



**Sightless
Children
Club**

Sightless Children Club News

May 2021

Important Reminders:

This Month's highlights:

- Club Meeting Monday, May 17th, Vandalia Community Center. Check out the map on page 5 for details.

- Remember to share amazon smile with your friends and family



- Please bring your bottle tops for charity recycle

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It's time to "wrap up" the SCC year, so we hope you will join us at this month's meeting to celebrate the things we've accomplished and to begin looking forward to a fresh start in September.

In so many ways, it is time to leave the past behind us, while learning from the challenges it has brought. We all long to leave the COVID era behind, knowing that in some ways it has changed us forever. Those of you who have been part of SCC for a long while are also probably looking forward to leaving some difficult days behind, so that we can focus on our mission of serving blind and visually impaired children in the Miami Valley. Please, join us next Monday to celebrate and focus on a bright new future for SCC!



As we look back on the past year, one of the most exciting SCC developments is the finalization of sale of the building we no longer need on Helke Rd. Returning the proceeds to the SCC investment account means that we can serve more children and young adults, while building for future generations. A huge debt of gratitude goes out to our president, Elaine Edwards, who has handled dozens of calls and mountains of paperwork over the past two years, as well as to the other board members and trustees who invested many hours of sweat equity into this project. Well done, team!



Camps for Kids with Special Needs

Ah, summer camp. The mosquitoes, the swim races, the friendships, the bug juice, the post-cards home. What child wouldn't benefit from the fun and structured freedom camps provide? Kids with special needs are no exception. But the idea can seem challenging to parents and kids alike -how can you be sure that your child will get the attention he or she needs? Will your child be able to participate fully? The good news is that there are many camp choices for kids with special needs. From highly specialized camps to regular camps that accommodate kids with special needs, options abound.

Different Types of Camps

When it comes to camps, kids with special needs have as many choices as other kids. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires all camps to make reasonable accommodations so that kids with special needs can attend. So, camps that previously couldn't host kids with special needs might now be on your list of possibilities. Inclusionary (or mainstream) camps do just what their name implies: they include kids with special needs in their groups of children with regular needs. These camps may have started out serving only a general population of kids, but they've gradually changed as the needs of the families they serve have changed. Some camps are designed just for kids with special needs. There are nonprofit and for-profit camps, religious camps, camps run by national organizations, private camps, day camps, camps that run weekend sessions, and sleepover camps that accept kids for the entire summer.

Benefits of Camp

The benefits of camp for kids with special needs are often the same as for any child: increased confidence & independence, activity and exercise, the opportunity to interact with other kids, develop friendships, and build relationships, positive role modeling by adults, and a chance for parents to have a much-needed break

Independence is an important camp benefit. For example, an overnight mainstream camp can give special-needs kids the

chance to be without parents, doctors, or physical therapists for a week. They'll do more things for themselves and learn how to ask friends to help, which can boost problem-solving and communication skills. Also, camp provides the physical benefits of increased activity. Many kids with disabilities or chronic illnesses are sedentary and don't get to participate in the sports or recreational activities that their peers do. They therefore miss out on the social and health benefits that exercise brings.

Starting Your Camp Search

To find a camp, make lists of the basics you're looking for: a list of goals, a list of caretaking priorities, and a list of other considerations (such as cost) then consider which type of camp might best suit your child:

- inclusionary (or mainstream) camps
- camps for kids with a specific special need
- camps for kids with many different kinds of special needs

Consider whether your child has ever been away from home, for the weekend or even longer, and what experiences might help prepare him or her for camp. This will help you to decide not only the type of camp, but whether your child is ready for a day camp or a sleepover (residential) camp.

Involving kids in the camp search will help to ensure that they get the most out of the camp selected.

So, ask your child:

- What do you want to get out of summer camp?
- Would you be more comfortable going to a camp with kids who do or don't have special needs?

If it turns out that the idea of camp is a bit overwhelming for both you and your child, you might want to try starting small, like weekend sessions at a special-needs camp.

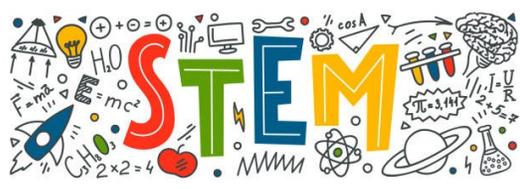
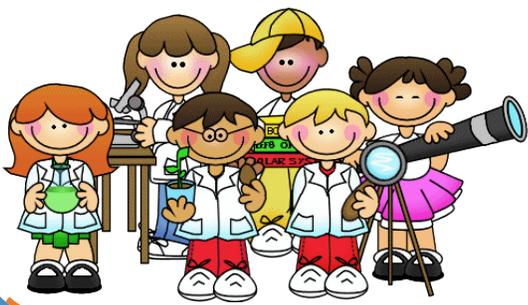
Doing Your Research

Whatever type of camp you're leaning toward, it's important to do your research. Many places offer information —the American Camping Association (ACA), for example, has an online listing of special-needs camps broken down by the types of camps, cost, length of stay, state/region, and campers' ages. The site is also loaded with general and age-appropriate advice for parents of would-be campers. (Con't on pg. 3)



You also can call local chapters of major disability organizations about camps in your area. Many organizations publish lists of camps and can connect you with camp directors and former campers. Of course, part of your research will involve figuring out what you can afford. The cost of camps varies widely, but you can help fund your child's camp experience by applying for scholarships. You can contact charitable organizations and fraternal organizations (such as the Lions, Kiwanis, and Rotary Clubs, all of which sponsor special-needs camps). And depending on your child's specific special need, he or she may be eligible for financial aid from your state

Probably the only way to get a true feel for the camp is for you and your child to visit it together. This is especially important if your child is going to a regular (inclusionary or mainstream) camp where they haven't hosted many children with special needs before. This gives you a chance to point out changes they might need to make and see how the camp's staff responds to your requests. If you can't visit a camp, interview the director and some staff members to get a feel for the place. Ask them to describe the physical layout and the kinds of activities your child will do. Also ask to speak with other families whose kids have attended to see what their experiences were like. In fact, word of mouth is one of the best ways to find out what you need to know about each camp. As you're trying to figure out which camp is best, just remember that whatever the special need, there's likely a camp out there to suit your child. With some research and understanding between you, your child, and the camp director, your camper-to-be can have an unforgettable summer. For more info: <https://www.sst10.org/docs/district/parents%20&%20families/cmpdir21.pdf?id=2562>



Calling All High School Students!

This summer, we want to give you some tools to grow your spatial thinking skills while expanding your knowledge of STEM—and connect you with a group of other blind youth your age.

Did you know that high spatial thinking skills are correlated with success in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) in school and careers? Spatial thinking skills are also critical to being a successful traveler. The stronger your spatial thinking skills are, the easier it is to build a mental map and perform all sorts of other tasks that are important to get you where you want to go in the environment or in life!

From July 5 through July 30, the NFB EQ Program is going virtual. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 3:00-6:00 p.m. eastern time, we'll be facilitating classes that focus on building spatial thinking skills. Activities will include origami, creative and technical drawing, and building structures out of a variety of materials!

We will send you everything you need to engage in the classes and, by the end of NFB EQ, you'll have more physical tools in your toolbox (and more thinking tools in your brain) that you can apply now and in the future. Learn more and apply today at nfb.org/eq.

Congratulations
CLASS OF
2021

Aleea Chaffin

is graduating from high school in June!

Her family invites you to
join them as they celebrate
her success on:

Saturday, May 16, 2021

from 2-5 pm at

Crossview Christian Church

4237 East Social Row Rd., Waynesville, Ohio



Nathan James

Will receive a Bachelor's
degree in

Healthcare Informatics

on Saturday, May 14th

In Lynchburg, Virginia

City of Vandalia Community Room

245 James E. Bohanan Memorial Drive

Vandalia, Ohio

