



THE
CENTER FOR
DISCOVERY

HEALING & INTEGRATED ARTS Best Practices Manual

FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN
WITH PROFOUND COMPLEXITIES

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THE CENTER FOR DISCOVERY®

The Center for Discovery® (TCFD), designated as a Center of Excellence by the New York State Department of Health and OPWDD, is a major research and specialty center that offers residential, medical, clinical and special education programs, as well as world-class Music and Creative Arts Therapy, Adapted Physical Education, and a biodynamic agricultural program among other unique services.

Located on 1,500 acres of land in the Mid-Hudson Region, less than two hours from New York City, TCFD has become a magnet institution where individuals from around the region and world travel to receive highly advanced care and access to groundbreaking research and treatment for a myriad of complex conditions. TCFD has a long history of innovation in curriculum development, program implementation, and assistive technology, leading to significant breakthroughs and life-changing opportunities.

Each year, The Center serves 1,200 children and adults with complex disabilities, medical frailties, and Autism Spectrum Disorders from across New York State and beyond. Growing from 25 employees in 1980 to over 1,700 employees in 2019, The Center is the largest private sector employer in Sullivan County, New York. Over the last seven years, The Center for Discovery® has generated \$1.075 billion of economic impact for the State of New York.



The Center for Discovery's Lifestyle Medicine Approach



The HealthE6® Model outlines six pillars related to health and functioning for individuals with complex forms of autism and other disabilities. This complexity typically includes co-occurring biomedical conditions and problems such as sleep disorders, gastrointestinal problems including constipation and gastroesophageal reflux disorder, seizure disorders, obesity and Type 2 diabetes, immune and metabolic problems, anxiety, and other psychiatric conditions, all of which exacerbate stress. The dimensions outlined in the HealthE6® can be regulated as a foundational intervention to optimize health, functioning, and learning. When these dimensions are properly regulated, individuals will experience less stress on their body and brain resulting in decreased maladaptive behaviors, better health outcomes, and increased focus, attention, and positive interaction.

Evaluation is an evidence-based, comprehensive body and brain approach that is focused on improving health and functioning in three dimensions that have major risk factors in complex conditions including: biology, behavior and environment. The risk factors in these dimensions are not only highly prevalent in autism and other complex conditions, but they contribute significantly to morbidity and mortality for these individuals.

During the initial and ongoing evaluation periods, each risk factor is carefully assessed by expert physicians, clinicians, and program teams to develop an integrated treatment plan to support and treat areas of risk. Together, our programs focus on addressing all six dimensions as a foundational intervention to optimize health, functioning, and learning.

Environment includes the physical, temporal, and social dimensions, which can be regulated to help an individual be more successful. The physical environment includes the built environment and natural landscapes, which are intentionally designed to reduce stress and promote learning and socialization. The temporal environment includes the carefully planned activities and timing of events that occur throughout the day and seasons of the year. The social environment is characterized by the people an individual interacts with during the day, with an emphasis on building friendships and learning to interact with classmates and housemates. The social environment extends into the community as individuals are taught skills necessary for community living.

Eating and Nutrition are considered critical components of the program at The Center as the quality and quantity of what an individual eats are important to their health, vitality, sleep, and ability to learn and manage stress. What a person eats and how they digest their food affects how they think and perform. At The Center, individuals enjoy a mostly plant-based wholefoods, organically and biodynamically grown diet. Most of the foods are grown on site or sourced locally to ensure quality. Many individuals participate in the activities of the farm, and learn how to cook simple, healthy meals as part of the curriculum. Registered dietitians monitor each individual's diet to ensure they are receiving proper nutrition as appropriate for their age and individual need. If an individual is a highly selective eater, The Center has developed a program called Food Exploration and Discovery® (FED) to help them learn to eat a more robust diet. Individuals who are unable to eat and require a gastrostomy feeding are monitored closely by The Center's medical team to ensure proper nutrition.

Energy Regulation includes physical activity, sleep and daily routines that are designed to regulate the body and brain to improve health, functioning, and learning. Each individual is prescribed a daily dose of vigorous exercise and is given a visually sequenced schedule of his/her activities in an effort to reduce stress on the body and brain. Knowing what is expected of you during the day reduces stress and anxiety. Exercise is also well established as a method to improve health, sleep, attention, motivation, and at the same time, it helps to decrease maladaptive behavior and anxiety. A program called the ENERGYm® has been developed at The Center for individuals to engage in meaningful exercise programs throughout the four seasons. Sleep is extremely important for people of all ages, and staff are trained to help promote sleep through various activities that occur prior to bedtime.

Emotional Regulation is the ability to adjust to both negative and positive emotions based on experiences, and is a critical skill for children enrolled in the program. Emotional self-regulation is very complex because in order to control your emotions you need to be able to hold back temper, and/or rev up your emotions at will. All people need to learn to control their internal body and brain states in response to a variety of situations. At The Center, individuals are taught this skill through the creative arts including music, drama, plays, and through programs such as yoga and progressive muscle relaxation. The Center for Discovery® utilizes the Zones of Regulation program as well as other curriculums to teach students how to better understand their emotions and those of others, and to employ coping skills when needed. The ability to be in nature, which is integral to The Center's program, also helps individuals learn emotional regulation.

The last pillar, Evidence-Based Education and Treatment, underpin each of the other components. Everything we do at The Center is evidence-based and data-driven, and we systematically track the core programmatic elements and experiences of each individual over time. Our focus on applied informatics, cutting-edge technologies, and predictive analytics is helping us provide answers to caregivers and individuals in real-time and continually inform interventions. In addition, we are committed to collaborating with a broad network of researchers, care providers, philanthropic partners, and key partners within our community, and around the world, to educate others about this comprehensive model of care and advance the understanding of complex conditions.

The Integrated Arts Program

With the generous support of the Taft Foundation, The Center for Discovery's® Integrated Arts Department has set out to transform residential living by creating highly individualized therapeutic experiences, designed to radically enhance personal achievement and challenge society's expectations of individuals with the most complex needs. The Department brings together therapists, educators, and specialists to make experiences that focus intently on individuals in an effort to unlock hidden potential, discern how they learn best, and enable them to engage more fully in a variety of community and professional activities.

In addition to recruiting a cross-sectional staff, there are several key aspects of setting up an Integrated Arts program. First, the emphasis on the individual begins even before official programming does -- specialists interview the participants as well as their teachers, parents, and support staff about their past and present interests to learn what kinds of activities they would like to try. To give the individuals as much agency and choice as possible, these "interest surveys" can be an in person verbal interview, written survey, or adapted survey with visual supports (see the adapted Personal Profile and Interest Survey in the Appendix). Additionally, specialists can also present a "Kickoff Week," where individuals get to sample a variety of programs before making their selections, whether through direct participation, watching a video, or listening to a story about each of the available activities.

Based on how each person's interests cluster, specialists determine a focus category for each person to "major" in: Recreation, Food and Farming, Music, or the Creative Arts. Once the facilitators form their elective groups, they work with each participant to develop personal goals and strategies. These goals might range from increased communication or socialization skills, to improved motor skills or physical health, to task accomplishment and general confidence. Depending on the needs of the program, these goals can be tracked either officially or unofficially.

In terms of physical health, observed benefits include improvements in cardiovascular strength, endurance, body composition, fine and gross motor skills as well as the duration and quality of sleep. The Integrated Arts has also initiated changes in behavioral health, affecting cognitive engagement, social interactions, emotional regulation, expressive and receptive communication, personal motivation, achievement, and the sense of self-efficacy and identity that emerges from those achievements. Furthermore, the program provides a natural bridge into the surrounding community: as individuals uncover their own interests, they reveal to themselves what makes them unique and what they have in common with their neighbors. Ultimately, with joy and ingenuity, the Integrated Arts seeks to model a new standard of care that can reinvigorate services to adults and children of all conditions and abilities.



RECREATION THERAPY

Components of Recreation Therapy at The Center for Discovery®

1. Exercise and Fitness
2. Adaptive Sport and Games
3. Outdoor Adventures

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Recreation Therapy

Recreation Therapy at TCFD

Based on the idea that every person can have regular joyful experiences, recreation therapy uses exercise, adaptive sports, games, outdoor adventures, and community excursions to advance the holistic health and wellness goals of each person. The Recreation team plans and implements a variety of activities -- indoor and outdoor, on campus and in the surrounding community -- that often challenge the perception of what is possible for people with significant needs. All experiences are designed and adapted to provide opportunities that are safe yet still very exciting.

Observed Therapeutic Benefits

Physical Health

- *Weight management*
- *Disease control*
- *Enhances fine and gross motor skills*
- *Expands flexibility and increases overall strength*
- *Cardiovascular exertion reduces maladaptive behaviors on a short-term basis and increases endurance in the long-term*
- *Primes the body to sleep well*
- *Provides a natural incentive for frequent hydration and a nutrient-dense diet*

Behavioral Health

- *Increases independence in daily living tasks*
- *Creates a sense of personal progression and self-efficacy*
- *Invigorates emotional engagement*
- *Improves communication through movement and sport, allowing individuals to safely manipulate their own body to express their mood*
- *Affords a safe environment of trust between individual and staff members which can carry over to other modalities throughout their program*

Recreation Therapy and Community Integration

- **Social Clubs:** *Once people have the chance to recognize their own talents and capabilities, they can look for people who share them too and can go on to establish clubs of all kinds (pool club, running club, baking club, book club, etc).*
- **Sporting Events:** *Attending competitions at local high schools or colleges to cheer for your hometown team. Hosting friendly competitions at home with peers or even signing up for community races and games.*
- **Volunteer Work:** *Local fire departments, soup kitchens, animal shelters, nursing homes, YMCA/health centers, book clubs, religious organizations, women's/men's groups, etc.*

Exercise & Fitness

Personal Goals: A recreation therapist designs weekly one-on-one training sessions to mature skills in an activity of interest, which could be standing up, walking, running, self-propelling a wheelchair, biking, swimming, etc. Whether the goal is more private in nature (such as being able to walk from the bathroom to the bedroom, or surpassing a personal best time in a past benchmark assessment) or more public (participating in a competition or joining a community event), both therapist and athlete work backwards from there, planning out what incremental victories it will take to accomplish that goal.



What a Recreation Therapist Can Offer:

Therapeutic Recreation is a certified health care profession that utilizes a therapeutic process, involving leisure, recreation and play. Recreation therapists focus on what each individual enjoys to develop a treatment plan to help them reach their goals in a motivating and entertaining environment. At TCFD our team of recreation therapists are innovative, energetic, and compassionate. They work both as a team and individually to develop and facilitate enthusiastic healing arts programs.



Pool: Treatments can range in size from individual sessions that target one person's goals; to structured, therapeutic small group sessions; to larger community-based groups. The goal can also range, from upper extremity strengthening to lower extremity strengthening; to increasing balance and aerobic conditioning; to improving socialization skills, gait, swimming stroke, and water safety skills.

"Healing is never about fixing. It's about remembering your wholeness & calling back the pieces of yourself that you don't believe are a part of you anymore"

- Athena Laz

"We had this moment at the pool with one of the residents when we realized that maybe she was a swimmer in her younger years because as soon as she got into the water, she was immediately vocalizing and smiling, being super happy and playful. But suddenly, she just put her head underwater and held it there, and so we all started to get worried. But then she began to blow bubbles. And we realized that she had done it on purpose. She recognized that, 'This is the pool, I did this in a happy time, maybe I did this with my family...'"

- (Recreation Therapist)



ENERGym®: A custom designed circuit-training program consisting of short bouts of vigorous exercise to develop aerobic functioning, balance, coordination, and overall body strength.



Want to try this out for yourself? Take a look at our [ENERGym Program Guide](#)

Move It!: A group or individual exercise program developed by an integrated team of recreation, dance, and physical therapists for people of all abilities; to stretch, invigorate, and relax every kind of body.



Want to try this out for yourself? Take a look at our [Move It! Program Guide](#)



TCFD TIP: **Visuals and Modeling**

When starting a new exercise program, introduce new skills progressively through modeling and visual scaffolding. Begin by having staff model the movement live, then physically assist the participant to help them learn the movement. Once mastered, show a video or print images of the movement. Use other visuals like cones, markers, or arrows to guide the participants to the next station or activity. When someone is beginning a new program or is struggling to complete the exercise, use timers or countdown strips to visually show how many repetitions or minutes are left before a break. Start small with less repetitions or time, then slowly increase as the person builds their tolerance.

RESSST (Relaxation Entailing Stretching, Sound, Storytelling, and Tactile-Input):

An interdisciplinary nighttime program that promotes relaxation and sleep by combining...

- **Yoga:** A type of exercise that builds body strength and flexibility. It teaches practitioners to concentrate on their breathing as they transition from pose to pose, stilling the mind and quieting the nervous system. Yoga can be adapted to meet each person's needs by simplifying postures or using a chair, wall, or yoga props to make postures easier to hold. You can teach yoga by demonstrating the pose yourself and reinforcing it with a picture or video of the same pose.
- **Nurturing Touch (through progressive muscle relaxation):** A technique for relaxing all muscle groups from head to toe. The person deliberately tenses and then releases each section of the body, starting with the head and neck, then moving on to the arms, belly, buttocks, and legs, and ends with the feet and toes. This slow and thoughtful sequence keeps the attention pinned to the breath and to each region of the body. By the end, the person often feels both more peaceful and more aware of the entire body.
- **Storytelling:** When used correctly, deep breathing can be one of the most powerful and dependable tools for returning the body to calm and keeping it there. A group leader can use a verbal story or guided meditation to instruct listeners to breathe deeply and practice progressive muscle relaxation. For more information about storytelling, see the Creative Arts section of this Manual
- **Sound Healing:** For a complete description, see the Music Therapy section of this Manual

R.E.S.S.T

RELAXATION, ENTAILING, STRETCHING, SOUND, STORYTELLING, AND TACTILE INPUT

SETTING THE ENVIRONMENT

- Dim The Lights
- Turn off Television, music, and all background noise
- Use a quiet voice: only speak to people in your immediate space

GATHERING

All staff and housemates come together for opening Chant

RESSST: YOGA, SOUND HEALING, NURTURING TOUCH, STORYTELLING

- Resst will encompass 10-20 minute intervals of yoga, calming sound, nurturing touch, and storytelling in the common spaces of the house.
- After the opening Chant, staff and participants can enter and exit as necessary for schedule needs (medication pass, shower, phone call with parents) or short breaks from the program.
- Participants who choose to take a break from the program should be encouraged to maintain a calm environment and to rejoin the group when they are ready. For example: refraining from running in the hallways and vocalizing loudly or listening to music/iPad outside of their bedroom
- Staff will remain mindful of background noise and interruptions to Resst's calming environment when requesting someone for a task by walking into room and gently tapping and whispering to them

SAY GOODBYE

- Staff will go about evening routines while maintaining peaceful environment
- Keep lights dim, maintain quiet voices, limit electronic devices if possible, television and music playing sound healing or relaxing music only

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Integrated
arts DEPT

Adaptive Sports and Games

Sport Intramurals: A recreational sports program that provides participants with socialization opportunities as they learn the skills and rules associated with each sport (i.e. kickball, soccer, basketball, volleyball, bowling, etc)

Adaptive Sports: All sports can be modified to fit each individual's skills and abilities. This can be done by shortening the length of the game, making the playing field smaller, allowing some players to play at close range, enlarge the target, or change the ball to be brighter, lighter, or more deflated. Some examples of adaptive sports include power or manual wheelchair soccer or basketball, bowling with a ramp, playing corn hole with a slingshot, t-ball, seated badminton, etc.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Fostering Team Spirit

A player's uniform doesn't have to end with the jersey! Try decorating foot guards with stickers, drawings, and cheers. Plus, inviting the players to decorate their foot guards or jerseys together can function as a quieter kind of pep rally, something to reinforce team camaraderie before the big game. But playing soccer isn't the only way to get involved -- participants can volunteer to be an announcer or a cheerleader, or even sing the national anthem before the game begins.

Games: Games are a fun and educational way to teach socialization, communication, motor skills, and turn-taking. Table-top games can include puzzles, card games, video games, table tennis, foosball, and board games. You can even consider following along with a game show on TV or finding apps that recreate the game for a group (ex. Family Feud, Jeopardy, Wheel of Fortune, The Price is Right).



TCFD TIP

How to Adapt a Board Game

- Using visual supports such as icons or using sticky notes to indicate where to start and where to move next
- Making the game more appealing by turning the players' favorite characters or objects into game pieces
- Changing the rules
- Changing the dimensions. "Life-sized" versions of the games can be bought or even made out of simple objects like large poster boards, buckets, sheets, and wood.

Watch Parties: Gathering a group of people to watch a televised event together such as the Olympics, the Paralympics, the Oscars, the Superbowl and other sport games.



TCFD TIP

Watch Party Activities

When organizing watch parties, it's important to plan activities in advance to make the party more than a passive "watching television" experience. Prior to the show, you can engage the group in a story about the sport, players, or actors they'll see. And throughout it, you can make a variety of visuals to keep the whole group's attention. If you are watching an award show, you can make a sample ballot. If you are watching a sports game, you can make a poster for each team and ask viewers to bet on who will win, or ask questions about the team currently in the lead. To take it a step further, you can even plan the week's schedule around the theme of the upcoming watch party. For example, if the Superbowl is on Sunday, activities might include: playing flag football, reading uplifting stories about the players and their teams, playing football BINGO, and baking snacks or appetizers the day before the game.

Seasonal Celebrations: Our Recreational Therapy team and dedicated staff lead seasonal, holiday, and special event festivities all year long to establish daily and seasonal rhythms, helping people feel more connected to their environment and to one another. These can take the form of collaborative community-wide events; a small group gathering, craft, or meal; as well as musical concerts and performances.



TCFD TIP

Looking for a reason to celebrate? Here at The Center, we've hosted...

- Solstice and Equinox Celebrations
- Earth Day Cleanups
- Summer Concert Series
- Block Parties
- Garden Harvest Celebrations
- Fall Festivals
- Prom (for our school-age program)



See our full seasonal calendar of events in the [Appendix](#)



Outdoor Adventures

Hiking: Spending time outdoors walking in a local park, on grass fields, nature trails, or wooded paths.

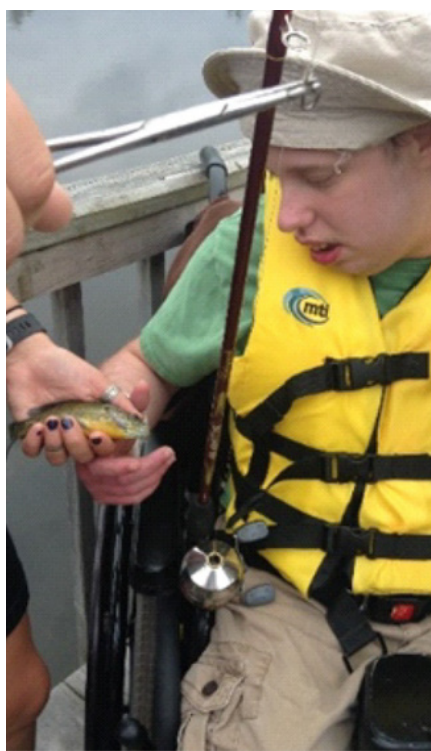


TCFD TIP

Building Tolerance

When starting a hiking program, it's a good idea to build up people's tolerance before going on a long, strenuous hike with possible elevation gain.

1. Treadmill, Track, Stroll around the neighborhood
2. Sports Field by local school, nearby park, community rail trail
3. Flat hike through the woods
4. Extended hike with elevation gain



Fishing: The most common form of recreational fishing is done with a rod, reel, line, hooks and any one of a wide range of baits or lures. Fishing can take place on land or off the deck of a boat.

Boating: Canoes, kayaks, rowboats, paddle boats, sail boats, or motorboats.

Setting Up Before Setting Sail

We have participated in several collaborative boating events including the Coastal Team Challenge with World Team Sports, as well as sailing the Hudson River as guests on a 60-foot wheelchair-accessible catamaran called "The Impossible Dream." To prepare individuals for these experiences, we held boating practice at our local park and swimming pool. This preview gave our team the chance to see which supports and equipment each person would need in order to be equal parts independent and safe. It also allowed each individual to rehearse the experience of boating ahead of time, introducing them to the sensation of being on the water, and the motor skills they'd need to propel the boat forward.



<https://worldteamsports.org>



<https://www.theimpossibledream.org/>



Snow Shoeing: Utilizing specialized footwear to walk on top of snow. This can take place in any outdoor location -- fields, trails, or even snow-covered walking paths.



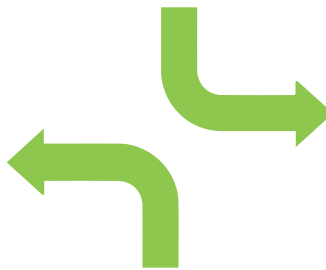
TCFD TIP

When introducing snow shoeing to our residents and students, we take small steps to make people feel comfortable. While some participants put on snowshoes and take off like a pro, others need time and exposure to get used to the new footwear. Begin by putting on just one or both of the snowshoes, and practice standing and sitting with handheld support. Once participants feel more self-assured, practice taking a few steps to a second chair. Build up tolerance incrementally, lengthening the amount of time or distance that the participant can snowshoe. To challenge the more expert snowshoer, set up an obstacle course with objects to walk around, step over, or bend down to collect.

Ice Skating: Can happen either indoors (in specially designated places like arenas, tracks, parks) or outdoors (frozen ponds, lakes, and rivers).



For someone who has trouble balancing on their own, consider aids like a specialized walker or seated ice gliders.



Skiing (Cross-country): Traversing across the snow on a flat or slightly slanted surface by pushing off of the skis and pulling with the hand poles. Possible adaptations might include swapping standing skis for a seated ski or changing the grip on the hand poles.



Skiing (Alpine): Participants rely on downhill momentum to move. Like cross-country skiing, there are several adapted skiing options depending on each person's ability.



 **Look for the people who are waiting to help you**

The support of trained ski instructors is crucial for the success and safety of each individual. At The Center for Discovery®, we have collaborated with our local chapter of [disabledsportsusa.org](https://www.disabledsportsusa.org) at Windham Mountain to provide opportunities for everyone interested in this thrilling experience.

Bird watching: A form of wildlife observation. This can be done with the naked eye, with the help of binoculars and telescopes, or even with public webcams. For those who can use senses besides sight, listening to birdsong live or on the computer can also be a way of “seeing.”

Camping: An overnight stay away from home in a shelter, such as a tent or a recreational vehicle. Consider practicing a camping trip on the lawn before moving on to a campground or cabin.

Farm-Based Programs: Contact a local farm or 4H club to arrange a visit. Offer to make and deliver approved treats for the animals and/or do barn chores (brush horses, feed goats, pet rabbits, etc.).

Recreation Therapy Staff Training Concepts

Safety Considerations

Individualized Behavioral Considerations: Before an individual starts a new program, check that staff have been trained on the individual's behavior plan and have taken the appropriate steps to prepare. For example, making a plan to introduce the program in stages and creating visuals or social stories when needed. If participants require a communication device, ensure they are able to utilize it during every activity.

Medical Clearance: Ensure each individual gets medical clearance for any exercises or recreation programs. If appropriate, work with an individual's therapists to confirm proper positioning when using equipment and to guarantee that safety supports are in place. If necessary, ensure staff complete all safety courses. (i.e First Aid, CPR, Lifeguarding, etc.)

Environmental Concerns: Be mindful of temperature and forecasted weather when choosing clothing, footwear, and travel plans. Familiarize yourself with poisonous or otherwise harmful plants, animals, or insects native to your area (particularly ticks and mosquitoes). Teach individuals about the importance of proper hydration and sun protection throughout the day.

Fostering Independence & Self-Efficacy

Be a motivating coach. Recognize accomplishments daily, no matter how small and offer behavior specific praise. For example: "Great job running that extra lap today!! You rock!!"

Encourage individuals to participate in their own goal-making – this can help them connect to their own desired outcomes and persist in challenging their limitations.





FOOD & FARMING

Components of Food and Farming at The Center for Discovery®

1. Horticulture Therapy
2. Animal Husbandry
3. Culinary Arts

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Horticulture Therapy

Horticulture Therapy at TCFD

Horticulture Therapy uses garden participation to do two things at once: grow quality food and offer learning opportunities for our residents and students. To support this, there are several “Healing Gardens” located throughout TCFD, working plots with a variety of medicinal and culinary herbs, flowers, ornamentals, and shrubs. We also have three designated herbal workshops where our students and residents create culinary blends, herbal teas, and dried products for consumption throughout the agency. Gardening happens all year long, with participants joining in every aspect of planning and maintaining a garden, from the greenhouse to the field and beyond. Our gardens and herbal workshops surround individuals with a rich, multi-sensory experience that intensifies their connections with themselves, their fellow gardeners, and the natural world.

Observed Therapeutic Benefits

Physical Health

- *Increases range of motion, muscle tone, and cardiovascular stamina.*
- *Expend energy and productively raises the heart rate in a productive manner, which can permit individuals to better regulate their actions throughout the rest of the day.*
- *When individuals discover the relationship between their efforts in the garden and the food in front of them, their sense of victory and pride may pique their curiosity to try new and healthy foods.*

Behavioral Health

- *Communication*
- *Socialization*
- *General life-readiness*
- *Develops patience and resilience to failure*
- *Stimulates creative thinking*
- *Cultivates empathy and gratitude for all living creatures*
- *Supplies opportunities to accomplish well-appreciated work, generating self-efficacy and self-esteem as a result*
- *Concentrates and calms the senses, functioning as its own form of emotional regulation. Whether indoors or out, being in a space lush with the smells, colors and textures of living things can instill a sense of serenity*
- *Mitigate depression, anxiety, and stress, restoring the power to self-regulate their own emotions more easily*



Horticulture and Community Integration

- **Visits:** public gardens, community garden clubs, arboretums, parks, or local businesses with impressive landscaping
- **Outings:** Garden store to gather supplies
- **Themed Excursions:** Apple, berry, and/or pumpkin picking at local farms
- **Seasonal Celebrations:**
 - Harvest festivals
 - Listening/playing music in the garden
 - Making natural decorations for holiday events for the home and community



TCFD TIP

Coordinate with celebrations and community efforts that are happening already

Pollinator Week: Throughout June, we raised awareness of the decline of bees and other pollinators, which culminated in attending a local honey bee festival.

Symbolic Gardens: In an effort to support the dwindling Monarch butterfly population, we planted milkweeds in our garden and in nearby communities. This project also focused attention on the county's use of herbicides and clean-till practices that destroy milkweed.

Horticulture Projects

Vegetable Gardens: No matter what your setting is, a vegetable garden is a great way to bring life into the environment. A garden can be made in pots on a patio, in a box on the windowsill, a raised garden bed, a greenhouse, or a full garden patch. Growing vegetables allows individuals to connect to the nourishing food they eat. Simple gardens can include herbs, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and squash.

Sensory Gardens: A reserved spot that appeals to all of the different senses. Sniff the pungent plants. Crumble the soil. Feel the vibration from the water channeled through the hose. While in this space dedicated to quiet focus, individuals can also practice meditation, do yoga, listen to soft music, bird-watch, butterfly-watch, or read a book.

Garden Clubs: Participants gather together with like-minded peers to care for a communal space. Our Garden Club has worked on weeding, composting, watering hanging plants both indoors and outdoors, trimming, and mulching trees. When the planting season comes to an end, the garden club harvests and packages seeds to renew the garden's life cycle for next year.



Want to try this out for yourself? Take a look at our [Gardening Club Program Guide](#)



TCFD TIP

"Do what you can with what you have, where you are"

-Bill Widener

If an individual has more mobility using their foot rather than their hand, switches or objects can be repositioned to take advantage of that strength. Likewise, if an individual can move her hand, she can extend the reach of her arm with a switch-activated device. There's always more than one way to do something!



Garden Markers: Stoke the group's creativity by making garden markers to identify each plant when they are in the beginning stages of growth, whether they're still underground or they just haven't ripened into something recognizable yet.

Fruit and Vegetable Stamping: Use a piece of fruit or a vegetable as a paint brush, or slice it in half to make a stamp. Apples and potatoes make good, sturdy choices, and for celery, simply cutting the base makes a stamp with scalloped edges that resembles a flower.

Flower Arrangements: Encourage the group to choose which flowers they would like to pick and arrange into bouquets.

Pressed Flowers: Pressing flowers during the harvest months provides opportunities for the Gardening Club members and others to enjoy flowers all year long, in the form of stationery, framed wall art, or note pads.

Flower Seed balls: mixing a combination of flower seeds, clay, and soil and rolling them into a ball to dry. Thrown the dried balls into the garden, fields, or anywhere flowers should grow. Seed paper can also be made and given as gifts.

Wreaths, Swags, and Centerpieces: Group members can collect cuttings from the local trees and shrubs they find on a nature walk and transform them into seasonal decorations. For example, a pumpkin can be repurposed as a pot and stuffed with Spanish moss, dried flowers, and mums to make a centerpiece for Thanksgiving.

Herbal Workshop: Through working with herbs creating culinary blends, teas, and dried products residents have the opportunity to garden with a purpose. These workshops make it easy for anyone to learn the principles of herbal therapies and the biodynamic method of farming.

Orchards: Growing one or a few fruit trees provides several options for work-based learning (planting, watering, and trimming). Once the tree has reached maturity, individuals can harvest and enjoy the fruit of their labor in many ways: by eating the apples raw; making apple chips; baking them into apple crisp and applesauce; or pressing them into apple cider or apple cider vinegar.

BONUS ACTIVITY

If your Garden Club is looking for something to do...

Take a cue from nature itself and search for partnerships that could be mutually beneficial. If you've got a surplus of bouquets, look for places that would like some sprucing up, such as nursing homes, funeral homes, and hospitals. At The Center, individuals grew, harvested, dried, and delivered coreopsis tinctoria to the local fiber arts studio to use as a natural dye.





TCFD TIP

While working outdoors, participants will be exposed to various types of weather and may become more aware of the seasons. You can draw out this awareness by sharing your own observations and modeling how to respond to the physical environment. This may be as simple as remembering to bring suitable clothing or commenting about how the plants are changing.



Maple Sugaring: From February to April, participants can extract sap from maple trees and turn it into syrup for their community. A beginner can tap seven to ten trees, which will produce 10 gallons of sap each and boil down to a few gallons of maple syrup.



Want to try this out for yourself? Take a look at our [Maple Sugaring Program Guide](#)

Animal Husbandry

Animal Husbandry at TCFD

The caring for and breeding of animals such as dogs, cattle, sheep, goats, chickens, and pigs.

Observed Therapeutic Benefits:

Physical Health:

- *Increases range of motion, stamina, and muscle tone*
- *Refines gross and fine motor skills*
- *Increases heart rate and provides meaningful chores to discharge energy*
- *Offers intrinsic motivation for many individuals, leading to a natural rehearsal of functional skill development*

Behavioral Health:

- *Challenges cognitive processing*
- *Supplies sensory stimulation*
- *Relating to pets can help foster a feeling of closeness and understanding with another being, especially for people who find it difficult to make such a connection with people*
- *Perceiving and understanding what an animal needs draws out empathy*
- *Animals often have a calming demeanor, which supports emotional regulation and internal energy regulation*
- *Provides both continuity and structure for individuals*
- *Requires both personal responsibility and teamwork*
- *Builds social connections and skills through common interests and goals, which allows individuals to feel more connected both to their human team and the more-than-human environment*

Animal Husbandry and Community Integration

- **Volunteer Work:** At local farms and/or shelters or making food or bedding deliveries to shelters
- **Shopping:** Ordering and picking up supplies from your local farm store or neighboring farm
- **4H Clubs:** Collaborate with local chapters or establish one of your own. Participate in agility competitions, demonstrations, and animal shows
- **Hosting Events:** Seasonal celebrations, horse shows, family days, goat yoga

 <https://4-h.org>

Animal Husbandry Projects

Caring for pets: Small (fish, guinea pig, rabbit, hamster, reptiles) or large (dogs and cats), day-to-day upkeep includes:

- Refreshing food and water at least daily
- Socializing and training daily
- Habitat cleaning as needed
- Grooming and bathing as needed



TCFD TIP:

Pet care can be used as a tool to model and motivate self-care strategies. For example, if an individual struggles to tolerate brushing their teeth or hair, therapists may work with an animal and the individual to desensitize them to the process. Students can build skills such as increasing thoroughness, grasping a brush, motor planning, and general body awareness.



Caring for chickens requires:

- Refreshing food and water at least once a day. During colder months, it is important to check the water multiple times a day to make sure it does not freeze.
- **Collecting eggs:** Eggs need to be collected from the chicken coop every day. If working with a large number of chickens, eggs must be collected more often to avoid being destroyed
- Cleaning, sanitizing, and packaging eggs



TCFD TIP

At TCFD, caring for chickens is a functional hands on educational process with goals to improve:

- Fine and gross motor skills while carefully collecting eggs then lifting and walking with heavy water buckets
- Sequencing farm tasks while following visuals to clean and sanitize eggs for consumption
- Mathematic concepts when weighing and sorting the eggs into appropriately sized containers

Caring for livestock requires

- **Stall cleaning:** Providing animals with proper housing, clean bedding, and safe pastures will help keep the animals healthy and content.
- **Grooming and Bathing**
- **Feeding:** This activity requires a degree of physical strength and coordination. Math skills and measuring skills are also needed as feeds and supplements will need to be measured, weighed and or amounts counted.
- **Exercise:** Providing enrichment, socialization, and exercise opportunities for the animals help them maintain happy and healthy lifestyles.
- **Observing Health:** It is important to spend time just observing the animals. After a period of time spent working with the animals, it will become easier to identify individuals and to develop an awareness of their unique appearance and behavior. Changes to these could indicate a concern regarding their health.

Animal Assisted Therapy:

Animal-assisted therapy is an alternative or complementary type of therapy that involves animals as a form of treatment. AAT is only conducted with the presence of a trained and licensed clinician. Also, sessions must be goal specific and accompanied by a clinical documentation of outcomes. Specially trained professionals, paraprofessionals, or volunteers in association with animals that meet specific criteria.

Equine Assisted Interventions:

Horseback riding lessons taught by specially trained instructors that may be adapted for all individuals no matter their ability. This activity is recreationally based and goals may address leisure, education, socialization, competition in the sport, and fitness.

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BONUS ACTIVITY

- **Homemade Animal Treats**
- Look for recipes online to make homemade dog, rabbit, horse, or treats for any pet!
- **Wild Bird Feeders**
- Maintain a traditional bird feeder or create your own molded bird suet by mixing bird seed, flour, and gelatin and adding them to cookie cutters.

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TCFD TIP:

Horses and other animals provide our students with social and emotional benefits. Horses and cattle are companion animals by nature, they are always found in herds and become fearful if left alone. When you remove these animals from their companions, the rider/handler becomes their companion, our animals look to our students for direction and compassion. Animals are extremely in tune to human emotions. They can sense if you are happy, sad, angry, nervous, or excited and they will respond accordingly. Children and adults with Autism appreciate the reaction the animals give them and learn how to communicate with the animals.


 **Want more information from the PATH** (Professional Association for Therapeutic Horsemanship) Equine assisted Psychotherapy certification <https://www.pathintl.org>

Facility dogs: Facility dogs undergo extensive and specialized training and are partnered with professional facilitators to provide structure, practical “task-oriented” interactions to groups of children and adults with disabilities in healthcare, educational, and other professional settings. These dogs are typically bred to have lower than average instinctual drives and reactivity which makes them able to receive sometimes intense attention from individuals. Handlers often include professionals such as physical/rehabilitation therapists or special education teachers. The handler facilitates the interaction and directs the dog in practical task-oriented applications or works with a client to integrate specialized tasks into therapeutic routines. For example: Handlers can also utilize communication technologies to allow the individual to direct the action of the facility dog to sit, bark, or other commands.

Hello Leland

Our Canine Companions for Independence facility dog, Leland, is a two-year old Labrador/Golden Retriever cross breed. During the day he works with an Occupational Therapist at TCFD and at night and on the weekends, Leland is with his handler relaxing at their home.



 Want more information from Canine Companions for Independence? cci.org

 <https://riverreporter.com/stories/hello-my-name-is-leland.35568?>

Culinary Arts

Culinary Arts at TCFD

At The Center for Discovery®, we believe that food is medicine. For our chefs and artisan bakers, taste never comes at the cost of nutrition, because the goal is to make sure the highest quality ingredients actually make it into the bellies of our residents. Our culinary team takes clean, wholesome ingredients and turns them into meals that have all the familiar flavors of savory comfort foods. We make food that genuinely engages people, not just because of its looks and smells, but because of the residents' own involvement in cooking groups, chef apprenticeships, and frequent health-conscious baking activities.



Observed Therapeutic Benefits

Physical Health

- *Enhance a person's appetite for trying new foods*
- *Ability to recognize healthy eating choices, which leads to a healthier overall lifestyle*
- *Supplies freshly cooked snacks and meals as healthy alternatives to processed snacks and takeout meals*

Behavioral Health

- *Cooking is an important life skill that gives individuals the opportunity to work on many skills including: reading, following directions, sequencing, meal planning, measuring, and using a variety of tools.*
- *Builds confidence as cooking skills progress*
- *Emotional regulation: many people find cooking to be a positive form of stress relief*
- *Sensory experience: colors, smells, and textures of the food*
- *Opportunity to practice communication and socialization skills in a motivating setting.*

Culinary Arts and Community Integration

- **Gatherings:** Opportunity to attend or host special occasion
- **Volunteer Work:** Local food pantry or cook for a neighbor in need
- **Outing to a new restaurant:** Opportunity for socialization by trying new restaurants and talking about the food

Culinary Projects

Personal Food Prep: Independently choosing and preparing personal snacks and meals



TCFD TIP

Choosing Healthy Snacks

At TCFD, we take every opportunity to teach our residents and students about making healthy food choices. When choosing snacks and participating in baking activities, we choose recipes with whole food ingredients and limited sugar. When possible, we choose recipes that can be eaten for breakfast or lunch.

Cooking Club: a beginner cooking club to teach cooking and baking skills such as: collecting ingredients, measuring, stirring, preparing the pan, and preparing the item



TCFD TIP

Functional academics can be developed in many different ways during food preparation activities by using number and word skills in a practical way. For example, counting or weighing ingredients, deciding which measuring cup to use, reading recipe instructions, and writing labels on bottles.

Sous Chef: Sous Chefs work alongside the Chef to help prepare side dishes, desserts, and dressings. Sous Chef's assist in all areas of cooking including: cutting and peeling vegetables, measuring ingredients, making parts or all of the meal.

Coffee clutch/Café: A beginner showcase of basic cooking and drink preparation as well as customer service skills. Individuals can set up a coffee, tea, and light snack shop for peers or staff to purchase items.

Restaurant Club: An advanced showcase of all skills learned in cooking club and Sous Chef. Participants host a restaurant and serve friends and family a meal.



Want to try this out for yourself? Take a look at our [Restaurant Club Program Guide](#)

Producing and Packaging: Homemade recipes and ingredients prepared and packaged for future use or gifts. This can include: Salad dressings, granola, cookies and bars, dried fruits, and mixed herbs.

Bonus Activity

Infused Waters and Homemade Salad Dressing

A productive weekly activity can be preparing homemade salad dressings, iced tea, or infused water.

Food & Farming Staff Training Concepts

Safety Considerations

Individualized Behavioral Considerations: Ensure all staff are trained on each individual's behavior plan prior to participating in a new program. Concerning behaviors in a food and farm environment may include individuals who display PICA and elopement. Participants who display elopement behaviors may wear a safety vest with contact information while performing tasks outdoors. Be mindful of the environment to ensure participants remain with the group and a safe distance from roadways and lakes/ponds. When considering PICA concerns, staff should regularly check the environment for small or concerning objects and ensure all chemicals are properly stored.

Medical Clearance: Ensure each individual is medically cleared for any food and farming tasks prior to participating. Pay close attention to food and environmental allergies when planning your garden or cooking schedule.

Safely Interacting with Animals: Animals can be unpredictable, consider all potential hazards when working in close proximity to them. Specialized policies and training may be developed to ensure all staff and individuals understand the hazards and can utilize self-protection techniques to limit danger.

Environmental Concerns: Be mindful of weather, temperature, poisonous or otherwise harmful plants or animals, ticks and mosquitoes, if applicable in your area. Ensure proper hydration and sun protection.

Food Safety: Pay special attention to personal hygiene (hand washing, gloves, and hair nets), food care and preparation when working with fresh food. Specialized staff and participant training should be considered in the areas of fire safety in the kitchen and using kitchen equipment such as a stove, oven, and knives.

Fostering Independence & Self-Efficacy

Identifying Supports: Communication devices, visual supports such as written or picture schedules, task cards or counting strips to help the individual recognize what the expectation is. Consider adaptive equipment to help the student become more independent.

Utilize each individual's strengths when planning work tasks, ensure each individual can easily achieve success during parts of their day, and participate in challenging tasks.

Individuals will be producing vegetables and flowers that are not only consumed by themselves, but the whole community. This can contribute to a sense of pride and belonging. In time, participants may also be able to take on a leadership role, helping to assist other people or take individual responsibility for a particular task. These opportunities can build a deeper awareness of the social environment and community, and also help build self-efficacy.

Be conscious of the social and teamwork building opportunities involved in food and farming. Engage in opportunities to help individuals recognize how their hard work and effort contribute to other people's happiness due to tangible outcomes of growing. Reflect on how different activities could support particular individuals in developing their social skills and sense of enjoyment in life.



CREATIVE ARTS

Components of Creative Arts at The Center for Discovery®

1. Dance
2. Dramatic Arts
3. Art

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DANCE

Dance at TCFD

Our Therapeutic Dance Program inspires children and adults to explore, discover and embrace the world of dance. Registered dance therapists and educators use creative movement as a tool to enhance health and well-being. Beyond the obvious physical benefits, participants in our Therapeutic Dance Program also build skills for self-expression, creativity and self-confidence.



"Dancing with the feet is one thing, but dancing with the Heart is another"
 – Unknown

Observed Therapeutic Benefits

Physical Health

- *Physical activity leads to greater energy regulation by raising the heart rate, circulating endorphins, lowering stress, and better sleep*
- *Improves range of motion and expands repertoire of personal movements*

Behavioral Health

- *Provides opportunity for emotional expression and co-regulation through symbolic movements*
- *Empowerment through making personal movement choices*
- *Improves self-esteem and personal growth*
- *Therapeutic relationship provides feelings of safety and trust*
- *Opens channels for communication*
- *Fosters feelings of inclusion, community, and belonging*

Dance and Community Integration

- **Dance Performances:** *attending a local dance performance in your community (local high school, ballet studio, etc.) or organizing a talent show or performance for friends and family*
- **Field Trip:** *Plan a trip to go see live professional performances*
- **Visiting Artist:** *Invite a renowned dancer or dance student to come speak to the group or host a dance workshop*

Dance Projects

Individual or Small Group Dance Therapy Sessions: An individualized dance movement session where individuals learn expressiveness and creativity to build their confidence.



What A Dance Therapist or Dance Educator Can Provide

When developing a dance program, it is important to recognize the benefits of finding an instructor who has formal training and/or education that qualifies them to teach the target population. A certified master's level Dance Therapist focuses on using movement to process emotional and behavioral health. Dance Therapists develop choreography and individualized programs to help the dancer accomplish any emotional, social, cognitive, and physical goals. Since one of the aims of therapeutic dance is to help a person experience a sense of wholeness and integration, these goals can be the consensus of a team of people, ranging from Behavioral Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Teachers and their assistants. Dance Educators use their keen awareness of body alignment to continually correct the dancer's form, protect the dancer from injury, and improve strength and mobility by making sure movements emphasize the right muscles.

Dynamite: A high energy choreographed aerobic fitness program featuring movements inspired by various styles of dance, using upper and lower body movements to meet each individual's needs. Positive enthusiasm and a lively playlist that promotes health, vitality, and wellness. This program ends with massage and deep breathing to cool down and promote a sense of calm and well-being.



Want to try this out for yourself? Take a look at our [Dynamite Program Guide](#)



TCFD TIP

To help people reach out and in, punch up, and shake their arms among other dynamic movements, an individual can modify all the dances while doing them seated in a chair or with gentle hand-over-hand assistance

Line Dancing: Partnered group dancing that begins with guided stretching for all participants as a physical and social warm-up. Followed by creating exciting shapes and spatial patterns throughout the room to promote social interaction. Line dancers can walk, self-move their wheelchair, or be pushed following the verbal and visual movements of the instructor. To promote independence, dancers can be directed to different colored tape on the floor.



How to Choreograph a Line Dancing Group

Start in a circle formation as a way to unify the group members, develop a sense of cohesion and safety, and place everyone on an even playing field. Once we become comfortable there, we may shift to two opposing lines, or "teams." We also engage in creative duets and solos, giving each group member or duet the opportunity to be fully seen, heard, and honored by the rest of the group, by dancing freely in the middle of the circle or down the center of the two lines. These spatial arrangements enable participants to interact socially with a wide variety of expressions, attitudes, and relationships. The structure inherently draws each individual out of his or her isolation and creates a trusting sense of community through symbolic dance. At the end, we re-form a circle and close the group with soft music, partner massage, and deep breathing.

Dance Classes: Introductory group classes in Hip Hop, Ballet, and Tap dancing

Pool Dance: Move together through the water using different rhythms and movement qualities to splash, kick, sway, or float depending on the energy and mood of the participant.



TCFD TIP

“Movement motivators”

Engaging props to aid in adapted movement and provide sensory stimulation. (Octoband, dance scarfs, parachute, textured/sized balls, pinwheels, maracas/shakers, and feathers, mylar balloons, etc.)

Performances: Dance recitals are a great way to showcase all of the group members’ hard work to friends and family. At TCFD, Dance performances happen yearly with themes such as: Disney Review, Broadway Extravaganza, and Swing into the Season.



DRAMATIC ARTS

Dramatic Arts at TCFD

Participants in our dramatic arts program are taught the basics of what it means to be on stage, which in turn provides tools for success in everyday life. In addition to taking classes in the dramatic arts, our actors and actresses are provided with opportunities to perform in productions for their families and friends. Individuals take on roles behind the scenes as well, assisting with everything from costume and set construction, to stage management and publicity. Productions ultimately become an achievement shared by many from within The Center's community, not just those on stage-but those lucky enough to be in the audience as well.



Observed Therapeutic Benefits

Physical Health

- *A fun and interactive form of exercise*

Behavioral Health

- *Creativity: Imaginative play stimulates and challenges the brain, and allows kids to be innovative and broad-minded*
- *Developing confidence*
- *Promoting self-discipline and self-motivation*
- *Improving language and musical skills*
- *Learning, memorizing and problem solving skills*
- *Social interaction and cooperation*
- *Overcoming anxieties. The triumph of going out of stage, performing a rehearsed piece successfully, and receiving feedback afterwards is one of the profound and tangible reassurances of worth and achievement you will ever get. It gives kids a sense of control and power equivalent to winning scholastic prizes or sports championships, and will encourage aiming higher, overcoming more obstacles, and achieving greater goals in future endeavors*

Drama and Community Integration

- **Live Performances:** Attend a show at your local high school, college, or theater
- **Outings:** Shop for props, costumes, and other supplies
- **Extracurricular:** Sign up for a drama class

Drama Projects

Joke Club: A social group focused on teaching the art of telling jokes. Focused towards individuals who are learning how to appropriately gain attention and socialize with their peers. Topics include: Timing of jokes, Knock knock jokes, funny faces, impressions, pranks, holiday themed jokes, and more.

Stories and Sound: A guided improvisation group that uses storytelling, acting, and live improvised musical accompaniment to identify emotions, reactions, and practice empathy by embodying others.

Elements of Stories & Sound

Introduction Song: Vocal and body warm-up

Contrast Song: hot vs. cold, slow vs. fast

Acting & Story Improvisation:

Week 1: Characters: Pirates, King, princess, teacher

Week 2: Action based scenarios: Hiking, swimming

Week 3: Problem/Solution: Lost pet, monster shows up

Week 4: Put it all together!

Goodbye Song: Applause and bow

Theater 101: A beginner theater club where group members can learn social skills as well as basic theater and acting concepts.



TCFD TIP

Engagement Tip

Use visuals and props to allow actors to choose characters or scenarios or randomly assign these by rolling dice and matching the numbers to corresponding nouns.

Theater Tech: A behind-the-scenes support crew for drama productions and other performances. Individuals assist with making costumes, set design and construction, stage management, and publicity.

Discovery Drama: An advanced group focused on developing social skills through theatrical arts.

Discovery Drama Productions: A showcase of the group's hard work and talents to family and friends. Past productions have included adaptations from: "The Wizard of Oz," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "A Christmas Carol," "Guys and Dolls," "The Lion King," "Fiddler on the Roof," and "Beauty and the Beast."

 <https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/living/story/traditional-program-changing-children-autism-treated-64113506>

ART

Art at TCFD

Art is everywhere at TCFD. It is embedded into our residential, day habilitation, and school programs as a tool for learning and an outlet for residents and students to display their creativity.



Observed Therapeutic Benefits

Physical Health

- *Assists with fine and gross motor planning by requiring different techniques for different materials*

Behavioral Health

- *Many art processes require rhythm, which can be comforting and build emotional regulation and leisure skills. When individuals immerse themselves in their work, they are already starting to practice mindfulness*
- *Prompts decision making (about materials, color, texture, etc.)*
- *Express creativity by designing and decorating items*
- *Improves socialization and communication by asking the individuals to exchange ideas and techniques with other artisans*



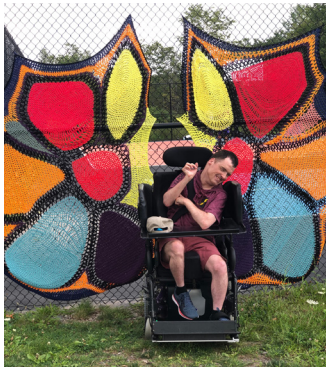
Art and Community Integration:

- **Excursions:** *Attend a workshop or class at a local art studio or college*
- **Donations:** *Make hats, scarfs, and blankets and donate them to local animal shelters, nursing homes, or homeless support organizations*
- **Art Show:** *An opportunity to display an individual's hard work -- or the hard work of a whole Art Club. An art show can be featured in an art studio or common space for ongoing participation*
- **Social Crafting:** *Visit a local social crafting business or host your own! Paint and sip (with sparkling mocktails), wood signs, painting ceramics, knit-ins*

Connecting with our Community: To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the original 1969 Woodstock festival, Sullivan County commissioned local artists to hand-paint 50 dove sculptures, forming a "Dove Trail" to link towns together. Residents participated in this county-wide endeavor by making a dove of their own, decouping magazine cutouts onto a wooden silhouette.

Art Projects

Fiber Arts: Using wool and other fibers to create artistic and practical items. In addition to learning the essential disciplines of the craft, there is a programmatic focus on the cycle of animal care and the natural world, including care of the sheep and an exploration of the origins of the fiber sourced for use within the program.



Elements of a Fiber Arts Project:

Preparing the Wool: Wool can be bought ready-made from a store or shaved off of a sheep and turned into yarn through a process of carding, spinning, and dyeing.

Wet Felting: Dampen wool with a soap solution and rub the fibers together to make felt. With this process, you can create felt balls for hanging garlands, sculptures, keychains, necklaces, dryer balls, felt-covered soaps, and bowls.

Knitting, Crocheting, and Weaving: Three other techniques that can create garments like hats and shawls as well as furnishings like table mats and rugs.



TCFD TIP

Looking for an idea for an outing?

Collect material from local plants and trees such as onion skin, mountain alder, sumac, dandelion and nettle to color your yarn.

Community Project: Yarn Bombing: Working together as a community to decorate community spaces with colorful crochet or knitted yarn. Wrapping poles, signs, or objects. Hanging from fences or walls. Making pom pom garland.

Pottery: Using clay to create artistic and functional wares.

Elements of Pottery

Preparing the Clay: Depending on where in the process you start your project, clay can be bought in a store or harvested from mud in the earth to create education about natural resources then wedged and rolled into slabs to be formed.

Molding and Hardening the Clay: Clay can be thrown on a spinning wheel or formed using templates or molds to create the shape you want for the project. Once the shape is created, and depending on the clay you choose, the piece can be fired and glazed.

Pottery projects can include decorative bowls and mugs, vases, tea bag holders, soap dishes, toothbrush holders, seasonal decorations, ornaments, garden markers, windchimes.

Woodworking: Participants build useful and long-lasting fixtures for their community while learning meaningful skills such as measuring and marking and using woodworking tools.

Sample Projects: Bird boxes or feeders, life-size game boards, cornhole set, bee “supers,” planters, benches, chicken roosting ladders, jewelry boxes, decorative signs.



Want to try this out for yourself? Check out our [Woodworking Program Guide](#)

Jewelry Making: Stringing store bought or homemade beads to make necklaces, garland, or keychains. Homemade beads can be made using colored clay, salt dough, or rolled paper.

Crafting: Painting on canvas, window painting, painting on rocks, drawing, decoupage, mosaics, stamping, scrapbooking, picture collages, suncatchers, door hangers or other door decorations, making soap or hand scrubs, homemade candles, etc.

Bonus Activity

Crafting Activities for all ages

Home decor: making seasonal or holiday crafts or decorations

Party Preparation: making banners, garland, and posters for sporting events or birthdays, table decorations, birthday cards, decorating party hats.

Upcycling: The creative reuse of unwanted or extra household materials to transform them into works of art or practical items. Milk cartons, egg crates, aluminum cans, muffin liners, coffee filters, etc.

Bonus Activity

Food as Art

Spice Painting: Create a sensory painting experience by drizzling glue or using a paintbrush to spread the glue onto paper and sprinkling with different spices to create names, shapes, or decorate printed pictures.

Seed Mandalas: Using different size, shape, and color seeds to make decorative mandalas. Dye or paint the seeds to give more color options!

Creative Arts Staff Training Concepts

Safety Considerations

Individualized Behavior Considerations: Before an individual starts a new program, check that staff have been trained on the individual's behavior plan. If a person displays poor safety awareness, set up a safety plan when working in hazardous environments or with tools and equipment. If there are PICA concerns, ensure small materials are properly stored and monitored.

Environmental Concerns: Recognize potential hazards and develop protocols and training plans about hazards in the creative arts environment. Support individuals in becoming more alert to the hazards in the workshop. For example: utilizing tools, equipment, and machines, chemical safety, fire safety, keeping the environment clean and clutter free to prevent tripping.

Fostering Independence & Self-Efficacy

Develop strategies for recognizing and valuing success. This could begin with praise and positive reinforcement to build confidence and self-esteem, and then progress to strategies like comparison, positive criticism, highlighting the consequences of an action or the impact of their behavior on their work, emphasizing quality over quantity, setting realistic goals, etc. The aim is that individuals will gradually strengthen their ability to independently evaluate their own actions in a reliable and effective way.

Try to extend the period that an individual can remain focused and engaged in a task.

Building in appropriate sequential cues and rhythms into a session can help with this -- consider the timing of tasks and breaks, use visual directions and steps, and set clear goals. Start small and work your way up to longer tasks to help motivation.

Ensure all individuals participate in maintaining and running the studio space by cleaning, tidying up, and helping others complete tasks. This is part of participating in a working environment, where each activity is important and contributes to the smooth running of the whole. Individuals can begin to experience the value of participation and the value of their own contribution.

Notice the learning opportunities. There are several opportunities to develop functional academics in a creative arts environment, such as measuring, counting, weighing raw materials, working out simple ratios or areas, and reading numbers from a measuring scale or temperature gauge.

Helps staff feel more independence and self-efficacy, too. Provide additional workshops or training to pertinent staff such as nurturing touch training and non-verbal communication training (eye contact, movement, touch, mirroring).



MUSIC THERAPY

Components of Music Therapy at The Center for Discovery®

1. Clinical Music Therapy
2. Music Therapy Based Programs
3. Sound Healing

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Clinical Music Therapy

Music Therapy at TCFD

Our team of Board Certified Music Therapists engage individuals in interactive music-making experiences that are tailored to develop specific skills. Based on the Nordoff-Robins approach, which proposes that every person has an intrinsic “sensitivity to music,” our therapists use clinical improvisation, drawing out and drawing on individuals’ natural impulses and letting them take the lead. This process -- an individual makes an offer, which elicits a reply from the therapist, which elicits a reply from the individual in turn -- lays the groundwork for reciprocal communication, social interaction, and self-expression.

Observed Therapeutic Benefits

Physical Health

- *Increased physical fitness and gross motor skills: individuals can stretch, breathe, dance, and move to their favorite music*
- *Playing instruments encourages people to use a wider range of motion and improves fine motor skills*
- *Slow music promotes physical relaxation and mindfulness*

Behavioral Health

- *Stress reduction*
- *Provides socialization opportunities between therapists and peers by fostering a welcoming inclusive environment*
- *Cognitive stimulation that is suitable for children and adults with a wide variety of abilities and diagnoses and not limited to age or developmental level*
- *Communication and self-expression: allowing people to express themselves through vocalization, movement, or by playing an instrument to communicate and express emotions*
- *Self-Esteem: music as an outlet of creativity, adaptations and personal growth through repetitive practice promote independence in expression and a sense of accomplishment*



Music and Community Integration

- **Live Concerts:** Go to local fairs or venues with live music or invite local up-and-coming musicians to your location. Prepare ahead of time by talking about the type of music you will hear and listen to a few of their songs.
- **Outings:** Visiting a local recording studio or radio station. Produce a music video or CD for family and friends.
- **Performances:** Plan performances and invite family and friends to showcase your work, e.g., Talent Shows.

Music Therapy Projects

****To be performed with the guidance of a Board Certified Music Therapist****



"When words fail, music speaks" –Hans Christian Anderson

Individual and Group Music Therapy Sessions: Therapy uses music within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs. Treatment includes creating, singing, moving to, and/or listening to music. Music therapy also provides avenues for communication that can be helpful to those who find it difficult to express themselves in words. It provides an outlet for expressing feelings and is a motivating avenue for engagement.

STOMP: A unique music and movement program developed by an interdisciplinary team (music therapists, dance therapists, a dance teacher) at TCFD for teenagers with autism spectrum disorder. The program relies on the phenomenon of "entrainment" to organize and connect all those engaged in it. Within the STOMP program, participants are led through a variety of interactive rhythmic experiences, including chants, dances, creative movement, body percussion, drumming and instrumental play.



Want to try this out for yourself? Take a look at our [STOMP Program Guide](#)

Drumline: An advanced rhythm group focused on synchronized drumming while learning advanced skills such as standing and walking in formation while drumming.

Rock Band: A fully interactive, individually adapted music ensemble which promotes interaction between group members through the use of voice, instruments, and adapted technology to create music together through improvisation. At TCFD, our band consists of 6-10 musicians who play a variety of instruments including drums, keyboard/piano, guitar, iPad instruments, and phonotonic sensors.

Traveling Troubadours: A program created to provide residents with a collaborative music experience during the height of restricted staff movement due to COVID-19. At the time the program was created, there were no other in-person activities taking place. The group – Traveling Troubadours – went from home-to-home and serenaded the residents by playing outside of open windows, doors, or outside with the residents – each located 6 feet apart.



“When words fail, music speaks” – Hans Christian Anderson

“One stand out moment that I will always remember is singing “Hey Jude” with the folks from one of our pediatric houses. The guys and girls were all spread out in the living room and hallways. A few of the vocal residents were singing LOUDLY and playing instruments, while the staff sang and played along, too. It was such a pure moment of connectedness guided by the music. At the end of the song everyone was singing the “na, na, na’s” together, and it was like nothing else mattered in that moment.”

Music Therapy Based Programs

Recreational Music Group: Music is shared together to both energize the group with high vigor and instruments with a mixture calming melodic classics with the goal to increase social awareness and self-expression for participants. People can participate anyway they choose: singing, humming, clapping, playing instruments, playing adaptive instruments, or listening. This can also utilize art and short stories along with the music to create a multimedia experience.



TCFD TIP

Scheduled music groups or individual sessions that occur weekly help establish a routine for people as well as a connection to therapists and peers. Music promotes environmental awareness and reinforces circadian rhythms through lyrics, movement, or senses. We incorporate seasonal calendars into music selections to reinforce daily and seasonal rhythms. This can include using holidays, weather, and time of year to create a musical theme for each session. Some examples include: Christmas caroling, Passover dinner music, and weather recognition- songs about sunshine, rain, snow.

Choir: An advanced singing group that rehearses and performs songs.

Music Production: Assisting people as they compose their own individual song, record a holiday CD, or create music videos.

Mealtime Music: Live or recorded tranquil and melodic music is welcomed during dinner to promote peace and self-regulation. It relieves stress associated with eating as well as promotes digestion.

Sound Healing

Sound Healing at TCFD

Based on the idea that every existing thing teems with its own signature vibration, Sound Healing uses instruments with especially pure and resonant tones -- gongs, crystal bowls, chimes, tuning forks, and the harp -- to bring the frequencies radiating from a person into harmony.

How does Sound Healing work?

In a deep and dreamless sleep, our brain waves tend to pulse in the range of 0-4Hz, which we classify as “Theta” waves. During waking hours, we give off “Beta” waves between 14 and 30Hz, which we experience as alertness on the low end and agitation on the high end. In contrast, the instruments of Sound Healing slow down our brain waves to the “Alpha” category of 8-13Hz, associated with the tranquil, lucid state when we’re right on the cusp of falling asleep, disrupting the stress response, reducing blood pressure, and mitigating anxiety.



Want more information? Take a look at our [Sound Healing Program Guide](#)

Observed Therapeutic Benefits

Physical Health

- *Regulates digestion*
- *Clear energy blockages*
- *Allows the brain to enter alternate brain wave states and a deeper state of consciousness*
- *Establishes natural and healthy sleep cycles*

Behavioral Health

- *Regulates and relaxes physical/mental/emotional state*
- *Decreases stress (facilitates the release of tension)*
- *Elicits positive emotional states*



Sound Healing can be done in the pool to facilitate even more powerful relaxation and stress reduction.

“If you want to find the secrets of the universe, think in terms of energy, frequency and vibration”

- Nikola Tesla

“One of our students was struggling with controlling motor and vocal perseverations throughout all parts of his day, including during preferred tasks like eating dinner. He would repeat phrases and contort his body in an uncontrolled manner. Among other intervention strategies, his team suggested providing sound healing opportunities in the common area in his residence. Throughout these sound healing sessions, the student was able to rest quietly with limited to no perseverations. The effects had a greater impact on the entire environment bringing down the high energy of the house from a 9 down to a 4, which is one of the reasons why I think the staff enjoy it as much as the kids.” (Music Therapist)

Music Staff Training Concepts

Safety Considerations

Individualized behavioral considerations: Ensure all staff are trained on each individual plan prior to participating in a new program.

Provide safety measures if students display aggressive or property destructive behaviors when handling sensitive or expensive equipment.

Fostering Independence & Self-Efficacy

Utilize technology and adaptive equipment to promote as much independent music-making as possible. Consider training workshops on different technologies for key staff members.

Allow opportunities for people to take control and make choices: Which song would you like to sing first? Would you prefer fast or slow music? Do you want to stop or continue?

Celebrate every success and small milestones to encourage self-satisfaction.

Emphasize active participation. Music is extremely motivating for some people and opens channels for expression, socialization, and communication.

THE
CENTER FOR
DISCOVERY

Appendix

Timeline for Developing Healing Arts Program

Month 1: Start-Up

- Hire the Healing Arts team including at least 4 Full time Therapists/Educators

*Music Therapist
Dance Therapist
Horticultural Therapist
Creative Arts Therapist
Recreation Therapist
Adaptive Physical Education Teacher*

- Train the Healing Arts Team

*Project goals and methods
Assessment strategies
Systems for interprofessional collaboration*

Months 2-3: Program Readiness

- Conduct interest evaluations and baseline assessments for the target population
- Identify target areas and program needs for each individual
- Obtain consent forms forms, if necessary
- Develop and implement an expanded calendar for Healing Arts activities

Months 3-6: Program Initiation and Delivery

- Implement individualized Healing Arts programming for the target population
- Develop a system to track progress quarterly
- Personalized social media blogs/portfolio's/journals
- Quarterly newsletters

Months 6-12: Ongoing Program Delivery

- Continue individualized Healing Arts programming for the target population
- Expand programming and assessment to enhance personalized experiences

Sample Interest Survey



Health. Wellness. And Wonders.
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PERSONAL PROFILE & INTEREST SURVEY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Interviewed: _____

Personality: Put an x in the column that best describes the participant.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
Energetic				
Problem Solver				
Happy and Upbeat				
Natural Leader				
Caring/Empathetic				
Reserved but Focused				

How Does The Participant Currently Enjoy Their Free Time: Please rate these activities 1-5, 1 being top choice.

Walking Board Games w Friends Computer/Ipad Sensory Objects Arts & Crafts
Watching TV Book/Magazine Listening to Music Sitting in Bedroom People Watching

Talents, Skills, Interests: Please rate these activities 1-5, 1 being top choice.

Music Socializing Cooking/Baking Gardening Arts & Crafts
Sports & Fitness Drama Zumba Interacting with Animals People Watching

Motivation: What motivates the participant? Circle all that apply.

Learning New Things Meeting New People Being Challenged Accomplishing a Task
Praise From Others Verbal Praise High Five Thumbs Up

In The Last 6 Months How Often Has The Participant:

	0 Times	1-2 Times	3-4 Times	5 or more
Participate in TCFD concerts or other events (off Ridge)				
Gone to the pool				
Gone to the movies, dinner, shopping, bowling, etc.				
Walk, hike, or bike off campus				

PERSONAL PROFILE & INTEREST SURVEY

Scoring: Choose one activity per column. Each letter is associated with a domain/category regarding activities, once all questions are answered, total up the number of times each letter was used for each section.

A Recreation	B Horticulture	C Creative Expression	D Social Outings
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1	Playing Football (A)  football	Cooking (B)  cook	7	Playing an Instrument (C)  instrument	Going to a Restaurant (D)  restaurant
2	Planting Flowers (B)  plant trees	Cheer Group (C)  cheer	8	Playing Soccer (A)  soccer	Visiting a Zoo (D)  zoo
3	Attending a Play (D)  play	Baking (B)  bake	9	Going on a Hike (A)  hike	Zumba (C)  dance
4	Lawn Games (A)  lawn darts	Egg Collection (B)  chicken	10	Singing (C)  sing	Going to a Party (D)  street party
5	Going to a Concert (D)  concert	Pool (A)  pool	11	Feed the Horses (B)  horse	Attend a Party (D)  party
6	Doing Yoga (C)  yoga	Ride a Bike (A)  bike rider	12	Decorating a Cake (B)  decorate cake	Dancing (C)  dance

Sample Schedule

M	T	W	Th	F
<p>Rec/Fitness Bari + Nicole W + David</p> <p>3:30-4 RL, MB, AR, LH, TK, EH 4-4:30 EBK, VD, QS, RV, MM 4:30-5 JT, JA, BI 5-5:30 NS</p> <p>Gardening Club Eva + Christine 4:15-5:00 AD, JP, MN 5:00-5:45 JF, JU, AB, SM 5:45-6:15 CMc, JT</p> <p>Food& Farming 5-6 Acorn</p>	<p>Rec/Fitness Bari + Nicole W</p> <p>3:30-4 AR, MC, JSM, RL, EH 4:15-5:00: CG, AR, OH, BI 5:00-5:45 AG, BL</p> <p>Zumba Craig 4-4:30- TK, LH, CT, MN 4:30-5 EBK, VD, MB, NS</p> <p>Sous Chef Top Quad Café 3:30-4:30 DM, EM, MSB, JP</p> <p>Cooking Club 5:30-6:15 MM,AD,MC,RL,</p> <p>Art Club Christine + Eva 4:15-5:00 NI, BG, MG 5:00-5:30, Acorn 5:30-6 AR, CG, MSB, CMc</p>	<p>Music Therapy Kenny 3:15-3:45 SM 5:15-6 KW</p> <p>Stories & Sound Christine D, Kenny, Nicole 3:45-4:30 JS, DM, JO 4:30-5:15 AR, MN, NI</p> <p>Restaurant Club Eva Top Quad Café 4:30-5:30 DM, MSB, Chris Ma, QS, JF, AR</p> <p>Photo & Film Christine D, Eva, Christine 5:30-6:15 JS, JP, JO</p> <p>Horseback Riding Heather + Nicole B Milligan Hill Barn 3:15-4: KW 4-4:45:CH 4:45-5:30: TB 5:30-6:15: BG</p> <p>Food& Farming 5-6 Briarwood</p>	<p>Drumline: KENNY 1:45: LH, JSM, NI, JO Stomp KENNY + Rebecca 3:30-4 LH, EH,TK,KW, QS, EBK, EM, MN ,MC</p> <p>Music Therapy KENNY 4-4:45 DM, NI, MG 4:45-5:30 CT 5:30-6 BI</p> <p>Express Yourself Christine D+ Eva 4:15-5 AR, JP, JO 5-5:45 BL</p> <p>Cooking Club Eva + Kelly Top Quad Café 5:30-6:15 AD, JSM, MSB, RL</p> <p>Horseback Riding Heather + Nicole B+ Nicole W Milligan Hill Barn 3:15-4:00: MM 4:00-4:45: JO 4:45-5:30 QS 5:30-6:15 MM</p> <p>Yoga/Mindfulness Christine D 6:30-7 Briarwood 7:15-7:45 Acorn</p>	<p>Music Therapy KENNY 3:30-4 CH 4-4:45 TK 4:45-5:30 EBK 5:30-6 RV</p> <p>Individual Art Exploration Christine D 5-5:30 CM</p> <p>Animal Exploration Heather + Nicole B Milligan Hill Barn 3:15-4 TB, JO, EC, MM 4-4:45 BG, NI, AD, JA, AR 4:45-5:15 JO, SM, AG, BL, MB</p>

TCFD Events & Traditions Calendar

TCFD ANNUAL TRADITIONS & EVENTS

	HOLIDAYS	EVENTS & TRADITIONS	FARM TASKS	COMMUNITY OUTREACH
DECEMBER	Winter Equinox Christmas Chanukah Kwanzaa New Years Eve	Luminary Walk Winter Dance Showcase Ski trips begin	Wreath Making Package Seeds	Holiday Open House Holiday in Hurleyville Overnight Breakfast
JANUARY	New Years Chinese New Year Martin Luther King	Project Runway Winter Festival	Seed Catalog and Orders Collect seed containers	
FEBRUARY	Valentine's Day Mardi Gras Groundhogs Day Presidents Day Black History Month	Cabin Fever Fest	Maple Sugaring begins Garden Planning Start Mother's Day Plants Orchard Pruning begins	Holiday Open House Holiday in Hurleyville Overnight Breakfast
MARCH	Spring Equinox Saint Patrick's Day Women's History Month	Culture Awareness Fair Spring Book Fair	Planting in Greenhouse Make Garden Signs Clean Birdhouses	
APRIL	Easter Passover Earth Day	Earth Day Cleanups	Garden Preparation Outdoor Planting Chicks Arrive	
MAY	Cinco De Mayo Mothers Day Memorial Day	Discovery Drama Production Prom		Evening of Discovery Staff Wellness Fair
JUNE	Summer Solstice Father's Day	Graduation Talent Show End of School Year Outdoor Concert's	CSA Share begins	Golf Tournament Community Horse Shows World Team Adventure Sports
JULY	Independence Day	TAZ/ACT/Summer Camp Block Parties		Golf & Tennis Fundraiser 82nd Airborne Visit
AUGUST		TCFD Concert Series Garden Harvest Parties	Honey Extraction Calving Season	World Team Coastal Challenge
SEPTEMBER	Fall Equinox Labor Day	New School Year TCFD Horse Show	Apple Picking	
OCTOBER	Columbus Day Halloween	Fall Festival TCFD Annual Art Show	Pumpkins Apple Cider Pressing Fall Garden Clean-up	Harvest Festival: Green Shovel Award Big Barn Event
NOVEMBER	Day of the Dead Veterans Day Thanksgiving	Thanksgiving Conference	Wild Turkey Season Garden Clean up Cont. Spreading Compost	



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