



*THE VOICE*  
Anne Arundel County Chapter  
of the  
Autism Society of America

April, 2003

Volume 7, Issue 9

## *President's Message*

**AACC-ASA meetings are held on the last Tuesday evening of each month at Ruth Parker Eason School in Millersville.**

**Meetings begin at 7:00 pm.**

The **agenda** includes introductions and general announcements, along with time for open discussion. A refreshment break is followed by a discussion led by the guest presenter. Ample time is allowed for questions and follow-up discussion, as well as further opportunity for group support and socialization.

**New members and new ideas are always welcome.**

**Come check us out!**

Our March meeting featured a discussion about **dealing with sleep issues in individuals with autism spectrum disorders**, led by **Kim West**, also known as the "Sleep Lady". If you wish to contact Ms. West, she can be reached at **(410) 370-8400** or **(410) 974-1600** or by e-mail at [kim@sleeplady.com](mailto:kim@sleeplady.com).

At the March meeting I received from one of our chapter members the videotape of the recently aired Disney original movie "**Tru Confessions**". It is about a teenage girl who has a developmentally delayed brother. While making a documentary about him for a school project, she becomes closer with him. This videotape has been added to our chapter lending library. Thanks to **Mike and Linda Golonka** for making this contribution.

I have also recently added to our library a publication from the **Organization for Autism Research** entitled "**Parent's Guide to Research**". This publication includes basic information about autism, autism research, and scientific writing in a user-friendly form.

In recognition of **National Autism Awareness Month**, our April meeting will feature a discussion about **autism awareness in the classroom and ways of educating students in the general education population about autism spectrum disorders**. I will have the pleasure of leading this discussion and sharing resource information and materials designed to help students in the general education population better understand autism spectrum disorders. I encourage parents and other family members, as well as professionals and service providers working with individuals with autism spectrum disorders, to join us on April 29th. As always, ample time will be provided for questions and discussions.

During the month of April we are conducting our **annual membership drive**. If you have not become a member of our chapter in 2003, I encourage you to join or to renew your membership when you receive your membership letter. This year our membership drive includes a **special incentive**: for a payment of \$15 (as compared to the regular dues of \$10) you will receive an **autism awareness ribbon cloisonne lapel pin**. If you wish to purchase additional pins, they will be available for purchase (for a price of \$5 each) at our **chapter meetings** and through our web site at <http://www.aaccasa.org>.

You can now obtain by mail information about **Walk F.A.R. for NAAR on May 18th**. As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, our chapter's team is the **Anne Arundel Trailblazers**, led by co-captains **Melinda Wise** and **Karen Orofino**. The two-mile walk will be held at the **Montgomery County Fairgrounds**; it will raise money for the **National Alliance for Autism Research**, which funds researchers working on the causes, prevention, treatment, and cure of autism spectrum disorders. I encourage you to join our team and participate in the event; if you cannot attend, you can participate by making a donation and collecting donations from others. To **obtain material about the event**, please call **Melinda Wise** at **(410) 721-4562** or **Karen Orofino** at **(410) 421-5444**.

In closing, this newsletter contains a flyer for our upcoming chapter fundraising event: **Dinner at Cantina D'Italia** (126 Defense Highway, Annapolis) on **Tuesday, May 6th** from **5:00 - 8:00 pm**. The owners of the restaurant, the Lubrano family, will donate 20% of the proceeds from that evening to our chapter. I thank them for their generosity and encourage you to join us for a wonderful family event and a wonderful meal!

*Chapter*

*Phone Line:*

**(410) 923-8800**

*Next Meeting:*

**Tuesday,  
April 29th**

**7:00 pm**



## Autism Awareness event: "The Ride Together"

On **Thursday, April 24th**, at **7:00 pm**, the **Howard County Chapter** will present **Judy Karasik**, co-author of the new book "**The Ride Together: A brother and sister's memoir of autism in the family**" for a reading, discussion, and book signing. The event will be held at **Borders Books and Music** in the **Columbia Crossing Shopping Center** in Columbia.

About the book:

Growing up in suburban Maryland in the 1960s, Paul and Judy Karasik enjoyed a happy childhood surrounded by loving parents and a stable home. Born into a typical middle-class family, the Karasiks were not unlike countless other children in their community. Except for one big difference: they had a brother with autism. A disability that might otherwise drive some families apart, David Karasik's autism became just another part of the Karasik's everyday routine. Yet, what he brought into their lives would ultimately have a profound effect on how they would develop their attitudes, their relationships, and the way in which they came to better understand their family and themselves.

For further information, please call **(410) 760-5595** or go to <http://www.howard-autism.org>.

### AACC-ASA Options Policy:

All information provided or published by the Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Autism Society of America (AACC-ASA) is for informational purposes only. Reference to any treatment or therapy option or to any program, service, or treatment provider is not an endorsement by the AACC-ASA. You should investigate alternatives that may be more appropriate for a specific individual. AACC-ASA assumes no responsibility for the use made of any information published or provided by the AACC-ASA.

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<b>Liisa Neumann, Secretary</b>	<b>(410) 721-1385</b>

## \* \* Chapter News and Notes \* \*

Our chapter is participating in the **Future Horizons Affiliate Program**. Through this program, when you follow the link on our web site <http://www.aaccasa.org> to the Future Horizons web site and purchase any of their products (books, videos and conferences), our chapter will receive **20% of the purchase price**. By making your Future Horizons purchases through our web site you will help provide funding for our chapter's projects and activities.

\* \* \*

Our chapter's **lending library** is located at the **Partners for Success Resource Center**, Oakwood Elementary School, Portable "B", 330 Oak Manor Drive, Glen Burnie. To see a full listing of the items available from our chapter's lending library, as well as related items available from the Partners for Success library, please go to our web site at <http://www.aaccasa.org>.

To request an item from our chapter's lending library or from the Partners for Success library, please contact **Partners for Success** by phone at **(410) 222-3805** or by e-mail at [pfsaa@yahoo.com](mailto:pfsaa@yahoo.com). They will provide information about the various ways in which library materials can be obtained.

\* \* \*

Our chapter is sponsoring the sale of two **disability awareness posters** that have been designed by one of our chapter members. These posters illustrate the poems of **John Burns**, a Scottish poet and the father of a daughter with autism. For further information about the posters and how to order them, please go to our web site at <http://www.aaccasa.org>.

\* \* \*

Subscribe to our **e-mail action alert** by sending a message through our web site at <http://www.aaccasa.org>. It is an easy way to learn the latest information about Federal, State, and local legislative initiatives, lobbying efforts, or other action items related to autism and disabilities.

\* \* \*

The **Anne Arundel County Resource Guide for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder** is available at <http://www.aaccasa.org>. The version on our web site is updated to keep pace with changes in resource information.

If you have an update for the Resource Guide, please send a message through our web site at <http://www.aaccasa.org> or call **(410) 923-8800**.

\* \* \*

Become a **newsletter e-subscriber!** You will receive the newsletter earlier. You will also help us control our costs, and thereby allow us to allocate the money we save in printing and mailing costs towards other chapter projects and activities.

To become an e-subscriber, please send a message through our web site at <http://www.aaccasa.org>. If you have questions about e-subscriptions, please call **(410) 923-8800** or send a message through our web site at <http://www.aaccasa.org>.



## Conference on transitioning high school students with disabilities

On **Thursday, April 24th**, from **8:00 am - 3:00 pm**, **Project Access** will present a conference entitled "**Transitioning the High School Student with Disabilities to the Postsecondary Level**". The conference will be held at **Howard Community College** in Columbia.

The conference will feature as keynote speaker **Dr. Robert Pasternack**, the United States Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The conference will include workshop sessions on the following:

- \* Autism and telemedicine research
- \* The transition battle: To postsecondary and beyond
- \* Summer transitioning program for students who are blind or visually impaired
- \* Tips for teaching deaf and hard of hearing students
- \* Peer tutoring in reading and writing: Yes, it can work!
- \* Interpreting diagnostic assessments of adolescents and adults with learning disabilities
- \* The Master Notebook system
- \* Designing your website for accessibility
- \* Empowering employment of students with disabilities
- \* Students can succeed in math given the right tools
- \* Ask the expert: Transition and documentation issues
- \* Students with emotional or psychiatric disabilities on the college campus
- \* Reasonable accommodations and the law on the post secondary campus

The registration fee is \$115. For further information or to obtain registration materials, please go to <http://www.howardcc.edu/resources/projectaccess/>.

## Conference on health care choices for youth with special health care needs

On **Friday, May 9th**, from **9:00 am - 3:30 pm**, a conference will be held to discuss the life skills needed and resources available for youth with special health care needs to make informed health care choices as adults. The conference will be held at the **Maritime Institute in Linthicum**, and is sponsored by **Parents' Place of Maryland**, the **Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Office for Genetics and Children with Special Health Care Needs**, and the **Kennedy Krieger Institute**.

The registration fee is \$10 and the deadline to register is April 25th.

For further information, or to obtain registration material, please call **Grace Pushparany Williams** at **(410) 859-5300**.

## Assistive technology workshops

The **Maryland Assistive Technology Co-op** will present the following workshops:

**April 23rd, 1:00—4:00 pm**  
Savage Branch Library, in Laurel

### “What an Impact on Communication -- Portable Impact From Enkidu”

Free half-day session; hands-on work with this communication software on Enkidu devices or on a PC computer.

**April 29th, 8:30 am — 3:30 pm**  
Savage Volunteer Fire Hall, in Savage

### “Alternative and Augmentive Communication (AAC) and Literacy for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: The Literacy-Communication Connection”

Full day presentation by Dr. Joanne Cafiero exploring the research and rationale for literacy, and in particular writing interventions, for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. "Writing" is defined as any expressive visual communicative output, from Velcro and symbols (PCS) to keyboards. Each participant will design their own writing interventions from a variety of templates and create a Home-School Journal.

Registration fee:

- \* \$65 for parent/guardian
- \* \$90 for professional residing and/or working in Maryland
- \* \$100 for out-of-state professional

**April 30th, 8:30 am — 3:30 pm**  
Savage Branch Library, in Laurel

### “Basic Boardmaker”

Full day hands-on computer lab course for beginning users of Boardmaker (Windows only). Participants will create individualized visual supports for their child or student.

Registration fee:

- \* \$50 per professional (includes disk of customized templates)
- \* \$259 includes copy of the Boardmaker software and manuals with the training
- \* \$20 deduction for parent/guardian

For additional information, please contact **Susan Garber** at **Maryland A.T. Coop** at **(410) 792-9901**. Electronic registration is available through the “training” section of their web site at <http://www.matcoop.org>.



## Presentation focuses on siblings of individuals with disabilities

On Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, from 7:30 – 9:00 pm, Dr. Eve Band, a psychologist in private practice, will speak on "Educating siblings and developing positive sibling bonds".

The presentation will be held at Jewish Family Services, 5750 Park Heights Ave, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, in Baltimore County. For further information, contact Ilene Isaacs, LCSW at (410) 542-6300.

## Workshop on developing language skills

On Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup> and Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, Communication Enrichment Services and George Washington University's Speech and Hearing Clinic will sponsor a workshop on "The Affect-Based Language Curriculum (ABLC)". It will be led by Diane Lewis, M.A., CCC/SLP and held at the USM Shady Grove Center in Rockville.

The ABLC program is based on using affect and engagement to develop communication and language skills in children on the autism spectrum and/or children with disorders of relating and communicating. The workshop will provide information about the theoretical framework and terminology of the ABLC, and allow participants to develop their own ABLC for a specific child they are currently teaching. The workshop is appropriate for parents, therapists, and teachers.

The registration fee for the two-day workshop is \$400. For further information, or to obtain registration material, please contact Diane Lewis by phone at (301) 652-2220 x 2 or by e-mail at [ablc2003@hotmail.com](mailto:ablc2003@hotmail.com).

## Participants sought for clinical trial of nutritional supplements

Children between 4 to 8 years old, diagnosed with autism or related childhood developmental disorders, are being sought to participate in a 10-week clinical trial to begin in late April. The study is led by Dr. Jeff Bradstreet, with the assistance of the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine & Health Sciences and Arizona State University.

Participants will receive all study material, forms, and study supplements in the mail. All communication will take place via mail, phone, or email. The children will be randomized to a group taking the supplements or a group taking placebo pills; a total of 13 capsules per day will be required for both groups.

For further information, please call (321) 953-0278 or send an e-mail to [ek@gnd.org](mailto:ek@gnd.org).

## CTE Summer Institute

The Maryland State Department of Education and Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education will present their "Summer Institute 2003: Technology Strategies for Improving Youth Performance". The session will be held on June 26<sup>th</sup> and 27 and August 12<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 am – 4:00 pm at the Johns Hopkins University Columbia Center, in Columbia.

The Summer Institute will offer workshops addressing low-tech and high-tech solutions to improve student learning. There will be an on-line course on "Best Practices in Reading".

The Summer Institute is designed for:

- \* Special & general educators
- \* Teachers of ESL
- \* Related services professionals
- \* Paraprofessionals
- \* Administrators
- \* Parents
- \* Others who are interested in education and technology.

Professional development experience credits are available for educators, related service professionals, and early childhood practitioners.

For more information or to register, please contact Bijul Dalal, Project Specialist, by phone at (410)312-3810 or by e-mail at [dalal@jhu.edu](mailto:dalal@jhu.edu).

## Participants sought for research on parent employment experiences

Researchers with the "Common Ground? Families and Employers" project are seeking participants for a study about how parents who are caring for children with emotional or behavioral disorders manage both employment and family responsibilities. The project is funded by the Research and Training Center for Family Support and Children's Mental Health, Portland State University, in Oregon. The participants they need for the research are parents who are caring for children with an emotional or behavioral disorder in their home who are employed (including self-employment) or who are seeking employment or who are unemployed by choice to care for their child.

The information will be used to educate employers and human resource professionals about the work-family experiences and needs of this population of parents. The survey is anonymous and will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

To access the Parent Employment Experiences Survey, please go to <http://rtc.pdx.edu/pgPEsurvey.htm>.



### Summer respite care provider available

**Margaret Bates**, a Psychology undergraduate student at Duke University, is interesting in and available to provide respite care during the summer for local families of children on the autism spectrum. Her experience includes providing intervention therapy for a 3-year-old child with autism.

She will be available to provide respite care from mid-May to early August.

Interested individuals can contact Ms. Bates by phone at (919) 613-0535 or by e-mail at [mjb27@Duke.edu](mailto:mjb27@Duke.edu). She can also be contacted by calling (410) 544-2763 and leaving a message at her parent's home.

### New publication on helping preschool children interact

Teachers understand that preschool children from 3 to 5, especially those with disabilities, may not naturally acquire the skills to function socially with their peers. A recent **Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)-funded research synthesis** reviewed social skills interventions used by early childhood educators and analyzed the types of interventions that were most effective across disabilities. The research synthesis reviewed the results of 23 studies of social skills interventions that included almost 700 students exhibiting a variety of disabilities.

A summary of the findings of the study, "**Helping preschool children interact: Social skills interventions that work in inclusive settings**", is available by going to <http://ericec.org/osep/newsbriefs/news35.html>. A complete discussion of the findings can be found in the article "Social Skills Interventions for Young Children with Disabilities," published in the **January/February 2003** edition of **Remedial and Special Education**.

### Information available about therapeutic essential oils

**Nancy Quigley** of **Health Essentials** is available to provide information about using therapeutic essential oils for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

This information includes Raindrop Therapy essential oils, other therapeutic essential oils, and heavy metal detoxification using supplements and essential oils.

Ms. Quigley can be contacted by phone at (410) 897-1172 or by e-mail at [nancyquigley1@msn.com](mailto:nancyquigley1@msn.com).

### New workshop video for parents and caregivers of young children with autism

Through a unique parent/professional partnership, a new video is available to help parents and caregivers of young children with autism. The video is entitled "**Using visual and behavioral cues in the home: Teaching functional life skills to young children with autism and other significant developmental disorders**".

The 2-hour video features behavior specialist **Robin Allen, Ph.D.** It is filled with practical strategies families can readily use in their home to help their child develop communication skills (whether verbal or nonverbal), reduce disruptive behaviors, and perform daily life skills with greater independence.

The video is produced and distributed by **STEP Seminars, Inc.**, founded by a parent of a young child with autism.

Topics addressed in the video include the following:

- Activity schedules and routines
- Making choices
- Self help (grooming)
- Chores and responsibilities
- Setting expectations
- Community visuals
- Materials development
- Setting up the home environment
- Resources

The video is available for \$69.95 (plus \$5 shipping and handling) from STEP Seminars, Inc., 9120 Glenridge Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

For further information, please call (301) 495-8824 or go to Dr. Allen's web site at <http://www.robinallen.com>.

### On-line support group focuses on speech/communication disorders

**VOICES (Victory Over Impairments of Communication, Expression and Speech)**, a non-profit organization created to be a resource for families with children who have speech/communication disorders, has an on-line group.

Participants in this group include parents, professionals and others who care about the issues that speech/communication-disordered children and their families face. It functions to help participants learn about this diagnosis and share knowledge about special education, therapy techniques, nutritional supplements, parenting and other issues.

To join, go to [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/voices\\_group/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/voices_group/).



## Education Department issues proposed rules on accountability for children with significant cognitive disabilities

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) has issued, and asked for public comment on, proposed rules governing state and local accountability for the academic achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

The full language of the proposed rule can be accessed by going to <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/proprule/2003-1/032003a.html>.

In summary, the rule proposes the following:

- \* To permit states to define **alternate achievement standards** for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Such students will also take an **alternate assessment**. These alternate achievement standards must be aligned with the state's academic content standards and reflect professional judgment of the highest learning standards possible for those students.
- \* To allow states to use alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to calculate **adequate yearly progress (AYP)**, as long as the percentage of those students at the school district and state level, separately, does not exceed 1.0 percent of all students assessed.
- \* To define the term "**students with the most significant cognitive disabilities**" as students whose **intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior** are **three or more standard deviations below the mean**.

**Public comments** on the proposed legislation are due to the Department of Education on or before **May 19th**.

Comments should be sent to **Jacquelyn C. Jackson, Ed.D.**, Acting Director, Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3W230, FB-6, Washington, DC 20202-6132.

Comments may be submitted by fax to **(202) 260-7764**, or by e-mail to [TitleIrulemaking@ed.gov](mailto:TitleIrulemaking@ed.gov) (be sure to include the term "proposed rule" in the subject line). For further information, please contact **Jacquelyn C. Jackson** at **(202) 260-0826**.

## Changes planned by Social Security Administration

The **Social Security Administration (SSA)** is planning to **update and revise the rules it uses to evaluate mental disorders in both adults and children who apply for Social Security disability benefits or Supplemental Security Income payments based on disability**. However, before drafting any revisions, the SSA is asking interested individuals and organizations to send them comments and suggestions about revising these rules.

In addition to receiving comments about its rules, the SSA is also interested in receiving ideas about **how to improve their programs for people who have mental disorders**, especially those who would like to work full-time or part-time with supports.

The full text of their invitation to send comments and suggestions is available at <http://www.ssa.gov/regulations/>.

The Social Security Administration will accept comments until **June 16th**. Comments may be submitted by the following methods: going to <http://policy.ssa.gov/pnpublic.nsf/LawsRegs>; sending an **e-mail** to [regulations@ssa.gov](mailto:regulations@ssa.gov); sending a **fax** to **(410) 966-2830**; or **writing a letter** to the Commissioner of Social Security, P.O. Box 17703, Baltimore, Maryland 21235-7703.

For further information, please contact **Cathy Lively**, Office of Disability and Income Security Programs, Social Security Administration, at **(410) 966-1180**.

## Reminder: Family and Friends Day

Be sure you have marked your calendar for our **Family and Friends Day**. It will be held on **Saturday, April 19th**, from **2:00—4:00 pm** at **Severna Park Baptist Church**, 506 Benfield Road, in Severna Park.

We will have:

- Food and drinks
- Games, crafts, and activities
- Easter egg hunt
- Music

This special event is in recognition of **National Autism Awareness Month** and is for the families, friends, and many other individuals in our county whose lives have been touched by autism spectrum disorders.

We look forward to seeing you there!!

*Welcome Spring !!*



## The lighter side of special education: Parents and kids By Aimee Gilman, Esq.

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Before you read this article, you should be warned. If you are among those humor-challenged individuals who believe THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING FUNNY ABOUT DISABILITIES, then I urge you to stop now and go back to biting your nails down to your elbows.

I understand how you feel. When my child was born, and we found out that he had special needs, I was seriously bummed. I know that if anyone had suggested there was anything funny about this situation I would have called them callous and unfeeling and burst into a torrent of hysterical tears.

As the years passed, I began to realize that my child actually provided me with some pretty funny moments. For example, I recall one year when I took my son to the pediatrician for his annual checkup. The nurse asked my son to pee in a cup. As I waited outside the bathroom door, my son called to me to get him another cup. I couldn't imagine that this might be necessary so I asked him why. He replied, very naturally, "Because this one is full."

As an advocate for other parents, I have also had opportunity to observe the antics of both families and school districts, and all these folks provide me with hours of amusement. Unfortunately, this amusement has not been accompanied by large amounts of money (and sometimes no money) so I don't know how long I can afford to continue laughing about this.

Anyway, if you believe that this subject matter is NOT APPROPRIATE for humorous treatment, please do not read any further. Oh, and by the way, you'd better not call me. I doubt we would hit it off.

**The Parents:** There are 2 kinds of parents of disabled children: moms and dads. There is a very important distinction between these types and one could never be confused with the other.

**Moms:** As moms, we are usually seen as crazed lunatics, a characterization I consider to be grossly unfair. We are actually crazed obsessive lunatics and consider it an unpardonable offense for anyone to discuss anything with us other than those matters that concern our disabled children.

Moms of disabled children invariably find one another, primarily because no one else can tolerate us. I am always amused when people describe my son as being "perseverative." At least he lets go after a while, while I can go on and on long after anyone has demonstrated any ongoing interest in my subject matter. The friendships formed by moms serve the necessary purpose of allowing us to feed our obsession by constant discussion of our favorite topic at all sporting events or any other work-related or social occasion where conversation is present. (We try to refrain while in theaters, for example).

Moms are easily identifiable because they are always engaged in one of the following activities: talking on the phone to another mom of a disabled child; reading the Catherine Maurice book; spending hours of time online where they communicate with other moms and obtain vast quantities of information about their child.

Of course, these activities necessarily take Mom away from spending any actual time with her child, or other children if she has them. But she is happy because she is convinced that what she is doing is even more valuable.

**Dads:** Dads play an interesting role in this milieu. They do not feel the same need to spend every waking hour of their lives focusing on this child because, after all, they never thought anything was different about this child anyway. They are always telling people that they were just exactly like that as a kid. Mom knows this to be true because she has always secretly told everyone in the universe that the child's disability had to come from his father's family.

Dad is pretty happy to let this child do as he pleases. Dad does not mind when Johnny is brushing the turtle's teeth because Johnny is GENERALIZING the skills he has learned in school, and besides, it's football season. Of course, Dad is in serious trouble with Mom because he has failed to notice the trail of toothpaste plastered in every upstairs room, all of which will now be used to decorate Dad's pillow.

As parents, we all know the financial commitment we must make in order to pay for all the services our child requires and which will never be covered by insurance no matter how many times we switch companies. I am amazed, however, at the money families will throw at the many varied and sometimes esoteric therapies, some of which were developed for no other purpose except to give us something else to throw our money at. These include things like:

The Miller Method	ABA
DTT	AIT
DDT	ZZ Top
Swimming with Dolphins	Running with Bulls
Fast Forward	Ass Backward
The Lawrence Welk Method	

This last therapy involves teaching the child to communicate through really geeky music and dance. It has been around for years but is only now being rediscovered, primarily in New Jersey and California.

**The Kids:** Poking fun at kids with disabilities is a chancy thing. But some of the things these guys do are hilarious.

I remember a recent episode involving my son when I received the dreaded CALL FROM SCHOOL. This is every parent's worst nightmare because we know it means our child has done something horribly inappropriate such as emerging from the locker room into the swim area without a bathing suit.

In this instance, the principal called to inform me that my 12-year-old son had cornered an 8-year-old girl in the coatroom. "Oh no," I thought, "Here it comes—sexual harassment, lawsuits, humiliation (again)." She then told me that my son got into this child's face and told her that she "must vote for Al Gore." Though I did not want to diminish the gravity of this offense, I burst out laughing. This is expected behavior for my son who loves the election process. Besides, I was relieved because his speech was protected by the First Amendment.

One thing we all know is that these kids all run circles around us. As my son frequently says to me when he knows he is in trouble, "But Mom, it's not my fault. I have a disability." Yeah.

Anne Arundel County Chapter  
Autism Society of America  
P.O. Box 1304  
Millersville, MD 21108

Postage  
here



### Membership Application

Clip and return with check to:  
Anne Arundel County Chapter  
Autism Society of America  
P.O. Box 1304, Millersville, MD 21108

*Join us!*

*Dues are only  
\$10 per year!*

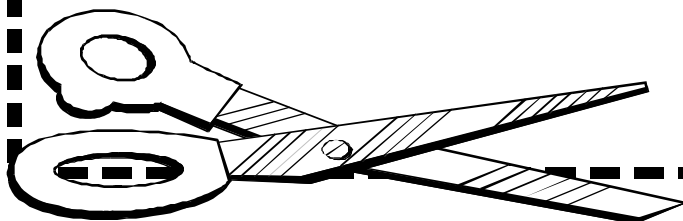
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Interest:  Parent  Self-Advocate  Friend  Relative  Professional



Clip and return with your check  
payable to "AACC-ASA"