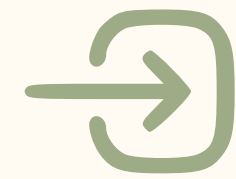


Inviting Spaces

Creating Programs for Teens & Adults with
Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)



Special Needs Meet Up



Spring Hill Public Library

Jenny's Vision

A place for adults & teens with special needs to:

- Meet up & make friends
- Learn & have fun
- Enjoy being together



Daniel & Jenny

Why create library programs specifically for adults with IDD?

Spring Hill Public Library Mission Statement

"...to connect and strengthen our community through knowledge, resources, and opportunities while seeking to inspire and nurture innovation, discovery, and delight."

History of IDD Services

- The deinstitutionalization movement 1960
- Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) 1975
- Community-based care initiative
- Adults frequently age out of programs

(Spassiani, N. A., 2019)



“When I graduated from high school,
it felt like I became invisible.”

HK Derryberry



JENNY MUELLER

“We may have different learning needs or special needs or learning disabilities, but we are all treated as equal.”

-Jenny Mueller

Program Description

- Named by Jenny
- Vague description to allow for changes each month
- Longer run time to give time for relaxed arrival & departure
- Sign up, to collect emails for future communication
- Age guidelines restrict access for younger participants



SPRING HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY

SPECIAL NEEDS MEET UP



12:30-2:00 p.m.
4th Wednesday
For teens & adults

Come & make friends with the members of our community living with intellectual & developmental disabilities & their families/caregivers.

- Enjoy stories, games, arts & crafts, and refreshments
- Connect with new friends & other families with special needs
- Share resources & discover new opportunities



Please Sign Up

Scan QR code for event description

If you build, will they come?

1. Host information session
2. Exchange contact information
3. Find a peer partner & plan!
4. Connect with local social worker
5. Schedule event
6. Adjust as needed
7. Invite public school & other agencies
8. Offer resources to caregivers



Jake of All Trades at the Special Needs Meet Up, June 2022

Yes!



Science Guys at the Special Needs Meet Up, October 2025

Program Content

- Peer-Led Programs
- Non-profit organizations
- Paid Performers
- In-house & simple
- Hybrid programs



Titanic Trivia with Jenny Mueller



Special Needs Meet Up:

BUTTERFLY ART CLASS

12:30- 2:00 p.m.
Wednesday, March 25
Teen & Adult

RAINBOW MOSHO teen artist on the autism spectrum will lead a class exploring sensory art. Participants will create a butterfly out of a variety of materials including feathers, fabric, foam pads, stickers & more.



sign up:
springhilltn.libcal.com

Sensory Art with Rainbow Mosho

Peer Led Programs

- Opportunity to lead
- Tell their story
- Share what they love
- Encourage others




Wyatt

Santa's Photo Booth with Matt K




Non-Profit Organizations


- Highlights other community partners
- Easy to work with
- Affordable or free



Special Needs Meet Up




PHOTOGRAPHY FOR SELF-EXPRESSION



12:30-2:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24
TEEN & ADULT

AbleVoices is a local nonprofit organization that teaches photography to youth and adults with disabilities as a means for self-expression, empowerment, and advocacy. AbleVoices photographers will share their favorite photos with the group. They will also lead a photo scavenger hunt with attendees so **bring your cameras** (a phone camera is fine too)!



Sign Up



Able Voices: Photography class

Animal Therapy & Service Dogs



Pet Partners with Beth Clark

Paid performers



Story Times with Middle Tennessee Princess Parties

Princess Anna's Winter Wonderland

- Frozen story adaptation
- Sing-a-long
- Snowman craft



Michael



Music Therapy



Drum Circle with Vanessa Davis

Science Shows



Mr. Bond with Nashville Science Guys

Magic Show



David David Torres-Fuentes with Abrakadabra Events



“The pure joy in this room,
now that's magic!”

-Marsha Gallardo,
SHPL Children's Librarian

In-house programs

- Arts & crafts
- Puppet shows
- Karaoke Christmas
- Bingo with jokes
- Disney Trivia
- Giant Board games
- Lego building challenge



Nicole & Madisun



“Who took all the good ship building bricks?
The Resistance wins again!”

-Storm Trooper Dan



A Christmas Carol Puppet Show



Grinch & Jonathan

Holiday Themes

- Costumes
- Crafts
- Games
- Prizes
- Music
- Food

Refreshments

- Avoid things that crumble
- Minimal packaging
- Straws for drinks
- Allergy Options



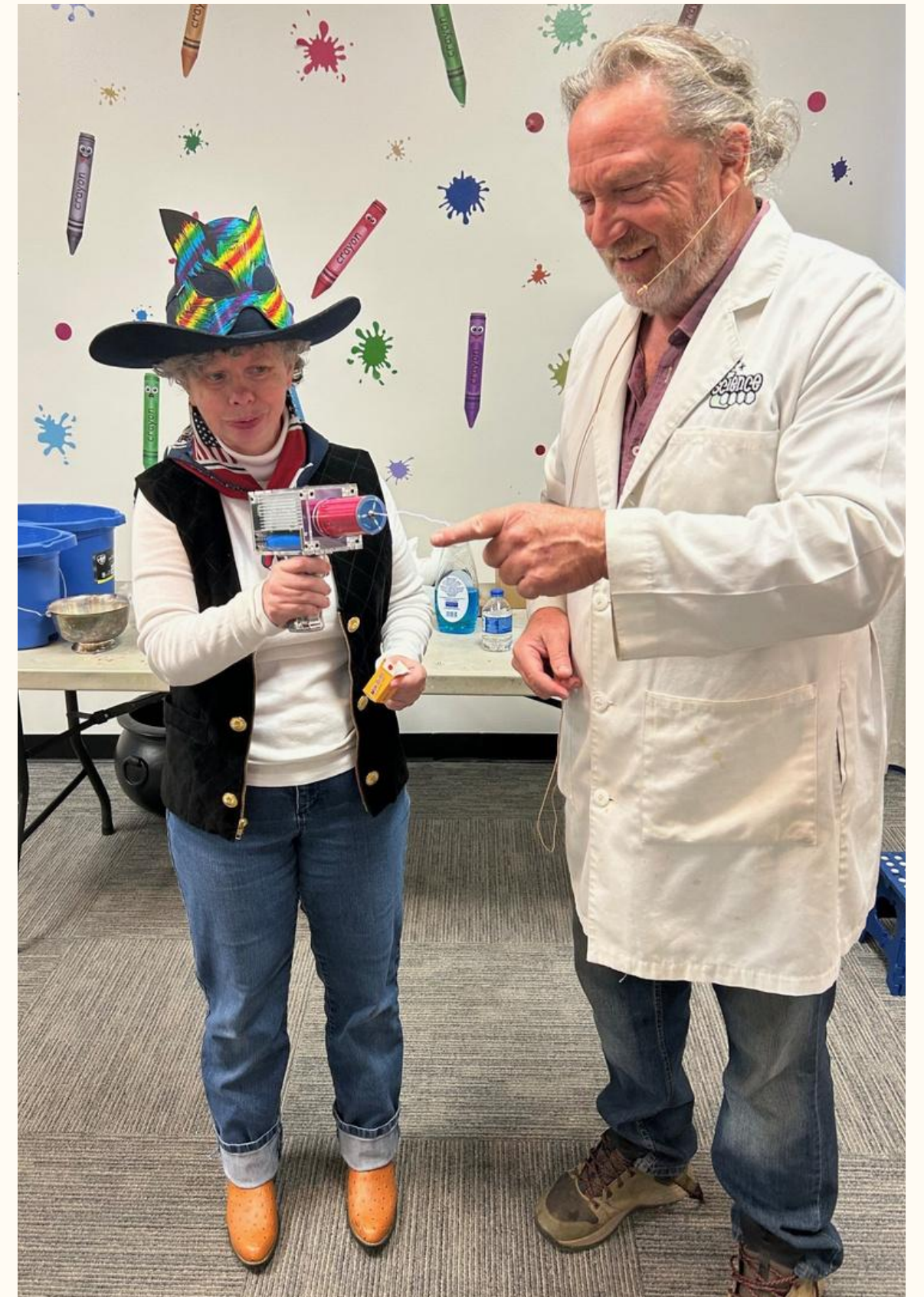
Reader's Theater with Building Blocks Arts Theater

Time to Connect

- Questions
- Stories
- Photo Op



David & Zola



Jenny & Mr. Bond

Hybrid programs

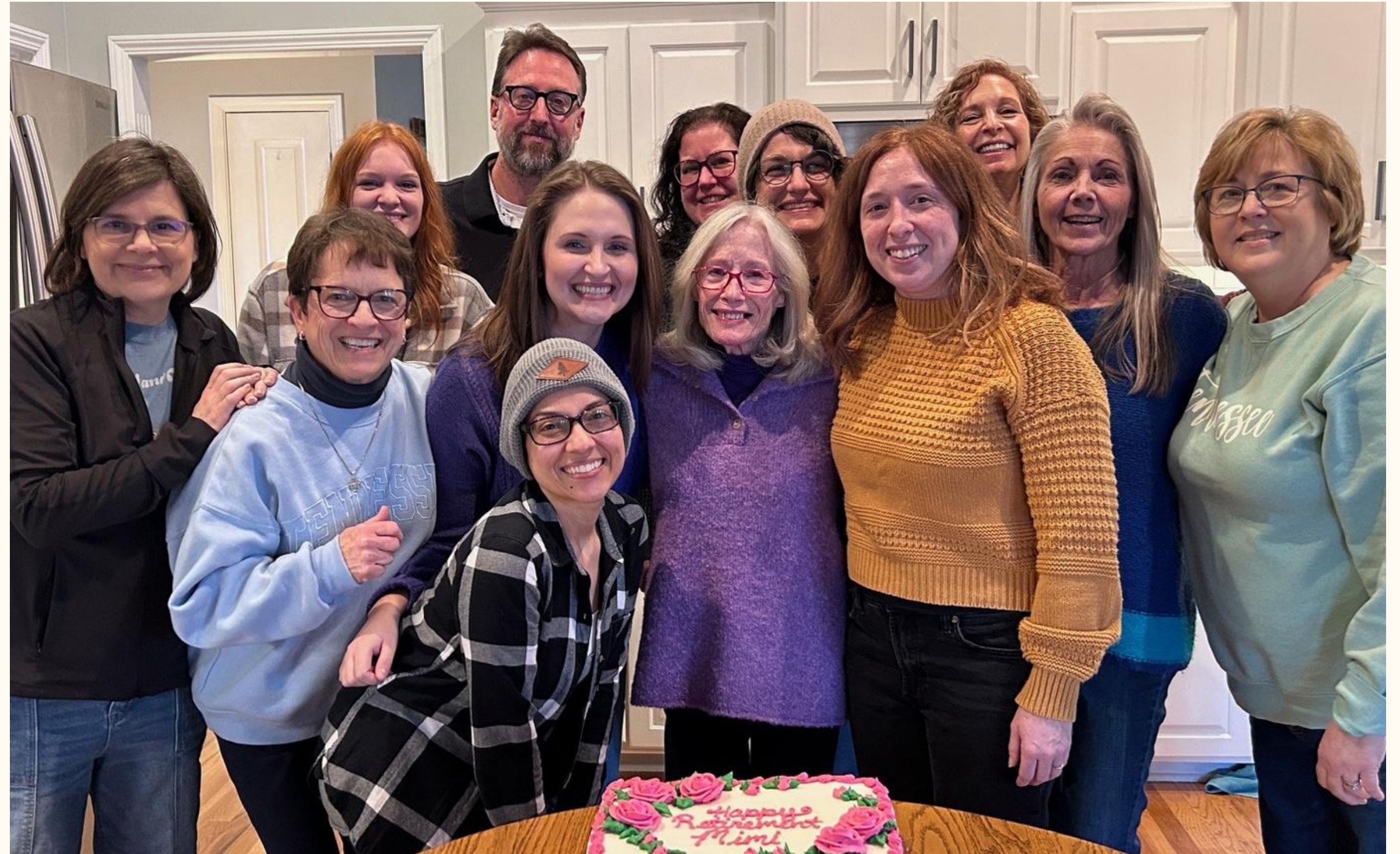
- Inclusive programs that are led by people with IDD
- Welcome all ages
- Create opportunity for connection
- Bring the whole community together



Joe & Jenny

Some Things We Learned

- Professional Training for serving individuals with differences
- Disability Etiquette
- Preventing & Handling Crisis Situations



Dana, Rachel, Ezra, Jesse, Jessica, Marsha, Janice, Janet, Erin, Mimi, Amber, Krystle & Ginnie

Library Policy

- Accommodation requests
- Policy adjustments
- Update program descriptions

The screenshot shows a web editor interface for a program description. At the top, a title box contains the text "Teen Art Studio: Spin Art". Below this is a rich text editor toolbar with various icons for text formatting (bold, italic, strikethrough, underline, font color, background color), alignment, lists, and media insertion. The main content area contains two paragraphs of text. The first paragraph reads: "Unique arts and crafts for teens: painting, drawing, knitting/crocheting, paper crafts & collage, and more. Choose between instructed projects or independent work. Hang out with friends in a relaxed environment." The second paragraph reads: "All materials supplied. For ages 13-17 (or high school graduation). If reasonable accommodations are needed for participants, please contact jjoy@springhilltn.org!" The email address is underlined in the original image. At the bottom left of the editor, the text "body p" is visible, indicating the current text style.

Screen shot of LibCal program description page

Make it Accessible

- Document camera for art classes
- Projector for e-books
- Quiet overflow space
- Closed captions & microphone
- Extra help in room
- Sensory tool kits



Debbie King art teacher

Sensory Tool Kit

- Available for in-house library use only
- Signage for it is posted throughout library



Noise cancelling headphones, colored glasses, fidgets

Volunteers

- Library volunteers with IDD
- Vetting volunteers to help with IDD programs
- Connecting with caregivers about library policy & emergency contact



Spring Hill Public Library Volunteer Application

Please understand that we cannot accommodate all requests to volunteer in this busy library, and some volunteer experiences are temporary, on an as-needed basis. So that we can match you as a volunteer with our very specific needs, please answer these questions:

1. Are you able to follow complex instructions, working alone, without supervision?
2. Are you able to work alone in a fast-paced, loud, and often unpredictable environment?
3. Are you able to set up and break down 6-foot tables and folding chairs?
4. Are you able to use scissors, paper cutters, hot glue guns?
5. Are you able to shelve books according to the Dewey Decimal System, if properly trained? (i.e. Are you proficient with placing decimals in order?)
6. Are you able to accept kindly shared constructive criticism of work that is unsatisfactory?

Volunteer application

User Design Experience

- Library walk through
- Ask what is needed
- Are you comfortable?
- Do you feel safe?
- What obstacles do you see
- Ask for permission to help
- Discuss solutions



Jose, HK, Haiden, Storm Trooper Dan & Alexa

Outreach

- Attend events to get connected with other community agencies that support IDD community & to promote library services
- Collaborate & Cross-promote



Braden & Charles at Home Run Heroes Soft Ball League

Community Care Connection

Invite First Responders to events to create opportunity for:

- Positive interaction
- Talk with caregivers
- Help fill out emergency contact forms
- Answer questions

Special Needs Emergency Contact Form

Name of Child/Adult with Special Needs: _____

Nickname (if any): _____

Date of Birth: _____

Height: _____ Weight: _____

Eye Color: _____ Hair Color: _____

Medical Conditions: _____

Scars/Identifying Marks: _____

Primary Address: _____

Contact Number(s): _____

Method of Communication (if non-verbal): _____

Identification Worn (ex. jewelry, Medic Alert®, clothing tags, ID card, tracking monitor):

Current Prescriptions (include dosage): _____

Sensory/Medical/Dietary Issues and Requirements: _____

Inclination for Wandering or Attention-Attracting Behaviors: _____

Favorite Attractions/Locations Where Person May Be Found if Missing: _____

Likes/Dislikes (Include Approach and De-escalation Techniques): _____

Medical Care Providers (Name/Phone): _____

Parent/Caregiver Information (Name/Phone): _____


Emergency Contact Information (Name/Relationship/Phone): _____

Current Photo (Attach to Front of Form)

(Attach additional pages as needed for medications, sensory issues, etc.)

Programs for Caregivers

- Conservatorships & Trusts
- Funding Sources: Medicaid & Waivers
- TennCare's ECF Choices
- American Jobs Center: Job Training & Employment Opportunities
- Autism & the Law
- The Arc: Family Services
- TN Technology Access Program
- Special Needs Law Center
- Understanding IEP



Special Needs Speaker:

Employment & Community First


Choices

ECF CHOICES

6:00-7:00 p.m.
Monday, September 16
SHPL Multipurpose Room

Allison Bender director & co-founder from Enrich for Life will explain the ins & outs of the Medicaid program ECF CHOICES with Q&A following her presentation.

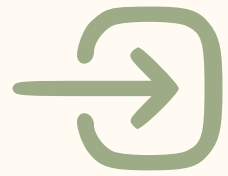
All ages invited
Light refreshments provided
Sign up: springhilltn.libcal.com



Scan QR code for event description

5

Laws of Inclusive Programming



Public Libraries

1 Space



- Provide warm & inviting meeting space separate from quiet & children's areas
- Offer refreshments, charging ports for devices, creative projects with guidance & support

2 Voice



- Create opportunities to lead, to make choices & think critically- to be seen, heard & valued
- Peer-driven programs encourage collaboration, celebrate diversity & empower everyone

3 Partner



- Participants, parents, caregivers & stakeholders must agree on intended outcome, set goals together & make a plan
- Programs must engage intended population while meeting the overall needs of community

4 Create



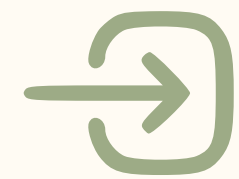
- Facilitate multifaceted creative projects focusing on literacy, STEAM, social/emotional support & independence
- Peer-led programs inspire & motivate participation

5 Care



- Staff must stay current on issues & trends to signal safety to vulnerable populations
- Model social skills, problem solving & restorative justice
- Offer social service resources within programming curriculum

A Place Where Everyone Belongs



Adapting Teen Programs for All Abilities

Teen Programs

- Teen Art Studio
- Makers Market
- Manga Book Club



Pop art acrylic painting with Taegan

Teen Art Studio

- Teens only (13–high school graduation)
- No sign up
- Open-ended projects
- Comfortable space
- Charging stations
- Refreshments
- Parent connection
- Cross-promote other teen programs



Room set up

- Tables facing in
- Extra supplies in middle
- Use projector for tutorials, instructions, promotional flyers
- Aprons & gloves available
- Chill music
- Refreshment table



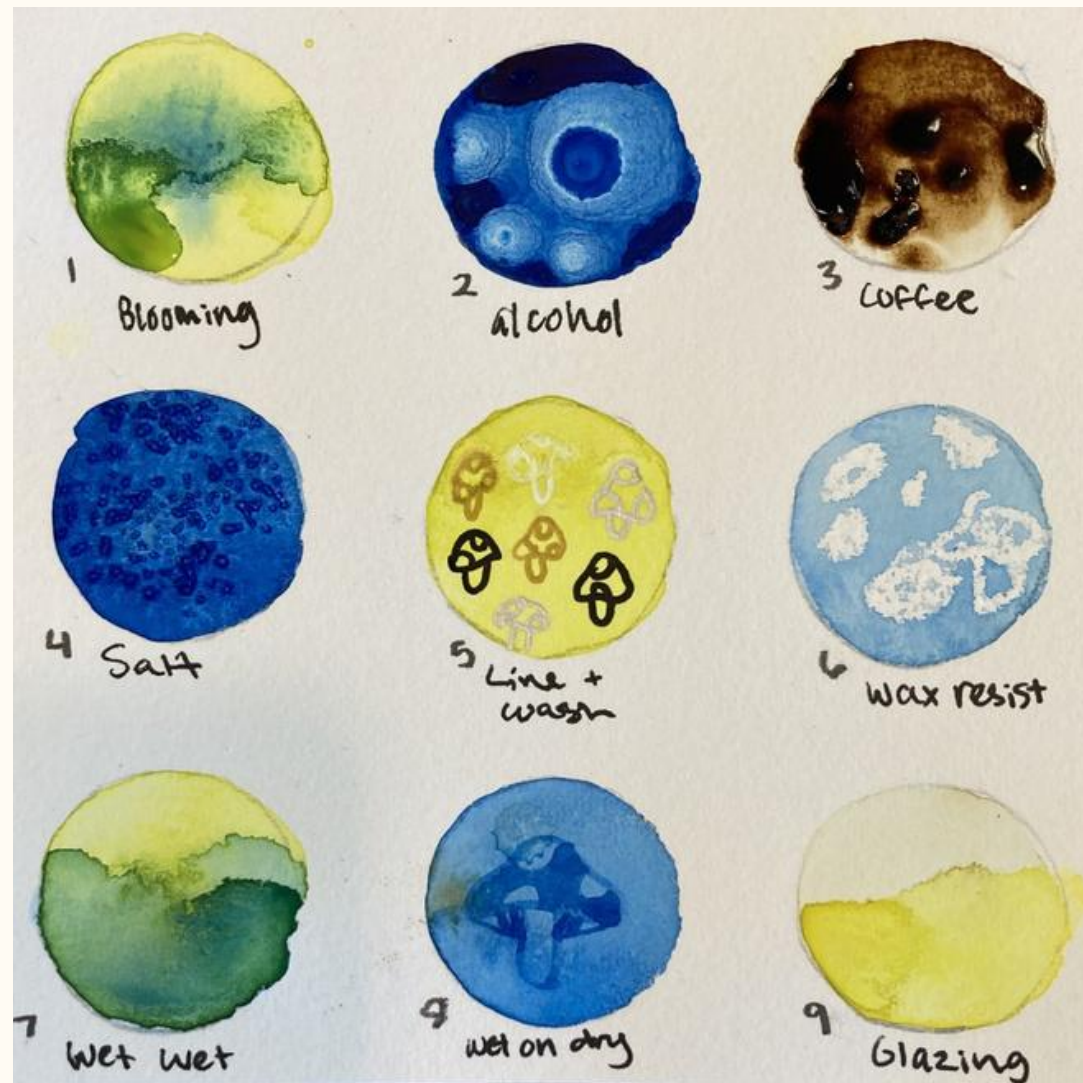
Hot chocolate station



Pencil drawing class in Teen Art Studio

Watercolor Experimentation

- Gel pens
- Salt
- Rubbing alcohol
- Wax resist with crayon
- Instant coffee



Watercolor chart



Gel pens overlay to enhance watercolor

Fondant Design

- Parchment paper
- Butter knives
- Toothpicks
- Fondant



Bumblebee from the Transformers animated series made from fondant

Spin Art

- Salad spinners
- Scrapers
- Tempera paint
- Acrylic markers



Paint pulling with scraper



Photo paper, tempera paint & liquid watercolor

Pumpkin Painting

- Pumpkins
- Acrylic paint
- Paint brushes
- Paint markers
- Newspaper



TJ, Maya & Ty



Art displays give program participants ownership of the space & recognition for unique talents

Personalized Mugs

- Ceramic mugs
- Polymer clay
- Acrylic markers



Permanent marker



Polymer clay on porcelain mug

Upcycle Left-Over Supplies

- Wooden kits
- Polymer clay
- Acrylic paint markers



Bird feeder with acrylic paint markers



Wooden fish with polymer clay scales

T-shirt & Canvas Bags

- Tie-dye
- Fabric painting
- Screen printing
- Patches
- Acrylic painting



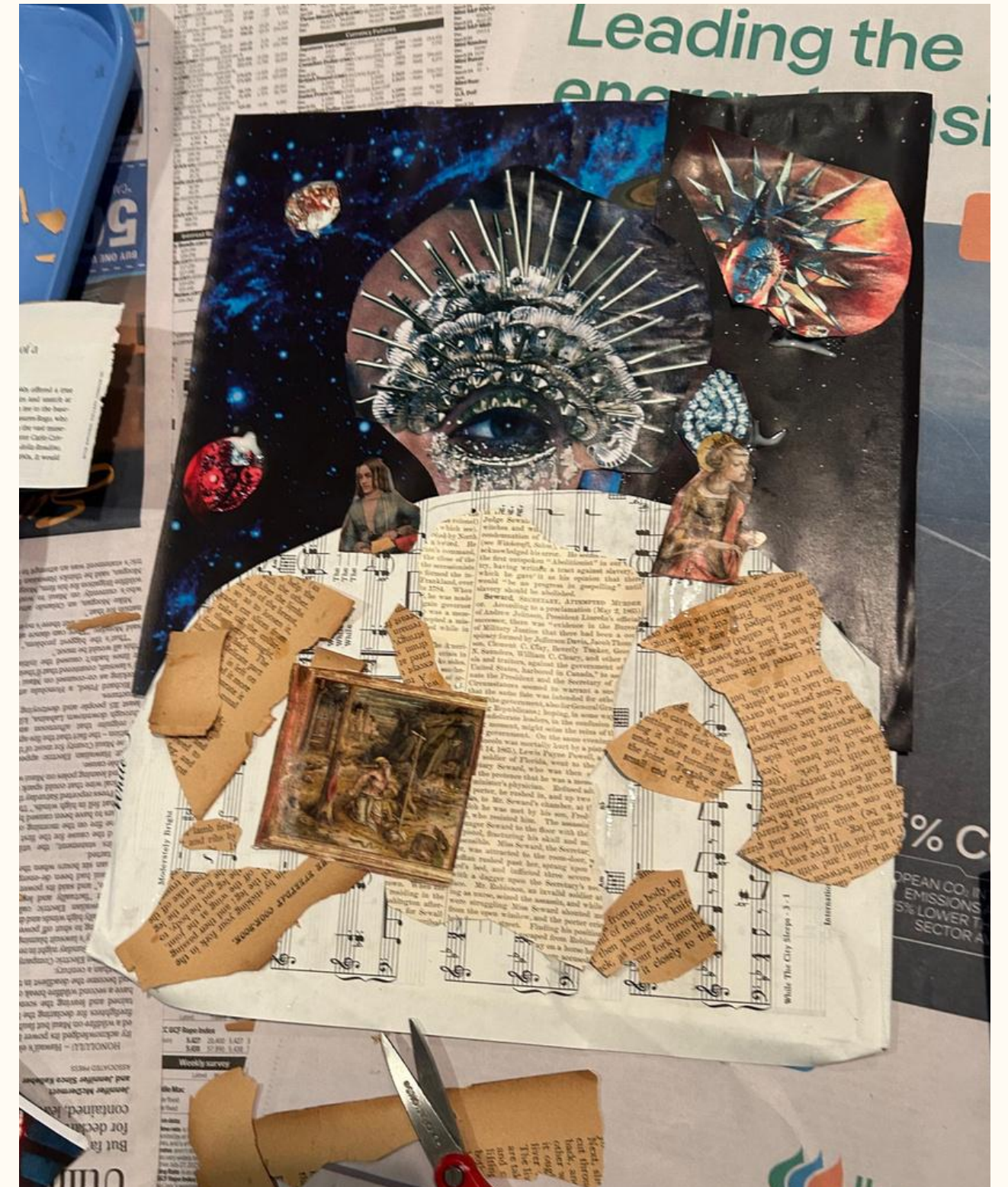
Pop Art Book Bags



Georgia & Maddy

Collage

- Discarded books & magazines
- Card stock
- Scissors
- Glue



Mixed-media collage

Discarded Book Art Journals

- Discarded books
- Paint markers
- Magazines
- Photographs
- Glue sticks
- Wax paper



Make an art journal out of left-over supplies

Hand Sewing

- Felt or fabric
- Thread & needle
- Hoop
- Scissors
- Buttons



Embroidery for beginners



The Teen Art Studio made this mural for you!



- Collaborative group project
- Spring time mural on display in children's area of library
- Flyer posted beside it for context

The flowers are made out of coffee filters & watercolor paint.
The insects are made out of egg cartons & old magazines.

In-House Display



Nature prints on display in teen area of library

Successful Instructor-Led Classes

- Pizza dough class
- Henna body art
- Acrylic painting on canvas book bags
- Group art therapy class



Pizza Dough Class with Viking Pizza

Makers' Market

- Money management/math
- Business/sales
- Social skills
- Critical thinking
- Art show & tell
- Community connection

Spring Hill Public Library 5th Annual
Teen Artisan
**MAKERS'
MARKET**

10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13
For teens only

Calling all teen artists & entrepreneurs!
Showcase your unique, handmade goods
with the opportunity to sell them



VENDOR SIGN UP

Scan QR code for event description

Organizing the Event

- Every year before Christmas
- Look at other events in area before scheduling- no conflicts
- Have it run for 3-4 hours
- Advertise everywhere- outdoor signs too
- For ages 13-high school graduation
- Open to community
- Sponsored by Friends of Library
- \$5 table fee to give back to the community- charity organization is highlighted in description & has table at event



Benny Jett with his book *Spring Hill, Tennessee's Veterans*




"I learned a lot from the experience."
- Damian




"This was really fun!"
-Xavier

Manga Book Club

- Engages reluctant readers
- Purchase fewer hard copies of book
- Introduce Libby & Hoopla
- Kindle accessibility features
- Use projector with ebook- guided reading feature
- Students with diagnosed IDD can apply for devices- TN Technology Access Program




MANGA BOOK CLUB



4:00-5:00 p.m.
1st Wednesday of the month
For teens only
Please sign up

Limited copies of Manga Book Club books will be available for checkout at the circulation desk on a first come, first served basis.



Scan QR code for event description

More Fun with Manga

- Anime Viewing party every summer (English subtitles)
- Cosplay Contest
- Manga Trivia with prizes
- Teen Led Reader Advisory- everyone gets a chance to review favorite book
- Manga Related Reads- encourages branching out from Manga to graphic novels, novels, arts/craft & cookbooks

Manga Related Reads



Monsters/spooky:

Sabriel Y F NIX
This Savage Song Y F SCH
Daughter of Smoke and Bone Y F TAY
The Forest of Hands and Teeth Y F RYA
The Knife of Never Letting Go Y F NES
Slasher Girls and Monster Boys Y F TUC
I Feed Her to the Beast and the Beast is Me Y F SHE
Storm Front: a novel of the Dresden files F BUT

Super-abilities:

Renegades Y F MEY
Steelheart Y F SAN

Adventure fantasy:

Alanna Y F PIE
Artemis Fowl JF Series ART
The Beast Player (Japanese mythology inspired) Y F UEH
Shadow of the Fox (Japanese mythology inspired) Y F KAG
Wicked Fox (Korean mythology inspired) Y F CHO
The Coming Storm J F KID
Isle of Swords Y F BAT
Drowned Wednesday YF NIX
Brotherband Chronicles book 1: The outcasts YF FLA
Straight on till morning: a twisted tale YF BRA
Blade breaker YF AVE
A twisted tale anthology YF TWI
Windwitch YF DEN
Mistborn F SAN

Sci-fi/robots:

Defy the Stars Y F GRA
Iron Widow (older teens only) Y F ZHA
All the crooked saints YF STI
Steelstriker YF LU

Spine Label



Y = Young Adult

J = Juvenile

Lower letters = Author's last name

F = Fiction

Final Thoughts...

- Our programs are hitting capacity
- According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 8.5 million people have diagnosed IDD in 2021
- We need more libraries to host the Special Needs Meet Up and related programs that support teens & adults with IDD



Special Needs Meet Up at the Spring Hill Public Library 2025



Send me your ideas, success stories & resources!

Jessica Joy
jjoy@springhilltn.org



Resource Guide