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Beach day, surfing planned in Belmar for children with autism

*BY BONNIE DELANEY
TOMS RIVER BUREAU*

A surf camp and beach bash for children with autism and their families is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at the Seventh Avenue beach.

The free event is hosted by Autism Family Services of New Jersey, and this year marks its fifth year, said Samantha Griffiths, a spokesperson for the organization. Last year 3,000 people attended, she said.

Music; beach activities; arts and crafts; free product samplings by Napoli Boys, Rookie's Gluten Free and Schar; photo identification kits; and free resources for parents are part of the event.

The surf camp will give 190 children with autism an opportunity to surf alongside professional surfers from the Surfers Healing organization.

Lifeguards will be donating their time in the off-season to watch the open swim area, and the Belmar First Aid Squad will also be on hand.

Due to the size of the event, those attending should register in advance by visiting www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org or by calling 877-237-447.

The mission of Autism Family Services, launched in October 2004, is to ensure a better quality of life for individuals and their families affected by autism and related disorders throughout the lifespan. It is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to developing programs such as respite care and after-school and recreation programs. Its local office is in Brick.
