



CST CHATTER BOX

MEET OUR PRECIOUS GEMS!

Precious Gems is a special needs cheer team that was created in June of 2014 at a gym in Randolph called Gems Cheer Stars. The team consists of local boys and girls at the elementary through high-school level.

This heart warming and very enthusiastic group of cheerleaders brighten each day that the certified coaches and cheer volunteers spend with them. We ALL have had so much to gain from this experience. During practices, Precious Gems have

been able to improve their exercise, motor skills, positive self image, confidence and courage while also gaining many new friendships. This talented group of children have learned how to follow a choreographed routine that includes dance, stunts, and tumbling.

Precious Gems compete at several local competitions and are rewarded for all of their hard work with medals, trophies, and/or banners. They have placed first at several competitions and even

took home Grand Champs in their division for their very first competition.

If you would like to know more about Precious Gems, please contact Laura Hoffman at laura1016@verizon.net

(Speech/Language Therapist/Wharton) or Coach Carlie at info@gemscheerstars.com.

There will be an Open House coming in June with regard to next year's program and sign-ups. This has been one of the best experiences I have ever been involved with and would love to have more children join our team! - Laura Hoffman

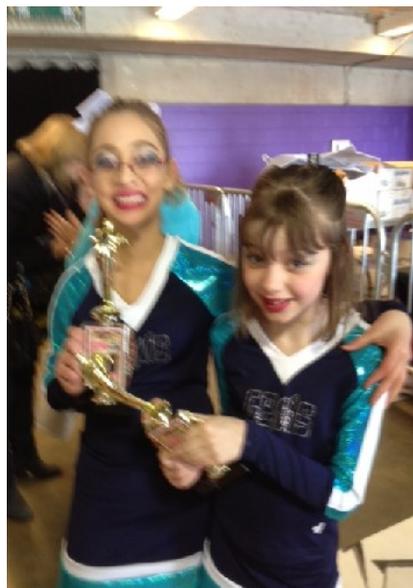
Spring 2015

Volume 2, Issue 2

Mar-April 2015

Special points of interest:

- ☉ Learn about a special needs cheer team
- ☉ Talk the Special Ed. talk
- ☉ Participate in some local events for students with mental health and/or Autism needs
- ☉ Learn how to make behavior charts!



Inside this issue:

Special Education Placements	2
Morris-Sussex Resource Network	2
Behavior Charts Made Easy	3
Sample Behavior Chart	3
Meet Armi Clancy	4

Learn About Special Education Placements

When making placement decisions, the “**Least Restrictive Environment**” must be considered. In other words, students should be given the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. First, placement in the General Education classroom with accommodations is considered. Based on the individual student needs, the following special education placements (all of which provide flexibility, offering individual and small group instruction options) is then considered:

In Class Resource

Pupils receive instruction from both a general education teacher and a spe-



cial education teacher. It is considered a general education setting.

Pullout Replacement

Instruction is provided in a separate room with only special education students. Curriculum can be modified by the special education teacher.

Self Contained

Instruction is provided by a special education teacher in a separate room for special education students with disabilities that cannot be addressed

in general education programs.

*Preschool Disabilities class provides opportunities for students ages 3-5 to develop readiness skills in preparation for Kindergarten.

*Multiple Disabilities (MD) class provides academic, functional, social and language programs based on individual needs with modifications to curriculum. It can utilize the Applied Behavior Analysis approach to increase independent functioning.

*Autism class provides individualized programs to address skills in language, socialization, academics, functional life skills, and vocational skills. Programming is based on the principles of the Applied Behavior Analysis with the goal to increase independence.

*Learning and/or Language Disability (LLD) class provides academic and social support in the core academic subjects. The curriculum is modified.

More Resources At Your Fingertips!

Check out these upcoming events around Morris and Sussex County!

- **NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Support Group in Spanish:** Wednesday, April 15, 6:30-8:00 PM at 51 W. Blackwell St., Dover. In this support group, you will find emotional support, information, educational programs, and community resources. Contact Awilda Belardo at 973-252-9424

- **NAMI Basics:** Wednesday, April 22-Wednesday, May 27; 6:30-9 PM; Family Partners 67 Sprint St., Newton, NJ. This course will include current information about mental health issues and brain disorders, treatment strategies, working with the school system, crisis management planning, finding supports in the community, etc. Classes are free but registration is required. Contact Jeri at 973-214-0632.



- **Parent Networking & Junior Youth Partnership:** Wednesday, April 22, 6:30-7:30 PM. For Parents: Support Group. For Youth: In honor of Earth Day, Family Partners will be having the Junior Youth Partnership paint flower pots then bring home a life plant they will be able to help water and watch grow. To register call 973-940-3194. Family Partners of Morris and Sussex Counties, 10 Stillwater Rd. Blirstown, NJ.

- **2015 Autism Awareness Night at the Please Touch Museum.**

Looking for a great activity to do during Autism Awareness Month? The Please Touch Museum is opening its doors to Variety’s children and their families for a great Variety at Play

event! Come out to the Please Touch Museum on Saturday, April 18 from 6-9 PM for a night of hands-on and sensory –filled excitement as families explore the museum’s wonderful exhibits!

Where: Please Touch Museum, 4231 Avenue of the Republic, Philadelphia, PA 19131

Cost: \$10

Sign up at: <https://support.varietyphila.org/>



BEHAVIOR CHARTS MADE EASY!

A behavior chart is for tracking desirable behaviors that are then rewarded when achieved. You can use stickers or tallies when the child achieves one of the behaviors.

The basics of making a behavior chart:

- *Look at the chart every day
- *Review the progress with your child
- *Reward positive behavior
- *Don't dwell on the fact that your child may not get a sticker for the day
- *Only give them a sticker/tally when they achieve one of the goals
- *Make the chart exciting for the child and have fun
- *Be consistent
- *Remember, rewards are set up before the chart starts. They are not a bribe!

How to make your behavior chart successful:

- a. Set clear expectations
- b. Concentrate more on positive behaviors
- c. Immediate reaction
- d. A smaller amount of consequences and more incentives

The difference between promoting positive behavior versus negative behavior:

*Positive behavior: motivates the child to

increase their behavior which will allow them to engage in the positive behavior. Once the desired behavior is revealed you can now present them with a reward.

This reward is seen as motivating them to continue the behavior into the future.

*Promoting positive behavior helps promote: "independence", "life skills", "confidence", and a joint respect between you and your child instead of causing a power struggle.

*Example: limit setting, play and let them lead, focus on the positives

*Name a positive behavior that they did today.

*Negative Behavior: You are taking something away to increase a response.

You do not want to always focus on the negative behaviors.

Setting Goals:

- *Focus on 2-3 goals
- *More than 3 goals can cause stress and can be difficult for the child to achieve
- *Be consistent with the praise and rewards or else they want work
- *It takes time to see results.
- *Don't give up!
- *Examples of goals you can use: keep hands to yourself, follow household/classroom rules, share, no hitting or yelling, wait quietly for teacher or parent (5 seconds), uses emotion plate, use sensory box appropriately, and seek positive at-

tention (self-control, talking positively to teachers/peers, uses inside voice, and uses appropriate language).

*Carry the chart over at school and home

Rewards

- *Stickers
- *Extra time with mom or dad or another special family member
- *Go to the dollar store
- *Bake together
- *Bed time can be increased by 10-15 minutes
- *A special snack
- *Go to the library
- *Go to the park
- *Special toy
- *Create a treasure box where they can pick a toy
- *Create your own playing cards

Strategies for positive reinforcement

- *Remain calm and use a calm voice
- *Be consistent
- *Be clear on what your expectations are
- *Set an example
- *Avoid never and always
- *Use positive and encouraging words: "You must feel proud of yourself for..." "You have really learned how to..." "You have worked so hard..." "Give me an extra high five for..."

Example of a Behavior Chart

(Child's Name) Positive Behavior										
Goals	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Keeps his hands to himself										
Follow classroom rules										
Shares										

Shared Services Child Study Team

Wharton Borough Schools
973-361-3010

Mine Hill Township School (CAS)
973-366-0590

Rockaway Borough Schools
973-625-8605



The Shared Services Child Study Team has made it a goal to increase communication and Special Education knowledge with parents as well as teachers and administration within the three school districts. As part of this goal, you will now be receiving newsletters from the team three times a year filled with information on special education practices/law, community resources, special needs tips, etc. We hope you find this helpful!

Leslie Mozulay, LDTC

Stephanie Dzikowski, LDTC

Stacy McCoy, School Psychologist

Alexa Mignone, School Psychologist

Armi Clancy, School Social Worker

Get to Know Your CST

My name is Mrs. Armi Clancy. I am the school social worker and part of the shared services team under Morris Hills Regional District. My office is located in the Wharton Borough School District, but I also service students in Rockaway Borough, and Mine Hill.

I have a master's degree in Social Work from Columbia University, and my concentration is in School Based Services. I am a licensed social worker in the state of New Jersey.

Prior to working in these districts, I worked for two years at Mendham Borough and for three years at two different charter schools in



Armi Clancy, School Social Worker

Harlem, NYC. I have enjoyed working with children from various socio-economic, family, and cultural backgrounds.

As for my life outside of work, I am busy with my husband and three kids, ages 6, 3, and 10 months! Having grown up in the Wharton and Randolph area, I was happy when my family and I settled in the area. We enjoy spending time as a family and serving in our church!
