



# AJE UPDATE

Volume 13, Issue 4 • Exercise Your Mind and Body • Summer 2015

## Inside this Edition

Summer Safety.....1

Extended School Year....2

College Transition.....3

Active Lifestyle.....4

## Mission

The mission of AJE is to educate parents, youth, and the community about the laws governing public education, specifically for children with special needs. We seek to empower youth and parents to be effective advocates and youth to self advocate to ensure that children receive an appropriate education. It is also our mission to make the public aware of the consequences of institutional negligence of children with or without disabilities to promote school accountability.

## About AJE

AJE is home to the Parent Training and Information Center, DC Parent Information Network, DC Health Information Center, and the DC Parent Center.

**V:** (202) 678-8060

**F:** (202) 678-8062

**TF:** (888) 327-8060

**W:** [www.aje-dc.org](http://www.aje-dc.org)

**E:** [information@aje-dc.org](mailto:information@aje-dc.org)

25 E Street, NW, 4th Floor  
Washington, DC 20001  
Hours: 9am - 5pm (Mon - Fri)

3912 Georgia Avenue, NW  
(Mary's Center)  
Washington, DC 20011  
Hours: 9am - 3pm (Tues. & Thurs.)

## Summer Safety Tips for Allergy and Asthma Sufferers



Summer can be a difficult time for those who suffer from asthma, allergies or other respiratory conditions. Constant changes in the air quality and an abundance of pollen can trigger asthma and allergy symptoms, especially in the summer due to the humidity and dry heat. This is because both dry heat and humid air require the body to do more work in order to breathe. Below are tips for surviving and thriving with allergies and asthma during the summer.

1. Before heading outside on a hot, humid day, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends checking the Air Quality Index (AQI). This can be done by checking the "Air Now" website ([www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov)) developed by the EPA and other agencies to provide the public with easy access to national air quality information. The AQI measures the amount of pollutants with the amount

of air, determining how clean the air is for the day.

2. Monitor the amount of pollen in the air, given that it is another common trigger for allergy and asthma sufferers.
3. Asthma sufferers should use their inhalers before outdoor exercise, as advised by your doctor.
4. When going outside for an extended time on a hot humid day, take plenty of breaks and drink lots of water.
5. Asthma sufferers should also keep their fast-acting inhaler with them in the event that an attack is triggered.
6. Avoid sleeping with the windows open. Air condition is much better for avoiding the triggers of asthma and allergies.
7. Carry an asthma action plan with you in case you have a severe asthma attack requiring emergency medical assistance.
8. Consider taking allergy medicine during the pollen season to cut down on symptoms.

*Adapted from All Season Allergy and Asthma Center, [www.allseasonallergy.com](http://www.allseasonallergy.com).*

## Summer Safety: Keeping Children Safe and Healthy in the Summer

Summer is here and it's time for fun! As parents we want to ensure the safety of our children at all times. Here are a few tips on keeping your child safe during the summer.

### Heat Safety

Plan to have a cool, air-conditioned space for your child. If your home does not have air-conditioning, find a nearby building that does. Libraries can be a great place for a cool retreat from the heat. Make sure your child stays hydrated by regularly drinking plenty of water. Plan for more time

to rest than usual; heat can often make children feel tired. When your child is feeling hot, give him a cool bath or water mist to cool down. Kids six months and older (as well as adults) should use sunscreens with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or greater, which can reduce the intensity of ultraviolet rays (UVRs) that cause sunburns. Apply liberally 15 to 30 minutes before sun exposure, so it can absorb into the skin and decrease the likelihood that it will be washed off. Reapply every two hours and after kids swim,

sweat or dry off with a towel. Dress kids in protective clothing and hats. Clothing can be an excellent barrier of UVRs.

### Water Safety

Young children are especially at risk of drowning. They can drown in less than 2 inches (6 centimeters) of water. Teach your child to never play around pools, lakes or standing water and to never enter the water without an adult. Watch your child at all times when you are near a pool

*(Continued on page 2)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

or other body of water. Don't allow floaties or other flotation devices to take the place of close supervision. Encourage your family to take swimming lessons and be aware that even a skilled swimmer is at risk of drowning.

#### **Travel Safety**

Don't ever leave a child (or pet) in the car while you are running errands, even for just a few minutes. Even on mild days, the rising temperature of

a vehicle can be dangerous because a young child's body temperature rises three to five times faster than an adult's. A child's fast rising body temperature can lead to injury or death. Plan, map and estimate the duration of your driving ahead of time and let others know your plans. Expect to encounter roadwork, delays & detours. Check your car tires, including the spare. Inspect the engine, battery, hoses, belts and fluids for wear and proper levels. Check the air conditioner and

test all the lights and wipers. Clean the windows, inside and out. Prepare an Emergency Roadside Kit, including jumper cables, a flashlight and plenty of bottled water and a first aid kit that includes: medications for chronic conditions, bandages, antibiotic cream for cuts and scrapes, crushable icepacks for bruises, benadryl, an epi-pen for a person with known allergies, insect repellent and tweezers.

## **Effects of Summer Vacation on Students**

Summer break may have both positive and negative effects on children, especially children with disabilities. Many children experience the effect of the "summer slide." What is the summer slide? The summer slide can be defined as the loss of academic skills over the summer vacation break. In other words when many students often don't read during the summer vacation, continue to work on math problems, or the students aren't engaged in other learning experiences, many students regress, losing the skills they learned throughout the school year. Here are some ideas to assist with the prevention of the summer slide.

#### **Start a family book club.**

Your family can come together and take turns reading a book. Once the book has been read, family members can discuss the book. Having a family book club can assist with not only creating family bonding time, but it also can enhance your child's critical thinking skills.

#### **Cook with your children.**

This is one of the best ways to integrate math, reading and following directions. Let your child design the menu and help your child put together their favorite recipes in a cookbook.

#### **Plant a garden.**

Your child will gain responsibility and pride as they watch their plants grow and thrive.

#### **Take a field trip.**

Head out to a museum, zoo or local park with walking trails. Keep a journal about your travels.

#### **Enroll in a quality summer program.**

Enroll your child in a summer program that will provide your child with opportunities to build their critical thinking skills. The "Our Kids" website provides a list of activities and events for children and families in the Washington, DC area. This information can be found at [www.our-kids.com](http://www.our-kids.com).



#### **Learn a new word each week.**

Hang it on the fridge and see who can use it the most times throughout the week.

#### **Acquire useful resources.**

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) offers some great tips for parents looking for high-quality summer programs for children, which can be found on their website, [www.summerlearning.org](http://www.summerlearning.org).

## **Extended School Year & Summer School...What's the Difference?**

#### **What are "Extended School Year" Services?**

In some instances, D.C. schools are obligated to provide special education services beyond the normal school year to students with disabilities who receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This obligation is referred to as "extended school year" (ESY) services/programs.

A district must provide ESY services when a

child's individualized education program (IEP) team determines, on an individual basis, that the services are necessary for the student to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). 34 C.F.R. 300.106(a)(2). The term "extended school year services" means special education and related services that are provided to a child with a disability that is: (1) beyond the normal school year of the public agency; (2) in accordance with the child's IEP; (3) is no cost to the parents of the child; and

(4) meet the standards of the state educational agency (SEA). 34 CFR 300.106(b). In D.C. the SEA is the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

D.C. schools are prohibited from limiting ESY services to particular disabilities, or unilaterally limiting the type, amount, or duration of ESY. 5 D.C.M.R. § E3017.

(Continued from page 2)

### What is Summer School?

Summer school is additional educational time and coursework occurring during the summer break. It is not limited to students with IEP's, but students with disabilities should be provided an equal opportunity to participate in summer school under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. This means that parents can request accommodations during summer school that will allow their students an opportunity to take advantage of a summer school program.

Summer school usually serves as a way for students to catch up on high school credits or to brush up

on academics not sufficiently mastered during the regular academic year. It can also be used to enrich or build on subjects mastered during the regular academic year.

### Summer School Regulations

The DC Code requires students who are retained during the previous academic year to enroll in summer school unless they are excused by their school principal or the Chancellor. D.C. Code § 38-781.05 (a). Retained students who attend summer school must be promoted if they have less than three (3) unexcused absences from summer school, and receive a passing grade in the subjects

that they did not pass during the regular school year. D.C. Code § 38-781.05 (b).

D.C. Municipal Regulations also require schools to notify students who have not passed a course no later than the last day of school, so that they can enroll in summer school.

Have additional questions or need further assistance about ESY or Summer School?

Contact AJE at (202) 678-8060 or visit us at 25 E Street NW, 4th Floor, Washington DC 20001 for further information or assistance.

## Top 10 Things to Prepare Students with Disabilities for College

Planning for college can be an exciting yet stressful time in a student's life. If a student has a disability, there can be additional challenges when preparing for school. A student with a disability is not required to inform a postsecondary school that they have a disability. However, if they want the school to provide any academic adjustments or accommodations they will have to identify themselves as having a disability and provide documentation of their disability. The office in which you provide these documents to may be called The Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS) or Student Disability Services or something to that effect. It is also important to inform the school about a disability if a student requires accessible facilities so they will be assigned to an accessible dorm if planning to live on campus.

All universities, colleges or other postsecondary institution that receive funding from the Department of Education must comply with the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). Section 504 was written to protect the rights of people with disabilities in programs such as schools and activities that receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education.

Here are 10 tips for students with a disabilities on transitioning to college:

#### 1. Know your Disability.

Knowing the areas in your life that are limited due to disability puts you in the driver's seat for your future.

#### 2. Know Your Needs.

You should review your transition plan and your individualized education program (IEP) with teachers and parents to help you anticipate the specific accommodations that will need to be arranged for you.

#### 3. Weigh your options.

There are so many options for you to make. The key is to remember that you have to live with your choices - not your parents, teachers, or advisors. Thus, you need to be an active participant in any planning or discussion about your post secondary options and make a choice that is right for you.

#### 4. Take College Entrance Exams

It's important to get an early start on planning for standardized test such as the SAT's and ACT's. You should request accommodations you may need during testing. Make sure you submit all required documents, as your request will not be considered if your documentation is deemed incomplete. You should also consider taking the PSAT in the spring of your junior year of high school - it's good practice for the SAT or ACT.

#### 5. Obtain Updated Documentation

The documentation of your disability needs to be current and complete and you need to know exactly what documentation your next school or training program will require if you are seeking accommodations or services on the basis of disability.

#### 6. Self-Advocacy

It is never too early to become your own advocate and it is never too late to learn. As early as possible, begin asking questions at your IEP and Transition Planning meetings - such active engagement will pay off in all aspects of your life later when you have to self-advocate for services, identify your disability, and articulate your needs to function successfully.

#### 7. Vocational Rehabilitation Services

A good practice drill in self-advocacy is going to the local Vocational Rehabilitation Services office to determine what services may be available to you. Your high school counselor should have linked you with your Rehabilitation Service Agency Case Worker. If not, speak with your

guidance counselor, or you can contact the Rehabilitation Service Agency (RSA) yourself:

Rehabilitation Services Administration  
1125 15th St., NW, Washington, DC 20005  
Ph: (202) 730-1700 Fax: (202) 730-1843  
TTY: (202) 730-1516 Email: dds@dc.gov

#### 8. Living Space

Consult with your parents and teachers for input and advice. Living space issues are frequently ignored prior to admission, only to surface after the student encounters difficulty. If you and your family and advisors agree that you might require special housing, such as a single room, discuss your concerns with the disability service coordinator at your school or program.

#### 9. Time Management

Many postsecondary experiences, technical school, college level learning or employment, will require some level of time management skills. If you haven't mastered these important time management skills yet, start practicing them now. Break down assignments into smaller, more manageable chunks, using the syllabus that the professor gives out the first week of school. For example, if you know reading a chapter of a dense biology textbook takes you several hours, break it into sections and plan to read a section a day.

#### 10. Expect the unexpected

Students who approach this next phase of their lives with reasonable expectations are often the best prepared to face many new challenges. Know that there will be days when note takers do not show up; when wheelchair ramps are not cleared; when professors do not understand; when plans and strategies do not work out. However, that is okay and to be expected. Many such hiccups happen to everyone and not only you. It's part of learning to adapt to changes. Overcoming such pitfalls will only make you stronger and better prepared to deal with the next bump in the road.



## **Fitness Activities for Students**

When choosing any activity for children, the top priorities should be fun and safety. The type of physical activity your child engages in will depend on their abilities and preference. Community based programs that offer activities for children with special needs can provide suggestions to help both you and your child select the most appropriate activities for your child's interests and goals. There are plenty of fitness activities the entire family can participate in.

### **Some possible options include:**

- Walking or jogging as a family
- Playing tag
- Dancing
- Videos games that incorporates movement
- Water aerobics or swimming
- Walking the dog
- Playing soccer or kickball
- Biking

### **Community sports or organizations**

It is important that all children experience adapted play and physical activity. Organizations like the Special Olympics offers individual and group sports for people with disabilities. While, these programs are not inclusive they offer the benefit of exercise, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, and

encourages social opportunities. There may be situations where a child may need an aid, teacher or a volunteer to help them participate based on his/her individual needs.

Below is a list of local organizations that provide physical activities to children and youth with disabilities located in the Washington D.C. Metropolitan area.\*

*\*(Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc does not endorse any organization listed. Information on this page is for reference purposes only and is not a comprehensive list.)*

### **Special Olympics District of Columbia**

Provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, including track & field, basketball, bowling, soccer, golf, motor activity, tennis, unified sports, volleyball, and bocce.

**Contact:** Call (202) 408-2640

### **KEEN Greater DC**

Provides monthly one-on-one recreational opportunities for children and young adults with developmental and physical disabilities at no cost

to their families and caregivers. Activities include soccer clinics, basketball, swim, music and family sports day.

**Contact:** Call (301)770-3200 or email [info@keengreaterdc.org](mailto:info@keengreaterdc.org)

### **The DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Therapeutic Recreation division**

Provides recreation and athletic programs for D.C. residents of all ages, including adaptive programs and facilities for persons with disabilities.

**Contact information:** Call (202 ) 698-1794 or email [dpr@dc.gov](mailto:dpr@dc.gov)

### **Dreams For Kids DC (DFKDC)**

Provides monthly innovative adaptive clinics, to children between the ages of 4 and 24 with physical or developmental disabilities. Each clinic hosts between 50-150 participants and have a one on one participant to volunteer ratio.

**Contact:** Call (301) 742-7787 or email [gfu@dreamsforkids.org](mailto:gfu@dreamsforkids.org)