

Staff Appreciation

Staff Appreciation is one of the most anticipated days of the year at Spaulding! It's our chance to pause and celebrate the true heart of our organization—our incredible team. The work they do each day for the children in our care is nothing short of remarkable. While one day will never feel like enough, we hope it serves as a reminder of just how valued and appreciated our team is. This year's event was filled with laughter, gratitude, and camaraderie, with more than 200 of our dedicated staff coming together. Seeing that level of turnout is truly humbling and inspiring. Thank you for being part of this amazing community and for making our mission possible every single day!

Nicole Desharnais
Board Liaison & Communications Specialist

Learning



Student Art

Paint

This month in the art room we have been experimenting with paint! Students have been creating painted paper that we will use for future projects. We have been using rollers, sponges, and all sorts of different brushes to apply paint to the paper. These beautiful pieces are from Stephanie's class!

Robyn Allen,
Art & Music Teacher



Enjoying More Fruits and Vegetables

Nutrition

Eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables is associated with reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, lower blood pressure and prevention of some cancers. The goal is to eat 2 ½ cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit each day. This can be reached by filling ½ of your plate with fruits and vegetables.

Tips on increasing your intake of fruits and vegetables:



- Add vegetables to foods like pizza
- Add fruits to foods like salads
- Try making a smoothie with fruits & vegetables
- Try having a veggie wrap made with low-fat cheese & a whole wheat tortilla
- Try eating your vegetables grilled or roasted
- Keep cut veggies on hand for snacks or side dishes
- Add pureed apples, berries, or pears into marinades for a sweet sauce on grilled meat, poultry or in pancakes or waffles
- Add vegetables to scrambled eggs or omelets
- Top baked potatoes with beans and salsa or broccoli and low-fat cheese
- Add grated, shredded, or chopped vegetables to pasta dishes, casseroles, soups or stews
- Make fruit your dessert: slice a banana lengthwise and top with low-fat yogurt and nuts or berries

LesleyRobie, RDN, CNSC
Registered Dietitian

Campus Day

We were trilled to bring Campus Day back to Spaulding! This cherished tradition is all about celebrating the heart of our community by bringing families together on our beautiful campus for a day of fun, laughter, and connection.

From start to finish, the day was packed with activities for every age. Families enjoyed sand art bottles, face painting, carnival games, temporary tattoos, a photo booth, bubbles, chalk art, and a classic dunk tank featuring our brave staff. The Choose Love Bus also made its way to campus, adding inspiration and excitement to the day!

For those who love games, the adaptive playground hosted oversized favorites like Jenga, Checkers, and Connect Four. With so much to do, kids and adults alike were sure to find something to enjoy together!

It was a delight to welcome families back to Campus Day! It was a joy filled day and reminder of the power of community and the incredible bonds that help every child thrive.

Nicole Desharnais
Board Liaison & Communication Specialist

Happenings



ATTAIN



Our behavioral health department (as well as some staff from other departments) recently participated in an on-campus training that focused on suicide prevention for neurodivergent youth. The training provided invaluable information on recognizing the unique risk factors and warning signs of suicide in neurodivergent youth, as well as strategies for intervention and support. We had a lot of collaborative conversations throughout the training, sharing insights and building a stronger collective understanding of how to best support this population. We are committed to applying this knowledge to enhance our services and create a safer, more inclusive environment for neurodivergent youth seeking support within our department. Thank you, Kelly, from ATTAIN for being willing to bring this training to us!

Sarah Smolen, MS
Clinician



ABA Kitchen: The Secret Recipe for Reinforcement Success!



Every great chef has a secret ingredient... and in Applied Behavior Analysis, ours is REINFORCEMENT! It's the magic sprinkle that turns "I can't" into "I did it!"

Recipe for Reinforcement

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of something the learner LOVES (stickers, praise, high-fives, music, you name it!)
- A pinch of perfect timing
- A big scoop of genuine enthusiasm
- Optional: silly dance moves for extra flavor

Directions:

1. Mix in Motivation - Start with a reinforcer the learner really enjoys. Remember, what works for one might not work for another.
2. Serve it Fresh - Deliver reinforcement right after the desired behavior, while it's still warm (the behavior, not the cookie).
3. Season with Specific Praise - "Nice job asking for help!" is way tastier than a plain old "Good job."
4. Slow Bake for Independence - Over time, reduce the frequency so the skill stands strong on its own.

Chef's Tip:

Positive reinforcement adds a desirable stimulus (like praise or a reward) to increase the likelihood of a behavior. Negative reinforcement takes away an aversive stimulus (like an annoying sound) to also increase the likelihood of a behavior. Both strengthen a behavior but differ in whether something is added or removed.

Remember: Every success, no matter how small, deserves a sprinkle of celebration. Because in the ABA kitchen, we know happy learners are hungry learners!

Nicole Hilliker,
Behavior Specialist



Back To School

As summer winds down, the familiar rhythm of a new school year is coming. This transition can stir a mix of emotions in both children and caregivers, from excitement about new friends and teachers to anxiety about new routines and challenges. With a little preparation and a lot of communication, you can help make the return to school a positive and smooth experience for the whole family.

Here are some helpful tips for families:

- Create a "command center": Set up a central spot for school essentials like backpacks, lunchboxes, and shoes to avoid chaos in the morning.
- Prioritize open communication! Encourage your child to share their feelings, whether they are excited or nervous. Acknowledging their fears and reassuring them can help ease anxiety.
- Teach resilience: Remind your child that setbacks are a part of learning. Help them see challenges as opportunities for growth and problem-solving.
- Stay in touch with the school: Keep an eye on the school calendar and check the school website or app for important updates, including events and closures.

Most of all, be engaged and ready to navigate the new school year together. When kids feel supported, they are more open to talking with their adults about the highs and the lows!

Sarah Smolen, MS
Clinician

Permanency



Fisher Cats Game

Our students at Spaulding Academy & Family Services love getting the chance to participate in events in the community. When we were given the opportunity to watch a Fisher Cats game from box seats, we knew it was an offer we couldn't pass up. The excitement on the students' faces could be seen from a mile away. With plenty of snacks and drinks to go around, the students made their appearance at the game. Many of the kids sat outside of the box, eyes locked in on the game with smiles on their faces. Others chose a quieter setting, choosing to eat and watch the game from inside. Some let their passion and excitement for the game out, cheering loudly to show their support for the Fisher Cats. Being able to see our students that happy and excited made the challenges of getting a big group of students off campus worth it. It fills my heart to know that we are able to provide such unique and incredible experiences to our kids here at Spaulding. I'd like to thank Mike Ventura for sharing his box with Spaulding, giving our students and staff this wonderful and memorable opportunity.

Dakota Lane,
House Manager

Residential

