are our responsibilities, and to recommit ourselves to ensuring that every child experiences the type of early environment that will promote their early learning.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN
THE DEAF-BLIND COLLABORATIVE

Recently staff members who teach and provide specialized therapeutic services for the deaf and/or blind population at Alternatives For Children East Setauket received training and information at an in-service provided by the New York Deaf-Blind Collaborative. The NYDBC provides technical assistance to early childhood programs to support the development of transdisciplinary programs that meet the particularly unique developmental needs of children who are deaf and/or blind. Information was shared to ensure that children are appropriately identified, and that families who have a child with hearing and vision loss are receiving the services that meet the specialized developmental needs of their child. Critical areas for children who fall within this diagnosis include:

- Communication and language development
 - Social and conceptual development
- Planning for the transition to school-age programs



Ms. Susan Morrow, (NYDBC) Dr. Ficano,
Ms. Suzanne Chen, (NYDBC)
Wendy Jorgensen (Clinical Coordinator),
Janice Milusich (Vision Teacher) (l-r)

Alternatives for Children

Mission Statement

To provide the highest quality special and regular education programs and services to children with disabilities and typically developing peers. Education, medical, pediatric rehabilitation, and support services are integrated to ensure the comprehensive needs of the child and family are met.

14 Research Way
East Setauket, NY 11733
631-331-6400
Preschool Programs
Child Day Care
Early Intervention Services
Universal Pre-K
Administrative Office

1116 Main Road
Aquebogue, NY 11931
631-722-2170
Preschool Programs
Child Day Care
Early Intervention Services
Universal Pre-K

600 South Service Road
Dix Hills, NY 11746
631-271-0777
Preschool Programs
Child Day Care
Early Intervention Services

168 Hill Street
Southampton, NY 11968
631-283-3272
Preschool Programs
Child Day Care
Early Intervention Services

Executive Director
Marie E. Ficano, Ed.D.

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Tina VanVort, Esq.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN REMEMBERS

MR. JOSEPH A. DEMPSEY, ESQ. - SECRETARY, BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Dear Staff, Friends and Families,

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of our longstanding Board of Trustees member Mr. Joseph Dempsey. Mr. Dempsey began his Trustee role in 1990 shortly after the inception of our organization (formerly St. Charles Educational and Therapeutic Center since 1988.) Over the years we have never lost sight of our mission, to provide the highest quality programs and services at a critical time in the development of a child. Joe believed in our mission.

Over the years he provided his counsel and guidance without remuneration because he truly cared about who we are and why we exist!

Mr. Dempsey, in his quiet manner, thoughtfully weighed in on the pros and cons of all of our organization's ongoing decisions. He supported Alternatives For Children when we struggled, as well as when we celebrated our many accomplishments. He was instrumental behind the scenes, and we utilized his expertise in our latest venture, the relocation of our Melville site to our new facility in Dix Hills.

Mr. Dempsey attended and supported our many fundraisers, including playing in our Annual Golf Outing, attending our Casino and Anniversary events. He joined us at ceremonies and special events for our children.

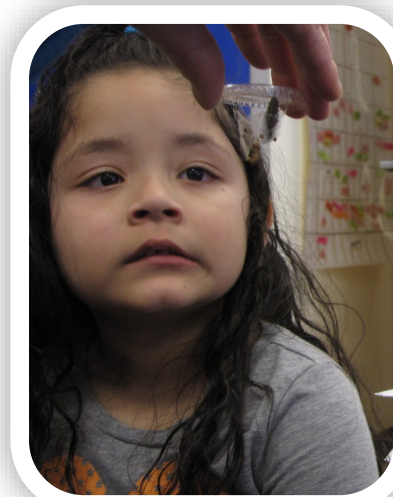
Mr. Dempsey lived with his wife Kathy, and we thank her for sharing Joe with us for twenty-five years. A ceremony for Joe will be held at our East Setauket campus in the Brady Russell Memory Garden to remember our friend, supporter, and colleague. More information will follow with the date and time.

Mr. Dempsey will be missed and remembered by all at Alternatives For Children.

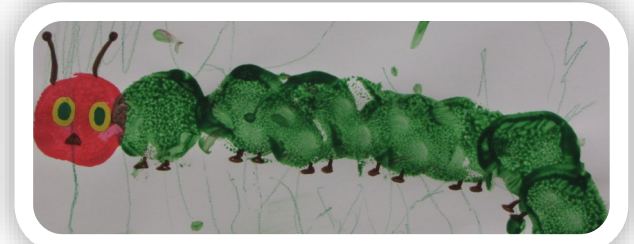
Marie E. Ficano, Ed.D.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN

WATCHING & WAITING - THE LIFE CYCLE OF A BUTTERFLY



Not too excited to see the chrysalis!



Helen Keller said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." That is exactly what happened when Alternatives For Children's Lee Morris, Music Therapist and Donna Menna, Curriculum Coordinator came together with Sandra Gil of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services - Neighborhood Aide Program and Sr. Mary Lang from the Centro Corazón de María Mother's Group.

The Mother's Group is a six-week informational parent workshop sponsored by the Suffolk County Department of Health and hosted at St. Rosalie's Church in Hampton Bays by the Centro Corazón de María.

Group participants learned about using music to enhance the learning of early pre-literacy skills. A fun and informative time was had by all while singing songs, playing maracas and dancing. Parents then joined together with their children to put into practice what they had just experienced with Miss Lee. Group participants were enthusiastic about what they had learned and were eager to bring their new found "voice" home to share with their children.

Many thanks to Sandra Gil and Sr. Mary for inviting us to share our years of early childhood experience with the Latino community on the East End.



Lee Morris leading the group in singing and acting out
Cabeza, Hombros, Piernas, Pies
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes

Alternatives For Children @ the Riverhead Library
Janet Davis-Lowe, Speech Language Pathologist and Suzanne Willoughby, Music Therapist visited the Riverhead Library to spend some time at a Parent-Toddler Workshop. Music, and how it enhances language acquisition was the topic, but, it was all about the singing, dancing, and moving for the parents and their children. Simple, yet memorable songs that are real language development boosters were taught to parents for them to share with their child at any time.
Thank You Janet & Suzanne for sharing your expertise



De Colores Desarrollo Infantil Grupo Musical *a Bilingual Child Development Music Group*

Families that are impoverished and monolingual Spanish have limited access to seeking out workshops, in-services, and preschool programs or parent/child groups that would continue to broaden their knowledge base on child development and the development of early literacy skills. Improvement of parental informational awareness of child development and literacy can only lead to the strengthening of present and future parent/school partnerships. These partnerships can enhance student academic performance, benefiting everyone involved with better student educational outcomes, and with the potential of decreasing the student drop-out rates among this population.

In an effort to address these concerns, Alternatives For Children will provide at our Southampton location, a bilingual Child Development Music Group, De Colores; Desarrollo Infantil Grupo Musical. This group will utilize our bilingual staff Music Therapist and will be available on a monthly basis to Latino parents with preschool age children living in the Town of Southampton.

Understanding that music plays an important and essential role in all areas of development, the facilitators will present and model appropriate parent/child interactions through a variety of musical activities. Song, music, story, and bilingual children's books will be used to enhance the child's social/emotional skills, the learning of early pre-literacy skills, and kindergarten readiness skills.

Funding for this program
has been made available through a
2015 Town of Southampton
Human Services Grant

Lots of Celebrating this SPRING . . .

On March 21st, *World Down Syndrome Awareness Day*, families and staff joined the *Spread the Word to End the Word* campaign, which is an ongoing effort by Special Olympics, Best Buddies and world-wide supporters to inspire respect and acceptance through raising the consciousness of society about the R-word and how hurtful words and disrespect can be toward people with special needs and intellectual disabilities.

In April we celebrated *Autism Awareness Month*. On April 2nd, *International Autism Awareness Day*, families and staff joined with supporters around the world in wearing BLUE in support of Autism Awareness.

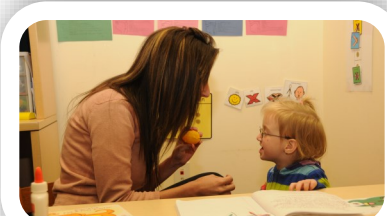
ACCEPTANCE
INCLUSION
RESPECT
FRIENDSHIP
Be a fan of
UNITY

www.r-word.org



APRIL . . . Occupational Therapy Month
MAY . . . Better Hearing & Speech Month

Helping children do the Ordinary . . . Extraordinarily



Thank You to our OT & Speech Departments



ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN RECEIVES NYS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT GRANT
FUNDING THE NATURE EXPLORE PROGRAM OF THE ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION



Through a grant received from the NYS Education Department our students will be spending a lot more time communing with nature. The Nature Explore program is a collaborative effort of the Arbor Day Foundation and the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation. The mission of this initiative is to help children develop a profound engagement with the natural world, where nature is an integral, joyful part of children's daily learning. In an educational setting such as ours, the program calls for the development of outdoor learning environments. The children will enjoy gardening in our new accessible/raised planter beds. Involving children in gardening at an early age gives them the opportunity to develop a sense of wonder about the world and be amazed every day with each new discovery.



Window Nest Boxes will give the children a magical look into the fascinating world of birds

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

Alternatives for Children will work together with families to answer any questions, and help access information needed. Each year, Alternatives for Children is required to notify parents of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations (FERPA) to:

- Inspect and review the student's educational records.
- Seek amendment to the student's educational records that the parent believes to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.
- Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records.

Alternatives for Children will comply with a request for access to records within 45 days of a received request and respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of records. If a parent believes the education records relating to the student contain information that is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's rights of privacy, he or she may ask Alternatives for Children to amend the record.

**For More Information on FERPA
and your rights as parents visit our website**
www.alternatives4children.org/confidentiality-parents-rights.html
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>





Miss Nikki (left) and Miss Debbie (right)
at the East Setauket PARP Pajama Party

One of the most important skills our children learn is reading. Reading creates a strong, positive influence and builds a foundation for a lifetime of learning and enjoyment. PARP is a New York State PTA program designed to foster the love of reading in children by asking parents and other family members to set aside 15 minutes each day to read with their children.



Alternatives For Children Dix Hills
each paw print represents a book read by a family!



Hundreds of families across all four Alternatives For Children locations participated in PARP 2015. Reading books – drawing pictures of wild animals – researching wild animals on the internet – sending in pictures of family reading time. An educationally sound and fun experience! Our families certainly are WILD About READING!



Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!

The staff at Alternatives For Children Southampton had a very exciting day planned in February that allowed students to make a connection between characters in books, learning about who authors are, and their reasons for writing books. It was a fun filled literacy day. Staff and a few of our students gathered with the Cat in the Hat in front of their Get Wild About Reading mural that they had created in celebration of participation in PARP.



ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN AQUEBOGUE CELEBRATING EARTH DAY

We thought you might be interested in finding out about how we celebrate Earth Day out in Aquebogue. Occupational Therapist Becky Orłowski and Speech Pathologist Janet Davis-Lowe shared a collaborative lesson with the children. Miss Janet read the book *Recycle*, an informative handbook that explains the process of recycling from start to finish. The book focuses on 5 different types of "garbage" - paper, glass, aluminum cans, plastic and polystyrene. The children and Miss Becky then maneuvered through an obstacle course while sorting recyclables. Teacher Karen deMey and the children also created their own "Earth" using coffee filters, markers and a spray bottle.



Huntington Crescent Club

Monday June 15, 2015

15 Washington Drive • Huntington • NY 11743



_____ I will bring a foursome to this year's outing
\$1,600 foursome entry fee enclosed,
\$620 tax deductible. Includes luncheon, dinner,
greens fee, cart, caddy, putting contest for four.

_____ I will play in this year's outing \$400 individual entry
fee enclosed, \$155 tax deductible. Includes luncheon,
dinner, greens fee, cart, caddy, putting contest.

_____ I will sponsor a hole in this year's event
\$300 enclosed per hole sponsorship,
fully tax deductible

_____ I will sponsor a Hole in One in this year's event
\$500 per Hole in One sponsorship, fully tax deductible

I will be an event sponsor for this year's Outing
_____ Platinum Sponsor \$5,000
(\$3,720 tax deductible)

_____ Gold Sponsor \$2,850
(\$1,950 tax deductible)

_____ Silver Sponsor \$1,500
(\$1,275 tax deductible)

_____ Dinner only @ \$125 per person = _____

I cannot attend, but please accept my donation of
\$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Sponsorship Opportunities

Platinum Sponsor - \$5,000

Awards Dinner Sponsor

- ◇ Golf Foursome with caddy
- ◇ Prominent Corporate signage at venue
- ◇ Sponsor board
- ◇ Hole sign
- ◇ Four additional guests for dinner
- ◇ Affinity Membership
- Donor Wall, Newsletter Mention

Gold Sponsor - \$2,850

Barbeque Lunch Sponsor

- ◇ Golf Foursome with caddy
- ◇ Prominent Corporate signage at venue
- ◇ Sponsor board
- ◇ Hole sign

Silver Sponsor - \$1,500

Registration Sponsor

- ◇ Play for one golfer
- ◇ Prominent Corporate signage at venue
- ◇ Sponsor board

Hole in One Sponsor - \$500

- ◇ Company name on Hole in One sign

Hole Sponsor - \$300

- ◇ Company name on Hole sign

Day's Events

- 10:00 am Registration
- 10:30 -12:00 Luncheon
- 10:45 - 11:45 Putting Contest
- 12:00 noon Shotgun start - Callaway Scoring
- 5:00 pm Cocktail Hour/Longest Drive
- 6:00 pm Dinner

Name _____ Company Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Make Checks payable to Alternatives For Children 14 Research Way East Setauket, NY 11733

Credit Cards accepted - Visa, Master Card, American Express

REGISTER ONLINE until June 1st at <http://www.alternatives4children.org/golf.html>

Card Type _____ Card # _____ Exp Date _____

Print Name _____ Signature _____

Golfer #1 _____ Golfer #2 _____

Golfer #3 _____ Golfer #4 _____

ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN
FAMILY HOLIDAY WISH PROGRAM



Since they founded eVero Corporation in 2000, Christos and Constantine Morris have been dedicated to helping health care and non-profit agencies serving the Intellectually and Developmentally Disabled community find technology solutions. They not only find IT solutions for these agencies, they also offer a comprehensive Community Outreach Program focusing on educating persons with disabilities on marketable job skills. Employees with disabilities are recruited, hired, trained and paid by eVero to become computer basics instructors. The expansion of the Outreach Program, as well as the fact that the vast majority of the students complete the multi-session courses speaks volumes to the Program's impact and potential.



Staff & Community Outreach Program members at eVero purchased, wrapped and delivered Holiday JOY! Thank you eVero!

eVero has also had a tremendous impact on many families at Alternatives For Children. For the past several years eVero has partnered with us as a major sponsor of our Holiday Wish Program - providing much needed joy and happiness in the form of holiday gifts, toys, clothing, and other necessities for hundreds of our families. Alone we could not provide for all, but with eVero's help, any family in need was assisted this past Holiday season!

ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN
AFFINITY MEMBERS



Jim Buzzetta



Merik C. Dolber



Dr. & Mrs. Fred Mendelsohn



Mark Senders



Dan Meystrik



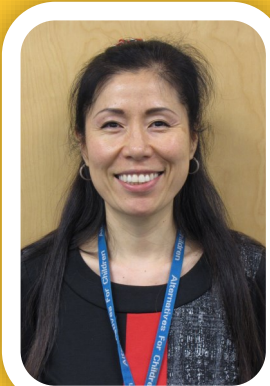
Mike Russell

Teknow Services, LLC



Katherine Crowe

Victor Nelson



Nikki Gins, Educational Technology Teacher at Alternatives For Children, was recently named to the Suffolk County Asian American Advisory Board. Serving under the Suffolk County Executive and Office of Minority Affairs, the function of the Board is to improve cultural understanding between ethnic communities, the County government, and the community as a whole. The Board also works to promote minority business development, access to services, and encourages civic participation at all levels by all members of the community. Miss Nikki said that, "Although I've been living my life more as an American than as an Asian American, I'm honored to have an opportunity to serve our community and I'm determined to try my best to bring understanding, acceptance, and support to this multi-cultural community." Congratulations Nikki!



Alternatives
For Children

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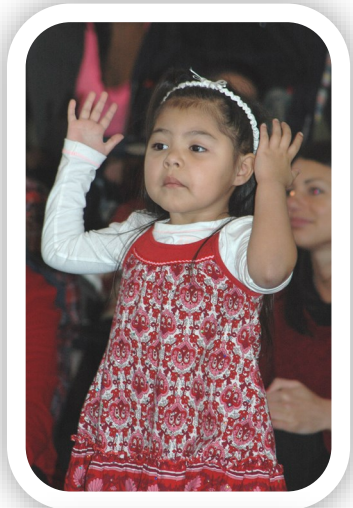
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Providing the highest quality special and regular education programs and services to children with disabilities and their typically developing peers.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN SOUTHAMPTON
CELEBRATES VALENTINE'S DAY



Sweet LOVE Songs - Sweet Dancing
Sweets for our Sweets! Parents and children all having FUN!
Lots of LOVE to go around and plenty of Sweet Treats for all!
All a part of our Valentine's Day Dance Party.



Dr. Ficano, Executive Director (left)
Donna Menna, East End Coordinator (right)
Enjoying the Festivities!

