



PERSPECTIVES

A publication for parents and professionals serving individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Grand Blanc Parks and Recreation Programs

We have Spring programs coming up...if numbers are low, they will cancel. Please check out our programs, including Gym Night, Floor Hockey, and Swim at www.gbparcs.com. Call 810-694-0101 for more information. Also keep your eyes out for our upcoming Summer 2009 programs, new ones to choose from! Our summer booklet will be in print by the first week of May mailed to only GB residents.

Summer 2009

Summer break is fast approaching. Here are some ideas for activities for the summer months:

- ☺ Oakland University—www.oakland.edu/oucares offers a Summer Day Camp. E-mail questions to oucares@oakland.edu or call 248-370-2424. Registration forms are online.
- ☺ Mott Children's Health Center's LOGO Teen Social Group for ages 12-16. Call 237-8692 for more information.
- ☺ Asperger Society of Michigan—www.aspergersmichigan.com camps:
 - * Springhill Camp is a Christian camp that has an inclusion program for kids with special needs, including ASD. Web site: www.springhill.com or phone 231-734-2616.
 - * St. Francis Camp on the Lake is a non-profit organization providing a summer camp experience for children and adults, including autism. Financial assistance may be available. Web site: www.saintfranciscamp.org/ or call 517-688-9212.
- ☺ Camp Copneconic has many programs, camps, and summer day camps for kids 3 to 13. Web site: www.campcopneconic.org or call 810-629-9622.

- ☺ Easter Seals programs include The Play Project, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Sensory Integration, Therapeutic Camp Experiences, and Early Intervention. Get more information at www.mi.easter-seals.org.
- ☺ Grand Blanc Parks & Recreation, Special Needs; web site www.gbparcs.com or phone 810-694-0101.
- ☺ Southern Lakes Parks & Recreation, Web site www.slpr.net or phone 810-591-0080.
- ☺ For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum. For more information call the nature preserve at 810-789-8567 or the arboretum at 810-736-7100, ext. 6 or go to www.geneseecountyparks.org
- ☺ Michigan Summer Camps, www.camppage.com/michigan.htm
- ☺ American Camp Association, web site: www.acacamps.org or phone 800-428-2267.
- ☺ Sloan Museum, phone 810-237-3450. Many activities are provided throughout the summer.
- ☺ The Flint Institute of Arts, phone 810-234-1695 or website www.flintarts.org. The institute offers many classes in the summer.
- ☺ Flint Youth Theatre, phone 810-237-1530. Classes are offered in the summer.
- ☺ Flint Institute of Music, phone 810-238-1350. Classes are offered in the summer.
- ☺ PAC Library. The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) has a library of books, DVDs, and videos or various special education areas that can be checked out. Come by this summer and see what's available at GISD's, SESC-N building, 5075 Pilgrim Rd., Flint, MI 48507. For further information contact Marcia Clark at 810-591-4881.

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- ☺ Mott Children's Health Center
 - * Kid Power for brothers and sisters of kids with special needs. Phone 810-237-8692.
 - * Parent Empowerment Program for parents with newly diagnosed/suspected ASD. Phone 767-5750, ext. 5292.
- ☺ Thomas the Tank is back in August at Crossroads Village! Web site: www.thomasandfriends.com/dowt or phone 866-468-7630.

Genesee Belle) + 4 Trillium Movie Passes + \$100 Cash!!
 ☺ 3rd, 4th, & 5th Prizes: \$100 Cash

Southeast Michigan Walk Now for Autism

Sunday, October 11, 2009
 The Palace of Auburn Hills

2009 Autism Walk & Festival

The Autism Support Group of Genesee County (www.geneseeaautism.org) is excited to announce the Kick-Off of the 2009 'Autism Walk & Festival.' This event presents an occasion for families, educators, students, the medical, business and non-profit communities, as well as the general public to come together to celebrate the lives of children with autism. The purpose of this Walk is to show appreciation of our community's many 'Autism Angels,' to increase community awareness of autism, and to raise money toward the ASGGC's Adult Residential Project. All monies raised from this event will go toward the development of a farm-based residential community to provide for the care that will be necessary when many of these children reach adulthood. Your support is greatly appreciated!!



ASGGC 2009 Autism Walk & Festival
 YMCA Pierson Rd., Flushing, MI.
 May 30, 2009 11:00 a.m. Free!!!

Sponsors, Volunteers, Teams needed!
 Register/information at:
www.firstgiving.com/asggc
 Contact: cennest@comcast.net or
 (810) 694-8034



- FAMILY FUN RAFFLE (Need not be present to win)
- ☺ Tickets \$1.00 (see above) Drawing at 1:00 p.m.
 - ☺ 1st PRIZE: Vacation for 4 to Cedar Point OR Zehnders Splash Village (includes Hotel, Tickets, and \$200 Spending Money) or \$600 Cash Prize!!
 - ☺ 2nd PRIZE: Crossroads Village/Huckleberry Railroad Annual Family Pass (6 people for 1 year to enjoy Crossroads, Huckleberry RR and the

The 2009 Autism Speaks' Southeast Michigan Walk Now for Autism website is now open. Please register your team today and start your fundraising for this year's walk. Visit www.walknowforautism.org/semichigan to sign up, start a team, and access online fundraising tools.

Family Services

Applications are now being accepted for the fourth round of Family Services Community Grants that address one of the following areas of need: Education, Recreation/Community Activities, Equipment/Supportive Technology and Young Adult and Adult Services. Successful applicants will apply grant funding to support new programs or the expansion of existing projects. All applications must be submitted online by June 25, 2009.

Autism Speaks will host a Family Services Community Grants Application Webinar for interested applicants on April 21, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. (EDT). This is a great opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the application process. The webinar is optional and is offered as a courtesy to applicants. If you are interested in participating, please send your name and

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Jan D. Russell
 Assistant Superintendent
 Special Education Services

Compiled by
 Becky Downing
 Teacher Consultant
 for Autism Spectrum Disorders

Layout & Design
 Text Processing
 Patti Dombrowski

GENESEE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
 Thomas Svitkovich, Ed.D.
 Superintendent
 2413 West Maple Avenue
 Flint, MI 48507-3493
 (810) 591-4400
 TDD (810) 591-4545
www.geneseeisd.org

Resource Fair: Spring Spectrum Expo, 2009

"Resources Across the Lifespan" From General Ed. To Special Ed., from 0-93

Featuring Special Guests - Authors Nick Dubin and Linda Hodgdon! This event will take place on Saturday, May 16, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Oakland Schools Administration Building, 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48238. Summer is coming!! ASM is hosting a resource fair to showcase products and services that will be beneficial for the summer and throughout the year. Exhibitors will represent recreational, educational, community providers, state agencies, advocacy groups, therapists, adult resources, camps, schools, transitional programs, consultants, and food samples including allergen free products. In addition, will also have a book store and an "Ask the Expert Table" area where experts in their field of Autism Spectrum Disorders will be available to answer your questions and much, much more. Admission is free!



Autism Society of Michigan and Central Michigan's Autism Society of America Chapter are Co-Sponsoring a Mini Resource Fair!

ASM and the Central Michigan Chapter of the Autism Society of America are co-sponsoring this event to bring resources and information to the Northern part of the State!

April 25, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Chippewa River District Library (CRDL)
301 S. University Ave.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
(Cross Streets: Near the intersection of S.
University Ave. and E. Illinois St.)
(989) 773-3242



5 THINGS YOU SHOULD NEVER SAY TO A PARENT WHOSE CHILD HAS AUTISM

If your child has autism then you're a walking target for friends, relatives, and even strangers to offer unsolicited advice. You realize they have good intentions but it's still a very hurtful experience. We've compiled a list of common mistakes that people make. When talking to parents whose children have autism, here are five things you should never say.

1. Autism does NOT mean deaf

You're chatting to your friend and you notice her child engaging in some strange behavior. You're curious and you ask "What is he doing? Does he always do that?" Questions like these place a parent in a very difficult situation. They are also very damaging to the autistic child's self-esteem. The child might not look up at you but he heard what you said.



A common misconception is that people with autism don't comprehend the world around them. Nothing could be further from the truth. People with autism might not respond or react in typical ways. They might not have much speech but they do understand what's being said. Keep in mind that many of them have acute hearing and can hear what you're saying clear across a room.

2. Actions speak louder than words

You're standing in line a busy store. The woman in front of you is struggling to keep her sanity intact. Her child is running off and pushing items off the sales racks to the ground. "What an insolent child" you think to yourself. "His mother should discipline him better!"

Don't jump to conclusions just yet. It's very possible the child has autism. Even if you're tempted, do not roll your eyes and shake your head in disdain with other customers. This mom faces judgment at every turn. You will make her day if you smile broadly at her. Then offer to keep her place in line so that she can redirect her child.



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3. Discipline advice

You're visiting a friend whose child has autism. Her child is painstakingly building a tower and he accidentally knocks it over. Devastated at his mistake, he flies into a rage and hurls the blocks through the air. Your friend quiets the situation but you don't approve of the way she handles it. Shocked at her son's inappropriate outburst, you offer some well meaning advice and share your discipline tactics.

Children with autism often don't respond to conventional methods of discipline. This mom deals with more than you can possibly imagine and has probably tried every discipline tactic in the book. She's afraid you'll be judging her actions. A warm smile and a swift change of subject will do wonders for her.

4. You can leave him behind

You're planning a trip to the amusement park. You'd love to go with your friend but you're in a dilemma. Her typical kids love the amusement park but her child with autism seems to have a difficult time. So you come up with a solution. "Come with us to the amusement park" you tell her. "Your kids will love it. Well except for Tommy, but you can find something else for him to do that day."



Inviting a family to join you, except for their child with autism is a very crushing experience to a parent. Your intentions might be good but that doesn't make the experience less devastating. Parents that have children with autism desperately want their kids to be accepted in the community. Rise above the judgments of others and invite the whole family. If you feel that isn't a viable option, leave your invite for another day when the whole family can be included.

5. Therapy recommendations

Your grandchild has autism. You're distraught that your children have such a rough road ahead of them. You're devastated that your gorgeous grandchild is autistic and you want to help. Having already raised your own children you've learned a thing or two. You cringe as your daughter tells you about the therapy option she's picked and the behavior management she has for her child. You give the gift of wisdom

and let her know how she should do it differently.

Parenting a child with autism is totally different from raising a typical child. You have to live it to really understand. If you want to do something wonderful, be supportive to the parents. Give your love, follow through on their decisions and stand by their side. You will become a hero to parents who desperately need your acceptance and support.

To all the parents whose children have special needs, we commend and praise you! Your road is rocky, filled with joy and challenges. To everyone else, we stand in gratitude. Your love and support is immeasurable for parents and their special needs kids. Thank you for standing by their side.

Reprinted from [www.http://www.nlconcepts.com](http://www.nlconcepts.com)

The Social Times

By Kari Dunn Buron

A Fun Supplement to Any Social Skills Program

The Social Times is a great resource for professionals working with students who have social cognitive deficits, grades 3-9. Seven issues, 10 student copies per issue—only \$4.80 per student.

Topics Covered in Volume 1:

- ⊕ Issue 1: Reading Body Language
- ⊕ Issue 2: Thinking About Thinking
- ⊕ Issue 3: Reading Faces
- ⊕ Issue 4: Tone of Voice
- ⊕ Issue 5: Social Stress and Anxiety
- ⊕ Issue 6: Giving and Receiving Compliments
- ⊕ Issue 7: Repairing Social Problems



Go to www.asperger.net

ASA Teams Up with Little, Brown Company to Promote Awareness through "The Horse Boy"

March 12, 2009

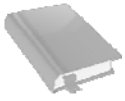
By: Carin Yavorcik

New book to be released this April

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In *The Horse Boy*, Rupert Isaacson shares his inspiring story of how he and his wife learned to think of their son's autism as an adventure rather than a curse, a beginning rather than an end. Little, Brown and Company is publishing the book on April 14, 2009, and will be partnering with the Autism Society of America to raise awareness. Both the ASA and the book aim to empower families to think creatively and openly when it comes to treatment.



When his son Rowan was diagnosed with autism, Rupert Isaacson was devastated. Would he ever be able to communicate with his child? Were all the dreams he and his wife Kristin had for their son dashed? No matter which doctors they saw or therapies they tried, Rowan could not connect with the people around him.

But Rowan could connect with animals, in particular a neighbor's horse. When Isaacson and Rowan rode together, Rowan improved immeasurably. Isaacson knew there was a place in the world that combined horses and healing, but the idea of traveling to the outer reaches of Mongolia seemed absolutely crazy. Still, inspired by his son's progress, Isaacson pursued the dream literally to the ends of the earth for a chance to heal Rowan and their family.

ASA and Little, Brown will be presenting the book at a series of events this April - stay tuned for more details - and an ASA autism awareness bookmark will be included with copies of the book. For more information about the book, visit <http://www.horseboythebook.com/>.

Reprinted from www.autism-society.org

ASA Calls for Global Recognition of Human Rights for Individuals with ASD

April 2, 2009

By: Carin Yavorcik

ASA President to Speak at U.N. for World Autism Awareness Day

Today marks the second World Autism Awareness Day, as recognized by the United Nations, and on this occasion the Autism Society of America is calling on the nations of the world to support its Declaration of the Human Rights of Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

In honor of World Autism Awareness Day, the U.N. is presenting a panel discussion on "Autism and Human Rights: Understanding and Safeguarding the Rights of People with Autism" at its headquarters in New York. Lee Grossman, ASA President and CEO, will be one of the distinguished panel speakers from across the globe, along with Dr. Stephen Shore, an ASA Board of Directors member and individual with autism. Other speakers include Dr. Hatem El-Shanti, director of the Genetic Medical Centre at the Shafallah Centre, Qatar; Paulo Barrozo, professor of law at Harvard University; Evelyne Friedel, president of Autism Europe; and Pat Matthews, executive director of the Irish Society of Autism. Mr. Matthews is also a past president of the World Autism Organization. A webcast of the briefing will be available at <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/index.asp>.



"We will know we have succeeded when people on the autism spectrum become an accepted part of the human condition," Grossman says. "While this goal may take a generation to achieve, the global community should aim for nothing less, and it is imperative that we begin to work toward that goal today."

An estimated 30 million people in the world have an autism spectrum disorder, 1.5 million in America alone. To date, there is no global survey or study on prevalence. Individuals on the autism spectrum and their families struggle daily to advocate for basic health care, education and community acceptance that should be their natural rights as humans, yet they are systematically discriminated against and subjected to global abuses.

ASA's declaration states that people with autism have the fundamental human right to live an autonomous, independent and meaningful life; self-determination and direct involvement in decisions affecting their

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lives; accessible and appropriate education, housing, assistance, care and support services as well as sufficient income; freedom from threats, discrimination social exclusion and cruel and abusive treatment. Read the declaration in its entirety at www.autism-society.org/humanrights.

Mr. Grossman also participated in a U.N. video conference on autism and educational challenges on March 30.

Reprinted from www.autism-society.org

How One Autistic Young Man Runs a Business

By Nancy Shute

Joe Steffy is off to Overland Park, Kan., this week to do a PowerPoint presentation on his business, Poppin' Joe's Kettle Korn. He's a 23-year-old small-business man with a goal of \$100,000 in sales by 2012. Joe also has autism and Down syndrome and is nonverbal. When he gives his talk, he will push buttons on an augmentative speech device to deliver the words. His audience will be parents who fervently hope their own special-needs children will be able to work, too.



Joe's parents, Ray and Janet, didn't agree with the school district assessment in their home town of Louisburg, Kan., that said Joe would never be able to work or live independently. "I'm one who can easily get ticked off," says Ray. "That ticked me off. We saw more in Joe than that. We set out to prove to the school that he had capabilities." They came across kettle corn while on a trip to Alaska and realized that all that popping, scooping, and serving suited Joe's love of work.

The path to Joe Steffy's success was not an easy one; Ray Steffy worked closely with Dave Hammis, an advocate for self-employment for people with disabilities in Middletown, Ohio, who trains business owners, government employees, and parents on how to make use of state and federal programs. The Steffys wrote up a business plan and helped Joe secure \$25,000 in grants from programs like Social Security Administration's Plan to Achieve Self-

Support program (PASS).

In 2005, Poppin' Joe's Kettle Korn was born. Sales have grown from \$16,000 in 2005 to \$50,000 in 2008, both from selling at festivals and from delivering popcorn to local outlets. Joe has five part-time employees, and his parents help out with driving and other tasks. "Pop and everyone that works with him knows whatever Joe wants to do you let him do, because he's the boss," Ray says. "If he wants to pop, he'll shove Dad out of the way and pop."

If the business stays on track, it should be grossing more than \$100,000 in three years, and the Steffys are seeking a business partner who can work with Joe to manage the business. Joe is no longer on Social Security disability payments; instead, he pays state sales tax and state and federal income tax. He rents his own house and is helped by caregivers who are paid by a state program. "It's been hard work, from the standpoint of physical work," says Ray Steffy, who is 67. "But a parent with a child like Joe has a choice. You can either kick in and do this kind of thing, or you can sit and fret emotionally with the amount of energy, worrying about what's going to happen to them." The payoff for that effort, as far as the Steffys are concerned, has been priceless. They see their son make a local popcorn delivery, accept payment, fold it, and put it in his pocket. When he walks out, his dad says, Joe looks 3 inches taller than when he walked in.

Reprinted from US News

ASA Statement on IACC Strategic Plan

By: Carin Yavorcik

Plan lauded for inclusion of research on services

Recently, the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) published its Strategic Plan for Autism Spectrum Disorder Research. This Strategic Plan will advise federal agencies and Congress on needs and opportunities for research investigating autism. ASA President and CEO Lee Grossman serves on the IACC, and ASA welcomes the plan and applauds the



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Conferences

Date	Title & Location	Speakers	Fee	Contact Info
May 7, 2009	Access to the General Education Curriculum Inclusion Conference	Dr. Michael Wehmeyer	\$125	www.mcesa.k12.mi.us 989-631-5890
May 12, 2009	Aggression, Rage & Meltdowns! Strategies for Managing Students with Behavioral, Emotional & Spectrum Disorders Southgate	Kay Otten, Behavior & Autism Specialist	\$199	800-678-8908 www.sdresources.org
May 28, 2009	School Refusal Behavior: Effective Techniques to help Children Who Can't or Won't go to School East Lansing	George B. Haarman, Psy.D., LMFT	Varies	
June 3, 2009	Early Intervention for Children with Developmental Disorders including ASD Grand Rapids	Karen Searcy, MA, CCC-SLP	Varies	www.crosscountryeducation.com 800-397-0180
June 4, 2009	Early Intervention for Children with Developmental Disorders including ASD Saginaw	Karen Searcy, MA, CCC-SLP	Varies	www.crosscountryeducation.com 800-397-0180
Nov. 5-6, 2009	PECS Detroit		\$395	www.pecs.com 888-732-7462

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committee for its diligent work on this important issue.

The plan is a comprehensive strategy to look at all areas of research on autism. It includes six major subject areas: diagnosis, the biology of autism, risk factors, treatments and interventions, services and supports, and lifespan issues. Each subject area includes a discussion of research opportunities, short- and long-term objectives, and a recommended budget estimate.

ASA especially applauds the inclusion of services research in the plan, including an annual "State of the State" review of policies, services and supports for people with ASD and their families; effective dissemination of evidence-based practices for people with ASD at the community level; cost-effectiveness studies of interventions and services for people with ASD across the lifespan; studies that characterize current ASD diagnostic and service utilization patterns in community settings, examine the relationship between the likelihood of a diagnosis and services availability for those with ASD, and evaluate services and intervention outcomes; and improved and coordinated methods for tracking trends in ASD prevalence across the lifespan of diverse populations.

ASA will continue to engage the IACC and other federal agencies to make sure that research on the crucial areas of effective services, supports and treatments receive the attention and funding needed to help families today. To read the Strategic Plan for Autism Spectrum Disorder Research in its entirety, please visit the IACC Web site at <http://iacc.hhs.gov/>.

Reprinted from www.autism-society.org

Funny Moments and Autism

Science Wizard

When my son was in 1st grade, his teacher told us "I've learned that if your son and I disagree on a science fact, HE is always correct."

So that's where the Police are!

Please note that I have complete respect for our police officers and emergency workers. We were studying community helpers, and I showed a picture of 2 police officers to one of my students. I asked, "What do the police officers do"? The student replied, "Go to Starbucks"!

Reprinted from www.nlconcepts.com

Genesee Intermediate School District
Special Education Services Center
2413 West Maple Avenue
Flint, Michigan 48507-3493
Phone: 810-591-4877
Fax: 810-591-4548



Support Groups

- * Autism Support Group of Genesee County:
www.geneseeautism.org
- * ASA/Oakland County Chapter Events:
www.asaoakland.org
- * www.oucares.edu (click site map, then centers)
- * Mott Children's Health Center Parent Empowerment Program for parents and caregivers of newly diagnosed or suspected ASD. Karen Shoemaker 767-5750, ext. 5292
- * Kathleen's House: www.kathleenshouse.org, 810-720-0667.

Websites

- ☞ Autism Society of America: www.autism-society.org
- ☞ Autism Society of Michigan: www.autism-mi.org
- ☞ ASA Oakland County Chapter:
www.asaoakland.org
- ☞ Dr. Tony Attwood: www.tonyattwood.com
- ☞ On-line Asperger's Information and Support-OASIS: www.aspergersyndrome.org
- ☞ The Gray Center: www.TheGrayCenter.org
- ☞ Liane Holliday-Willey: www.ASPIE.com
- ☞ Free pictures of visual schedules, etc.:
www.usevisualstrategies.com
- ☞ Picture Exchange Communication System:
www.pecs.com
- ☞ TEACCH: www.teacch.com



Have a great summer!!

