



The Hamaspik Gazette

News of NYSHA
Member Agencies
and General Health

JULY '24 • ISSUE NO. 223



GAZETTE SURVEY

The GAZETTE asks YOU:

HAVE YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER EVER GOTTEN FOOD POISONING?

A: YES; B: NO

Respond to: survey@nyssha.org • 845-655-0667



HEALTH STAT

FOOD-POISONING FIGURES

ANNUAL U.S. CASES	48 million (est.)
PERCENT CAUSED BY SALMONELLA	40
AVERAGE RECOVERY TIME	12 to 48 hours

Sources: CDC, World Health Organization (WHO), Mount Sinai Hospital



HEALTH TIP

FOR FOOD-POISONING PREVENTION, DO THE FOUR-STEP

The FDA keeps it simple: Clean, separate, cook, and chill. Soap hands and work surfaces before and after making food; separate raw from ready-to-eat items; cook foods hot enough to kill bacteria; and keep your fridge at 40°F or less.

INSIDE

HEALTH

03 (Not) seeing the light: South Korean study associates bright city night lighting with some vision problems

04 Walk this way: Walking through green areas better for brain than plain street scenes, finds study

HAMASPIK

08 Getting back to the green: Men's Day Hab Program at Hamaspik Rockland knows simpler is better

09 Taking a bigger "steak" in the greater community: NYSHA opening restaurant at Resort

AUTISM

10 Blood pressure drug lowers anxiety in young people who have autism, finds University of Missouri study

HOSPITAL NEWS

18 A healthy career: Hospital-based healthcare found by survey to be the eighth-best workplace in IT

SENIOR HEALTH

19 Most-physically-active seniors have least dementia, finds study

HAMASPIK NEWS

TO EMBRACE DISABILITY, A REAL SONG AND DANCE

MUSIC PUMPING, YITZCHOK TAKES TO THE MIC AND PROGRAM-MATES TAKE TO THE FLOOR WITH MAINSTREAM PEERS AS MONSEY'S DARKEI UVOS BOYS SCHOOL WARMLY WELCOMES HAMASPIK ROCKLAND'S MEN'S DAY HAB



AFTER FIRST MEETING AND GREETING THE INDIVIDUALS PERSONALLY, THE SCHOOL BOYS OF DARKEI UVOS PUT ON A PLAY—AFTER WHICH THE YOUNG MEN OF HAMASPIK ROCKLAND'S DAY HAB PROGRAM JOINED THEM ON STAGE FOR A VICTORY DANCE OF SORTS

SEE PAGE E6 >>

TRI-COUNTY CARE NEWS

It's a "SNAP": Care Manager Gets Client Benefits Restored

SEE PAGE E3 >>

HAMASPIK NEWS

Personal Choice Baked Right into the Program: Hamaspik Orange Men's Day Hab Makes Cookie Making Individualized

SEE PAGE E12 >>

HEALTH NEWS

Rolling Public-Safety Problem: Scooter-Related Injuries Triple Over Four-Year Period, Finds a Review of Hospitalization Data

SEE PAGE E13 >>

Non Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Flex Group

NYSHA Inc.
Published and Copyrighted July 24
1 Hamaspik Way
Monroe, NY 10950

Services Provided by NYSHA MEMBER AGENCIES

OPWDD SERVICES

INDIVIDUALIZED RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE (IRA)

A supervised residence for individuals who need out-of-home placement.

INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT SERVICES (ISS)

Paid housing expenses and support for individuals who can live independently.

HOME FAMILY CARE (HFC)

Places individuals with developmental disabilities into private homes to care and support the individual.

DAY HABILITATION (DH)

A day program for adults with disabilities designed to develop skills, greater independence, community inclusion etc.

Site Based: Day Habilitation Service delivered in an OPWDD certified facility.

Without Walls: Day Habilitation Service delivered in a community-based setting.

COMMUNITY HABILITATION (CH)

Working one-on-one with individuals in their home or in the community to achieve valued outcomes by helping them develop daily living skills and achieve long-term goals.

COMMUNITY PRE VOCATIONAL

Working with individual to prepare them for paid community employment- Teaching individuals job skills and other related social skills to enhance their ability to obtain employment in the future.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SEMP)

Working with individual to support and provide them with necessary coaching so they can successfully engage in paid competitive employment.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES (FSS)

Support for the individual's family by reimbursing them for certain qualifying items or services, otherwise not available to them.

INTENSIVE BEHAVIORAL SERVICES (IBS)

Short-term interventional services for people with behavioral issues and their family members.

RESPIRE:

Home and Community-based respite services to provide a relief for the individual's caregiver and family.

At-Home: Respite services delivered in the home of the individual.

After School: Respite program provided every day after school hours.

Sundays: Respite program provided every Sunday.

Legal Holidays: Respite program provided on all legal holidays when school is not in session.

Summer Break: Full day respite program during the summer break weeks.

Respite Night Program: Respite services delivered in the evening hours to high-functioning individuals by taking them out in the community and doing recreational and stimulating activities with them.

Weekend Getaways: A weekend retreat for individuals receiving respite services.

SELF-DIRECTION

The Individual or their advocate takes direct responsibility to manage their services and self-direct their budget.

Fiscal Intermediary (FI): Assists individual or their advocate in implementing their Individual Support Agreement and to manage financial accountability and employer responsibilities.

Brokerage: Assisting individuals or their advocate in creating and managing their budget.

ARTICLE 16 CLINIC

Provides medical, diagnostic, and therapeutic services for persons with developmental disabilities. Such as: Physical therapy · occupational therapy · speech therapy · psychology · social work · psychiatry · nutrition

PARENTAL RETREATS

Providing: Getaways and retreats for parents of individuals with disabilities

EMOD, VMOD AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Individuals who are eligible and approved for OPWDD services who reside in non-certified home and community-based settings may qualify for AT, E-Mod, and V-Mod services funded through the OPWDD HCBS Waiver.

Assistive Technology: Any device, item, equipment, product, or system that is used to increase, maintain, or to improve an individual's functional capabilities and/or independence in performing activities of daily living (ADL).

E-Mods: Physical adaptations to an individual's home, like ramps, lifts and grab bars, needed to ensure his or her health, welfare and safety and to maximize independence and reduce need for institutionalization and/or more restrictive, costly living arrangements.

V-Mods: Physical adaptations to the individual's vehicle that are necessary to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the individual or that enable the individual to function with greater independence.

DOH

EARLY INTERVENTION (EI)

Provides a range of services to help young children (ages birth-3) who have a specific delay in their development.

Group Development Model (GDM): Provides Early Intervention services in a group-setting

Therapy: Provides OT, PT, SLP, Vision, Nutrition, Play, Special Education, Family Training etc. to help the child develop appropriately.

Evaluations: Provides full evaluations to assess child's skills and development.

Ongoing Service Coordination (OSC): Provides ongoing support for families of children enrolled in the Early Intervention Program.

NURSING HOME TRANSITION AND DIVERSION (NHTD)

Waiver services to help individuals who need nursing-home level of care safely remain home and avoid nursing home placement.

Service Coordination (SC): Provides coordination to the individual in gaining access to needed waiver and Medicaid State Plan services, as well as other local, state, and federally funded educational, vocational, social, and medical services.

Community Transitional Services (CTS) / Moving Assistance (MA): Provides moving assistance with packing and transporting individual's possessions and furnishings when he/she must be moved from an inadequate or unsafe housing situation to a viable environment.

Environmental Modifications (EMODS): Provides Internal and external physical adaptations to the individual's home, that are necessary to assure the health, welfare and safety of the individual and avoid institutionalization.

Vehicle Modification (VMODS): Modifications to a vehicle that is used to improve the individual's independence and access to services and supports in the community.

Assistive Technology: Provides durable medical equipment and supplies for the individual to increase their level of independence, safety, and functional limitations.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

Waiver services to help individuals who had a traumatic brain injury.

Service Coordination (SC): Provides coordination to the individual in gaining access to needed waiver and Medicaid State Plan services, as well as other local, state, and federally funded educational, vocational, social, and medical services.

Community Transitional Services (CTS) / Moving Assistance (MA): Provides moving assistance with packing and transporting individual's possessions and furnishings when he/she must be moved from an inadequate or unsafe housing situation to a viable environment.

Environmental Modifications (EMODS): Provides Internal and external physical adaptations to the individual's home, that are necessary to assure the health, welfare and safety of the individual and avoid institutionalization

Vehicle Modification (VMODS): Modifications to a vehicle that is used to improve the individual's independence and access to services and supports in the community.

Assistive Technology: Provides durable medical equipment and supplies for the individual to increase their level of independence, safety, and functional limitations.

SOCIAL DAY PROGRAM

A comprehensive structured program providing functionally-impaired adults an array of services in a protective daytime setting. Each individual participant receives services in accordance with an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) based on a personalized assessment.

SENIOR DINING PROGRAM

Serves balanced nutritious meals to older New Yorkers up to five days a week in a variety of settings. Eligible to seniors age 60 and up, as well as to spouses younger than 60 and individuals with disabilities residing in eligible seniors' homes. Made possible by Orange county OFA/ NYS OFA.

HAMASPIK CHOICE

MLTCP:

Providing: A managed long-term care plan (MLTCP) approved by New York State.

HMO/INSURANCE

ABA

Behavior modification services for children with autism.

Social Group: ABA service delivered in a group setting.

One on One: ABA service delivered on a one-on-one basis in the child's home or community.

HAMASPIK HOMECARE

LHCSA

Licensed HomeCare Services Agency.

Home Health and Personal Care Services (HHA/PCA): Our PCA/HHA assist individuals with personal care needs, activities of daily living, and light housekeeping. They are extensively trained, screened and supervised by a RN.

NHTD/TBI Home & Community Support Services (HCSS): Our HCSS Certified Aides assist those enrolled in the NHTD or TBI Medicaid Waiver Programs with oversight and supervision, in addition to personal care services.

Nursing Services (RN): Providing skilled observation and assessment - care planning - paraprofessional supervision - clinical monitoring and coordination - medication management - physician - ordered nursing interventions and skilled treatments.

HHA/PCA Training: Free PCA/HHA training and competency testing offered for those interested in a home care career.

CDPAS/CDPAP: CONSUMER DIRECTED PERSONAL AIDE SERVICES/PROGRAM

As an alternative to traditional homemaker, this program empowers the client to hire, train, and set the schedule of their personal assistants (PA). The PA's may be family members and can even live in the same home.

NYS HCR

ACCESS TO HOME

Providing home modifications for people with physical disability.

RESTORE

Providing emergency repairs for low incomes homeowners over the age of 60.

US AND NYS AGRICULTURE

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

Provides federal reimbursements for the costs of nutritious meals and snacks which are served to eligible children and adults at participating daycare centers, after-school programs, or shelters.

NYSED SERVICES

ACCESS VR

Assist individuals to achieve and maintain employment and to support independent living through training, education, rehabilitation, and career development.

PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT

Employment planning and support services that provide assistance for individuals to obtain, maintain or advance in competitive employment or self-employment.

NYSHA

THE HAMASPIK GAZETTE

Providing: A bilingual monthly newspaper keeping the community up-to-date on all major news in medicine, public health, disability, hospitals, senior care, and general Hamaspiik news.

MAMTAKIM

A summer camp for individuals approved for OPWDD services.

DOE

THE HAMASPIK SCHOOL

Private chartered school for kids age 5 - 10 with developmental disabilities, taking education to heart and teaching them in a way they can learn thru an individualized plan, including ABA, OT, PT, SPL and Multi-sensory hands-on learning.

KINDERVILLE

A summer camp for individuals approved for OPWDD services. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides free meals and snacks to eligible children and teens ages 18 and under when school is not in session.

OMH

SIPUK, ARTICLE 31 CLINIC

Mental Health-licensed behavioral health, Article 31 Clinic, servicing all ages.

OMH/DOH

ADULT HEALTH HOME CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Intensive, comprehensive care management for Adults with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care.

CHILDREN HEALTH HOME CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Intensive, comprehensive care management for children ages 0-21 with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care

ADULT HCBS SERVICES

Behavioral Health Home and Community-Based Services for eligible adults over the age of twenty one.

Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment: Support and treatment to achieve functional improvement and stability, while working to attain the personal goals in a community setting.

Family Support and Training: Family training and support to engage the family in the treatment planning process and provide them with emotional and informational support to enhance their skills to assist in the recovery.

Psychosocial Rehabilitation: Assists with rehabilitating functional deficits and interpersonal or environmental hardships associated with the behavioral health condition.

Empowerment Services-Peer Support: Peer-delivered services designed to promote skills for coping with and managing behavioral health symptoms, while utilizing recovery-oriented principles.

Habilitation: Assist to acquire and improve skills such as: communication, self-care, socialization, mobility, etc. to successfully reside in home and community-based setting.

Intensive Supported Employment: Assists to obtain and keep competitive employment.

Prevocational Services: Prepares for employment, developing strengths and soft skills that contribute to employability.

Transitional Employment: Strengthens the work record and skills toward the goal of achieving assisted or unassisted competitive employment.

Ongoing Supported Employment: Ongoing follow-along support when holding down a job.

CHILDREN HCBS SERVICES

Behavioral Health Home and Community-Based Services for eligible children from birth to twenty one.

Prevocational Services:

Designed to prepare a youth (age 14 or older) to engage in paid work, volunteer work, or career exploration. Prevocational Services are not job-specific, but rather are geared toward facilitating success in any work environment.

Caregiver Family Support and Services: Teaches skills to caregiver/family's that will enhance their ability to care for the child/youth in the home and/or community.

Community Self Advocacy Training and Support: Provides family and caregivers with techniques and information not generally available so that they can better respond to the needs of the Individual related to their disabilities.

Community Habilitation: Provides assistance with learning social skills, daily living and health related duties by working with the individual on goal-oriented tasks.

Supported Employment: Designed to prepare youth with disabilities (age 14 or older) to engage in paid work.

Planned Respite: Provides short-term relief for the individual's family/caregiver while supporting the individual's mental health, substance use and/or health care goals.

Day Habilitation: Provides assistance with learning social and daily living skills in a certified agency setting.

► TRI-COUNTY CARE NEWS

Public Food Benefits Restored in a Snap

Care Manager's Alacrity Puts Tri-County's Stamp of Effectiveness on Food-Stamp Case

Being a Care Manager at any New York State-approved Care Coordination Organization (CCO), such as Tri-County Care, entails a lot of daily work in the social-services ballpark.

Besides helping people with special needs obtain and retain the specialized supports and services needed due to their disabilities, Care Managers tend to a range of life-improving needs—which, in the following example, revolved around Food Stamps, known today as SNAP.

The Care Manager here works out of Tri-County Care's offices in upstate Monroe, New York—from which he tends to a client base of dozens across a wide area. What's more, like so many employees of the agency, he not only has the heart and passion for helping people with special needs, but also has a beloved immediate family member with special needs.

As such, it was only natural that

when a client found himself with a major problem, the Care Manager cared to solve it—and effectively and quickly, too.

He explains to the *Gazette* that his client had been victimized by a recent scam in Brooklyn that hit hundreds benefiting from the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) program—a decades-long initiative still informally known by its original name of Food Stamps.

Beneficiaries of SNAP normally use electronic cards not unlike debit cards to pay for the groceries the program covers. Since its original iteration in 1939, the program has helped millions, especially working fathers and mothers blessed with large families and concurrent large food expenses. As of 2022, over 41 million people in the U.S., or 12.5 percent of the population, were getting SNAP benefits.

But in a recent scam, sophisticated criminals had obtained individual SNAP

recipients' card numbers and even their personal identification numbers (PINs). They then used that data to drain numerous accounts of thousands of dollars.

Thus, the individual receiving supports from Tri-County Care suddenly found himself unable to purchase food items at his local convenience store, what with his SNAP standard-issue Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card suddenly reporting no funds available.

In a telling testament to Tri-County Care's reputation of reliability, the first thing the gentleman did was call his TCC Care Manager.

Having thus been notified, the Care Manager immediately contacted the state's SNAP office, quickly and authoritatively educating himself on how to file the correct paperwork or otherwise see to it that the gentleman's missing funds were restored to his card. This would result in the client ultimately

suffering a temporary setback at most.

More specifically, the Care Manager first ensured that the card had been canceled. Next, he solicited the process to reclaim the missing money—spending over two hours on the phone with the correct state office to secure the correct documents needed to be filled out and sent back by the crime victim.

The Care Manager was informed that it would take up to 50 days to just learn whether or not funds would be replenished—but by the beginning of May, the card had been replenished and the situation rectified.

"The speed was so fast!" he concludes, commenting on how fast the rectification was completed. "I was shocked! I thought it would take months."

But we're talking about Tri-County Care here.

As the Care Manager puts it, "This is what I need to do—whatever issue they have, I try to help." ★

► HEALTH NEWS

Study Suspects Big-City Lights as Link to Higher Rates of Failing Vision

South Korean research finds association between living in high-artificial-light areas and sight loss, macular degeneration

Jeju City, South Korea — The ancients long believed that long-term eye care was symbolized by the gradual rising and setting of the sun—conveying the philosophical life lesson, not to mention practical eye-care tip, that change should be gradual, not sudden.

As such, they believed that the human eye should be subjected to gradual, not sudden, adjustments to environmental levels of light—in other words, that sun-based daytime is the time for light and nighttime is time for darkness.

That concept comes to light (pun intended) in light of new research at Jeju National University College of Medicine in South Korea. There, ophthalmology researchers found that people living in the country's most urbanized and developed places—meaning, where human eyes are regularly bombarded by streetlights, glowing electronic ads and well-lit skyscrapers—had over twice the likelihood of developing age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Even after accounting for other factors like insomnia or depression,



SEEING THE LIGHT: A SOUTH KOREAN STUDY LINKS URBAN OVER-LIGHTING WITH VISION WOES

researchers still found higher rates of the vision-hampering condition among city dwellers than those in less

urban areas.

In AMD, the part of the eye called the *macula* degenerates over time, with

the progressive loss of central-field vision hindering daily life activities like reading or driving. It generally affects people over 60.

According to the researchers, chronic exposure to artificial (not sun-based) light can damage sensitive cells in the retina, which contains the macula.

The research first isolated data on 4,100 South Koreans ages 50 or older who had been diagnosed with AMD. They then cross-referenced their home address with nighttime satellite images of the country, grouped by four levels of human-made light. They found that people living with the highest levels of outdoor artificial light had 2.17 times the odds of developing AMD. ★

Hamaspik Gazette

Published and Copyrighted July '24 by:
 NYSHA, Inc., 1 Hamaspik Way, Monroe, NY 10950
 Distributed free. USPS Presorted Non-profit Mail
 Postmaster: Return service requested
 © All Rights Reserved



EDITOR: Meyer Wertheimer
WRITER: Mendy Hecht
TEL: 845-655-0625
FAX: 845-655-5625
MAIL: Hamaspik Gazette, 58 Rt. 59, Suite 1,
 Monsey, NY 10952

Happening in Health Today

RARE-CANCER DRUG PILL FOUND TO REGENERATE INSULIN PRODUCTION WITHIN TWO DAYS

Melbourne, Australia — Existing cancer pill Tazverik (Tazemostat) can also cause a failing pancreas to resume production of insulin cells, researchers at Australia's Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute have found.

Failure of the pancreas to produce insulin cells is a cause of diabetes.

Tazverik is normally prescribed to treat a rare kind of cancer called *epithelioid sarcoma*. But now, Baker researchers discovered that Tazverik regenerates insulin cells and makes them functional within 48 hours. Tazverik works by inhibiting the function of a gene called EZH2.

Currently available diabetes treatments primarily focus on controlling blood glucose levels but do not address the underlying destruction of insulin-producing cells. The discovery could modify the disease by using a patient's remaining pancreatic cells to produce insulin, thus possibly freeing patients from the constant need for insulin injections.

"ZAPPING" NERVES AND INTENSE REHAB RESTORES STROKE-DISABLED HANDS AND ARMS

Boston, Massachusetts — While some stroke survivors tend to lose hope of recovering lost arm or hand movement, a new trial has now found that a blend of deep nerve stimulation and intense physical rehabilitation might actually restore normal or near-normal function.

The technique was developed at Boston's MGH Institute of Health Professions university. Researchers used a previously-approved FDA device to stimulate participants' two *vagus* nerves, which run from the brain through the neck to the chest and stomach. Half of 74 study participants were implanted with the real device and other with a bogus one, and then given six weeks of intense onsite physical rehab. The bogus recipients

were then implanted with real devices; all followed with one year of at-home exercise.

After that year, those first with the real vagus-nerve devices had up to three times the improvements in hand/arm function compared to those getting them later.

WALKS THROUGH NATURE BENEFIT BRAINS MORE THAN URBAN SCENES, FINDS STUDY

Salt Lake City, Utah — Brain scans of volunteer walkers indicates that those talking walks among trees and other natural scenery enjoy more positive effects on the brain than those talking identical walks around parking lots and buildings.

A study by the University of Utah had 92 volunteers take 40-minute walks through either an arboretum or across the campus lot. All had electroencephalogram (EEG) brain-activity scans done before and after their walks—plus brain-teasing mathematical tests before and after, too.

Researchers found that the nature-walkers' brains showed better memory, decision-making and problem-solving than those of the urban walkers. "Participants that had walked in nature showed an improvement... whereas the urban walkers did not, so then we know it's something unique about the environment," said researchers Amy McDonnell.

EARLY MOUSE STUDY REVERSES AMNESIA CAUSED BY HEAD INJURY

Washington, D.C. — Georgetown University researchers found that mice subjected to minor head injuries suffered amnesia—a symptom occurring in humans, too. But researchers also found *why* the head injuries caused amnesia and were even able to use lasers to reverse it.

Both mouse and human brains use the *memory engram*, or memory neurons, to form memories. In the study, two groups of mice were

subjected to a memory-forming room—with one group then subjected to one week of daily mild head impacts. The head-impact group initially showed unfamiliarity with the room, indicating short-term memory loss.

Researchers had previously learned that head impacts changed how memory-*engram synapses* (nerve cell connections) work, causing memory loss. They now used lasers to reactivate them—with the mice then again showing familiarity with the room.

But with lasers currently unusable on human brains, researchers are seeking non-invasive methods to reset human memory engrams.

GENETIC CAUSE FOUND FOR EXTRA DIGITS ON HANDS, FEET, OTHER CONDITIONS

Leeds, England — It is rare, but it is known for children to be born with extra fingers and toes, with a range of other birth defects. Now, scientists know precisely which mutated gene causes it.

The finding is so new that the condition doesn't yet even have a name.

But research led by the University of Leeds in England has found that a mutation in a gene called MAX causes as extra digits, as well as a range of symptoms relating to ongoing brain growth, including autism. Three children showing those symptoms were all found to have the mutated gene.

The research also found a molecule that could potentially be used to treat some of the neurological symptoms and prevent any worsening of their condition. But more research is needed to test that molecule before it can be used as a treatment.

The research was published recently in the *American Journal of Human Genetics*. ★

RESEARCHERS DISCOVER DEAFNESS-CAUSING GENE



NOW HEAR THIS: A MUTATION IN GENE TMTC4 CAUSES HAIR-CELL DEATH IN THE EARS

San Francisco, California — Researchers at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) found that a mutation in the TMTC4 gene is the cause of the *unfolded protein response* (UPR). That's a mechanism occurring in the inner ear that kills off the *hair cells* that are vital for hearing.

"Millions of American adults lose their hearing due to noise exposure or aging each year, but it's been a mystery what was going wrong," says study co-senior

author Dr. Dylan Chan, director of the Children's Communication Center (CCC) in the UCSF Department of Otolaryngology, in a university release. "We now have solid evidence that TMTC4 is a human deafness gene and that the UPR is a genuine target for preventing deafness."

According to researchers, the unfolded protein response (UPR) is also activated in hair cells when they are exposed to loud noise or chemotherapy drugs like cisplatin. ★

Take Time to Unwind

in the heart of the Catskills

NOW OPENING OUR DOORS TO COUPLE & FAMILY BOOKINGS

From cozy accommodations to world-class amenities, enjoy the perfect blend of privacy, serenity, and convenience for your ultimate summer getaway.



OPENING:
AUG 26 -
SEPT. 30

GRAND OPENING

Fleishig Restaurant
Next door to the Hamaspik Resort

ROCK
BISTRO AND BALLROOM
By Kaufman's Aperion

joy2media.com



SUMMER 2024

AN UNFORGETTABLE ESCAPE

Brand-new Fully Accessible Park ≈ State-of-the-Art Mikvah ≈ Fully Stocked Beis Hamedrash ≈ Spacious Ballrooms
Beautiful Grounds & Garden Patio ≈ Spacious Lobbies & Seating Areas ≈ 24-Hour Tea Room ≈ Indoor & Outdoor Pool, Sauna, Gym Separate Hours



Hamaspik Resort

Book your stay: 845.409.2000 \\hamaspikresort.com \\283 Rock Hill Dr. Rock Hill NY, 12775

● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

For Disability Inclusion Education, Monsey Cheder Turns to Hamaspik

Sanzer Boys Elementary School Recruits Hamaspik of Rockland County's Men's Hab Program to Acclimate Students to Community Members with Disabilities

Who would have thought this would have happened even less than one generation ago, never mind one full generation? And two or more generations ago?! It goes without saying that such a community occurrence would have been utterly unheard of.

But today, when Vice Principal Rabbi Yitzchok Fekete of the Darkei Uvos [Fathers' Ways—ed.] Chasidic boys elementary school in Monsey ran a six-week social-justice curriculum for his school, to teach his students all about tolerating, not judging or mocking, and including, those special souls with disabilities in our midst, he brought in Hamaspik.

And that's ultimately how one impressionable and now-positively-impressed-for-a-lifetime Darkei Uvos Eighth Grader found himself holding hands with a man with intellectual disability around three decades his senior, both dancing for true joy.



The event took place on the premises of the Sanzer cheder [boys elementary school—ed.] at 235 N. Pascack Rd. in Monsey. It was part of a six-week curriculum, as mentioned, that aimed to inculcate in its students the *chesed* [social justice—ed.] values of their community, and the many fronts thereof.

As Rabbi Fekete later told the *Gazette*, several different community non-profit entities came down to the school, each conveying to the boys its unique niche of *chesed*. Thus, one week had volunteers with Kupas Ezra, a well-established community fund for financially struggling families, talk about what they do with the boys. A second week had the boys bring in non-perishable foodstuffs—for later stocking of visitor hospitality rooms at local hospitals, a program run in Monsey by a group called Chesed 24/7. That week was highlighted by the arrival at the school of a high-visibility Chesed 24/7 minivan, whose volunteer occupants walked their listeners through everything their organization does.

As for the Hamaspik event at the school, Rabbi Fekete explained that it was intended to “penetrate their minds” with the message that “there are other people not like you,” and that they are to be fully tolerated and accepted nonetheless.

Since the Hamaspik visit, the



INTEGRATION ON THE TABLE: THE SCHOOL'S GUESTS LISTEN AS THE PRINCIPAL PRESENTS



HEAVENLY: THE CROWD WATCHES AS THE STUDENTS PRESENT DIVINE DELIBERATIONS



THE PLAY OF A LIFETIME: CELEBRATING A CLIMACTIC EVENT, PERFORMERS AND CROWD-MEMBERS ALIKE DRIVE HOME THE INTEGRATION MESSAGE, WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

educator testifies, he has seen how his students no longer speak with the same innocent derision of which all children are unintentionally guilty until educated otherwise. “They no longer laugh at such souls,” he states—and neither, he adds while on the subject of social justice, at those who clearly lack sufficient food or clothing.

“It was fun and interesting,” he concludes about the event. “It also gave

them spiritual knowledge.”



The visit itself consisted of a school assembly of sorts taking place in the facility's dining room.

It began with a teacher conveying to students a spiritual take on individuals with special needs: Certain souls require only a limited lifetime mission and are thus born into bodies with

disabilities, empowering them to accomplish just the minimum needed for the completion of their souls—even if that takes a lifetime of decades, and even if that minimum only involves invoking the altruism of others.

Students were seated to one side of the room while in the middle, the Hamaspik visitors sat behind two tables in one long line. Behind them stood a large banner bearing “Hamaspik of Rockland County,” the school's logo, and the program's name. Directly opposite the Hamaspik contingent was a stage of sorts—an elevated wooden platform bearing a cloth-bedecked table on which were supplies for preparing colorful balloons.

The program first had the younger grade-schoolers all make and hand out balloons to the gentlemen, walking directly up to their “dais” to hand those out. Pictures seen by the *Gazette* show the Hamaspik gentlemen excitedly holding in their hands the balloons inflated for them by their hosts, while the students stood about, acclimating themselves to the individuals, all while upbeat music filled the room.

Finally, the school's Eighth Graders put on an inspiring play, depicting through drama the experience of a soul returning to Heaven to take stock of its human life on Earth.

With that solemn message conveyed, it was time then for some fun!

The tables and other play props were hastily cleared away and boisterous, electrifying music suddenly filled the air. With the rest of the cheder looking on from their dining-room places, the Hamaspik guests and the Eighth Grade performers took to the stage as the music all but triggered involuntary dance motion. Feet were soon stomping in unison as the boys joined hands to form a circular dance line around the stage... in the center of which one of the gentlemen from Hamaspik danced with abandon, eventually bringing in one of the students to join him.

In doing so, that young man (and his classmates, for that matter) received the finest, most positive and most effective experiential education in special-needs tolerance and mainstreaming—a lesson from Hamaspik that they will surely carry for a lifetime. ★

Driven by You



When we saw you needed a hand, we arranged the services you needed to get through it. When you had a question, we found answers. And when you're going through challenging times, we're right there with you.

Yours, truly.

Boro Park: 4102 14th Avenue
Williamsburg: 44 Lee Avenue
Five Towns: 76 Columbia Avenue
718-387-8400 // HamaspikKings.org



HAMASPIK
CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES
המספיק
מרכז עזרה לצרכי הציבור



Happenings around Hamaspik

Park it Right Here



A MOST NATURAL PORTRAIT: WITH NATURE'S MAJESTY AS THEIR BACKDROP, THE YOUNG MEN OF HAMASPIK ROCKLAND'S DAY HAB TAKE IT EASY-BREEZY AT CROTON GORGE PARK



ON A SLIDING SCALE: FOR ARYEH (L) AND SHOLOM (R), GETTING DOWN IS DEFINITELY UP AT THE MOST-THERAPEUTIC GREENING EXPERIENCE THAT IS HITTING THE OUTDOOR PARK

Dreams Coming True

Hamaspik of Kings Country families enjoyed a grand Chol Hamoed trip

On chol hamoed, Hamaspik families were treated to a trip to the Nickelodeon Universe amusement park at the American Dream mall. The theme and branding were, appropriately, "Making Dreams Together."

The atmosphere at the park was unparalleled. Hamaspik staff, park staff, and Shmira security officers were there to ensure that everything ran smoothly. Beautiful, branded signage pointed out the park's features, and Hamaspik set up stations for lost and found, refreshments, and take-home gifts.

There was *ruach*-filled music, an energized, Yiddishe vibe, and excitement and delight as the families enjoyed the thrilling rides and fun attractions.

The refreshments included every kosher l'Pesach goodie one could imagine: drinks, yogurts, snacks, and whole fruits to accommodate all minhagim and preferences.

In the words of one family: "We

had the most wonderful experience spending quality time with our kids together in a fun, exciting atmosphere.

"We felt extra safe with Shmira's presence, and could see how much attention was given to ensuring a smooth and uncomplicated trip!"

The seamless running of the trip was to the credit of the Gifts and Events team, under the dedicated direction of Mr. Joseph Moskovits. Mrs. Miriam Horowitz took care of the many technical details in advance of the trip, and Mrs. Chayala Feirstein played a key role in managing the logistics.

Tremendous thanks goes to Mr. Shulem Jeremias and his team, for the incredible scanning system that allowed every family to enter the park with ease and speed.

Families left with wonderful memories and huge smiles, bearing gift bags packed with fun games and activities.

Truly, a day in which dreams came true! ★

Getting Back to Roots and Down to Earth

For Restorative Resets, Rockland County Men's Day Hab Knows How to "Park" it

It's the ultimate 3D, surround-sound, immersive sensory experience.

But no man-made venue, this. In fact, it's quite the very opposite—and, to boot, the only environment that regularly outdoes the ever-realistic worlds of virtual reality: Reality.

As in, your friendly neighborhood park.

Green grass. Brown trees. Yellow sunshine. Blue sky. White clouds. Soft breeze. Warm air. Pungent flora. Chirping birds. Rushing falls. Gurgling brooks. It's all there, surrounding and penetrating you. The colors. The scents. The sounds. It costs nothing. But it beats everything.

Nowhere else does the simple ethos of "less is more," increasingly hawked by contemporary social scientists, come more to life than at the feast of nature that is the public park.

Here, the plaint, "But there's nothing to do!" is exactly the point.

It's why people go camping. Hiking. Mountain climbing. Or, as Hamaspik of Rockland County Men's Day Hab Manager Pinchos Knopfler and his "boys" have been doing for years, going to the park.

Because there's no therapeutic reset like the raw, rich and infinity beauty of real nature.

At a recent jaunt to the picturesque Croton Gorge Park in Westchester, the gentlemen enjoyed a healthy lunch ensconced in the rustic and yes, spiritual surroundings. Then they walked about at their preferred speed(s), checking out and/or relaxing in whichever park nook they fancied—and drinking in the mesmerizing waterfall.

Has Mr. Knopfler ever witnessed a magical moment prompted by a park? No, he says—but then adds, "They come back smiling, happy, freshened up and all aired out."

And that itself is healthy change of the best kind. ★

● ► HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK

Hamaspik Resort Opens On-site Kosher Restaurant

Rock Bistro Steakhouse and Ballroom Catering to Hotel Weekend/Single-Day Guests, and Community at Large

That NYSHA, Hamaspik’s parent organization, has a singular investment in caring for people with special needs is old news.

But now, you might say that the New York State Hamaspik Association has a major “steak” in embracing the greater community—including those seeking one place where they can stay, eat, and even host a party, too.

That’s because the Rock Bistro steakhouse and ballroom is now open to the public—on the premises of the Hamaspik Resort, the multipurpose hotel complex in upstate Rock Hill that is home to NYSHA’s trailblazing Camp Mamtakim summer overnight camp for girls with disabilities.

The new kosher eatery is planned and manned by the legendary Chaim Kaufman, manager of Aperion Productions’ upscale ballrooms and wedding halls in Brooklyn.

The establishment is catering to clientele with a taste for the fine sit-

down dining experience, rocking (no pun intended) an artsy, rustic style that suits a country steakhouse.

The idea for Rock Bistro came from Hamaspik founder Meyer Wertheimer, who long envisioned a dignified all-in-one venue for Catskills travelers and visitors alike.

But the new business arrangement between Aperion and Hamaspik is more than good matchmaking.

Besides both being good at what they do, Manager Kaufman reveals that his own family is affected by special needs—specifically, blessed as it is with a boy born with Down syndrome.

To Chaim Kaufman, Hamaspik is an agency with mental-health resources for every type of individual in need. The new restaurant partnership between Aperion and Hamaspik, then, is every bit personal as it is professional. “We’re going to be able to make people happy,” he declares. ★

Laying the Grounds for Personal Growth

With Gardening and Yard Work, Students at Hamaspik Rockland’s Shaarei Binah Program Get Down to Earth

“I wanted to do a full outdoor garden but it was still cold,” Chezky Szabovits tells the *Gazette*, referring to the wintertime. So instead, the Director of Hamaspik of Rockland County’s Shaarei Binah program discovered the world of indoor gardening—specifically, an all-in-one “grow your own tomatoes” kit.

And that’s how a grape tomato plant came to occupy its place of honor on the dining-room window sill at the yeshivah day program for men, where it collects its eight daily hours of sunlight.

But the tomato-planting at Shaarei Binah is part of something bigger: learning where your food comes from, Mr. Szabovits explains—specifically, the fresh fruits and vegetables at your local grocery. Planted several weeks before this writing, the tomato seeds have since germinated, Mr. Szabovits reports. “Now we have a solid bush and the flowers are coming in,” he says.

But to really know where things grow, you’ve got to get down to earth. Shaarei Binah’s ongoing horticulture project thus includes maintaining and improving its yard and grounds, with an eye towards a summertime garden.

Shaarei Binah just finished cutting the grass, Director Szabovits continues. (Whatever your average homeowner does for his own home, Szabovits explains, Shaarei Binah wants its boys to do—including deploying a weed whacker.)

So how is this activity part of Shaarei Binah’s curriculum?

“Tomatoes don’t arrive ready—there is a whole process behind it,” he explains. “They gain the knowledge of how tomatoes get to groceries.”

And at Shaarei Binah, they’re now also literally laying the groundwork for growth—both agricultural and personal. ★

A Greater Community “Steak”



YET ANOTHER FOOD RESORT: THE ROCK BISTRO, SHOWN HERE ON THE GROUNDS OF THE HAMASPIK RESORT, NOW GIVES GUESTS ANOTHER REASON TO STAY AT THE LUXURY HOTEL



TABLE FOR HOW MANY? THE WELCOME DESK GETTING READY TO GREET GUESTS



LAYING THE GROUNDWORK: PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCH ON THE DINING ROOM

Roots for New Growth



DIGGING IN: SHAAREI BINAH STUDENTS PLANT THE FIRST SEEDS OF THEIR TOMATO BUSH



FIELD OF EXPERTISE: TENDING THE LAWN



LINE OF WORK: KEEPING UP A NICE FRONT

The Autism Update

News and developments from the world of research and advocacy

ELECTED OFFICIAL WITH AUTISM WINS DISCRIMINATION CASE

Hartford, Connecticut — Given her diagnoses of deafness and autism, one might correctly think that Sarah Selvaggi Hernandez had an uphill battle in a disability discrimination lawsuit.

But, fortunately for the licensed occupational therapist, a four-year legal battle recently ended in a Connecticut U.S. District Court in her favor.

Ms. Hernandez had argued that the Connecticut town of Enfield and its board of education violated her civil rights by failing to provide accommodations for her disabilities during her tenure as a board member. A federal jury unanimously found that the town and its education board were liable for violating the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act.

The case is widely considered a watershed win for national disability rights and representation in government, paving the way for more people with disabilities to publicly serve.

AUTISM-DETECTING TABLET APPS ARE EXCITING BUT QUESTIONABLE

New York City — According to a recent report in industry publication *The Transmitter*, a number of software apps for handheld devices can now reasonably screen children for autism—but experts are urging caution.

One such app, called SenseToKnow, uses a tablet's camera to monitor children as they watch short movies and to track their motor skills during a bubble-popping video game. It then uses artificial intelligence to analyze their eye movements, blinks and other physical responses. That app correctly identifies children with autism (called *sensitivity*) 87.8 percent of the time and correctly returns negative results (called *specificity*) 80.8 percent of the time.

Another app, called EarliPoint, relies on eye tracking to spot signs of autism in toddlers. Approved by the FDA in 2022, EarliPoint showed 78 percent sensitivity and 85.4 percent specificity in a clinical trial.

However, experts question whether the apps can actually help resolve the current delays in

diagnosis and care for children with autism.

FIRST-EVER 3D-PRINTED BRAIN TISSUE FOR RESEARCH PRODUCED

Madison, Wisconsin — Scientists at the University of Wisconsin at Madison say they've created the first 3D-printed brain tissue that forms complex cellular networks much like real brains. The researchers say that the tissue can be used for research in most laboratories.

According to the research team, the 3D-printed brain tissue allows neurons to network and "talk" to each other.

In a press release, study lead author Prof. Su-Chun Zhang said, "This could be a hugely powerful model to help us understand how brain cells and parts of the brain communicate in humans. It could change the way we look at stem cell biology, neuroscience and the pathogenesis of many neurological and psychiatric disorders."

While existing organic *brain organoids* are already in use by research labs, those grow with far less cellular organization and

U.S. RENTAL HOUSING INCREASINGLY UNAFFORDABLE FOR PEOPLE ON SSI: REPORT



WAY TO (NOT) GO: FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE SUBSISTING ON SSI, AVERAGE U.S. RENT COSTS ARE TOO HIGH, SAYS A BOSTON-BASED DISABILITY NON-PROFIT

rent for a basic studio or one-bedroom apartment—\$1,398 a

month—exceeds the average SSI payment of \$983 per month. ★

interconnectedness than the new 3D-printed tissue.

STAFF BURNOUT, HIRING STRUGGLES, AFFECTING NATIONAL 9-8-8 HOTLINE SYSTEM

Washington, D.C. — The national 9-8-8 personal crisis hotline is apparently undergoing a crisis of its own.

A recent report paints a grim picture of employees at state and regional call centers leaving their jobs due to burnout, and centers being chronically understaffed—and remaining employees overworked.

The report focused on Carelon Behavioral Health, one such call center in New Hampshire, where even veteran mental-health professionals taking calls from people in distress are suffering from long-term negative effects of the job, including anxiety, nightmares and panic attacks, driving some to quit and/or to seek mental health care of their own.

According to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which runs it, the 9-8-8 prevention hotline has supported over seven million Americans since it launched in summer of 2022.

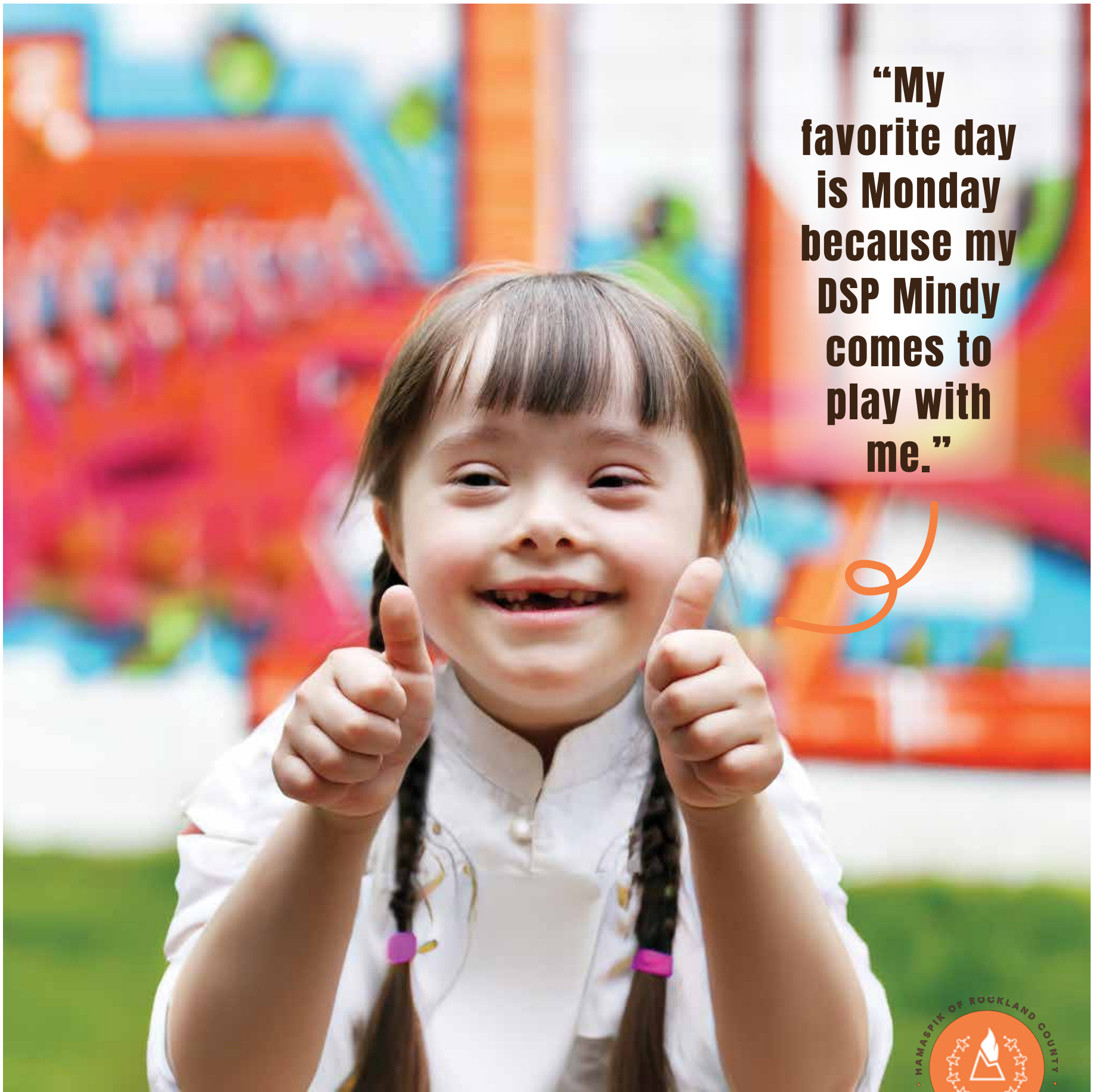
BLOOD PRESSURE DRUG MAY LOWER ANXIETY IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

Columbia, Missouri — In another example of *off-label usage*, or using a drug for something other than its original intended purpose, researchers at the University of Missouri's Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment have now found that a blood-pressure drug may reduce anxiety in people with autism.

In a small study, in which 69 people with autism between ages seven and 24 were given propranolol, the findings "show that propranolol could serve as a helpful intervention for reducing anxiety for individuals with autism," said study lead author Dr. David Beversdorf.

Volunteers given the drug, a blood pressure reducer that's been available since the 1960s, showed significant declines in their anxiety. The drug also had no effect on their socialization and communication skills.

"Up until now, we haven't had any known drugs that target psychiatric issues specifically for individuals with autism," said Dr. Beversdorf, "so these results are very promising." ★



“My favorite day is Monday because my DSP Mindy comes to play with me.”



**Be someone's favorite part of their day.
Join our team of DSP's!**

Diverse job roles to service mainstream or special needs babies, children, teens and adults.
Morning, afternoon, or evening hours ~ Male/Female positions ~ Competitive Salary

(845) 503-0423 - dsp@hamaspikrockland.org

● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

At Day Hab, Person-Centered Culinary Training is Baked Into the Curriculum

Weekly Food-Preparation Activity at Hamaspik Orange Men's Day Hab Puts Personal Choices Front and Center

Respect for the individual with intellectual/developmental disability (I/DD) has long been a defining priority at Hamaspik.

From its earliest days to today and from its smallest to largest supports and services for people with special needs, Hamaspik has all but insisted on taking the individual's preferences and autonomy seriously.

Walk into any Hamaspik group home or day program and you'll see caring staff attentively responding to their beneficiaries with the gravity encloded in good cheer that they deserve. It's their life, with their choice how to live it their inalienable human right, and Hamaspik has embedded that value into its corporate culture all across the dozens of services and supports it provides across multiple regions of New York State.

Residents of Hamaspik's Individualized Residential Alternative (IRA) group homes are regularly given the options of what they'd like to wear today each morning—and especially



YOUR COOKIES, YOUR CHOICE(S): A SUPPORTIVE STAFFER HELPS AN INDIVIDUAL PREPARE THE BATTER FOR A BATCH OF BAKED GOODS MADE FRESH AT HAMASPIK JUST THE WAY THEY LIKE IT

the chocolate chips, and more about personal choices. It reflects the “people first” value and mission emphasized by the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and its private-sector partners like Hamaspik in general, and its Day Hab in particular.

To preface, the Men's Day Hab high-functioning track consists of a group of individuals led now for several years by the program's devoted, experienced and highly-trained Hamaspik Direct Support Professionals (DSPs).

Those Day Hab DSPs together preside over several dozen individuals across the spectrum of function, from low-function non-verbal and non-ambulatory to high-function verbal and even borderline employable. The ongoing Day Hab program also includes “Yeshivah Torah VaChesed,” its yeshivah-style daily learning program for its highest-functioning members—although a number of even the lowest-functioning individuals, and those in the mid-function gray area, sit in on its daily classes, too.

But once a week, the DSPs take those gentlemen shopping.

In the course of that excursion into culinary retail therapy, they'll be purchasing the ingredients that they'll be using in making whatever baked good (or other food item) they'll be preparing that Friday at Day Hab. (That food item, is brought home to be shared with family members over Shabbos.)

The local store at which they do the shopping is chosen by the individuals for its feelings of community familiarity.

There, the gentlemen make their way up and down its well-stocked aisles as they consult their shopping lists. The Hamaspik DSPs stand by to assist should they have any questions as they select such staples as flour and eggs. They are even supported in making their own decisions over which quality, quantity, hechsher (kosher certification) and/or brand of item to pick.

Over the course of a good 30 minutes, then, individuals with disabilities can be seen mingling with ordinary shoppers in the mainstream. The scene, a sight seen at their favorite stores for years now thanks to Hamaspik, makes people with special needs out in the open an ordinary

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 >>

YOUR ULTIMATE SOURCE FOR GROUP INSURANCE SOLUTIONS!



Reliable Brokerage, Inc.
We get you protected.

888.783.6286

CALL FOR YOUR NO-OBLIGATION INSURANCE QUOTE

HENRY KELLNER & ASSOCIATES
E-mail us at: info@reliablebrokerage.com
Visit us on the web at: www.ReliableBrokerage.com

come Shabbos, when they enjoy dressing and feeling their best when out and about at shul or otherwise in the community. Little boys and girls at the agency's numerous After-School Respite (ASR) programs can likewise be witnessed putting marker to coloring sheet, assembling Legos, or otherwise engaging in their activity of choice during free time. And at mealtimes, beneficiaries don't eat what they are served but are served what they'd like to eat.

That also explains why the Men's Day Hab program at Hamaspik of Orange County, a group of its highest-functioning individuals regularly engages in person-centered activities throughout each week.

One such weekly activity, and one eagerly looked forward to by its beneficiaries as that weekday rolls around each week, is the Day Hab's weekly Shabbos food preparation activity each Friday.

Much of the time, that activity revolves around producing baked goods like challah or cake—or, as in the case of this article, the classic family favorite known as chocolate chip cookies.

But the actual activity is less about making the baked goods, in this case,

● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

At Day Hab

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

fact of life, which is precisely the idea. The message is especially driven home when the individuals get on line between other shoppers at checkout.

With people with no apparent disabilities behind and ahead of them as they empty their carts and baskets onto that familiar mini-conveyor belt, they are exactly where they should be in the greater surrounding society—figuratively and literally.

Back at the Day Hab facility, the gentlemen are assisted by staff in unpacking their grocery shopping. Then, staff help them spread plastic disposable tablecloths over large folding tables, as well as put on plastic disposable gloves and aprons.

Utensils such as large mixing bowls from the Day Hab's kitchen are then distributed across the tables, along with large spoons for mixing, and the work begins.

Following a recipe for chocolate chip cookies from a popular community cookbook (we're not going to say which, as to not sound partial to any of the great cookbooks out there!), the gentlemen measure out correct proportions of ingredients. They then get checking the eggs for any forbidden bloodspots (an important



MANUAL LABOR: TWO INDIVIDUALS EAGERLY SHOW OFF THE RAW INGREDIENTS JUST ABOUT READY FOR SHAPING INTO COOKIES AND IMMEDIATE BAKING—AND THEN, READY FOR EATING!

faith-based value in their community of origin) and then beating them, pouring out flour and mixing in water, sugar, oil and other ingredients to create cookie dough, and then pulling up fistfuls of fresh dough to roll and otherwise shape into patties that'll

shortly become cookies.

Both the raw cookie shapes, and the number and pattern of chocolate chips pushed into the raw cookies, are entirely up to them—with a wide variety of shapes, sizes and thicknesses emerging from under the

budding bakers' hands.

With cookies completed, large sheet-lined metal trays of them are carried off by the excited gentlemen to the kitchen, where preheated ovens await.

Some twenty minutes later, out come freshly-baked homemade cookies with the most scrumptious and pleasure-inducing aromas—invoking the pleasure of “homemade” as only cookies can.

The gentlemen crowd around as the DSP staff lay the hot trays out on the tables, with each looking on at their handiwork and eagerly waiting to snap them up, pack them and eventually bring them home—where fathers, mothers and siblings are sure to enjoy their choices, too.

So why is baking part of their curriculum? What does it give them?

“It gives them satisfaction,” replies a Day Hab DSP, explaining that it lends them a feeling of worthiness and validity. “A whole Shabbos, they talk about the food: ‘I made it!’” (In fact, he adds, the gentlemen's families usually like the cookies so much that one of their mothers once called him for the recipe!)

In doing so, he adds, it's as if they are saying, “I'm a person!”—not a disability case. “It's true!” he declares. “I'm not just saying that!” ★

● ► HEALTH NEWS

Serious Scooter Injuries Triple in Four Years

Increase in motorized two-wheeler usage sending rush of patients to U.S. emergency rooms with serious injuries

Los Angeles, California — Sharp usage increase of the electric scooter (e-scooter) has brought a sharp increase of serious accidents and resulting traumatic injuries.

The two-wheeled, electric-powered board with that tall T-shaped steering handle at its head is responsible for a veritable flood of emergency surgery at hospitals around the country, finds a grim new study out the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).

Researchers at UCLA, along with others at California's Loma Linda University, first isolated data from the National Inpatient Sample (NIS) on U.S. bicycle- and scooter-related injuries from 2016 to 2020.

Only 6,125 of the 92,815 hospitalized injury cases involved scooters. The rest (86,690) involved bicycles. However, the researchers found that hospitalizations for

scooter-related injuries nearly tripled during from the start to the end of that four-year period.

What's more, of those 6,000-plus injuries, over half required major surgery or operations.



SCOOT OVER, SCOOTERS: SURGERY-NECESSITATING INJURIES RELATED TO E-SCOOTERS ARE UP

The study also found that scooter-related injuries are: Likelier to strike riders under 18 years of age; more frequent during winter months; likelier than bicycle-related injuries to involve major surgeries (especially orthopedic and head injuries).

Another finding was that hospitalization costs for both bicycle and scooter-related injuries increased nearly five-fold between 2016 and 2020—rising from \$6.6 million to \$35.5 million.

“I think it's important for the public to recognize the significance of scooter-related injuries and the financial outcomes associated with them,” said UCLA research co-author Nam Yong Cho in a press release. “The public should also know that while caution must be taken among scooter riders, vehicle riders should also be cautious where shared scooter systems are prevalent.” ★

Public Health and Policy News

tract and blood.

But now, joint researchers by Harvard University and biomedical corporation Hoffmann-La Roche discovered that zosurabalpin, a new of antibiotic, can kill *A. baumannii*.

According to Hoffmann-La Roche, zosurabalpin employs a unique method of action to kill the bacterium. Essentially, it blocks an internal “conveyor belt”—causing so many “suitcases” to pile up inside its cells that the cells die.

In the study, zosurabalpin worked against more than 100 CRAB samples.

While it's now being tested in Phase 1 clinical trials, it's also years away from human use.

U.S. SUPREME COURT TO HEAR CASE ON FDA'S AUTHORITY

Washington, D.C. — The Supreme Court announced it will rule whether a federal judge has the right to restrict FDA approval of drugs.

The announcement is a response to the case last year of a federal judge in Texas overturning the FDA's nearly 25-year-old approval of mifepristone.

That approval was shortly reinstated by the Texas Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals; the case now heads to the nation's highest court.

The big question before the Supreme Court now is to what extent does the FDA have authority over allowing or banning certain drugs—not just with this drug but with all drugs.

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO), a leading biomedical industry group, warned in a statement that “undermining” the “authority and expertise” of the FDA “would create

within the biomedical industry massive uncertainty and significant barriers to advancing the next wave of innovation.”

VIOLENCE AGAINST HEALTHCARE WORKERS NOW INCUR DOUBLE FINES IN MICHIGAN

Lansing, Michigan — Under a raft of related bills signed into law recently by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, fines for assaulting health care worker in Michigan have now doubled.

Beginning in 2024, fines for assaulting healthcare workers and medical volunteers in the Great Lakes State are up to \$2,000 without weapons and to up to \$4,000 for felony assault with a deadly weapon.

The legislation comes as healthcare workers nationwide face increasing violence at work. According to 2018 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), they are five times more likely to suffer a workplace violence injury than workers overall.

Injuries caused by workplace violence have risen nearly every year since the BLS began tracking the data.

Lawmakers have introduced the Safety from Violence for Healthcare Employees Act several times, but the bill has failed to advance.

RULE REQUIRING GREATER TRANSPARENCY FOR NURSING-HOME OWNERSHIP FINALIZED BY CMS

Bethesda, Maryland — Under a new rule issued by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), nursing home ownership must now be more transparent and otherwise publicly available—specifically, by disclosing additional details about their owners, operators and management.

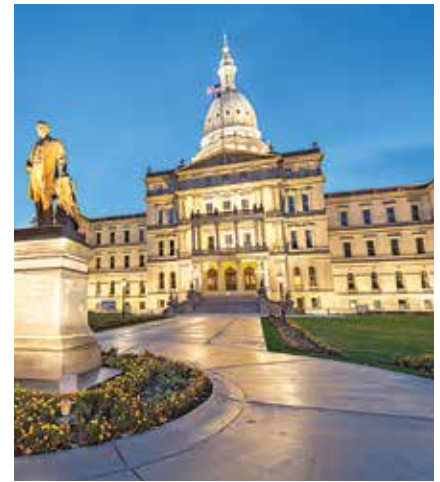
“Taking steps to help consumers to learn more about the owners of a nursing home,” said Dept. of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra in a press release, “will allow them to make the choice that best meets their needs.”

According to an HHS analysis, about five percent of facilities are owned by private equity firms.

In turn, that fact was found to be driving a 12-percent decline in resident nurse hours per day as well as a 14-percent increase in the deficiency score index—indicating worsening performance, compared to other for-profit owners.

MEDICAID ENROLLMENT DOWN BY ABOUT TEN MILLION

San Francisco, California — Enrollment in Medicaid, the



MICHIGAN STATE CAPITOL: HEALTHCARE WORKERS NOW DOUBLY PROTECTED BY LAW SIGNED BY MICH.'S GOV.

government-run health insurance program for the poor, is on track to return to roughly pre-pandemic levels.

Medicaid and the related Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) grew to a record 94 million enrollees as a result of a pandemic-era rule that prohibited states from terminating coverage during the nation's public health emergency.

But since last April, states have removed more than 16 million people from the programs in a process known as the “unwinding.”

While many beneficiaries no longer qualify because their incomes rose, millions of people have been dropped from the rolls for procedural reasons. But at the same time, millions have been reenrolled or signed up for the first time.

The net result is that enrollment has fallen by about 9.5 million people from the record high reached last April.

CONFLICTS-OF-INTEREST FOUND FOR MAJORITY OF MENTAL-HEALTH MANUAL CREATORS

London, England — A study by the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) confirms what many have suspected for decades: Decisions made by “objective” mental-health professionals on what is or isn't a mental disorder are anything but objective.

Research recently published by the BMJ finds that some 60 percent of physicians serving as panel and task-force members for the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) received over \$14 million in payments from industry interests.

The DSM, whose current Fifth Edition was updated in March 2022, is a critically authoritative manual. Its definitions of—and treatment guidelines for—mental-health diagnoses effectively control what licensed professionals can or cannot do.

The DSM also essentially dictates what governments recognize as diagnoses, making it a public-health game-changer of unrivaled power. ★

JOINT RESEARCH DISCOVERS NEW SUPERBUG-KILLING ANTIBIOTIC

Boston, Massachusetts — So-called “superbugs,” or bacteria that are resistant—or worse, impervious—to every known antibiotic, remain one of modern healthcare's biggest problems, especially in hospitals.

One such example is *carbapenem-resistant Acinetobacter baumannii*, or CRAB, which commonly causes serious infections in the lungs, urinary



OUTSMARTING THE OUTSMARTERS: SUPERBUGS “KNOWING” HOW TO DEFEAT EVERY KNOWN ANTIBIOTIC ARE STILL A PROBLEM, BUT NEW ANTIBIOTIC ZOSURABALPIN MAY BE A SOLUTION

The Hamaspik family cares for yours

Wondering what's available for your special needs loved one? From in home services, community or site based programs to reimbursements that will support your loved one and empower your family. Best of all: we will walk you through the process of getting the care they deserve.



gcnymarketing.com



- Community Habilitation (Com Hab)
- Home Based Respite
- After School Respite
- Family Support Services (Reimbursement)
- Prevocational Services
- Self Direction
- Day Habilitation
- Achosainu Academy
- ISS Apartments

Unsure if your loved one is eligible for services? **Call 718.387.8400**

<p>Boro Park: 4102 14th Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11219 Phone: 718.387.8400 Fax: 718.599.3261</p>	<p>Williamsburgh: 295 Division Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11211 Phone: 718.387.8400 Fax: 718.599.3261</p>	<p>Rockland County: 58 Route 59, Suite 1 Monsey, NY 10952 Phone: 845.503.0200 Fax: 845.503.1200</p>	<p>Orange County: 1 Hamaspik Way Monroe, NY 10950 Phone: 845.774.0300 Fax: 845.774.0500</p>
--	---	--	--

email: intake@hamaspikings.org

In the Know

ALL ABOUT...

INGROWN TOENAILS

Sources: Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, MedlinePlus, American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS)



Given that it's a very common and ordinary condition, and one that doesn't have a complicated name, ingrown toenails are the subject of this month's diagnosis column.

In fact, according to MedlinePlus (a U.S. government health encyclopedia of sorts), some 20 percent of foot problems for which people see their doctor are ingrown toenails.

So now, let's put our foot down (pun intended) to probe the causes and treatments of this common condition—and how to prevent it in the first place.

DEFINITION

"Ingrown toenails are a common condition in which the corner or side of a toenail grows into the soft flesh," summarizes the Mayo Clinic. "The result is pain, inflamed skin, swelling and, sometimes, an infection." The Cleveland Clinic adds that the reverse can also happen—where the skin of the toe grows *over* the nail, not the nail growing *into* the skin.

Ingrown toenails usually affect the big toe. However, an ingrown toenail can strike any toe.

According to MedlinePlus, doctors categorize ingrown toenails by three stages of severity:

- Stage 1: The nail has grown into the skin on the side. The skin hurts and has become inflamed.
- Stage 2: New, inflamed tissue, called *granuloma*, has grown at the edges of the ingrown toenail. The tissue "weeps" and produces pus.
- Stage 3: The skin around the toenail is chronically inflamed and keeps oozing pus (usually indicating an infection). The granuloma has already started growing over the

nail.

In defining the condition, MedlinePlus also adds the following: "Teenagers and young adults often develop them. This is because they tend to sweat more... But ingrown toenails are common in older people, too. They may have a higher risk because of medical conditions such as diabetes. Also, many older people are less flexible, making it difficult for them to take care of their feet and toenails. Because toenails get thicker with age, it's harder to cut them, too."

The good news is that, according to Mayo, "Often you can take care of ingrown toenails on your own." (We'll get to that soon.) "If the pain is severe or spreading, your health care provider can take steps to relieve your discomfort and help you avoid complications of ingrown toenails"—which is a polished way of saying, "See your doctor!"

CAUSES

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) says this: "If you trim your toenails too short, particularly on the sides of your big toes, you may set the stage for an ingrown toenail. Like many people, when you trim your toenails, you may taper the corners so that the nail curves with the shape of your toe. But this technique may encourage your toenail to grow into the skin of your toe. The sides of the nail curl down and dig into your skin. An ingrown toenail may also happen if you wear shoes that are too tight or too short."

However, the AAOS notes that some cases of ingrown toenails (known medically as *onychocryptosis* or *unguis incarnates*) are

congenital—meaning that the nail is just too large for the toe. "Trauma, such as stubbing the toe or having the toe stepped on, may also cause an ingrown nail," the AAOS literature continues. "However, the most common cause is tight shoe wear or improper grooming and trimming of the nail."

In short, the primary causes of ingrown toenails are:

- Cutting toenails not straight across, or cutting them too short
- Wearing shoes that crowd the toenails
- Injuring a toenail

Other factors that may cause ingrown toenails are:

- Having very curved toenails
- Nail infections
- Certain medical conditions

Risk factors

Factors that increase your risk of ingrown toenails include:

- Being an adolescent, when feet tend to perspire more, which softens the nail and skin
- Having nail care habits that encourage the nail to grow into the skin, such as cutting the nails too short or rounding the corners
- Having a reduced ability to care for one's toenails
- Wearing shoes that constrict the toes
- Participating in activities, such as running and kicking, that put your toes at risk of injury
- Having a condition, such as diabetes, that causes poor blood flow

SYMPTOMS

When an ingrown toenail first develops, it may be hard, swollen and

tender, says the Cleveland Clinic—and later may get red, infected, and feel very sore. Sometimes a small amount of pus can be seen draining from the area. In summary, ingrown toenail symptoms are:

- Pain and tenderness
- Inflamed skin
- Swelling
- Infection
- Pus

Complications

Complications can be especially severe if one has diabetes, which can cause poor blood flow and damaged nerves in the feet. So a minor foot injury—a cut, scrape, corn, callus or ingrown toenail—may not heal properly and become infected.

Sometimes new tissue starts growing over the toenail. As mentioned, doctors call this a granuloma, because the surface of the new tissue looks a bit like tiny granules. The inflamed area may weep, bleed or release pus and have an unpleasant odor—especially if bacteria get into the wound.

DIAGNOSIS

Ingrown toenails usually become noticeable early on because they hurt, points out the AAOS. “If treated in time, it is often possible to manage the inflammation on your own,” the group writes. “It will then heal without any consequences.”

But the inflammation can spread in people who have a weakened immune system and if bacteria infect the wound: That can cause an inflammation with pus around or under the entire nail. It’s then advisable to see a doctor, especially if you also feel tired and have a fever, and the infection has spread along the toe and developed into cellulitis (an infection of deeper layers of skin).

A doctor, PA or other qualified health care provider can diagnose an ingrown toenail without any complex examinations. All it really takes is a physical examination of the nail and the surrounding skin, and a few questions based on existing symptoms and any possible causes.

Additional tests—like a blood test, for instance—may be needed if a health care provider thinks that the ingrown toenail has already led to complications, such as cellulitis.

TREATMENT

Ingrown toenails should be treated as soon as they are recognized. If they are recognized early (before infection sets in), home care may prevent the

need for further treatment

Home treatment

“You can treat most ingrown toenails at home,” reads the Mayo Clinic’s page on the subject—by doing the following:

- Soak your feet in warm, soapy water. Do this for ten to 20 minutes three to four times a day until the toe improves.
- Place cotton or dental floss under your toenail. After each soaking, put fresh bits of cotton or waxed dental floss under the ingrown edge. This will help the nail grow above the skin edge.
- Apply petroleum jelly. Put petroleum jelly (Vaseline) on the tender area and bandage the toe.
- Choose sensible footwear. Consider wearing open-toed shoes or sandals until your toe feels better.
- Take pain relievers. A non-prescription pain reliever such as acetaminophen (Tylenol, others) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others) may help ease the toe pain.

During and after home treatment, the AAOS advises that when you go to bed at night, it’s best to give the toe enough room to move and make sure that the sheets aren’t right on top of it.

Professional medical treatment

“ THE MOST COMMON CAUSES OF INGROWN TOENAILS ARE WEARING OF TIGHT SHOES, OR IMPROPER TRIMMING OF THE NAILS ”

If home remedies haven’t helped the ingrown toenail, and if excessive inflammation, swelling, pain and discharge are present, the toenail is probably infected and should be treated by a physician. Said health care provider may provide any of the following treatments:

Lifting the nail. For a slightly ingrown nail, the health care provider may carefully lift the ingrowing nail edge and place cotton, dental floss or a splint under it. This separates the nail from the overlying skin and helps the nail grow above the skin edge, usually in two to 12 weeks. At home, you’ll need to soak the toe and replace the material daily. The health care provider might also prescribe a corticosteroid cream to apply after

soaking.

Another approach, which minimizes the need for daily replacement, uses cotton coated with a solution that fixes it in place and makes it waterproof (collodion).

Taping the nail. With this method, the health care provider pulls the skin away from the ingrown nail with tape.

Placing a gutter splint under the nail. With this method, the health care provider numbs the toe and slips a tiny slit tube underneath the embedded nail. This splint stays in place until the nail has grown above the skin edge. This method helps ease the pain of an ingrown nail as well.

Partially removing the nail. For a more severe ingrown toenail (inflamed skin, pain and pus), the health care provider may numb the toe and trim or remove the ingrown portion of the nail. It could take two to four months for the toenail to grow back.

Surgical Treatment

Some cases may be severe and/or advanced enough that the patient may need to take oral antibiotics and have the nail partially or completely removed. A doctor or surgeon can surgically remove a portion of the nail, a portion of the underlying nail bed, some of the adjacent soft tissues

that the toenail will come back deformed. In fact, it may take three to four months for the nail to regrow.

PREVENTION

Unless the problem is congenital, the best way to prevent ingrown toenails is to:

Trim the toenails straight across. *Don’t curve or taper the nails to match the shape of the front of the toe!* If getting a pedicure, ask the person doing it to trim the nails straight across.

If one has a condition that causes poor blood flow to the feet so that one cannot trim the toenails, see a podiatrist regularly to have them trimmed.

Keep toenails at a moderate length. Trim toenails so they’re even with the tips of the toes. If the toenails are trimmed too short, the pressure from the shoes on the toes may direct a nail to grow into the tissue.

Wear shoes that fit properly. Shoes that place too much pressure on the toes or pinch them may cause a nail to grow into surrounding tissue. If one has nerve damage to the feet, one may not be able to feel if the shoes fit too tightly.

Wear protective footwear. If regular activities put one at risk of injuring the toes, wear protective footwear, like steel-toed shoes.

Inspect the feet. Should one have diabetes, check those feet daily for signs of ingrown toenails or other foot problems!

Wear shoes and hosiery (socks) with adequate room for the toes.

Keep the feet clean and dry at all times.

PROGNOSIS

After a nail-removal procedure, one may take a pain reliever as needed.

It might help to apply a wet compress for a few minutes for a few days, until the swelling has gone down. Rest and elevate the toe for 12 to 24 hours.

When one resumes moving about, avoid activities that hurt the toe, and don’t swim or use a hot tub until the health care provider tells you that it’s okay to do so.

Unless the doctor says otherwise, it should be okay to shower the day after surgery.

Call your health care provider if the toe isn’t healing.

Sometimes, even with successful surgery, the problem occurs again. Surgical approaches are better at preventing recurrence than are nonsurgical methods. ★



Status Report

Happening In Hospitals Today

STUDY FINDS 'HOSPITAL AT HOME' MODEL PATIENT-SAFE

Boston, Massachusetts — Among the areas hospitals are branching into for increased profitability is the relatively new “hospital at home” model, in which medical hardware—hospital bed and all—is provided at the private residence of a non-critical patient, who is then monitored remotely in the comfort of home.

Now, according to a recent study by Boston's Mass General Brigham hospital, patients receiving that hospital-level care at home have low death rates and are not likely to suffer setbacks sending them back to the ER. The study was published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

“Home hospital care appears quite safe and of high quality,” said Mass General researcher Dr. David Michael Levine in a press release. “You live longer, get readmitted less often, and have fewer adverse events.”

Hospital-level home care became available to Medicare patients in 2020, when CMS launched its Acute Hospital Care at Home Waiver program.

MAJOR CALIF. HOSPITAL SYSTEM HIRES EX-FBI CYBERCRIME AGENT TO PREVENT ATTACKS

San Diego, California — A now-retired FBI cybercrime expert is now an employee of one of U.S. healthcare's most-targeted hospital systems.



HOSPITAL-LEVEL OF CARE AT HOME: A STUDY BY MASS GENERAL (ABOVE) FINDS THAT GETTING HARDWARE-SUPPORTED, REMOTE-MONITORED CARE WHERE YOU LIVE IS NOW A SAFE OPTION

Special agent Todd Walbridge, who left the FBI last year, is now as senior director for corporate and system safety and security at Scripps Health, the San Diego, Calif.-based five-campus hospital system that suffered a devastating \$100-million cyberattack in 2021.

Under agent Walbridge's leadership, Scripps hired a 24/7 live system monitoring company—which apparently is the latest trend in cyberattack prevention. With human monitoring, users are watched in real time for suspicious behavior.

SURVEY: THOUSANDS OF RNS LEFT JOBS DURING COVID, THOUSANDS MORE INTEND TO

Chicago, Illinois — The pandemic didn't just claim numerous victims—apparently, it also claimed thousands of nurses' jobs, too.

According to a survey by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), close to 100,000 U.S. registered nurses (RNs) left their jobs during the COVID-19 crisis. The survey cited personal stress, job burnout and career retirement as the mass movement's main reasons.

More alarmingly, the survey also found another 610,000 RNs had “intent to leave” the workforce by 2027 for those same reasons—with yet another 189,000 RNs under age 40 reporting similar intentions. Overall, the survey has nearly 20 percent of the nation's 4.5 million RNs abandoning healthcare over a short time.

Specifically, 62 percent of surveyed RNs reported a pandemic workload spike and 51 percent reported feeling “emotionally drained.”

HEALTHCARE NOW EIGHTH-BEST-PAYING INDUSTRY IN IT, SAYS SURVEY

Centennial, Colorado — If you're a techie looking for a great job, health IT is one place you'd definitely want to be looking at. According to a survey by technology job marketplace Dice.com, healthcare—in particular, hospitals—is now one of information technology (IT)'s top industries.

In fact, judging by rising or falling salaries, health IT employees are now the eighth-best-paid IT professionals across 25 industries.

According to the survey, IT salaries

rose nine percent overall from 2019 to 2021—and that in 2023 alone, health IT salaries rose 4.5 percent from 2022, to an average of \$117,578. That rise also gives the healthcare industry the sixth-fastest growing IT salary.

The survey of 6,000 respondents also found that the third-largest IT salary belonged to the medical/pharmaceutical/biotechnology fields, at an average of \$128,141.

HOSPITAL OPENS STAFF CAFETERIA WITH AMAZON'S LINE-FREE JUST WALK OUT TECH

Savannah, Georgia — The Deep South is long known for its “Southern Hospitality”—and now, a Georgia hospital has become more hospitable to its employees, thanks to new technology from behemoth disruptor Amazon.

Using Amazon's Just Walk Out cashless (and employee-less) store technology, doctors, nurses and other employees at Savannah's Candler Hospital Campus can breach a gated mini-store area with their electronic work badges, select shelved food items, and simply pay and walk out with a badge-tap on an exit scanner. The system simply deducts the cost from their paychecks.

The Just Walk Out technology, which eliminates traditional check-out lines, is already in use across the U.S. at stadiums and other venues, where patrons can pay and leave by tapping their cards. The Candler location is the first time it's gone into use at a hospital.

HEALTHCARE DATA BREACHES SET RECORD IN 2023

Chicago, Illinois — According to niche industry outlet *HIPAA Journal*, the healthcare industry's ongoing crisis of data breaches reached an all-time high in 2023. The Journal recently reported that, after analyzing publically-available government data, over 133 million patient records were breached last year—which is over double that number for 2022, or 51.9 million.

In 2023, there were 725 breaches each affecting 500 or more patient records—also a record number, found the Journal's analysis.

The organized cyberattack against HCA Healthcare, based in Nashville, Tenn., was 2023's largest single data breach, affecting some 1.3 million patients. Another nine million patients were affected by a cyberattack on medical transcription vendor Perry Johnson & Associates, which itself ripple-affected several other health systems.

Dental organizations Managed Care of North America and Delta Dental of California, and health IT vendor Welltok, finished the list of top five cyberattacks. ★



WATCHING OUT FOR THIS GUY 24/7: NO LESS THAN AN EX-FBI AGENT IS NOW LEADING A TEAM OF REAL-TIME CYBERGUARDS AGAINST HACKERS AT CALIF.'S SCRIPPS HEALTH HOSPITAL SYSTEM



The Senior Care Gazette

News from
the World of
Hamaspik
HomeCare and
Senior Health

Actively Promoting Active Lives

Beneficial, Therapeutic Senior Recreation is a Vital Part of Care at Hamaspik HomeCare

Getting up there in years doesn't mean that physical activity should slow down.

Quite the opposite, it turns out.

Staying physically and mentally fit is vital for people of any age—but especially so for people of 60 or more years of age. With seniors, countless studies show association—if not outright causation—between continued physical and/or mental activity and lower rates of disease and mortality.

At Hamaspik HomeCare, getting supported seniors engaged in recreational activities and hobbies is thus anything but a luxurious option or extra.

“We always discuss with our patient activities to be done throughout the

day,” Hamaspik HomeCare Field Nurse Adina Bodlander, RN tells the *Gazette*, asked if senior recreation is part of clients' regular care plans. “It is something that we follow up on during our visits and is a goal/task on our care plans. Whenever possible, we encourage patients to get out of the house and participate in activities with friends, family and community.”

Among the recreational activities and hobbies commonly advised by experts for seniors 60-plus are such staples as regularly walking or swimming, and more-unusual but equally-effective entries like crossword or jigsaw puzzles, or joining a community choir. Other suggestions include learning a new language, a new musical instrument, or even a new skill

like photography.

“The best activities are the ones that the patient enjoys and therefore they want to keep up with and do on a regular basis. When a hobby includes physical activity, that's great because you're able to combine physical and mental health into one,” Mrs. Bodlander explains. “Hobbies should feel relaxing. They should be something that the person looks forward to and feels happy and refreshed after doing.”

In fact, in a 2009 study in the journal *Psychosomatic Medicine*, close to 1400 adults had their Pittsburgh Enjoyable Activities Test (PEAT) numbers compared to their blood pressure, cortisol, body mass index (BMI) and waist circumference numbers. The study found that “higher

PEAT scores were associated with lower blood pressure, total cortisol, waist circumference, and body mass index.”

To determine what activity to take up, seniors should think about what they'd like to do, with family members helping with research. Family members can then encourage their loved ones to attend community venues providing those activities and facilitate their transportation to and fro—or bring them any necessary supplies should they need to remain at home.

“I definitely see the major pros of clients who have set activities,” testifies Mrs. Bodlander. “It is a very good feeling when we are able to help them get set up.” ★

Fittest Bodies, Fittest Minds for Seniors

Tracking Study Links Healthy Lifestyle with Less Dementia

Chicago, Illinois — Most seniors with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia have *plaques and tangles*, or buildup of proteins, in the brain—but not necessarily do seniors with brain plaques and tangles have Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia.

That known fact comes to the fore again in light of a recent study out of Chicago's Rush University Medical Center.

There, for 24 years, the Rush Memory and Aging Project tracked the lifestyle histories and end-of-life mental function of some 586 participating volunteer seniors. Some 350 were women, and the average age upon passing was just under 91.

Project researchers examined volunteers' brains and found that physical signs of dementia—buildup of plaques and tangles, and/or changes in brain blood vessels—had little if any relationship to the mental health of the physical healthiest volunteers.

Put otherwise, the volunteers who'd had the highest levels of physical fitness,

healthy diet and nourishing social lives had the healthiest minds—regardless of how badly their brains were physically out of shape.

The new research, published in in the journal *JAMA Neurology*, suggests that a healthy lifestyle can help stave off dementia in people as they enter their golden years.

According to Project lead researcher Dr. Klodian Dhana, none of the classic neurological dementia factors seemed to greatly affect a positive connection between volunteers' healthy living and end-of-life mental skills. Even if a brain was physically showing symptoms of deterioration, the individual's mental acuity was largely unaffected.

The researchers gave each participant a “lifestyle score” based on how many healthy factors they incorporated in their daily lives—as well as “global cognitive score” at the ends of their lives. They found that those with the highest lifestyle scores also had the highest global cognitive scores—regardless of physical brain health.

The Rush researchers say that good nutrition, regular exercise and other factors may serve to “provide a cognitive reserve” for the brain, buffering it against negative changes over time.

Lower rates of dementia have long been linked to eating well, exercising, avoiding smoking and heavy drinking. The new study underscores that.

According to the scientists, healthy living apparently provides aging brains with some kind of “reserve,” largely preserving healthy cognitive function even while dementia-related changes occur. Current exercise recommendations call for at least a total of 150 minutes of physical activity per week. ★

**WHY STRUGGLE ALONE
WITH CARING FOR YOUR
ELDERLY LOVED ONES?**

Call today to see if they qualify
for home care!

Call Hamaspik HomeCare's
Intake Dept. directly at

845-503-0700



Life is brighter with

24 hour Home Care

Already receiving home care?

Hamaspik's NHTD (Nursing Home Transition and Diversion) Program coordinators will guide you to get round-the-clock help. We've helped hundreds of seniors get approved for 24-hour care. See what a difference 24 hours a day makes!

genymarketing.com

Call Hamaspik homecare today to get 24-hour care!

24/7 Dedicated Home Care

Supportive Coordinators

Professionally Trained Aides



Hamaspik HomeCare
Legendary Support, Extraordinary Care

Call us: 888.503.8777 | NHTD@hamaspikcare.org