



an update for friends of Meeting Street

FALL 2010

HANDS ON!



Meeting Street

A Hard Worker, for Himself, and Others

Everyone knows Joey and everyone loves Joey. He has been a part of the Meeting Street family since he started in The Bright Futures Early Learning Center when he was three years old. Since that time Joey has steadily grown and progressed and today he is a social and mature 16-year-old young man in 10th grade at The Carter School at Meeting Street.

"Joey is a good student who works hard. He is just a really nice guy, who looks to help others in any way he can," says Jane DeMelo, who was Joey's 9th grade teacher. "One of his favorite things to do is read to his classmates and he does that very well. He captures their attention as he reads. He uses different voices for different characters and knows how and when to emphasize different parts of the book. The class loves it!"

Joey was born with Cerebral Palsy and has developmental challenges. Each year he has worked hard to develop his personal skills and academic

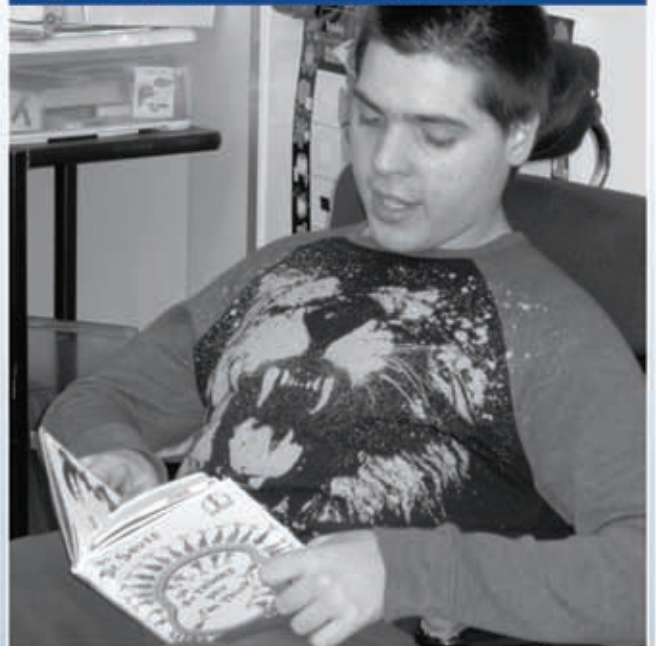
capabilities. His communication has improved dramatically and he can easily carry on a conversation with his peers, his teachers, and even Meeting Street's President, John Kelly. Although his speech is measured at times, he articulates incredibly well. Joey speaks so well and knows so much about Meeting Street that he recently led a tour through the building.

Joey is always quick to tell a joke or ask how your day is going. As Joey's speech has improved, so has his confidence. Joey has thrived in the vocational curriculum in The Carter School. He loves using his power wheelchair to collect the recycling throughout the building each week. It gives him a chance to see everyone and be "Social Joey" while doing the pick-ups.

Joey not only watches out for himself, but he watches out for his classmates too. Mark Quinlan, a Teacher Assistant adds, "He is like another Teacher Assistant, he helps watch over the class and helps his classmates stay on track and do their best." Joey has made a tremendous amount of progress over the years. We can't wait to see what he will do next!

JOEY

Age: 16, 10th Grade in The Carter School



One of Joey's favorite activities is reading. He loves reading stories to his classmates.

Meeting Street Services:

Education, speech, physical, and occupational therapy

Time at Meeting Street:

13 years, began in The Bright Futures Early Learning Center

Challenges:

Cerebral Palsy

Milestones:

Becoming more and more independent, improved speech

Personality:

Very polite, loves to tell jokes, a friend to everyone

What he enjoys most: Movies, Elvis, comedy, reading to the class, recycling



Gabriella's Story

Gabriella is a fun loving, energetic little girl who comes to Meeting Street weekly for Pediatric Outpatient Therapy. Gabriella was diagnosed with Down Syndrome and started in Meeting Street Early Intervention (EI) at 6 weeks old. While Gabriella received individual speech, physical and occupational therapy, her favorite activity was her group therapy sessions.

Meeting Street's therapeutic groups give Gabriella a chance to socialize with kids her age with similar challenges. At Meeting Street Gabriella took part in a music group, aquatic therapy group and a Gymboree group run by our experts. The interaction with her peers helped her develop her communication and social skills.

When Gabriella turned three-years-old, she was transitioned out of EI into Outpatient Therapy at Meeting Street. Gabriella's mother, Tabitha spoke on the importance of staying at Meeting Street. "Gabriella had made so much progress in EI, that we didn't want her to stop coming here. The continuity of services is very important. We have great trust in the Meeting Street therapists and Gabriella is very comfortable here so she learns a lot, very quickly."

Thanks to the therapy and the hard work of Gabriella and her family, she is able to do many things that she could not do before. Gabriella receives speech and occupational therapy, and mainly focuses on sensory integration, fine motor skills, communication, and activities of daily living. Her improved skills give her an abundance of confidence.

"Meeting Street has given Gabriella the confidence to feel that she can do things independently and she is so happy when she learns something new. I, too, learn something every time I come to Meeting Street. Her therapists meet with us before and after every session and we figure out what is and isn't working and how I can reinforce what she is learning at home," Tabitha adds. "I feel like we are all on the same team."



Back to School!

The start of a new school year is an exciting time here at Meeting Street. Students are eager to see their friends and teachers and therapists are happy to see old and new students. One of the ways Meeting Street likes to kick off a new school year is through our Back To School Celebration! This year's theme was "Everybody Has a Dream." The event was a lot of fun as students and staff cheered for Meeting Street! Our good friend Karen Adams helped welcome our students back to Meeting Street and introduced each class as they presented their dream or goal for the year.

GABRIELLA

Age: 4, Outpatient Therapy



Gabriella takes a break from therapy by showing off her creative Mr. Potato Head design.

Meeting Street Services:

EI, outpatient therapy, occupational therapy, speech/ language therapy

Time at Meeting Street:

4 years

Challenges:

Down Syndrome

Milestones:

Speech improvement – easier to understand, improved fine motor skills such as using scissors and putting her shoes on

Gabriella's Personality:

Happy, fun-loving child, enjoys playing with her younger siblings: Gloria who is 3 years old, and Angelo who is 1.

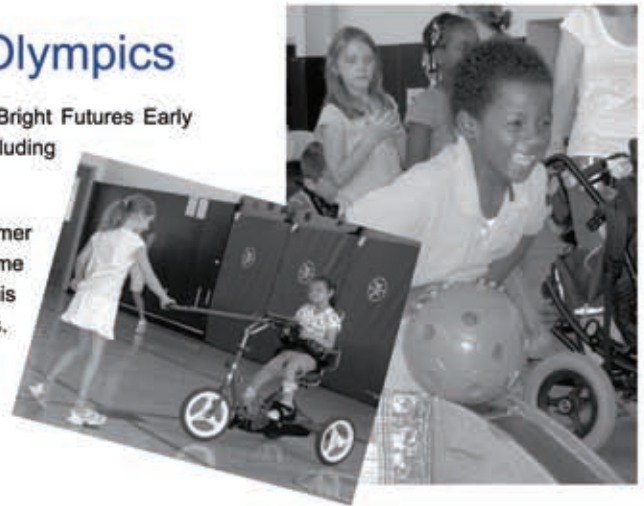
What she Enjoys Most:

Disney movies, going to the playground and pool, playing with her dolls, and being social and friendly to anyone she meets

Everyone Had Fun During The Summer Olympics

This year's 2nd annual Meeting Street Summer Olympics was a hit! Students from The Bright Futures Early Learning Center, The Grace School and The Carter School competed in a variety of events including baseball, relay races, obstacle courses, beanbag tosses, and bowling.

A special thanks to our own Mary Ellen Powers for her role in planning Meeting Street's Summer Olympics. Meeting Street would also like to thank community volunteers who gave their time to help out. Al Colella of the Vaughn Avedisian Fund at the RI Foundation and two of his grandchildren and former student Jade Lanni helped with the events and motivated the teams. Students were very appreciative to have them join in the fun.



A Committed Community Partner



Students in The Carter School are leading Meeting Street's Project Green, a team effort to make sure that Meeting Street remains an environmentally friendly leader. As the 1st LEED certified school building in the state, Meeting Street is committed to our green approach and have created a program that helps teach vocational skills to our Carter School students. The effort has been very successful thanks to

the hard work of the students and the special partnership they have created with Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC).

Each week Carter School students go around to every classroom and office to collect and sort any recyclable materials. It is a major effort in that we have 20 classrooms and over 40 offices in the building. After completing the pick-up and sorting, students are responsible for going to the RIRRC to dispose of the materials. The staff at RIRRC is always happy to see the students and is always impressed by how well they have sorted the paper, bottles and plastics.

This summer the RIRRC made changes in their process and equipment to help both our students and other Rhode Islanders. Bins were moved and platforms were put in place so individuals in wheelchairs, others with limited mobility, or individuals who were just too short could do their job. Lynn Domenici, Meeting Street's vocational coordinator, who accompanies the students to RIRRC, was surprised that all the changes were made. "We never asked them to make any changes; they just saw the need and took the time and effort to make changes to support our students. This type of community support makes a great difference in the lives our students and the lives of other Rhode Islanders. It is appreciated by both the students and the staff."

2010 Meeting Street Family Fair a Great Success!

This year's Meeting Street Family Fair was a tremendous success. We would like to give a big thank you to all of the sponsors and businesses who supported this great event.

White Carlin & Kelly
Lifespan
Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
ADJ Management "Dunkin Donuts"
AAA of New England
Lehigh Realty
McGarrhan Roofing
Eastside Marketplace

Coca-Cola Enterprises Inc.
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Calise & Sons Bakery
Sysco



Congratulations!!!

Meeting Street congratulates Amanda McMullen, Sr. Director of External Relations on being selected for this year's Providence Business News 40 Under Forty. This honor recognizes Rhode Island's top professionals for excelling in their professions and being involved in the community.

Thank You!

The 5th Annual Capuano Insurance Company Golf Tournament to benefit Meeting Street raised over \$26,000 to support programs and services of The Grace School.

The 29th Annual Allstate Insurance and Bay Realty Cocktail Reception hosted by co-chairs Robert B. Bolton and William E. Hannan from Allstate Insurance Company and Jay Readyhough from Bay Realty Ltd., was a huge success with over 200 guests and raised over \$9,000.

The 2nd Anniversary Memorial Bike Run, in memory of Carter School teacher, Rosie (Sabitoni) Randall and her husband Brad raised \$4,000 to support Meeting Street.

To support events at Meeting Street, please go to www.meetingstreet.org



Learn more about a
Meeting Street child like

brianna

who attends The Bright Futures Early Learning Center



Healthier and Happier Kids

As the incidence of childhood obesity escalates in the United States, data suggests that children with special needs may be at greater risk of being overweight than their peers. The increased risk can be due to limitations in mobility, a result of medications that may increase appetite or slow down metabolism, or because their disability hinders their desire to participate in physical activity. In addition to the health consequences of obesity, overweight kids also are likely to have self-esteem and quality of life issues.

Meeting Street is supporting children who are struggling with weight issues through the very popular Healthy Kids therapy group offered through our Outpatient Therapy program. Healthy Kids is set up as a fun-filled "boot camp" that meets twice a week and includes running, sit-ups and strength building exercises. Children, and their parents, also learn about nutrition and healthy eating habits.

Mitchell, a nine-year-old third grader who is overweight, has started his second session of Healthy Kids and his family has seen a change in him. "Before Mitchell started in the group, he was very anti-exercise and was anxious about starting the group," explains his father, Danny. "Once he got started, his attitude changed and so did his activity level. Mitchell was motivated by the other kids and pushed harder to keep up with them. He moves a lot during the sessions and always works up a sweat. I've noticed a change at home too. Now he is much more willing to bounce on the trampoline or play tag after dinner."

Mitchell lost two pounds in the first session but more significant is that his new habits helped decrease his BMI (muscle mass: fat mass ratio) by 12 percent. Mitchell's endurance and strength also improved. Another benefit is Mitchell's improved self-esteem. "Since this is Mitchell's second session, he has a lot more confidence. He now leads the others in sit-ups and is first to ask one of his friends in the group to race with him. He really enjoys it," adds his dad who believes that Mitchell is now a healthier kid and a happier one too.



CVS All Kids Can Race

The CVS/Caremark Downtown road race was held on Sunday, Sept. 19 in front of the Providence Place Mall. Over 30 Meeting Street students participated in the races. Students from The Grace School had fun as they raced toward the finish line. Races ranged from 50 to 800 meters based on age. Students, parents, and staff cheered participants on as they passed by. Thanks to Meeting Street's Mary Cooper, our adaptive physical education teacher, for helping to organize and get our students trained for the races.



Making Music Making Connections

Meeting Street students held a very successful end of school year musical performance. The production showcased African, Native American, Middle Eastern, Indian, Irish, Klezmer, and American Folk music and cultures through songs, costumes and instruments. Thank you to VSA of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island State Council for the Arts (RISCA) for giving students the opportunity to learn about these cultures.



Mary Ellen Powers, a Leader and an Advocate

This summer, Meeting Street staff member Mary Ellen Powers was honored to speak at the 2010 Special Olympics Global Congress held in Morocco. Mary Ellen was also one of eight athletes nominated for the next athlete chairperson for the International Board of Directors for Special Olympics Inc. She described the trip as an "amazing experience and an opportunity of a lifetime." Meeting Street would also like to recognize Mary Ellen for her involvement in successfully advocating to have the State of Rhode Island "Stop the R Word." The Rhode Island Department of Mental Health, Retardation, and Hospitals has now changed its name to The Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals.



Achilles Kids Track Event- Celebrating Victory!

Throughout the school year Meeting Street students will once again be participating in the Achilles Kids program during physical education classes. Meeting Street is the first and only Rhode Island school to host The Achilles Kids, a program that promotes physical activity as an important part of every child's healthy development.

Meeting Street Happenings

Join us for these events, help us raise funds, and have a great time doing it. For more information on upcoming events, visit www.meetingstreet.org. Mark your calendar!



Meeting Street Goes Back-Pack To School

For many families on a tight budget, getting ready to go back to school can be a financial burden. With close to three-quarters of our general education students receiving scholarships this year (over \$200,000), we are pleased that for the third year, every Grace School student benefitted from the 'Gear for Grades' program – a partnership between the Citizens Bank Foundation and Resources for Rhode Island Education (RRIE). Citizens Bank customers donate the school supplies at bank branches and Bank employees and volunteers fill the backpacks. Kathleen Samways, RRIE organizer for the Gears for Grades program, called Meeting Street, "one of our most exciting giveaway sites with Meeting Street students from all over the state receiving backpacks for back-to-school readiness. In this way, students return to school with some of the most basic tools they need for success."



UPCOMING MEETING STREET EVENTS

October

Meeting Street Holiday Card Sales (Oct-Dec)

- 19 Free Parent Seminar: 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Stress Relief Strategies for Parents and Caregivers of Children with Special Needs
To RSVP or for more information please call 401-533-9299 or email info@meetingstreet.org
- 27 ASD Grandparent Network
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
October topic – "Your Grandchild's Financial Future: Creating Wills and Trusts"
To RSVP or for more information please call 401-533-9299 or email info@meetingstreet.org
- 29 Halloween Parade

November

- 1 - 25 Pennies for Turkeys – Student penny drive to provide Thanksgiving dinners to families in need
- 16 Free Parent Seminar: 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
How to Get Your Picky Eater to Eat
To RSVP or for more information please call 401-533-9299 or email info@meetingstreet.org
- 18 ASD Grandparent Network
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
November topic – "Holiday Tips"
To RSVP or for more information please call 401-533-9299 or email info@meetingstreet.org

UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS

October

- 18 2010 Meeting Street Golf Tournament
TPC Boston in Norton, MA
For more information please contact Aimee Harvey at 401-533-9230 or aharvey@meetingstreet.org

November

- 18 Meeting Street Thankathon: A Day to Thank Our Donors

December

Brighten the smiles of the children and their families by participating in the McLaughlin & Moran, Inc. Pass the Buck Promotion

January

- 29 The 35th Annual Meeting Street Telethon

Does your office have a workplace giving campaign?

If they do, you can designate your gift to MEETING STREET.

Combined Federal Campaign Code – 96362

State Employees' Campaign Code – 4160

United Way – Write in Meeting Street



Meeting Street

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Success for a Meeting Street child like



who passed his third grade MECAPs with distinction.

WHERE EVERY CHILD THRIVES.

Every Donation Counts

Every donation makes a difference in supporting Meeting Street and our children. Especially with major state budget cuts and hard economic times, every dollar matters. Meeting Street is proud that close to 90 cents of every dollar goes directly to support children and families.

Thank you for your support!

\$25 – Theraputty for one classroom

\$50 – Book on CD for Library Collection

\$100 – “Big Mac Switch” Communication Device

\$250 – Help send 8 students for Hippotherapy (therapeutic horseback riding)

\$500 – Communication instrument to help a non-verbal child express his or her emotions and thoughts.

To make a donation, please visit www.meetingstreet.org
Thank you for your support!

Meeting Street is on Facebook!



Meeting Street has over 750 fans on Facebook, and we want you to join them! Help us reach 1,000 fans this month.

To view the Meeting Street Facebook page, go to www.facebook.com, log into your account, and type “Meeting

Sign Up for Meeting Street's Online Community!

- Sign up for e-news
- Make a gift
- View your donation history
- View upcoming events
- Send a free e-card

E-Mail Connections

Meeting Street wants to share our news with you via e-mail. It makes it easier to send you quick updates. It saves the agency money, and it saves trees! Please send your e-mail to: jcanole@meetingstreet.org.

Don't worry....we won't bombard you with information – just news you can use.

HANDS ON!

Hands On is published to keep in touch with friends of Meeting Street. Each issue highlights our services, supporters and activities, and celebrates the accomplishments of the children, young adults and families we serve. Forward your comments and suggestions to: John Canole, editor, at 401-533-9238 or email him at jcanole@meetingstreet.org.