



PossAbilities
for people
with disAbilities™

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PossAbilities during a pandemic

Monmouth County-based FRA helps individuals with developmental or acquired disabilities stay connected through remote learning and telehealth.

Red Bank, NJ – As a new reality sets in around the COVID-19 pandemic, all lives are affected – including those with intellectual/developmental disAbilities. Although these individuals are often thought of as not being able to easily adapt to change or technology, this is not the case for individuals enrolled in one of the 20+ classes offered by Family Resource Associates (FRA), which serves people of all ages who have developmental or acquired disAbilities.

In less than a week, FRA made the switch from onsite daily classes to remote learning. “It is fabulous to have over 70 of our students joining our daily remote learning sessions being taught by our highly qualified instructors,” said Nancy Phalanukorn, Executive Director of FRA. “Many of our students have taken computer-based classes for years, giving them a real ease and functional use of the computer at home.”

Students from the Monmouth/Ocean County areas are connecting through Google Classroom, Classroom Dojo, Zoom and other standard apps. Lead teacher, Jen Lindsay, is exuberant about the way the students have adapted to this new adventure as they continue to learn from home. “Every day our students take on new lessons, persevere in their focus and work hard to participate in activities with various apps,” said Lindsay. “They also love this new way of interacting with their friends and classmates.”

One parent said that her son loves remote learning so much that he may be resistant to coming back into the real classroom. “Parents have been a true asset for making this happen,” said Lindsay. “It is clear that technology can level the playing field for all of us.”



To ensure the entire FRA community stays active, hip-hop dance and karate classes have also moved to remote instruction with 10 sessions offered throughout the week. Most of the 100 students join their regular class.

Job coaches at FRA were able to move directly to remote services as well. Interns in the Monmouth Medical Center Project SEARCH program continue to make strides. Learning transferable work skills in real job settings, these interns had to leave their positions as COVID-19 took the forefront of the hospital's medical attention. This vocational program, supported by the NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities and public schools, has fully supported the transition to remote learning. Everyone is excited to see the growth and continued preparedness that the interns are demonstrating. Phillip Duck, Director of EmployAbility stated, "This sudden shift in learning delivery has actually supported our interns in being resilient and adaptable when things just don't go as planned."

Before COVID-19, FRA was seeing over 250 children from birth to three-years-old with developmental delays and disabilities each week in their homes and daycare centers. With the social distancing orders in effect, even services for babies have changed. "FRA's team of 60 early intervention specialists has now been trained to give high quality Telehealth services to our little ones as well," said Phalanukorn.

One FRA parent shared, "I was so happy to see how successful the structure of a Telehealth session works from a parent's view. My daughter was engaged, and her physical therapist was able to prompt me to assist her in a better way. Telehealth is truly perfect for Early Intervention, as the end goal is to develop a home program that we, the parents, can carry over to use the materials we have readily available during our routine/daily activities. We cannot wait to see the continued progress my daughter makes!"

Since 1979, as a program whose vision has been to expand and create innovative options for people with unique abilities and disabilities, FRA has again shown that there are no limits to what can be accomplished by someone with a disability when we raise the expectations and provide support. To learn more about FRA – PossAbilities for People with Disabilities, please visit www.frainc.org or call 732-747-5310.



About Family Resource Associates

[Family Resource Associates, Inc. \(FRA\)](#) is a 501(c)(3) in Monmouth County helping children, adolescents and people of all ages with disAbilities to reach their fullest potential. FRA connects individuals to independence through specialized therapies and advanced technology. Acknowledging the powerful influence of the family, we remain committed to them by offering both support and education.

FRA assists individuals of all ages who have developmental delays or disAbilities as well as acquired disAbilities. FRA provides home-based early intervention for infants, therapeutic recreation programs, pre-vocational and educational classes for adults, employability training and job coaching, along with family and sibling support groups.

TECHConnection, a signature program of FRA, leverages technology to help increase, maintain or improve the capabilities of individuals with disAbilities as a result of accident, injury, illness or aging as well as related issues affecting hearing, vision, reading or mobility. To learn more, visit frainc.org.

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FRA students learning through Zoom.

