



# THE HAWTHORNE HERALD

*“A Behavioral Approach to Lifelong Care ®”*



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### ***Staying Safe with Vaccinations!***

## ***New Westchester School Coordinator***

A longtime Hawthorne Foundation, Inc. administrator, Nicole Prisco, has recently taken over the reins as the Coordinator of HCDS- Westchester School Age Program. We wish Nicole the best in her new role!

The NYSDOH issued new guidance that our schools must follow. Effective September 13, 2021, all HCDS staff, contractors, interns, and volunteers working in our school age buildings **MUST** be fully vaccinated and provide proof of vaccination confidentially to HR or submit a negative COVID-19 test every week. Preschool staff, contractors, interns and volunteers must have received at least one dose of vaccine by September 27, 2021.

As an agency, we are committed to providing our students and adult participants with an appropriate, safe, and educational environment.

In our buildings, all staff, students, and visitors will be required to wear masks, covering their mouth and nose at all times with the exception of food and liquid consumption regardless of vaccination status. Accommodations will be made to those with documented or medical challenges.

When possible and appropriate, classrooms will maintain 3 feet of physical distance between students. Quarantine protocols remain in effect for unvaccinated staff and students after exposure to COVID-19; asymptomatic fully vaccinated staff and students will not be required to quarantine. However, they will be advised to seek testing 3-5 days after exposure;

All other COVID-19 protocols, including hand and respiratory hygiene, daily symptom screening, contact tracing, cleaning, and disinfection, will remain in place.



HCDS strongly encourages vaccination for eligible students, family members, and staff, as these vaccines provide the best defense against a widespread outbreak at our schools and severe illness or death from COVID-19, including the Delta variant. We hope that a high vaccine rate, along with the layered prevention strategies outlined above, will allow HCDS to remain open for complete in-person instruction without interruption.

### *Day Habilitation Programs*

The Day Hab is back in full swing. Most of our participants are attending the program now and several new individuals are joining as well.

The With Walls groups go out in the community at least once a week and enjoy socializing, exercising and walking in the park. Each group is using a picture board, to encourage nonverbal individuals to use picture cards to communicate their needs and desires.

Everyone is happy to be back and to be spending meaningful time in the program with their peers.

The Without Walls participants continue to volunteer in the community, and also enjoy going to parks, walking trails, river-fronts and Planet Fitness. Our music sessions are going very well!

Kudos to all day hab staff for their dedication to the program participants and families throughout this very challenging time!

