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COVID-19 Response and Preparing for the Return of Day Programs

A LETTER TO YOU FROM OUR CEO, JOHN LINK.

As our fiscal year draws to an end and we start to look to the new year, you will notice that many things have changed in the way services are delivered. Reflecting back on the previous three months and looking forward to the next six months, we must plan on an environment that provides greater protection and revamped services to the individuals that we serve.

Most of the services that we provide will be conducted on a limited schedule and many of the activities that we once took for granted in the past, may not be available in the future. On June 29, 2020, the Agency's day programs reopened for business, on a scaled back version the day program had 25 individuals show up for work or attend the adult training facility program. Included in the reopening process were daily temperature checks, social distancing and mask wearing. As we look to the future, we are hoping to transition additional clients and services each month moving forward, based on each individuals needs.

Our goal is to operate our programs at full capacity by January 1, 2021. Although the COVID Pandemic is still a concern, we are very excited about offering our services and getting our folks back to work and leading a normal life.

Additionally, I want to reassure families that our agency is taking all the recommended precautions, as defined by the CDC, State and The Office of Developmental Programs.



INDIVIDUAL FROM FAMILY LIVING PROGRAM MAKING BIRD SEED ORNAMENTS

STAY AT HOME ACTIVITY PROGRAM

The Arc of Butler County was able to quickly develop an At-Home Activity Program for its Residential Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Stay At Home Order.



MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 2

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Over the past three months our staff has worked hard to develop informational & recreational videos and posted them on Facebook and the Agency's website.

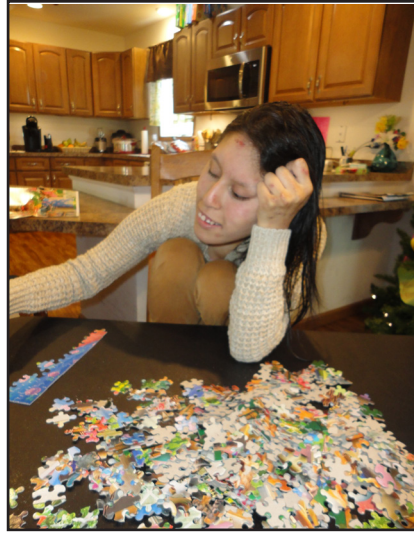
These videos are activities that the individuals/families can work on while restricted to their homes. They have also developed COVID-19 videos, which include: proper mask wearing, hand washing, social distancing and other information related to COVID-19.

This time of the year always brings uncertainty when it comes to agency funding. The Governor approved an initial budget in February of 2020 that included an increase in funding for waiver programs and a small increase in autism funding. This once positive budget has recently hit a snag. With all of the changes related to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this budget has had to be revamped and changed due to the state now projecting huge short falls in funding.

Some very positive and encouraging news relates to our Direct Support Professional (DSP) staff. During these difficult times the staff did an amazing job serving our agency and protecting our individuals. DSP's have a very difficult job under normal conditions not to mention the additional responsibility of protecting our individuals from an invisible enemy. Good Job!!

One last note, we all must remember that it is easy to get down in these times, however we must stay positive and remember that we will beat this together even if we have to be apart, and be stronger afterwards

To see these videos please visit our web-site: www.ArcButler.org



STAY AT HOME ACTIVITY PROGRAM CONTINUED

By reaching out to Residential Supervisors and Direct Support Staff, we were able to survey interests of what types of activities individuals would be interested in participating in. We received a wide range of responses such as Crafts and Painting, Cooking and Baking, and Games and Puzzles.

We ordered supplies to put together a basic activity kit for each house - each kit consisted of construction paper, paints, markers, scissors (basically everything needed for most of the activities). Each week we have been shipping out specific supplies to each house for scheduled activities.

For activities that require instruction, a recorded video is made and sent out for individuals to watch and participate alongside of.

Over the next few weeks, we are working to distribute technology to some of the residential houses to encourage them to participate in our LIVE, Virtual Activities.

We will be using GoToMeeting to interact with individuals and participate in all kinds of activities together.

Although we are living in unprecedented times, we have had the opportunity to provide fun activities for the individuals who live in the residential homes and with life sharing providers. With the use of technology, we will be able to interact with them virtually, play games, have paint parties, and many other activities.

Stay tuned for more updates about this new initiative!



DONATE TOWARDS COVID-19 RELIEF TODAY.

The Arc of Butler County has incurred significant expenses due to the COVID-19 public health emergency that were not budgeted. The need for personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies, was and will be evident. Please help us meet those needs by donating today. Your support will help The Arc of Butler County keep both the individuals we serve and our valued direct support professionals safe.

Please donate via arcbutler.org/donate or secure your donation in the attached envelope.



INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT



MAYA SWIMS, SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY



MEET MAYA SWIMS

University & Major/Minor:

Slippery Rock University: Special Education, Transition Programming

Internship Description:

Assisted with AERO Afterschool Transition Program and The Arc's Supportive Employment Program

"I had an awesome experience interning at The Arc of Butler County.

All the employees were very welcoming and taught me valuable information that will help me in the Special Education field", Maya said.

"Due to COVID-19, my internship was cut short, however, I learned skills that I can use in my future job and grew as an individual. I will miss interacting with my supervisors, other employees, and individuals with disabilities. They made me feel like a part of their family while I was there."

Future Plans: Maya's long-term goal is to be a Transition Coordinator. She would also like to further her education and get a Masters in Applied Behavior Analysis.

"Maya was a wonderful intern to work with. She worked well with the individuals we serve and was always willing to help where it was needed most. In the short time we had, we worked with the students from the AERO After School Transition Program and Maya was able to build a great rapport and relationship with each one of them. She will do great things in her future endeavors and I wish her the best of luck!"

-Marissa Wagner, Internship Supervisor

THANK YOU DIRECT SUPPORT PROFFESIONALS



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In recognition of all Direct Support Professionals during the COVID-19 Health Crisis, thank you for all your efforts and dedication to The Arc of Butler County's mission and to the individuals we serve.

We would not be able to do great work without you.
Thank you!

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SOCIAL DISTANCING 101



HELP MAKE DINNER	TAKE A NAP	PLAY CARDS	WATCH A VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP	CLEAN YOUR ROOM
YOGA	FACETIME OR VIDEO CALL	PLAY CHARADES	BAKE COOKIES	MAKE A GRATITUDE LIST
WEAR A MASK	FINISH A PUZZLE	FREE SPACE	BAKE BREAD	PLANT A GARDEN
TAKE A WALK	ONLINE SHOPPING	BINGE WATCH A TV SHOW	WORK FROM HOME	WASH YOUR HANDS
ADOPT A PET	GO ON A HIKE	BOUGHT TOILET PAPER	ORDER A PIZZA	WATCH A MOVIE

HEALTH AND SAFETY: A PRIORITY

With Governor Wolfe passing Butler County into the green phase, The Arc of Butler County is happy to announce the gradual re-opening of Day Programs. A series of videos can be found on the website www.arcbutler.org explaining the recommendations that we will be following as we continue to face the uncertainty of the COVID-19 outbreak. These guidelines and recommendations will help ensure the health and safety of staff and individuals we serve is a priority.

The Arc of Butler County is using an abundance of caution to provide a safe environment for everyone. Before reopening, we there was an initial sanitation to prepare for your return. All surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected with routine sanitation procedures daily thereafter. There will also be frequent touchpoint sanitization throughout the day, along with regular cleaning of restrooms, cafeteria, and work areas.

We will have a hand sanitizing station at each door and throughout the facility, along with encouragement of proper hand washing.

Partitions will be placed between workstations, with work materials, equipment, and tools having a routine sanitation practice in place each day. Signage and markings will be on the walls and floors to remind everyone of safety precautions and to promote social distancing. Temperatures will also be taken upon arrival and once more at lunchtime. Everyone will be asked to wear a mask when they return to their day program.



Desensitization and Wearing a Mask

As a result of COVID-19, health care providers have recommended people wear masks to prevent the spread of the disease. Wearing masks can be uncomfortable, and for individuals who have sensory sensitivities, it can be even harder.

Here are some tips and tricks to work with loved ones on getting comfortable wearing a mask!

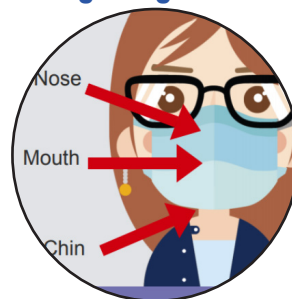


Give Choices



Reinforce

Talk About It



Desensitize



Practice Makes Perfect



FRONT OF PARC PRODUCTIONS, 100 N. WASHINGTON STREET

NEW ACCESSIBLE RAMP COMING SOON!

A huge project has started at PARC Productions on North Washington Street the beginning of July.

In 2019, The Arc of Butler County received a grant from Edith L. Trees Charitable trust for the construction of a new accessible entrance ramp.

The Vocational Facility had one ramp entrance on the side of the building, but due to more programming and traffic in the building, a second ramp in the front of the building was proposed. Having a second accessible entrance will increase the safety of the building for the individuals we serve. Keep an eye out for pictures of the completed project!

THANK YOU
EDITH L. TREES
CHARITABLE TRUST

ATF BACK IN SESSION

Due to health concerns, ATF and The Arc of Butler County's other Day Programs have been shut down since mid - March. With Butler County being released into the Green Phase and taking large safety precautions at the PARC Productions, we are happily bringing back individuals to participate in the Adult Training Facility Program.

Five individuals came back to the program the end of June and we hope to bring five or six more individuals back by the end of July. Individuals have been enjoying painting and/or coloring, building puzzles, and playing games while listening to music and music videos. We will hopefully start with cooking and baking activities with more safety precautions in place.

Music Time with Slippery Rock University Music Therapy Department will begin again on Friday's starting August 21st, with virtual sessions in place until further notice.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Art Work and Paintings found around PARC Productions were made by individuals in the ATF Program.

UPCOMING EVENTS



8TH ANNUAL MUM SALE

All proceeds to benefit the Thursday night party program

Mums will be available for pick up:

WHEN: Last week of August, 2020

WHERE: PARC Productions
(workshop facility)
100 N. Washington St.
Butler PA 16001

COST: **\$6.00 each**



**GO TO WWW.ARCBUTLER.ORG TO
PLACE YOUR ORDER TODAY FOR A VARIETY
OF COLORFUL MUMS**

Please submit order by August 14, 2020



Attention!
**THURSDAY
NIGHT PARTYS
CANCELLED**
until further notice

Out of an abundance of caution to safeguard the health of our staff and community members, The Arc of Butler County's Thursday Night Party's are cancelled until further notice.
We apologize for any inconvenience.



2020
FALL CRAFT
SHOW
CANCELLED

This quarterly newsletter is produced by The Arc of Butler County. It highlights the many ways our dedicated staff, volunteers, and generous donors come together to support and empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live, work, and participate in their communities.



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United Way
of Southwestern Pennsylvania

The Arc of Butler County is affiliated with the United Way of Southwestern PA, The Arc of the United States, and The Arc of Pennsylvania.

Achieve With Us.
For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

HELP US ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

The Arc of Butler County is committed to reducing the incidence and limiting the consequence of intellectual and developmental disabilities through:

Advocacy • Education • Support • Service Provision

The Arc of Butler County is committed to securing for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to choose and realize their goals of where and how they learn, live, work, and play. The Arc of Butler County will work toward securing, consistent with the individual's need, maximum personal independence, choices, inclusion, equal rights, and adequate supports, which are all necessary to guarantee a real quality of life to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Arc of Butler County will provide leadership in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities and develop the necessary human and financial resources to attain its goal.

STAY INFORMED • STAY CONNECTED



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We can be found at
www.arcbutler.org
Update your online bookmarks with this address!



Like Us on Facebook.
Stay up-to-date with our latest news, view photos, and hear about upcoming events. You can also share your stories and give us feedback.



Tell Us What You Think.
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