



Tools that Produce Big Rewards for Youth on the Autism Spectrum

Most students look forward to scrambling up Spaulding's climbing wall in the woods or paddle-boarding on a nearby lake. For Brent,* a student at Spaulding who is on the Autism spectrum, just anticipating such excursions was debilitating when he enrolled four years ago.



He displayed severe anxiety and used extreme aggression as an avoidance technique. All the members of his support team at Spaulding including academic, residential, behavioral, nursing staff and specialists collaborated to plan support mechanisms to help him overcome his anxieties and to enable him to participate in activities that other students were enjoying.

A visual tool that has been used very successfully in the ECHO (Experiential Challenges Outdoors) program is video modeling which involves video recording another student engaging in the desired behavior and then showing it to Brent repetitively. This technique has helped Brent enjoy many activities including scrambling up the climbing wall, swimming, kayaking and paddle-boarding.

Another visual tool that has been a success is the use of "social stories." For example, one story prepares him to

ride in the Spaulding van to go on an outing and another prepares him to make a purchase at a store.

The stories outline the steps, rules and expectations that accompany the experiences and are illustrated with photos to give visual cues. The stories are reviewed many times prior to participating in an experience until Brent knows exactly what to expect. Social stories greatly reduce Brent's anxiety - he is now able to ride in the van, walk through a grocery store, select an item and take it through the checkout.

Brent's campus-wide support team speaks enthusiastically and proudly about the progress that he has made. Brent's comfort level is increasing gradually in all aspects of his life allowing him to participate in adventures that other youth take for granted.

*Pseudonym used to protect the privacy of the individual.

SPAULDING BY THE NUMBERS | IN FISCAL YEAR 2014

Meals served to staff and students: **111,436**

Gallons of gas used in vehicles: **17,000**

Employees: **215**

Children served: **140**

OUR MISSION:

To leverage our professional expertise to help young people with autism or other developmental and/or behavioral challenges learn the academic and life skills needed to be successful in their homes, schools and communities.

spauldingyouthcenter.org



Every child deserves a childhood



HATS OFF TO JULIE GREEN

Julie Green is a busy single mother of one and full time admissions coordinator at Spaulding since 2012. She currently holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education with a concentration in Sociology and Social Work and is working on an 18 month program that will give her a Master's of Science Degree in Mental Health Counseling. As well as admissions at Spaulding, Julie is a case manager for one of our families that receives community support.

Julie loves being a mom and spends as much time as possible with her four year old son Kameron, hiking, flying kites, reading, visiting playgrounds and doing arts & crafts projects.

Kam is the center of her universe. She says he is Mr. Personality and is always up for an adventure, whether it is making forts in the living room or going for a drive with no destination in mind.

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Spaulding Youth Center

Spaulding receives \$10,000 from Rite Aid

In September, Rite Aid selected Spaulding Youth Center Foundation to receive a grant of \$10,000 after joining the KidCents Program. As a Rite Aid customer with a Wellness Account **YOU CAN HELP** support the children and youth at Spaulding by selecting Spaulding as your charity of choice to receive change from your purchases which are rounded up to the nearest dollar. Each \$500 raised will be matched 100% by Rite Aid.

Protecting Spaulding's Resources and Planning for the Future

Read CEO/President Jim Clements' post about Spaulding's plans to spend \$1.3 million in improvements and capital projects over the next 18 months, as well as developing a master campus plan for the future.

www.spauldingyouthcenter.org/from-the-hill



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spauldingyouthcenter.org/give or contact Gail Mayhew, Director of Development at 603-286-7500 or gmayhew@spauldingyouthcenter.org