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## Davis Center to get new outdoor sensory classroom

Cheryl Makin, @CherylMakin Published 2:04 p.m. ET Aug. 23, 2017



(Photo: ~Courtesy of JDCCF)

MANVILLE – By the end of 2017, The Arc of Somerset County's Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families (JDCCF) will have an outdoor sensory activity classroom for its developmental daycare and pre-school facility.

A volunteer initiative by the Leadership Somerset Class of 2017 will embark on a project that will benefit the children enrolled in the early childhood development program at 141 S. Main St.

Leadership Somerset is an adult community leadership program for people who live or work in Somerset County. The leadership team's goal is to design, create and install an Outdoor Sensory Activity Classroom at the center's existing outdoor facility playground.

**READ: [New programs unveiled at The Arc of Somerset County \(/story/news/local/outreach/caring-communities/2016/11/22/new-programs-unveiled-arc-somerset-county/94298870/\)](#)**

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The Arc of Somerset County, which serves individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, has 33 locations including 27 group homes and apartments, four employment centers, Camp Jotoni and the JDCCF.

Providing quality services to children and their families for more than 40 years, the mission of JDCCF is to ensure every child's optimal growth and development with comprehensive, interdisciplinary programs that are designed to meet the physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs of children who have a diverse range of abilities and who may live at or below poverty level.

Each year, participants are required to complete a class project that gives back to the community. The Leadership Somerset Class of 2017 selected The Arc of Somerset County's project proposal and members are working closely with JDCCF staff to assemble the appropriate materials required to benefit the children and the center.

"We are thrilled to be chosen for this year's Leadership Somerset Class of 2017 program and it is a wonderful opportunity for the program to make a significant impact on the children that we serve," said Lauren Frary, executive director for The Arc of Somerset County. "We are excited to be a part of the process and look forward to using the new sensory classroom soon."

On Aug. 10, Manville Mayor Richard M. Onderko came to visit the project area at JDCCF and offer his best wishes on the project.

The outdoor classroom will be composed of mostly up-cycled materials that can be transformed into an affordable and sustainable full sensory curriculum that is required by the JDCCF's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). QRIS is a systematic approach to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs.

Applications for the Class of 2018 are being accepted. The deadline is Oct. 31. For more information, go to [www.leadershipsomerset.com](http://www.leadershipsomerset.com) (<http://www.leadershipsomerset.com>). For more information about The Arc of Somerset County and JCCCF, go to [www.thearcofsomerset.org](http://www.thearcofsomerset.org) (<http://www.thearcofsomerset.org>) or call 908-725-8544.