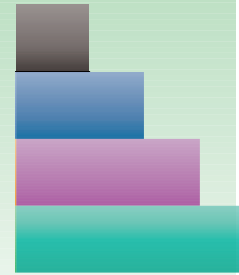


The Mentor Program — “Children Teaching Children”

Pathways believes that the children of today will be the leaders and advocates for greater acceptance of diversity in future generations. We begin training mentors at the age of 8 to work with children with disabilities. We offer a continuum of training, career, and leadership programs, giving mentors opportunities to grow with Pathways through adulthood. We have found that, by creatively blending our programs and raising our expectations up the steps of the pyramid, the strengths of all children can be promoted. It's a “win-win” proposition where communities everywhere can get involved.



Mentor Training Ages 8+

Pathways has designed a formal, two-hour workshop that teaches children to understand and work with children having a broad array of disabilities. The *Mentor Training* opens doors, answers questions, and alleviates the unknowns often associated with disability. It takes the stigma out of the word “disability” and teaches children how to creatively level the playing field so everyone can participate and contribute.

Lead Mentor Program Ages 11+

Children can apply to our *Lead Mentor Program* at age 11 and begin formal training in developing leadership skills, designing innovative programs, creating strategic marketing and business plans, public speaking, grant writing, fundraising, and much more. Each year, the Lead Mentors select team projects that provide hands-on experience advocating for social reform as it relates to the disability population. This program is designed to provide a foundation of skills that can be applied to any realm of public service or leadership they may decide to pursue in adulthood.

Mentor Employment Program Ages 16+

Mentors reaching employment age can apply for administrative internships, camp counselor and job coach positions available within Pathways. These employment opportunities encourage mentors to explore professions associated with the field of disability, and are also an investment in creating future employers who will establish a more accepting workforce for the next generation.



Statewide Outreach and Consultative Services

Blending the Pyramid

Pathways has made it a priority to collaborate with schools and communities to help build quality inclusive programs. We provide guidance, consulting services, conferences, and formal training courses to teach parent leaders, school administrators, recreation directors, and related professionals how to set up programs that model Pathways. We also provide *Parent Action Center (PAC)* trainings to educate parents on how to navigate the maze of disability systems and promote a more successful outcome for their children throughout the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process.

Membership to Pathways

Family or individual/professional membership is open to everyone. Our small membership fee and any contributions (in-kind, volunteer, or financial) help support programs and services we provide to children, families, and communities throughout New Jersey. Members receive our monthly newsletter and discounts on conferences and workshops. The membership form can be downloaded from our website.

Additional Information

Pathways for Exceptional Children, 4 Cherokee Ct., Montville, NJ 07045

Email: mvtpec@aol.com | Phone: 973-334-9240

Pathways is a 501(c)(3) organization. Tax ID: 05-0547509

Pathways is a registered Professional Development Provider with the New Jersey Department of Education.

Visit our website at www.PathwaysKids.org



Team Sports &
Recreation

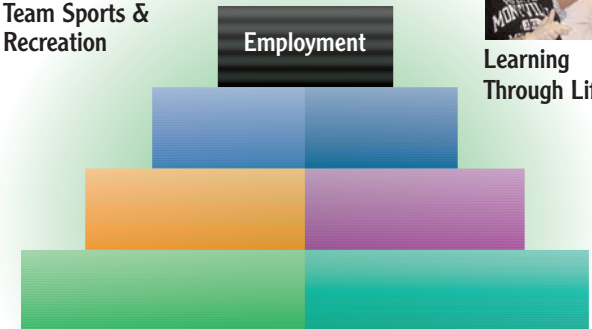


Magic of Reading
and Writing



Learning
Through Life

Employment



Redefining disability



Project Win-Win



Mentor Program



Every child should have the opportunity to fulfill his or her dreams. Yet, sadly, people with disabilities are only half as likely as people without disabilities to achieve a bachelor's degree

or higher in postsecondary education or find employment, and three times more likely to live in poverty.* That is why Pathways for Exceptional Children prepares children with special needs for the real world, and at the same time, prepares the real world for children with special needs.

*Cornell RRTC, 2006 Disability Status Reports for the United States

Pathways' Mission Statement

To teach communities to embrace children with disabilities and to collaboratively find answers that will benefit not only children with special needs, but all children, in their quest to become actively involved, self-sufficient, and contributing members of society.

Goals

1. Empower parents and caregivers of children with special needs to become collaborative leaders who will inspire change and promote positive outcomes not only in their schools and communities but throughout the state.
2. Create flexible, innovative, and collaborative approaches to inclusion that give children with special needs a sense of belonging and strong foundation of community.
3. Develop public/private partnerships dedicated to building programs and supports that begin to prepare children with special needs at very early ages and continuously progress them toward the goal of being self-sufficient and employed by age 21.
4. Provide mentor trainings, programs, and opportunities for children that will lead them ultimately to be understanding and responsible adults who will advocate, educate, and/or employ people with disabilities.
5. Develop an infrastructure and expertise that permit communities to network and leverage resources and provide quality affordable programs and services for children with disabilities and their mentors.

The Pyramid to Success

A Continuum of Programs for Children with Special Needs

Pathways has developed an array of programs that not only incorporate essential skills but also can be implemented in either school or community recreation settings. Classes meet three-to-five times per week to provide early intervention and consistent reinforcement. Our programs are designed to continuously progress children toward the goal of being self-sufficient and employed by age 21. The continuum of programs shown below helps a child take the necessary steps toward building a pyramid to success.



Team Sports and Recreation

Social Skills: ages 3+

Athletics, community-based recreational programs, and field trips each play a key role in a child's development. They teach children to follow rules, take turns, win and lose, develop discipline, work as a team, explore their community and achieve a sense of camaraderie and belonging. Children with disabilities rarely have access to the same after-school or recreation programs offered to other children. Because of this, Pathways collaborates with recreation departments and schools by providing consultative services to help create successful programs for children with disabilities ages 3-21 that run continuously throughout the year.



Magic of Reading & Writing

Literacy Skills: ages 4+

Many children with disabilities, regardless of their diagnoses, encounter difficulties with reading that can prove devastating. The *Magic of Reading* and *Magic of Writing* programs are for children ages 4-10 who have either been classified with reading disabilities or identified as high risk for reading difficulties. These coordinated literacy programs meet twice a week for 45-minute classes in six-week sessions, and offer a "Summer Magic" literacy camp, as well. The goal is to provide the extra help needed to maximize reading, comprehension, and writing skills toward more functional performance in a fun-filled and social environment.



Learning Through Life

Functional Application of Academics: 8+

Children with special needs require experiential-based learning that integrates academics into real life situations to promote greater independence, confidence, and self-sufficiency. In our *Learning Through Life* program, children enjoy learning practical skills such as math through cooking, and differentiating money by using coins as chips for Bingo. They are motivated to read and write while making shopping lists, creating talking books on computers, planning a trip on the internet, writing newspaper articles, or public speaking. Classes run in a series of six-week sessions that include field trips into the community.



Project Win-Win

Preparing for the Workforce: ages 12+

This program integrates 21st century employment skills with early intervention in order to better prepare children with disabilities for a competitive workforce. *Project Win-Win* provides more specialized and intensive training in job readiness, technology, customer service, and business skills for young adults with special needs ages 12 and above. These young adults partner with mentors ages 16 and above who are trained and hired as job coaches. They work together as teams throughout the year under the direction of a class instructor and business professionals, and are given actual work experiences in various career fields they have chosen that build employment skills from an early age.