



[www.TheOrionSchool.org](http://www.TheOrionSchool.org)

## SPRING 2010 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends of the Orion School,

Thank you for your continued support of our mission to offer an ideal education for children who have ADHD and related challenges. The school year may be winding down, yet every day continues to be rich with learning. Our recent and ongoing projects include our ever expanding organic garden, our egg hatching experiment, our amazing catapult launcher, visiting neuroscientists, our solar cooker smorgasbord, and our upcoming hippotherapy outing.

Planning is well under way for our unique camp that offers a typical day camp experience for children who need more support than typical day camps can provide. Our camp enrollment is kept small to ensure that we can offer the same strategies for success for campers that we do for our students throughout the school year.

Check out my Blog *ADDED View* about insights learned in my multiple roles as a parent of a child with special needs, a non profit founder and full time volunteer educator for the community of ADHD learners. Also consider joining The Orion School Facebook group which frequently posts articles of interest.

Enrollment for the 2010/2011 school year continues to grow as word gets out about our innovative and supportive learning community.

Please look through the newsletter to learn more about what is going on at The Orion School.

Warmly,

Laura Markson,  
Director, The Orion School  
[director@theorionschool.org](mailto:director@theorionschool.org)

### May Tour Dates Expanded!

Parent Tour dates are by appointment on Fridays starting at 9:00am. To RSVP contact [ccarden@theorionschool.org](mailto:ccarden@theorionschool.org)

#### Quick Links

[The Orion School Web Site](#)

[The ADDED View Blog](#)



Listen to Karen Powell's radio show [Education Forum](#) as we discuss *The Orion School*. (View the 02/17/10 edition)

### CLUB ORION Community

### Join Us For Camp Orion!

Camp Orion is an active day camp for children ages 5-12 who have AD/HD. The focus is on social skills, self regulation and most importantly, self esteem!

**Camp Orion** offers a typical day camp but structured to ensure a successful camp experience for children who have AD/HD. Each day is designed to offer the novelty within structure that our curious & energetic campers thrive in. A 1:4 teacher to camper ratio ensures that camp goals are met. The camp is staffed by teachers with experience working specifically with students who have AD/HD.

High interest camp activities each day include crafts, art exploration, nature, gardening, cooking, yoga, sports, and field trips. Each week has a lively thematic focus  
Skill building activities are designed to foster growth in the following



## After School

Club Orion is the *only* Afterschool program in Atlanta designed specifically for children in the community ages 5-12 that have ADHD and related challenges.

The focus of Club Orion is friendship building, self esteem, social skills, and creative expression.

This program is open to all children in grades K-6<sup>th</sup>

### Club Orion Hours

Monday - Friday  
2:30pm - 6:00pm

### **Location**

The Orion School  
458 Ponce de Leon Avenue  
Atlanta, GA 30308

### **Fees**

2010/2011 School Year - \$3900  
Each day per week per semester - \$575

### **Club Orion**

- \* Offers an active after school program that is structured to ensure a successful experience for each child!
- \* Keeps the adult to child ratio of 1:4 or less
- \* Provides a nurturing, supportive setting for children to work on friendships, social skills, problem solving, and frustration management
- \* Includes homework help with patient teachers
- \* Provides high interest, life skill activities that are educational, fun and improve self confidence.
  - \* Includes snack.
- \* Has a program wide positive behavior plan in place.
- \* Uses The Alert program to help students with self regulation
  - \* Provides novelty within structure for curious and energetic children.



### **Weekly activities include**

Gardening, Art, Cooking, Martial Arts, Kumandi Drumming, Outdoor/Indoor Games and

Sport Skills, and Science/Nature Activities.

areas: friendship building, problem solving, managing frustration and anger, expressing needs and emotions, understanding social cues, cooperative play, and sport skill competence.

### **Four 1-week thematic sessions offered:**

"Survivor Week" - June 14<sup>th</sup> - June 18<sup>th</sup>

A fun week learning basic friendship, cooking, outdoor, and safety skills!

"Cooking Up Science Week" - June 21<sup>st</sup> - June 25<sup>th</sup>

Is it science or cooking? It depends on whether you are eating it!

"Orion Olympics Week" - June 28<sup>th</sup> - July 2<sup>nd</sup>

Diverse culture, crafts, food, and of course games!

"Let's Play Ball Week" - July 5<sup>th</sup> - July 9<sup>th</sup>

Explore games old and new as well as activities inspired by the orb shape

### **Hours:**

9:00am-3:00pm M-F

The fee is \$375 per week

Before & After Care available for an additional fee

Questions? Contact: [ccarden@theorionschool.org](mailto:ccarden@theorionschool.org)

## **CAMP ORION Q & A**

1. **Can my child visit the camp before it starts?** Of course! Once a child is registered for camp, we will make a plan for new campers to visit before camp begins.
2. **What does Camp Orion know about AD/HD?** The Orion School is the only Atlanta school with a mission specifically to help students who have AD/HD. Camp Orion is carefully structured to meet these needs.
3. **What other types of disabilities are represented at the camp?** Campers typically have a range of conditions that co-occur with AD/HD including anxiety, depression, OCD, tics, Tourettes disorder, mood disorders, SPD, LD, and HFA. On a case by case basis, we are also an inclusion camp for other disabilities.
4. **How many campers attend, and what is the staff-to-camper ratio?** Camp Orion keeps the same 1:4 teachers to child ratio that we do for our school program. We limit camp enrollment to better serve the needs of our campers.
5. **Who are the counselors?** Our camp is staffed by teachers with experience working with AD/HD students.
6. **What about if my child needs medication during the camp day?** A medical release is included in the application packet so camp teachers can ensure that medication is given.
7. **How are discipline and behavior issues handled?** We have a camp wide positive behavior support plan in place to help our impulsive campers regulate behavior. This constant, tactile reinforcement increases student confidence and communicates teachers' expectations by focusing on positive, desired behaviors rather than the negative.
8. **What is your social skills program?** Social skills are worked on throughout each camp day. In addition, direct instruction social skill activities are also used to teach pragmatic skills and emotional literacy. The Alert Program is used to teach self-awareness and regulation. This program also provides a sense of power and control over campers' bodies and choices.
9. **How does the camp deal with special food concerns?** The camp provided snacks that meet the dietary needs of campers who have food allergies or are on restricted diets. Camp Orion is also a Peanut Free Zone.
10. **Is there any academic tutoring available as part of the camp fee?** The goal of the camp is a typical camp experience for campers who need a bit more support to experience camp success. There may be camp teachers available that will tutor after camp hours. The fee for this is paid directly to the teachers.
11. **What are the goals for campers?** Do parents receive any sort of reports about their child? The goal for campers is to have fun and increase self esteem through successful experiences. There is a daily activity and behavioral report sent home for each camper as well as a weekly recap.
12. **How is communication handled?** Before camp begins, parents receive an informational packet with detailed information about the goals and activities for each

**To enroll your child in Club Orion for the 2010/2011 school year please call 404-551-2574**

## 2010/2011 School Enrollment

We have a rolling admissions policy and continue to accept a limited number of students for the 2010/2011 school year. Please sign up to attend a tour if you are interested in starting the admission process.

Contact [ccarden@theorionschool.org](mailto:ccarden@theorionschool.org) or call 404.551.2574

The Orion School Participates in the [Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program](#) (SB-10)



### We Have Partnered with the Apogee Scholarship Program

Now you can earn a Georgia State tax credit for donations this year to the [Apogee Scholarship Fund](#).

Through the **Apogee Georgia School Choice Scholarship Fund**, Georgia taxpayers can REDIRECT, at no cost, Georgia Income Tax dollars to The Orion School. As an added bonus, Individuals and Families in AMT (Alternative Minimum Tax) can actually profit up to 29% for making donations.

Donors receive a **"dollar-for-dollar" Georgia tax credit** for donations to the Scholarship Fund and in turn we provide eligible students with scholarships for private school tuition in Georgia.

The paperwork only takes a few minutes and any Georgia taxpayer can participate; so please spread the word to your friends, relatives, colleagues and businesses.

The Orion School is a GAC accredited, non-profit, alternative private school

week. Parents can talk informally with the teachers at drop off and pick up but, are encouraged to schedule a time to talk for more than a few minutes. Camp teachers understand the need for ongoing communication and information sharing about each camper.

13. **Most importantly, How do I know if my child a good fit for Camp Orion?** We are a camp for children who may or may not have the diagnosis, but have the following core AD/HD symptoms in varying degrees: inattentiveness, distractibility, impulsiveness, and hyperactivity.

Despite often being curious, outgoing and creative, our typical camper might have any number of the following related challenges:

- \* Needs to be in a smaller, more structured environment during the school year
- \* Struggles in a traditional camp setting
- \* Has difficulty making and keeping friends
- \* Misinterprets social cues from other children and adults
- \* Gets overwhelmed in new, unstructured, or even exciting situations
- \* Conflict resolution skills are not well developed
- \* Must win
- \* Will not stay on task if not interested
- \* Despite interest, does not consistently finish tasks
- \* Interpersonal skills may present as inappropriate or even rude
- \* Cause and effect are not always understood
- \* Repeats off behaviors despite redirection and intervention
- \* The concept of time is limited
- \* Struggles with Handwriting
- \* Has difficulty with organization
- \* May be relentlessly outgoing and talkative
- \* May have low self esteem

## FEDERAL FUNDS FOR CAMP ORION?

We are a tax exempt organization, so children who attend Camp Orion may be eligible for a federally funded stimulus program to offset the cost of summer camp. The application deadline is May 15th, below is some information to help you research this.

**Federal Government Paying for Summer Programs (ages 5-12)** The GA Dept. of Human Services has an initiative to assist families with paying for summer camp that is funded (ARRA) money. The Summer Camp Program will provide assistance with the cost of care for children ages 5-12 attending a tax exempt summer camp program between May 21 - August 9, 2010. There are no fees or co-pays. The Program will pay up to \$318 per week OR the summer camp's published rate, whichever is less.

**Applications must be received no later than May 15, 2010.** The application can be sent to the Child Care Unit at 2 Peachtree, Suite 21 - 295, Atlanta, Georgia 30303 to the attention of Arlene Green. Ms. Green can be reached at

[afgreen@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:afgreen@dhr.state.ga.us) For questions, please call 1-866-371-8222.

\*Families that qualify for the Summer Camp Program will receive care for the summer only, from May 21 - August 9, 2010.


\*Funding for the Summer Camp Program is available on a first come, first served basis and applications will be taken **until May 15, 2010 or until all funds are expended.**

To apply online go to: [www.COMPASS.ga.gov](http://www.COMPASS.ga.gov) (Click on the box designated for TCCA child care. As you complete questions regarding the type of service needed, you will see a prompt that will ask you if you are applying for TCCA Summer Camp Program.

## Share

The Orion School provides a specific and vital educational niche in the Atlanta educational community. Thank you for sharing this newsletter with interested parents, professionals and groups.

located in Midtown Atlanta. We use a disability perspective and a strength based approach to teach students in grades K-6 strategies to live successfully with ADHD. High interest multisensory activities are integrated into the fabric of a novel yet structured school day. The student to teacher ratio is very low at 4:1 or less.

 Forward to a Friend



Programs offered as part of the school and included in the tuition are Handwriting Without Tears, Occupational Therapy, a Social Skills curriculum, a Positive Behavior Support Plan,

The Alert Program, Thinking Maps, AIMS web, dance, drumming circle, Learning on the Log, Yoga Kids, art, photography, martial arts, swimming, tennis, rock climbing, sport skill development, and weekly field trips. We also provide our families a monthly educational parent support series led by Irene Celcer, MS, LCSW.

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