

# CP of New Jersey's EDUCATING FOR SUCCESS

February 2005

SUCCESS STORIES  
and SOLUTIONS for EDUCATING  
STUDENTS with DISABILITIES

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## Thinking 'Outside the Classroom' for ESY programs

For many kids, the first day back from the winter break is the first day they start dreaming about the summer break. The kids who may not be so eager to think about their summer plans are those with Extended School Year (ESY) programs written into their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Traditionally, ESY programs are an extension of what's been happening in the classroom during the regular year. Sometimes though, the location is different or the teacher and staff change. For the kids involved, it's still school.

CP of New Jersey offers a community-based Extended School Year program that addresses functional academics, physical fitness, social skills, activities of daily living and vocational issues. The program, Choices: A Creative Approach to Extended School Year Services, tailors programs to fit the specific needs of students and includes activities beyond a classroom setting - including things children typically enjoy during summer months.

"CP of New Jersey developed its Choices program because we believe students with disabilities deserve to spend summers in a fun and productive environment," said Jackie Edwards, Executive Director.

"We work with districts and parents to create individualized ESY programs that address the student's needs as well as the student's interests.

"It's important to consider the student's IEP goals, but it's also important to consider what the child would like to be doing during the summer months. There's no reason why a child's IEP can't include an aide to attend summer camp or assist with swimming lessons, or why academics can't be addressed through functional games, fun activities and field trips. We like to encourage people to think 'outside the classroom,' when it comes to ESY programs," said Edwards.

One of CP of New Jersey's Integration Specialists is currently preparing an ESY program for an older student who needs to work on self-awareness. This summer, the student will focus on personal hygiene issues in the very real world setting of his own bathroom. The program will also include practicing appropriate social behaviors at the local mall.

One of the younger students we will be working with this summer has plans to attend music lessons and go horseback riding. Academics will be addressed by a tutor in the home.

Putting together an ESY program geared for just one student isn't as extreme as it sounds. If you look at what the local community or municipality will be offering or take advantage of programs offered by sports leagues and scouting organizations - chances are you'll find lots of options, if your district is willing to be flexible.

For more information about Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey's Choices program or for information about designing a more creative ESY program, contact Ms. Edwards at 888-322-1918 ext. 526 or via email at [jedwards@cpofnj.org](mailto:jedwards@cpofnj.org).

### When Is an Extended School Year program appropriate?

There's no single thing a child study team can look at to determine whether or not an ESY would be appropriate for a student. Generally, the following are factors that are considered:

**Regression/Recoupment:** looking at the amount of regression a student experiences as a result of interrupted lessons and the amount of time it takes to regain the prior level of skill

**Nature and Severity of the Disability**

**Ability of Parents:** whether or not the parents can provide educational structure in the home setting

**Emerging Skills/Breakthrough Opportunities:** for example is the student on the verge of learning to read and would the summer break result in a setback?

**Availability of Alternative Resources**

**Rate of Progress**

**Ability of the Student to Interact with Non-Disabled Peers**

**Interfering Behavior:** does the child's behavior interfere with his or her ability to benefit from special education?

**Continuous Need:** are there areas of the student's curriculum which need continuous attention?

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# Solutions with Technology

Case Studies & Practical Applications  
of Assistive Technology in the Classroom



## Interpreting and Implementing IEPs

by Mike Marotta

As we support students who struggle meeting standards (NCLB, CCCS), often times a single Assistive Technology Evaluation is not enough to fully meet their needs. Many times we recommend technology that is expensive and quite complicated - not the kind of tool you'd want dropped into your classroom without any support to go along with it.

Ongoing Technology Support is a unique solution being implemented by some districts that addresses this situation. Consultants work with the teams on a weekly or monthly basis to ensure that the technology solution is the most appropriate for the student. In addition to providing trials on technology tools, the consultant can also conduct trainings for the student and the support team.

A great example of a student benefiting from ongoing support is Haley, a 10-year-old with multiple disabilities. Haley has a variety of technology tools provided to her, by the district, in order to meet her educational needs. Her team changed at the beginning of the school year and the new team members were unfamiliar with her technology. We provided weekly on-going support to Haley and her team.

This support varied from week to week, from group training one week to assisting with developing modified curriculum the next. As the team became more comfortable with the features of the technology tools and Haley's abilities, we were able to reduce the visits accordingly.

This level of technology integration may not be possible through a single Assistive Technology Evaluation. The ability to meet continually and customize the service to meet specific needs created a successful technology implementation.

Another trend school districts are exploring in the quest to meet student's needs is developing a team of their own staff members who can deliver assistive technology services. Our consultants can customize hands-on workshops and technical assistance to ensure that these new assistive technology specialists will feel confident in their posi-

tion and have the knowledge base to make informed, appropriate technology decisions for students.

For more information on ongoing technology support or training and technical assistance, contact Fred Tchang, Director of Assistive Technology Services at 888-322-1918 ext. 588 or via email at [ftchang@cpofnj.org](mailto:ftchang@cpofnj.org)

*Mike is a RESNA Certified Assistive Technology Practitioner and a Rehabilitation Technologist for Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey. Mike provides Assistive Technology assessments and trainings for consumers, teachers, and service providers throughout the state.*

### What Educators Need to Know About Special Education Students and Substance Abuse

Are you working with a student you think may be abusing alcohol or drugs but are unsure how to confront him or her about the issue? Do the special education personnel in your school district have opportunities to interface with the Substance Awareness Coordinator (SAC)? Are you aware of the risk factors for substance abuse among the classified special education student?

Whether a student is abusing alcohol, using illicit drugs or misusing prescription medication, teachers, child study team members, administrators and counselors need to be able to recognize the signs of substance abuse and what they can do to help the student.

Debbie Maslansky, MS, CPS, Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey's Director of Substance Abuse Prevention, offers free Roads2Recovery presentations to help educators identify, understand and address substance abuse issues in special education students.

To schedule a free workshop contact Debbie Maslansky at 1-888-322-1918 x 518 or email her at [dmaslansky@cpofnj.org](mailto:dmaslansky@cpofnj.org).

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