



FOCUS MATTERS

Because the creatively wired and socially challenged should not have to go it alone...

Fall 2014

Thanks to you, this issue's highlights include:

- The FOCUS Festival for Autism
- FOCUS on our Community
- FOCUS on Healthy Living
- FOCUS Summer Program
- FOCUS Programs
- Check Our Our Blog!
- FOCUS Friends in Faraway Places!

Upcoming Events:

Paint for a Cause:
Saturday, October 18
12-2:30 PM

We will see you there!



FOCUS Center for Autism
326 Albany Turnpike
PO BOX 452
Canton, CT 06019
(860) 693-8809



13th Annual FOCUS Festival for Autism: An Outstanding Time!

Our signature event, the **FOCUS** Festival for Autism, was bigger and better than ever! More than 350 people enjoyed an afternoon of music, games, activities and fun at Mills Pond Park. Special guests Rocky the Rock Cat, Tinkerbell and Acorn the Clown, entertained the crowd and met with their adoring fans. Our vendors provided information, resources and products for all to enjoy.

A mix of old and new activities kept everyone on their toes! Children of all ages participated in the annual Cupcake Walk and Potato Sack Race. They scavenged for bubble gum as an update to last year's Starburst search. Some competed in the inaugural Three Legged Race!

This year's Teacup Raffle was awesome! There were fabulous baskets and prizes for all to see. One lucky attendee won the grand prize, an iPad Air!

Thank you to our anonymous donor and Health Consultants Group, our **Media Sponsor**, HamletHub, our fantastic vendors and donors, our volunteers from **Kohls #661** of Canton, **#1448** of Berlin, and **#969** of Waterbury, Sharon Cable and the **Litchfield County Autism Spectrum Association**, James Cable, Gerard Hector and Friends, and the **FOCUS** staff, volunteers, family and friends who made this event possible!



Above: FOCUS with children from Tariffville Elementary School's Class of 2014



Above: Our Day Program with their miniature race cars.



Above: Flying high on the Eurobungee at the Festival for Autism

FOCUS on our Community

Over the past few months, **FOCUS** has received generous donations from community members who value the work that we do!

Thank you to:

- Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, Simsbury Office
- Peter M. Bakker Agency, New Hartford Office
- The Class of 2014 at Tariffville Elementary School, Simsbury

Your donations directly benefit children and young adults on the Autism Spectrum. We appreciate your support!

FOCUS on our Programs

FOCUS has been extremely busy! Our Day Program took two field trips to the Torrington Home Depot in May. The children had an excellent time building miniature racecars and lawn mowers, which helped them practice several hand-eye, coordination and fine motor skills.

The Day Program is proud to announce that three children have received achievement awards. **Blaise P.** received his Certificate in Elementary Education, **Nina K.** received her Promotion to Secondary Education, and **Max P.** received his Certificate of Completion from his home district! Congratulations!

FOCUS on Healthy Living

UNICO National and **FOCUS** are partnering to improve the lives of children on the Autism Spectrum. UNICO granted **FOCUS** \$1,900 to fund a Healthy Living program that engages children in activities that promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

Enrollment is Easy!

To request an application for our Extended Day Treatment Program, call (860) 693-8809!



Above: Channeling their inner soccer stars!



Above: Learning their safety hooks at Soarin' Indoors!



*Above: **FOCUS** and Heart International at our Week 6 Talent Show!*

FOCUS Summer Fun!

The **FOCUS** Summer Program provides six weeks of fun and social learning! Our children are immersed in activities that encourage them to make friends, improve their social skills, and expand their comfort zones.

Each exciting week has been featured in our **FOCUS** on Autism blog! Here are some highlights from the summer:

- Everyone had soccer fever during our Summer Program! Playing soccer taught our campers teamwork and sportsmanship.
- The Summer Program visited many fun places; including Soarin' Indoors, The Children's Museum of West Hartford, Petals and Paws, Salmon Brook and Elizabeth Parks, and Roaring Brook Nature Center.
- The Wilderness School provided adventure education activities that exposed our campers to new experiences!
- The Gamers Box made their annual visit during Week 5! It was lots of fun!
- We had two fantastic Talent Shows!

FOCUS Friends in Faraway Places!

Konnichiwa! **FOCUS** had a visit from our new friends at Heart International during Week 6 of the Summer Program. Located in Fukuoka, Japan, Heart International is a Japanese language school specializing in cultural immersion activities that correspond with their teaching curriculum. **FOCUS** learned about Heart International through alumnus Alan Looper, who is good friends with founder Chihome Irie.

During their visit, Heart International observed **FOCUS**'s unique clinical Model of Treatment to better understand how to work with children on the Autism Spectrum. They also provided an interactive lesson on Japanese culture that our children truly enjoyed! We're hoping this initial visit turns into an international partnership!

Check out our Blog!

Have you seen our blog, **FOCUS** on Autism? It is a part of our brand new website that shouldn't be missed! Our resident bloggers write about topics related to **FOCUS** and Autism Spectrum Disorders.

We want this blog to spark conversations. You make that happen! If one of our entries interests you, share it! Our blog can be shared on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other forms of social media. You can also leave us a message on our "Contact Us" page and let us know what you want to see in our next entry!

YOU Make a Difference!

FOCUS offers programs that help children learn to grow both socially and emotionally. **Your** donation today makes a difference for our children and families!

Your support funds:

- Scholarships for children in need
- A nutritious breakfast for eighteen children a day
- After School programming for eighty children a week

Donating to **FOCUS** has never been easier! Click the "Donate Today" button on our brand new website to make a donation online!

Save the Date: Paint for A Cause!

Get your creative juices flowing! Join **FOCUS** on Saturday, October 18 from 12-2:30 PM for an afternoon of fun at Muse Paintbar, located in beautiful Blue Back Square, West Hartford! Tickets are \$45, and includes the canvas and painting supplies used during this session. 40% from each painting will benefit **FOCUS**!

For more information, visit the event listing on our website calendar!



Above: One of the beautiful photos in our Festival for Autism blog entry!



*You give teens on the Autism Spectrum a place to belong. Support **FOCUS** today!*

