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Serving Children and Adults with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities for over 70 Years

August 7, 2020

PAUL TORRES
Executive Director

Dear Individuals, Families, and AHRC Suffolk Team Members:

OFFICERS

JOHN SMITH
President

JOSEPH ZIFCHOCK
Treasurer

JOSEPH CASSARINI
Secretary

What started out as a normal week, a week of the “new normal” I should say, quickly changed with Tropical Storm Isaias impacting our region on Tuesday. With such a widespread reach across Long Island, many Suffolk County communities experienced wind and tree damage and some residents are still without power today. I hope you all weathered the storm safely. Although several of our residences lost power, through the use of generators coupled with the ingenuity and resilience of our staff and individuals, AHRC Suffolk is mustering through this latest challenge. Thankfully no programs suffered any direct damage.

DIRECTORS

Deborah Pflieger

Unfortunately as a result of Tuesday’s storm, power to our Saul & Elaine Seiff Educare Center was impacted and school was unable to reopen for the remainder of this week. Prior to the storm, the school was well into their summer session and was in a good routine. Since about 50% of our students returned for in-person instruction, they are able to observe social distancing guidelines during the school day. Aside from days without power, remote instruction continues for the students who did not return to the building. Our September reopening plan for the students and staff at Educare was submitted to NY State Education Department yesterday and shared with families. Staff members, parents, AHRC Suffolk leadership and the Educare Administrative team collaborated to put together the comprehensive plan, a link to which can be found [HERE](#).

In our Adult Day Services, we continue to reach out to families daily to offer supports and gain confidence in our COVID Safety Plan. Each program site is diligently adhering to all our Safety Guidelines, which includes all of the most recent OPWDD COVID regulations and agency COVID-related policy and procedures. All staff and individuals are following the plan, which includes wearing face coverings, social distancing, continuous disinfecting and cleaning protocols, and frequent scheduled personal hygiene breaks for hand washing and hand sanitizer. We are grateful to the many families that have stepped up and agreed to help us with transporting their loved ones back to day program. Our staff are willing and ready to support them and engage them in meaningful activities when they arrive. On Tuesday, we launched our Virtual Day Hab called *My Choice*, for those individuals without transportation options. We continue providing our 2-hour Zoom classes with a variety of interactive games and activities for those who can participate. I hope you saw the poignant testimonials in this week’s edition of [Stories of Hope](#).

We have weathered many uncertainties and challenges during these last five months. It’s clear that when we are working together and supporting each other, we make each other, and our AHRC Suffolk community, stronger. Thank you for continuing the hard and dedicated work, and for your support.

Stay well, stay safe and thank you for all you do,

Paul H. Torres
Executive Director



Are you a member of AHRC Suffolk? An active, strong membership provides our chapter with a louder voice to our elected officials when advocating for policies and services that directly impact and benefit individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Become a member [HERE](#).

Your gift to our **COVID-19 Relief Fund** helps us purchase personal protective equipment, provide expanded medical and mental health services, increase our technology, and so much more. To donate, visit www.ahrcsuffolk.org/covidrelief

(donations, marked **COVID-19 Relief Fund**, can also be mailed to the address at the top of this page)