New ways of running programs in a world of social distancing!
In times like these, our programs are more vital than ever. Although our primary focus is children with severe disabilities, today our programs service all walks of life, young and old, stricken with one or more disabilities. With the current pandemic, we will continue to respond to Government recommendations while supporting our clients.

Now that everyone has moved to remote learning, work, social setting etc. Families raising children or caring for adults with disabilities are under more stress than ever. They are not only worried about keeping their jobs, but also how they will integrate their family into a “new normal” while keeping their loved ones safe. Staying healthy is their paramount concern.

We are all impacted by COVID-19, but people with development and physical disabilities can’t always comprehend a new situation which can cause depression, isolation, confusion and unwanted behaviors. By quickly transitioning our workforce of volunteers into an on-line community, we’ve been able to help our clients with new Zoom learning classes. As we continue to listen to our clients, our top priority is to go on to provide stimulating, educational and recreational services through remote learning. We are currently exploring the idea of offering outdoor activities in a private setting, while social distancing since Massachusetts has entered Stage 2.

SMILE Mass serves some of the highest at-risk community members including the 12.2% of school-age children between the ages of 3 to 22 diagnosed with severe disabilities.
Our guests visit our beach retreat on Cape Cod to relax. We all know what the beach and sun can do to our soul. With that in mind, SMILE Mass has gone to extraordinary length to make sure our guests feel safe and welcome, here are a few of the new policies:

1. We ask all guests to self check their temperature before arrival, and not to enter the condo if any one in their travel party has a temp higher than 98.6F for adults & kids no higher than 99F.

2. Face masks are required by state law and must be available to be used anytime you are outside the condo. Always keep 6 feet apart when outside in the common areas, except for your own family. All gatherings are limited to 10 people.

3. There are 3 stationary hand sanitizers (1 in each bathroom & kitchen)

Please refer to [www.homeaway.com/vacation-rental/p4982108](http://www.homeaway.com/vacation-rental/p4982108) to see the full list of house rules updated for COVID-19.

Since the opening of the beach house 3 years ago, we have had full capacity through out the whole season, this year with a waitlist of over 25 families
The Community Beach Wheelchair Program: In the new normal of Covid-19 we have added new and tighter procedures for both our loaner program and our community programs to make sure all clients coming to their local beach can feel safe, and healthy while visiting.

Beach wheelchairs need to be rinsed and sanitized in between each use with a spray sanitizer and allowed to stand in the sun to dry before being loaned out to the next user. (Suggested wait/dry time is 3 hours)

To offset the new guidelines, SMILE Mass will try to secure grants to fund the program to give everyone the opportunity to enjoy a day at the beach.

See full list of maintenance and recommendations in the guide provided to each town who have benefitted from the SMILE Mass beach wheelchair program.

Equipment Loaner program:

All equipment will be sanitized, once delivered to their destination using a spray sanitizer

Delivery is now required, and a small delivery fee will be implemented to all borrowed equipment.

SMILE Mass will hire personnel to help with the transport of adapted equipment

To see the full list of changes to all our programs, please refer to our website.
SMILE Mass....
Inclusion still matters in a social distancing world!

Over the past 10 years SMILE Mass have advocated, pushed boundaries, created new inclusive programs, all while challenging towns and cities throughout New England to ensure everyone is thought of when new community spaces are updated!

For most people with a disability, the world is already smaller under normal circumstances. With the “new normal” of the Covid-19 epidemic, the world as we know it is almost non-existent for our clients. Without a vaccine most of our clients are in total confinement. SMILE Mass has taken many steps to continue to service our clients. Our Zoom classes can’t offset the need our clients have for social interaction.

With that in mind, we are in the process of creating an outdoor all-inclusive program offering small class size, in a private setting to insure we can keep both clients and staff safe, while providing stimulating programs for clients that are having a hard time learning through Zoom calls.

Here are some of the first steps to make the program both safe, stimulating & fun:

- Private setting (already secured & rent free)
- Qualified staff/groups maximum 10 people
- SMILE Mass support staff will only intervene if a medical emergency happens
- Mask, gloves & facial shields for all staff
- All participants must wear masks, if able
- Breaks in between classes to wash hands and sanitize
Life is all about the little things

Thank you for believing in our Mission!

Together we can continue to build a better tomorrow where everyone belongs despite disabilities.

Lotte Diomede Co-Founder and President

- www.smilemass.org
- Info@smilemass.org
- 617-967-7755