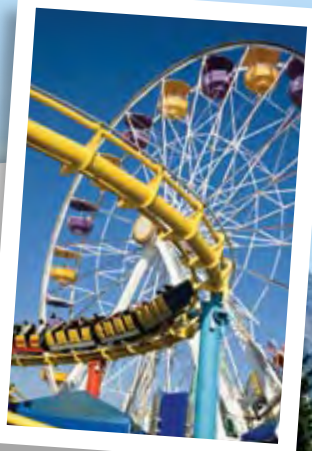
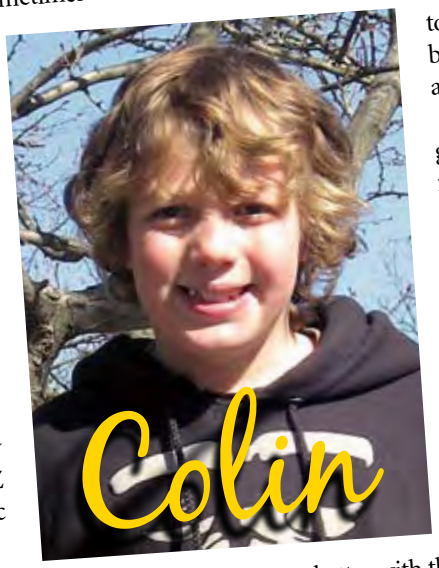


Colin Gruszka, 10, reacted with excitement when his parents told him he would be attending summer camp as the recipient of a CHADD Summer Camp Award. Colin says that as a result of his AD/HD, "sometimes it's a little hard to learn," so this summer he is hoping that his camp experience will help him "learn a few things, like reading" but also "learn some fun games," too. He finds that "school is really fun" when it comes to subjects like social studies and science, but "sometimes it is kind of boring" when it comes to a subject such as math. When not in school, Colin passes his time in a myriad of activities such as Cub Scouts, playing on a soccer team, playing video games, and watching movies. Colin also enjoys playing laser tag and baseball with his dad and brothers and going to amusement parks to ride the roller coasters. As if that's not enough, Colin also loves to read, especially books belonging to the A to Z Mystery series and the Magic Tree House series.



"Colin has an amazing spirit," explains his mom, Cheryl Gruszka, adding that he "is extremely smart and creative;" however, his AD/HD makes it "hard to control his behavior." She hopes that camp will teach Colin "self-control and how to manage his frustration." Gruszka explains, "With three children with AD/HD, we've been turned away by various professionals so many times. CHADD is giving our family a chance to do something we have not been able to do. Camp will really help our family."

The summer camp program the Gruszkas have chosen for Colin involves regular parent training sessions in addition to the camp activities that Colin will participate in daily. His mother looks forward to the parent training component in particular. Above all, though, she hopes that Colin, who is a triplet, will be able to apply what he learns at camp to fostering a stronger relationship with his brothers and get along better with them. Colin, his parents, and his two brothers reside in Ashland, Massachusetts.

TASHKA, JGROUP, DARKCLOUD, LEISADAVIS, TONYAGOODNOW, BLOWBLACKPHOTO / ISTOCK, CHALAKOV / SHUTTERSTOCK

Sarah Schneider-Firestone, MSW, *is a senior health information specialist at the National Resource Center on AD/HD, a program of CHADD funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

by Sarah Schneider-Firestone, MSW

Going to Camp!

Spotlight on the 2009 CHADD Summer Camp Awardees

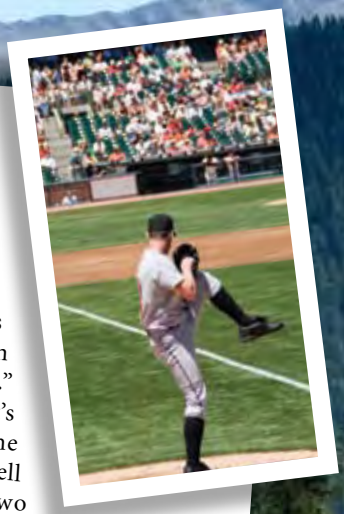
CHADD HAS ONCE AGAIN MADE POSSIBLE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND SUMMER CAMP to children living with a diagnosis of AD/HD. This year's awardees, Colin Gruszka and Sean Kopytowski, have each received an award of up to $8,000 to cover the costs associated with attending a camp specializing in meeting the distinctive needs of children living with a diagnosis of AD/HD. CHADD is able to provide this summer camp experience thanks to donation support by McNeil Pediatrics and Toys"R"Us Children's Fund, Inc. CHADD thanks McNeil Pediatrics and Toys"R"Us Children's Fund, Inc., for their generous financial contribution to this program.

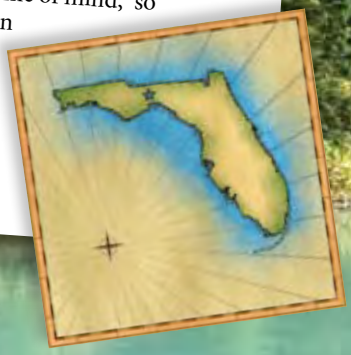
When **Sean Kopytowski**, 15, was asked what he is most looking forward to when he attends camp this summer as a recipient of a CHADD Summer Camp Award, he enthusiastically replied, "Everything! I like all of it!" Expanding on that statement, Sean says he very much looks forward to his first trip to Florida, where the camp he will attend is located.

A teenager with varied interests, Sean cites simple pleasures such as spending time outdoors and playing with his pets, which include a dog named Nieko and cat named Fallooppi, as two of his most beloved pastimes. Sean is also an avid sports fan, with baseball and football at the top of his list of favorite sports, and the Yankees and the Giants as his two favorite teams.

Sean says AD/HD adversely affects his ability to concentrate and focus, which in turn negatively affects his social skills. "Interacting with other kids—I'm not very good at that," he says. He is looking forward to the social interactions he will have at camp and hopes the experience will help him with peers upon returning home. Sean reports that he enjoys school, with math being his favorite subject, and boasts that he had perfect attendance this year. Sean, who will enter the ninth grade in the fall, confesses he is a little nervous about starting high school at a new school. He is optimistic that camp will help prepare him for the transition.

Sean's uncle, Steven Dowd, describes Sean as an active teen with "a lot of energy." He adds that "Sean's challenges make it hard for him to interact with other people." Dowd says, "It's hard—with the AD/HD, you tell him to do two things and he forgets the first thing." To help Sean effectively manage his AD/HD at home, his home environment is very structured. Dowd often gives Sean very specific directions, which helps him to focus on the task at hand. He hopes the camp they chose will be able to build on the routine and structure they established for Sean at home. Dowd also hopes Sean will "have a good time at camp and come back in a better frame of mind," so he can have an easier time interacting with others. Sean lives in Mohegan Lake, New York, with his uncle, grandmother, and sister.





Congratulations to CHADD's 2009 Summer Camp Awardees!

The 2009 CHADD Summer Camp Award Program is funded by McNeil Pediatrics, a Division of Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and Toys"R"Us Children's Fund, Inc.