



August 3, 2009 *Contributed by Easter Seals*

## Easter Seals Adds Saturday Respite Program To Their Expanding List of Exceptional Services



Easter Seals Participant Gerald, of Wilmington, (right) plays his winning piece defeating the Activity Leader Kristi Hughes, of Newark, (left)

Easter Seals Participant Gerald, of Wilmington, (right) plays his winning piece defeating the Activity Leader Kristi Hughes, of Newark, (left) at Easter Seals' new Saturday Respite Program. Recently, Easter Seals began offering this once a month service in its New Castle County location to give temporary relief or "break" to caregivers and families who are caring for adults with disabilities, chronic or terminal illnesses or the elderly.

The first session themed "Celebration of Independence" was enjoyed by all who attended, volunteered and received respite while their loved ones were being taken care of by the talented staff at Easter Seals. A special visit from PAWS for People, a non-profit, volunteer organization who lovingly provide elders, children, and people with disabilities individualized, therapeutic visits with gentle, affectionate pets, made the day an even bigger success.

"We want to thank the people at PAWS for visiting us and making it that much more special for the participants," Ray Brouillette, Saturday Respite Project Coordinator said. "The main focus of the respite program is to provide a fun environment for participants and to provide a time of relief from care giving responsibilities to caregivers."

For more information, visit [www.de.easterseals.com](http://www.de.easterseals.com) and click on the Saturday Respite button. Those interested can apply on-line or call 302.324.4444 for an application. Families can go to the [www.delrespite.org](http://www.delrespite.org) website to apply for financial assistance as this is a private pay service.

There are an estimated 130,000 Delawareans providing unpaid care for a relative, friend or loved one.

According to a University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Study, the average caregiver is a 52 year old woman who has been caring for her family member for over 20 years (Center for Disabilities Studies, 2003). This type of unpaid care was valued at almost a billion dollars in Delaware alone (National Family Caregivers Association, 2006).

Easter Seals offers a range of services, including outpatient rehabilitation therapy, early intervention services for children, day services for adults with physical disabilities and cognitive disabilities and assistive technology services to increase the functional capabilities of people with disabilities. For more information about, call 800-677-3800 or visit [www.de.easterseals.com](http://www.de.easterseals.com).