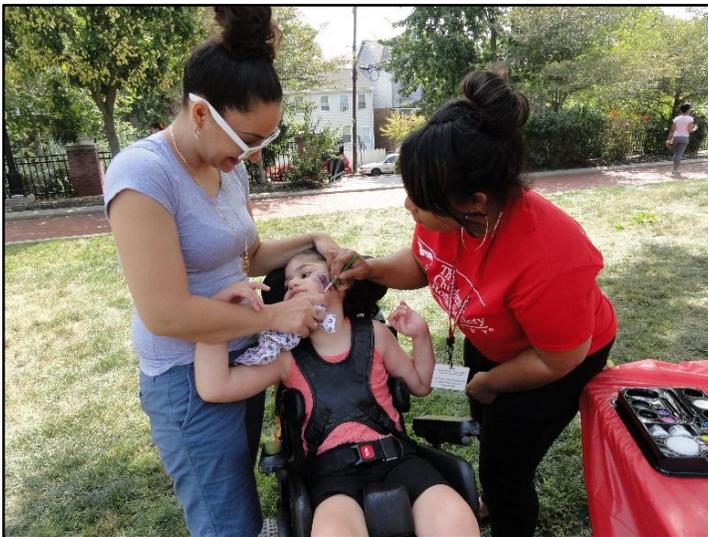


PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE- August 19, 2015**

PR Contact: Denise Wentzler – [dwentzler@chsofnj.org](mailto:dwentzler@chsofnj.org) or 609-695-6274 x153

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Childhood Disabilities and Health Resource Fair in Mercer County  
Hosted by The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's  
Early Head Start Home-Based Program**



A young girl has her face painted by CHSofNJ EHS Home Visitor Adriana Costello at The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Childhood Disabilities and Health Resource Fair, sponsored by CHSofNJ's Early Head Start Home-Based Program.



Children dance with DJ Michael Lee at The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Childhood Disabilities and Health Resource Fair, sponsored by CHSofNJ's Early Head Start Home-Based Program.

**Trenton, NJ (August 19, 2015)** – The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHSofNJ) Early Head Start Home-Based Program welcomed children, parents, and families to the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Childhood Disabilities & Health Resource Fair on August 8, 2015. Often, parents raising a child with known or suspected disabilities are unaware of the support network and resources available to them. CHSofNJ's Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) staff works tirelessly to ensure parents always know where they can turn, should they have questions or concerns regarding their child's development. **As the only event of its kind in Mercer County, the Early Childhood Disabilities & Health Resource Fair has proven a tremendous asset for CHSofNJ's HS/EHS programs and the greater community.**

The decision to move this year's event to an outdoor venue was well-received by volunteers, vendors, and the community and likely played a role in the tripling in attendance for this year's fair. 275 guests explored over 25 vendor tables at South River Walk Park (by Trenton Thunder's Arm & Hammer Park) from 10:00am – 1:00pm, learning about the resources available within their community for children, teens, and adults with disabilities or suspected disabilities. Autism Speaks, Disability Rights New Jersey, the New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS), Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, Inc. (SPAN), and Special Olympics New Jersey were just a few of the helpful community partners CHSofNJ brought together for this important event.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Childhood Disabilities & Health Resource Fair was an overwhelming success thanks to the coordination of CHSofNJ's HS/EHS Disabilities Manager Elaine Rodriguez, HS/EHS Family & Community Engagement Manager Natalie Young, HS/EHS Mental Health Specialist Melanie Shaw, and HS/EHS Administrative Assistant Jodie Otilie. In addition to the exciting new outdoor venue, this year marked the first time the Resource Fair featured a live DJ. Attendees enjoyed the talents of DJ Michael Lee as they spoke with CHSofNJ HS/EHS staff and their community partners, had their faces painted by Family Fun Face Painting, and enjoyed the "Bouncy House" and complimentary water ice provided by Bry-Sha Bouncer House & Party Rentals. Raffle prizes were awarded throughout the day, by both CHSofNJ and vendors. Trenton Education Dance Institute (TEDI), a program of CHSofNJ, taught children some of their fun dance routines during the event, and St. Anianus Kids Ministry provided healthy snacks and nutritional information to guests. Employee volunteers from Bloomberg greeted families and vendors and assisted with various projects throughout the day, and Capital K-9 Association donated bags for families to collect information and resources from the fair that will make a difference in their children's lives.

#### **About The Children's Home Society of New Jersey**

The Children's Home Society of New Jersey is a nonprofit child and family serving agency whose mission is to save children's lives and build healthy families. Founded in 1894, the agency protects abused or neglected infants and at-risk children by ensuring stable, permanent, and loving homes for each and every child it serves. All services are confidential and most are free. For more information, visit our website at [www.chsofnj.org](http://www.chsofnj.org).

#### **About CHSofNJ's Early Head Start Home-Based Program**

CHSofNJ's Early Head Start Home-Based Program is designed to enhance children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development, assist pregnant women with prenatal and post-natal care, support parents efforts to fulfill their parental roles, and assist parents in moving toward self-sufficiency. Pregnant women and families with children (birth to age 3) that meet Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines, reside within the city of Trenton, or have children with disabilities and/or special needs may enroll in CHSofNJ's Head Start/Early Head Start Program. For more information, visit our website at [www.chsofnj.org](http://www.chsofnj.org).

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