

## Special needs housing subject of Oct. 22 panel

CHATHAM - A panel of experts will discuss housing for the special needs adult from 7 to 9 p.m. Monday, Oct. 22, at ECLC of New Jersey's P.R.I.D.E. center, 100 Passaic Ave.

When children with special needs become adults, the transition from the classroom into the world of work and independent living can be daunting. One of the biggest challenges facing these young adults and their families is housing.

"Housing is important because it leads to greater independency and autonomy for adults with special needs. It expands their horizons for being more fully integrated in the community," said P.R.I.D.E. Director Dot Libman.

Panel members include:

- Sandi Cooper, executive director of Neighbours, Inc., who has been working for 24 years with individuals with special needs and their families to develop creative housing options

and ideas.

- Gail Levinson, executive director of Supportive Housing Association New Jersey, who is committed to improving community access and opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

- Thomas Toronto, president, Bergen County United Way, who brings 29 years of experience working with United Ways in Bergen, Burlington and Hudson counties.

- Janel Winter, the housing director of the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, where she is committed to assisting clients with suitable housing options.

Those interested in attending are asked to pre-register by sending an email to [wmandelbaum@ecfcfnj.org](mailto:wmandelbaum@ecfcfnj.org). For more details, contact P.R.I.D.E. Director, Dot Libman at (973-625-1705) or [dlibman@ecfcfnj.org](mailto:dlibman@ecfcfnj.org). To learn more about ECLC, visit [www.ecfcfnj.org](http://www.ecfcfnj.org).

