

PARENTS AS PARTNERS  
St. Johns County School District  
Volume 10, Issue 4



April is **Month of the Military Child**! This special recognition was established by former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger in 1986 to honor the important role children play in contributing to the strength of military families. The Military Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) is encouraging everyone to **Purple UP!** and wear purple on Wednesday April 21, 2021, as a visible way to show support and thank military children for their strength and sacrifice.

<https://mic3.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/4-2021-Purple-Up-Ideas.pdf>



## **ESE Department's**

### **Employee Spotlight**



George Freeman graduated from the University of North Florida with a master's degree in psychology and a minor in behavioral medicine. He has been a Florida Certified Behavior Analyst since the 1990s, and has worked with the district since 2004. As an ESE program specialist, he supports programming for Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities and supervises our district behavior specialists and our district mental health counselors. In addition, he serves on the District Review Committee and monitors restraint and discipline reporting for students with disabilities. He enjoys finding practical solutions for difficult situations and likes to carry a sense of humor along the way. When asked who his favorite people are, he often replies "Those who honestly want to make a difference in a student's life. This is especially true when they are open to doing things a little differently and willing to take a little extra time." George has been an major part of the ESE department and we are appreciative of the knowledge and entertainment he brings to the job.





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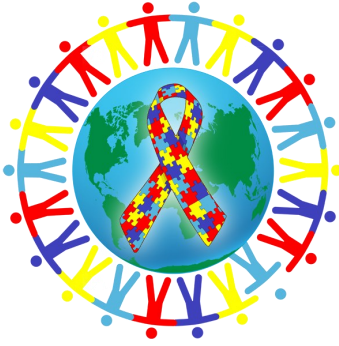


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# April is National Autism Awareness Month



Temple Grandin is an American scientist and activist. She is a prominent proponent for the humane treatment of livestock for slaughter and author of more than 60 scientific papers on animal behavior. She is a consultant to the livestock industry on animal behavior and an autism spokesperson. She is one of the first individuals on the autism spectrum to document the insights she gained from her personal experience of autism. She is currently a faculty member with Animal Sciences in the College of Agricultural Sciences at Colorado State University.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple\\_Grandin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_Grandin)

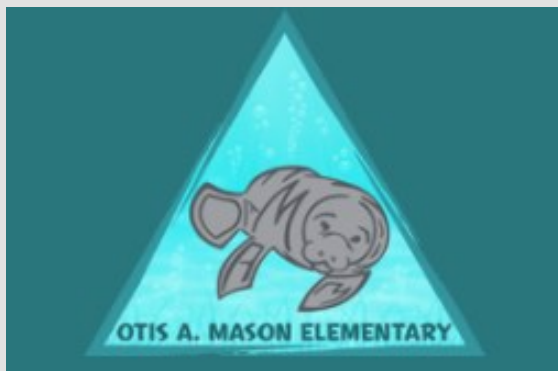






# STUDENT *Spotlight*

Ms. Hayes, Mason Elementary School and The ESE Department would like to shine a light on Paisley R. She has made tremendous growth in both reading and math. She has worked incredibly hard and has grown so much since October 2020.



# Save the Date:

## The 23rd Annual Family Café

The 23rd Annual Family Café will be in Orlando on **June 11-13, 2021**. The Annual Family Café brings together thousands of people with disabilities and their family members for three days of education, training and networking each year. There will be a great range of individual breakout sessions, a packed exhibit hall with dozens of vendors, and a series of special events including Keynote speakers and The Governors' Summit on Disabilities. The Annual Family Café offers families exposure to a range of public and private resources on a grand scale, opportunities to find support by networking with other families, and unprecedented access to policy-making officials. Online registration for The 23rd Annual Family Cafe opened on **February 15, 2021**. To view the 2021 Registration Brochure, go to <https://familycafe.net/new/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2021-Family-Cafe-Registration-Brochure.pdf>. For more information about The Annual Family Café, go to <https://familycafe.net/>.





# Big Brothers Big Sisters.

OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Johns County provides children with a 1-to-1 mentor at local participating elementary or middle schools. For one hour each week, a Big Brother or Big Sister works with the child to provide academic, social or emotional support. Eligible children must be between the ages of 6-12 and must be willing and able to meet one-on-one with a mentor in the school setting.

For more information, please visit our website at

[www.bbbsstjohns.org](http://www.bbbsstjohns.org)

or call Enrollment & Match Coordinator, Kit Caruso at  
904-829-9986, ext. 2.





# MOVERS FOR MOMS

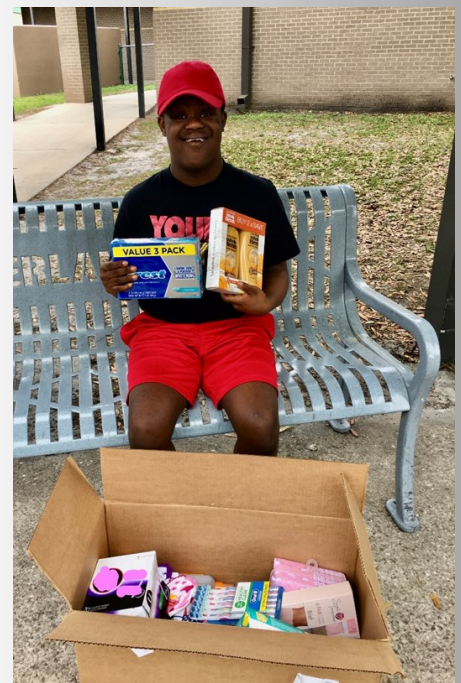
Movers for Moms helps support local women of domestic abuse at Hubbard House and Betty Griffin Center by collecting baby items, personal care items like soaps, hair styling products, shampoos and conditioners, pillows, blankets, slippers, robes, etc. with the goal of making these moms feel special on Mother's Day.



Luke G.

Luke G and Patrick B from Ms. Pollinger's class participated with Switzerland Point Middle School in the Movers for Moms drive. Thank you both for your generosity.

Patrick B.





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Painting with Emotion

**April 20, May 18, June 15, Begins at 5:00 PM.** Painting with Emotion is a monthly group for children between the ages of 12 to 16 years, who are registered with CARD or FDLRS-MDC. The focus of the group is to develop self-awareness skills related to personal emotions and ways to effectively express those emotions through painting. Lessons are sequential, with each having skills that lead into the next. For this reason, it is highly encouraged that participants register for all three dates. Click <https://med.jax.ufl.edu/calendar/attachments/6694/2021cardfdlrspaintingwithemotion.pdf>

for a downloadable flyer. Click [https://ufhjax.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIpCO-hqTMoH9AWtT1aB630o6\\_gg6IhH6ck](https://ufhjax.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIpCO-hqTMoH9AWtT1aB630o6_gg6IhH6ck) to register online. For more information please contact [brett.walden@jax.ufl.edu](mailto:brett.walden@jax.ufl.edu).

## Are Your Child's IEP Goals SMART?

**May 4, Begins at 5:00 PM.** Attendees to this online training will be provided with a brief overview of how goals are developed and an in depth understanding of SMART IEP goals. This will include defining SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable/Achievable, Relevant/Realistic and Timely and what it looks like in IEP goals. The attendees will also have the opportunity for hands on experience in developing a SMART IEP goal from a scenario provided by the presenter. Click [https://ufhjax.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvf-qhqT4rHtFNfdb5\\_KLqeSMHpcBiws\\_z](https://ufhjax.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvf-qhqT4rHtFNfdb5_KLqeSMHpcBiws_z) to register online. For more information please contact [gina.bauer@jax.ufl.edu](mailto:gina.bauer@jax.ufl.edu).

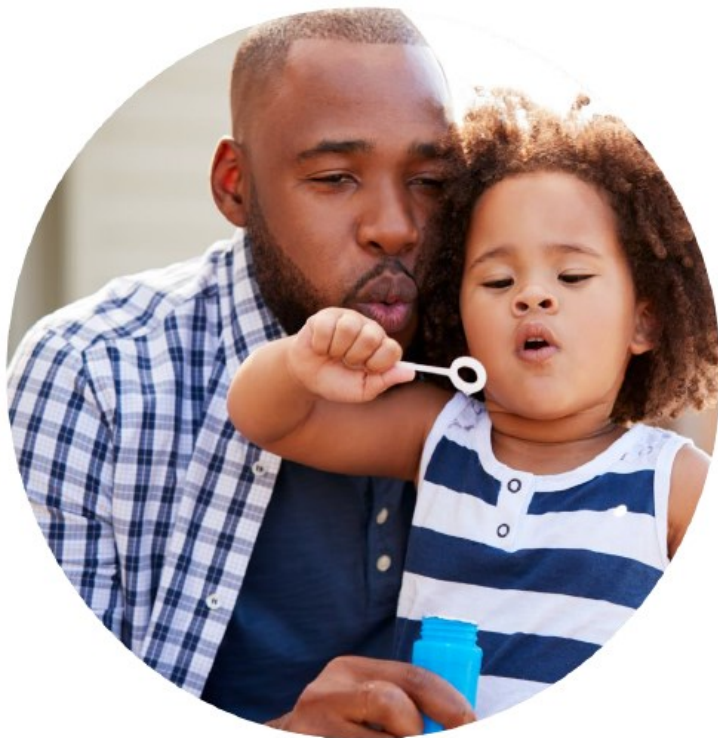
## Fridays with FDLRS – Resources for Parents and Families

**May 21, 11:30 AM – 1:00PM,** The FDLRS Administration Project and Associate Centers Network are proud to offer a series of parent webinars to take place virtually over the 2020-2021 school year. The 90-minute webinars are conducted during lunch hours on a designated Friday and are free of charge and open to all. Register <https://www.fdlrs.org/free-parent-webinars-fridays-fdlrs> and the URL will be sent to you in an email the day prior to the event. For more information contact [ahearnm@nefec.org](mailto:ahearnm@nefec.org)

## 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Tools for Success Family Conference

**June 25,** A conference for and about families of children with special needs ages birth to 22. Free admission and free parking. Tools for Success helps families gain information on available resources and topics that affect their child's education and wellbeing. This year Tools will be held online. For more information call FDLRS/Crown at (904) 346-4601. Click <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tools-for-success-family-conference-2021-tickets-124588059239> to register online. A downloadable flyer can be found by clicking <https://med.jax.ufl.edu/calendar/attachments/6554/afadfd.pdf>.





## Counseling Services

Counseling can take place in office, in school, in home, via telehealth, or in the St. John's County. Specialized therapeutic treatment includes Infant Mental Health Counseling, Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Play Therapy.

## Targeted Case Management (TCM)

Targeted Case Managers work with children and families to assess their needs and help make referrals to community resources. To qualify, a child must have Medicaid, be age 0 to 17, and have 1) Behavioral or emotional difficulties at home and/or school; OR 2) A diagnosis that is not a developmental challenge; OR 3) Destructive behaviors that may cause self-harm or harm to others.

**Care Coordination:** Care Coordinators target youth who are frequently admitting to local Crisis Stabilization Units (CSUs). This program works with the family unit to address behavioral and emotional difficulties in all settings for higher need youth.



Children's Home Society  
of Florida

### Our Vision

A world where children realize their full potential

### Our Mission

Building bridges to success for children

### Our Common Bond

Caring, Integrity, Respect, Commitment,  
Leadership, Excellence



For more information or to make a  
referral contact us at:  
904-510-6504 or

[Buckner.Clinical@chsfl.org](mailto:Buckner.Clinical@chsfl.org)





# BROOKS<sup>®</sup> Rehabilitation **Pediatric Recreation**

## Plant Pals

Join us for an outdoor class in a local  
community garden!

**Fridays**  
**April 9<sup>th</sup> - June 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**4:30-5:30pm**

**Ages 6 years old and up**

Participants will have their own raised garden bed to plant flowers, herbs, and vegetables. This class promotes physical exploration, following directions, social participation, and education on planting, growing, weeding, and tending to a garden. Caregiver participation is required.



**2202 Bishop Estates Rd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32259**

This class has a maximum of 6 participants for the 12-week session.  
Each participant is allowed 1 caregiver to maintain social distancing guidelines.



To register please call (904) 345-7501 or email [PediatricRecreation@BrooksRehab.org](mailto:PediatricRecreation@BrooksRehab.org)

3599 University Blvd S. | Jacksonville, FL 32216

[BrooksRehab.org](http://BrooksRehab.org) #WeAreBrooks





# Monday, May 3rd– Friday May 7th





### **Program Specialists**

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Private Instructional Personnel

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Virtual School, Surrogate Parents, Parent  
Advisory Meetings

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Assessment, Diploma Options/Deferrals

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Hearing

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Curriculum, Other Health Impaired, Orthopedically  
Impaired, Traumatic Brain Injured,  
FSA/EOC Waivers

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**Lisa Thacker**, (904) 547-7530 (office)

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Autism Spectrum Disorders, Access Points  
Curriculum

### **St. Johns County School District Exceptional Student Education**

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OT/PT, Assistive Tech, 504, McKay Scholarships

## **CHARACTER COUNTS!**



**Jill Sumner**, Executive Secretary

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**Carlyn Whitty**, Confidential Staff Secretary

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**Mission Statement: To identify and meet the unique educational needs of exceptional students and to provide support and resources to enhance educational opportunities so they become productive citizens.**

ESE programs and services address the unique needs of students who are gifted in kindergarten through 12th grade and those with mild, moderate and severe disabilities from age three until they graduate with a regular diploma or until their 22nd birthday. ESE programs and services are designed to assist students in reaching their educational goals through the use of instructional and behavioral approaches which are research-based and exemplify best practices. Technology is used in many creative ways to meet student needs as well.

ESE services are available at all district schools for gifted students and students who have mild to moderate disabilities. PreK students with disabilities and students with more significant disabilities are served in cluster programs at selected sites. Program support is provided to students, parents and school personnel by program specialists based at the district office. Students with disabilities who are not eligible for services through the ESE program may be eligible for an accommodations plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

We hope that you find this newsletter informative and useful. *Parents As Partners Newsletters* are posted to the St. Johns County School District web site at:

<http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/ese/>