



**THE VOICE**  
 Anne Arundel County Chapter  
 of the  
 Autism Society of America  
 August 2006 Volume 11, Issue 1

**President's Message**

**AACC-ASA meetings are held the last Tuesday evening of each month at Ruth Parker Eason School, 648 Old Mill Road, Millersville. Meetings begin at 7:00 pm.**

The meetings begin with 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.**

I hope everyone is having an enjoyable summer and finding creative ways to keep cool! We took our usual summer break from chapter meetings and from the newsletter, but now we are in full preparation for returning back to school and our chapter events.

Speaking of summer events, my thanks to the wonderful group of people who attended our **beach party** on June 24<sup>th</sup>. All of the families who attended had a very enjoyable time – the weather, the food, and the setting were all ideal! Special thanks to **Jacquelynne Shade** for her role in organizing this event.

I also want to offer my thanks to chapter member **Beth Strasnick**, who raised funds for our chapter at the Severna Park Chamber of Commerce's festival on July 4<sup>th</sup>. She collected contributions from local businesses and sold ice cream and cold drinks to festival participants. Beth has generously donated the proceeds of \$175 to our chapter.

Our August meeting will feature a discussion about **emotional intelligence for parents**. The discussion will focus on the types of feelings and emotions that many parents and caregivers of individuals with autism spectrum disorders experience, including: feeling overwhelmed by parental responsibilities; feeling confused trying to figure out the right thing to

do for your child; experiencing frustration when dealing with your child's behavior problems; feeling frustrated when others do not understand the needs of your child; feeling tired of all the "you should" advice from others who don't understand your perspective; and feeling stuck with the accumulation of challenges that you don't know how to handle. The discussion will also focus on ways to find solutions to knowing what's right for you and your child and the role of emotional intelligence in achieving these solutions.

The discussion will be led by **Dan Eisner**, a pediatric occupational therapist and parenting coach. He has been working at PACT, an affiliate of the Kennedy Krieger Institute, for the last 6 years. I encourage parents and other family members, as well as professionals and service providers who work with individuals with autism spectrum disorders, to join us on August 29<sup>th</sup>.

In closing, I want to let everyone know that this edition of the newsletter includes important information about the kickoff of our **annual membership drive**. I'm pleased to share that we have added a **Paypal** feature to our website which will make renewing your membership or becoming a new member much quicker and easier.

**Phone line:**  
**(410) 923-8800**

**Web site:**  
**[www.aaccasa.org](http://www.aaccasa.org)**

**Next Meeting:**

**Tuesday,**  
**August 29th**  
**7:00 pm**



**Book Friends meeting**

On **Thursday August 10th** from **6:30 – 8:00 pm**, Book Friends will hold their meeting at the public library located on McKinsey Road in Severna Park. "Book Friends" is a community book club for persons with or without a disability who are 18 years of age and older.

For further information and to reserve a seat, please call **Chrystal Irving** at Service Coordination at **(410) 923-5751**.



### Chapter membership drive

As your local chapter of the Autism Society of America, we continue to work hard on enhancing our services, which include our newsletter, web site, lending library, phone line, and monthly meetings, as well as our networking and outreach projects. We continue to strive to meet your needs by providing many services to our county's autism community, which includes family members as well as professionals and service providers.

Your financial support will allow us to continue to provide these services and more. We ask that you become a member or renew your membership in the Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Autism Society of America. To become a member or renew your membership, simply go to [http://www.aaccasa.org/member\\_ship\\_application.php](http://www.aaccasa.org/member_ship_application.php). You can quickly and easily complete the membership application form on-line, and then quickly and securely pay on-line via our new **Paypal** link. If you desire, you can choose the option of printing and mailing the form along with a check for your membership dues. We appreciate any additional contributions, which will be credited as donations and are tax-deductible.

If you have not already done so, we also encourage you to become a national member of the Autism Society of America. As one of the more than 200 chapters of ASA, we support and ask you to support the work done by the national office of ASA by become a national member. To do so, please go to <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?PageName=join>.

Thanks, in advance, for your support! With your assistance, we will continue to work for persons with autism spectrum disorder in our community.

### Autism Awareness Night with the Washington Mystics

On **Friday August 11th** at **7:00 pm** at the Verizon Center, the Washington Mystics will take on the Detroit Shock. Club Level tickets can be purchased for \$15 at <http://www.mysticstix.com/cureautismnow.html>. \$5 from every ticket purchased through this site will be donated to **Athletes Against Autism** and **Cure Autism Now**.

### PECS workshop

On **Monday August 14<sup>th</sup>** and **Tuesday August 15<sup>th</sup>**, **Pyramid Educational Consultants** will host a two-day **Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)** training workshop at the Crown Plaza in Richmond, Virginia. For further information or to obtain registration materials, please go to <http://www.pecs.com> or call (888) 732-7462.

### Position announcement: Autism Pilot Program Coordinator

The position is responsible for coordinating the planning and implementation of Year Two activities for the **Autism Pilot Program to Study and Improve Screening Practices for Autism Spectrum Disorders**. The Coordinator will act as a liaison between the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, provide support to the Advisory committee for the Autism Pilot Program, and complete tasks required in the legislation for implementing the Pilot in Year Two. The Coordinator will be responsible for: developing and conducting the pilot, developing and disseminating training materials and written information, facilitating communication among selected service providers and Infants and Toddlers Programs, collecting data, conducting tests, providing training, analyzing results and developing supports for health care providers.

The position requirements knowledge of Autism Spectrum Disorders, excellent organizational skills, excellent oral/written communication skills, and proficient computer skills in word processing, data base management skills and internet literature review. The position requires a Bachelor's degree in education, special education, early intervention or a related field, at least two years experience working in education, special education, early intervention, or health care involving children with ASD and their families; and experience conducting surveys, literature and data base searches.

Interested applicants must submit a letter of interest, a resume that demonstrates the required qualifications, and a bid form. The submission (one original and two copies) must be received by 2:00 p.m. on **Wednesday August 9<sup>th</sup>**; send to Alan Delman, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Room 219, Baltimore, Maryland 21201 (identify with the RFQ #R00R720013). For further information, please contact **Alan Delman** at [adelman@msde.state.md.us](mailto:adelman@msde.state.md.us).

### Port Discovery Fun Nights

**Pathfinders for Autism** invites children with autism and their families to Port Discovery Family Fun Nights on **Friday August 11th, 18th, and 25th** from **5:00 – 8:00 pm**. Families will enjoy the "kid-powered museum" during these special evenings, when crowds will be much lighter. To accommodate sensory needs, Port Discovery has offered to turn off the sound system, which should contribute to a successful and educational outing.

For further information or to obtain tickets, please contact **Linda Pearl** at [info@pathfindersforautism.org](mailto:info@pathfindersforautism.org) or (866) 806-8400. The first 300 tickets are free, and then ticket prices are reduced from \$6 to \$3 per person.



### **Applicants sought for Partners in Policymaking**

**Partners in Policymaking** is a leadership-training program designed for parents of children with developmental disabilities and adults with disabilities. The program teaches leadership skills, and the process of developing positive partnerships with elected officials, school personnel and other individuals who make policy decisions about services that you and/or your family use. Partners is about systems change – creating, working towards, and achieving a vision of shared values about people with disabilities. It is based on the belief that the most effective and enduring public policy decisions should be made by the people who need and use the services in partnership with elected officials, school personnel and other policymakers. It is about becoming confident in yourself, competent in the knowledge and information you will receive, and comfortable in sharing your life experiences and expertise with others.

Applicants must be able to commit to attending eight weekend sessions from September through May. Specific class dates are as follows: September 15-16, October 13-14, November 17-18, January 12-13, February 19-20, March 16-17, April 13-14, and May 11-12. Applications are available at <http://www.thearcmd.org> or by calling (410) 571-9320 x 22. The application deadline for the upcoming session is **Tuesday August 15th**.

### **Workshop on verbal behavior**

On **Tuesday August 15<sup>th</sup>** and **Wednesday August 16<sup>th</sup>**, **Parents Of Autistic Children of Northern Virginia** is sponsoring a workshop entitled "**Teaching Verbal Behavior in the intensive teaching environment**". It will be led by Holly Kibbe, MS, BCABA and Cherish Twigg, MS, BCBA and held at Marymount University, Ballston Conference Center, on North Glebe Road in Arlington, Virginia. The workshop is intended for school system personnel, parents, and other professionals.

Participants will receive precise feedback on their teaching methods and be provided with supervised practice in the following areas: establishing instructional control with an unwilling learner; manipulating motivating operations during teaching opportunities to maintain learner attention; developing an intensive teaching program using ABLLS; teaching language to non-vocal children using sign language; teaching receptive skills, motor imitation skills, tacting skills, and intraverbal skills; and organizing program materials and data recording methods, including hands on practice for data recording. It is strongly recommended that participants have attended an introductory workshop on verbal behavior and have some experience teaching children with autism within an intensive teaching program.

For further information, please go to <http://www.poac-nova.org> or call (703) 391-2251.

### **Session on family support and resources**

On **Friday August 18<sup>th</sup>** from **6:00 - 8:00 pm** the **Local Management Board of St. Mary's County** will host a free **parent-to-parent support session** at the Carter Building on Leonard Hall Drive in Leonardtown. It is intended for parents of children who experience anger, tantrums, or meltdowns. Parents will find support and be able to discuss resources available to them. The session will be facilitated by Missy Alexander. A light supper will be served.

Registration is required. For further information or to RSVP, please contact **Robin Duke** at (301) 475-4510.

### **Disability Awareness Day**

On **Saturday August 26<sup>th</sup>** from **1:00 – 4:00 pm**, the **Anne Arundel County Commission on Disability Issues** is hosting its annual **Disability Awareness Day**. This free event will be held at the Centre at Glen Burnie on Ritchie Highway (formerly known as the Glen Burnie Mall).

The event is for the whole family and includes interactive exhibits, live entertainment, and information on disability issues within the community. County Executive Janet Owens will be in attendance to present awards to local businesses that have demonstrated their commitment to the community's disabled citizens through employment opportunities and public access.

For further information, please contact **Bill Anderson** at (410) 222-4383 or go to <http://www.geocities.com/disabilityday>.

### **Fundraiser for Caring Communities**

On **Sunday August 27<sup>th</sup>**, **Caring Communities** will host a "**No Limit Texas Hold'em Tournament**" at the Marriott BWI Airport. Doors will open at 11:00 am and card play will begin at noon. For further information, please go to <http://www.caringcommunities.org> or call (866) 227-4644.

### **Conference on dual diagnosis**

On **Thursday September 14<sup>th</sup>** from **8:00 am – 4:00 pm**, the **National Association for the Dually Diagnosed** will host a conference entitled "**Best practices in dual diagnosis: An introduction to the mental health issues of people who have intellectual disabilities**". It will be led by Michael Mayer, Ph.D. and held at the Best Western Grand Venice Hotel in Hagerstown. For further information or to obtain registration materials, please go to <http://www.thenadd.org> or call (800) 331-5362.



### SSI/SSDI benefits planning sessions

A **Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach Professional** from the **Benefits Resource Center** will be available at the One-Stop Career Center on Baltimore-Annapolis Boulevard in Glen Burnie once a month from **9:00 am – 4:00 pm** to meet with Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries interested in joining the workforce. Participants will receive assistance with: consumer choice, impact of employment, work preparation, benefits analysis, scenarios advisement, work incentives, Employed Individuals with Disabilities program, Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) subsidy, Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA), Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE), Blind Work Expenses (BWE), student-earned income exclusion, Medicare and Medicaid support and services.

The upcoming schedule is as follows: **Monday August 28<sup>th</sup>, September 25<sup>th</sup>, October 30<sup>th</sup>, November 20<sup>th</sup>, and December 18<sup>th</sup>**. Appointments will be every 45 minutes. To sign up, please call **(410) 424-3240**. Be sure to bring the following information to the appointment: Earnings Record from SSA, Pay stubs if working or salary information for a potential job and Social Security number.

### Position announcement: Part-time Executive Director

The **Howard County Autism Society**, a parent-led nonprofit organization, is seeking its first Executive Director. This individual will assist the Board of Directors in reaching its goal of developing a resource center for individuals with autism, their families, and professionals in Howard County. The position requires someone who is experienced, energetic, and able to work closely with the Board of Directors. The Executive Director will have a professional presence that will allow him/her to deal effectively with funders, corporate leaders, the Board, the general public, and individuals with autism and their families. A manager with skills in nonprofit management and fundraising is preferred. The successful candidate will develop community partnerships, communicate effectively with diverse groups of people, raise public awareness, and work with local community leaders. Knowledge of service delivery systems for people with autism and knowledge of autism spectrum disorders required. Excellent oral and written communications skills, including public speaking, are required. Relevant experience may include volunteer activities. Some evening and weekend work required. Application package should include cover letter, resume, and references. Hours: 25 hours per week. Salary: Up to \$35,000. No benefits are included. The deadline for applications is **Thursday August 31<sup>st</sup>**. Please send applications to: Howard County Autism Society, c/o Human Resources Committee, 9326 Wild Grass Court, Jessup, MD 20794 or e-mail to [job@howard-autism.org](mailto:job@howard-autism.org).

### Therapeutic Recreation programs

The **Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks, Division of Therapeutic Recreation**, offers a wide variety of programs. Their upcoming schedule is as follows:

**After school recreation for children:** Children ages 5 - 13 participate in group games, crafts, and sports to develop social skills, broaden recreational interests, and improve physical fitness. The cost is \$150 for 8 weeks. It is held at Central Special on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 3:00 – 6:00 pm; Ruth Eason on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 3:00 – 6:00 pm, and Marley Glen on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 3:45 – 6:00 pm beginning September 18th.

**Saturday recreation program:** Children ages 6 - 16 develop social skills, play adaptive sports, create arts and crafts, and participate in other special activities. The cost is \$115 for 8 weeks. It is held at Central Special and Ruth Eason on Saturdays from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, beginning September 16th.

**Swim programs:** Youth and adults with disabilities participate in instructional swim classes. There are classes for beginners and advanced beginners, and for adults. The cost is \$70 for 10 weeks. It is held at Ruth Eason on Tuesdays or Thursdays, beginning September 19th.

**Teen club for youth with developmental delays:** Teens (ages 13 – 21) get together with peers for dancing, games, parties, and socialization. The cost is \$55 for 8 weeks. It is held at Ruth Eason and Central Special on Fridays from 6:30 – 9:00 pm beginning September 15th.

**Young adult social club:** Young adults (age 18 and up) get together with peers for fun, socialization, and other planned activities. The cost is \$55 for 8 weeks. It is held at Marley Glen on Fridays from 6:30 – 9:00 pm, beginning on September 15th.

For further information, please contact **Wendy Scarborough** at **(410) 222-7311 x 3554**. Information and registration forms are also available at <http://www.aacounty.org/recparks>.

### New on-line group about autism and insurance

A new **Autism Insurance Information** group has been developed to help with understanding issues relating to coverage of autism and concurrent issues. It is open to all members of the autism community, professionals and service providers. The purpose is information sharing, ideas on working with the system of insurance provisions, and ways of ensuring coverage is provided according to the laws that govern insurance, Medicaid and Tricare. It is located at [autism\\_insurance\\_information@yahoo.com](mailto:autism_insurance_information@yahoo.com).



### Fall groups

**OT Ventures, LLC**, a pediatric occupational therapy clinic in Ellicott City, will be holding the following fall groups:

**“Munch Bunch”** is an oral motor feeding group for children ages 3-10. It will be co-led by an Occupational Therapist and Speech Language Pathologist. Activities will increase tolerance of food tastes, textures, and smells while improving oral motor development. Activities will focus on simple food preparation, eating, and oral motor skills, while facilitating language, etiquette, and socialization.

**“Socialites”** will be led by an Occupational Therapist and Speech Language Pathologist. Each session will address all areas of a child's development, including socialization, gross motor and fine motor development, sensory processing, pre-writing and/or writing skills, and oral motor skills.

**“Write-On”** is a handwriting group led by an Occupational Therapist utilizing the Handwriting Without Tears, a multi-sensory approach to writing. Groups will be tailored to children of all ages and skill levels, including Pre-Writing, Printing, and Cursive.

For more information about any of the groups, please contact **Jamie Levine, OTR/L** at **(443) 812-6396** or [ot\\_ventures@hotmail.com](mailto:ot_ventures@hotmail.com). Further information is also available at <http://www.ot-ventures.com>



### New early intervention classroom

The **Center for Autism and Related Disorders** at the **Kennedy Krieger Institute** is opening a new **Early Achievements research and training classroom**. It is based on work that has been done over the past three years with funding from the NIH involving a new early intervention model for toddlers with autism spectrum disorders. This empirically-validated intervention model has produced significant improvements in participant's ability to communicate, play, and interact with others.

The program will be provided four days a week (Tuesday - Friday) from 9:00 - 11:30 am for a period of six months at the Greenspring Campus. The program is for children who are diagnosed with or show symptoms of an ASD who are between the ages of 18-33 months. Home visits and parent training are also part of the program. A speech language pathologist and two teaching assistants will run the classroom, and there will be five children in each classroom.

For further information about the new program, please call **(877) 850-3372** or send an e-mail to [REACH@kennedykrieger.org](mailto:REACH@kennedykrieger.org).

### Participants sought for survey on therapies

**Virginia Commonwealth University** is seeking parents and caregivers of children age 18 months to 21 years old with an autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, or Down syndrome to complete a survey about choosing and providing therapy for their children. Their goal is to learn more about what it is like for a parent of a child with a disability to choose and provide therapies for that child. The survey questionnaire asks for information about the child's diagnosis and level of functioning, the therapies you have tried, if it feels stressful to choose these treatments, how providing therapy affects your day-to-day life, and whether or not you are seeing the progress you expected.

The survey is available at <http://survey.vcu.edu/surveys/E4JY8Y>. For further information, please contact **Virginia Mackintosh**, doctoral candidate at the Department of Psychology, at [mackintoshvh@vcu.edu](mailto:mackintoshvh@vcu.edu) or **Dr. Barbara Myers**, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology, at [bmyers@vcu.edu](mailto:bmyers@vcu.edu) or **(804) 828-6752**.

### Participants sought for study of early signs and causes of autism

Mothers who have a child with autism and who are currently in their 22nd week of pregnancy or earlier are invited to participate in a research study that will follow them through their pregnancy to learn more about early signs of autism and its potential causes. The study is being conducted by Dr. Craig Newschaffer with the **Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities Epidemiology (CADDE)** at Johns Hopkins University and **Dr. Rebecca Landa** with the **Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD)** at the Kennedy Krieger Institute. The goal is to help plan for future studies and to identify possible autism risk and exposures/biomarkers.

The study will involve the following activities:

- \* collection of blood, hair, saliva samples (once per trimester) and placenta samples (photograph and biopsy), as well as blood from the umbilical cord and from the newborn heel stick
- \* fetal neurobehavioral assessment, includes monitoring of fetal heart rate and motor activity, as well as mother's heart rate, respiration, and skin conductance
- \* telephone interviews, questionnaires, and a pregnancy diary
- \* medical record reviews.

If a mother is interested, her newborn will subsequently be evaluated at CARD when he/she reaches the age of two. The 2-year developmental follow-up is not a requirement.

Participants will receive total compensation of up to \$200 for completing the study. For further information, please contact CADDE at **(877) 868-8014** or [cadde@jhsph.edu](mailto:cadde@jhsph.edu).



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

Postage  
 here

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

We have available for purchase **autism awareness puzzle ribbon cloisonne lapel pins** and **car magnets**, as well as autism puzzle piece **bracelets/wristbands**. They are available for \$5 at our meetings and \$6 by mail; order forms are available at <http://www.aaccasa.org>.

We are participating in the Affiliate Programs of **Future Horizons** and of the **Autism Asperger Publishing Company (AAPC)**. Through these programs, when you follow the link at <http://www.aaccasa.org> to their web sites and purchase their products, our chapter will receive a portion of the purchase price. By making your Future Horizons and AAPC purchases through our web site you will help fund our chapter's projects and activities.

Our **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 lending library, as well as related items available from the Partners for Success library, please go to <http://www.aaccasa.org>. To request an item, please contact **Partners for Success** at (410) 222-3805 or [partnersforsuccess@aacps.org](mailto:partnersforsuccess@aacps.org). They will provide information about the various ways in which library materials can be obtained.

Subscribe to our **e-mail action alert** by sending a message through <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.

**Anne Arundel County Chapter  
 Autism Society of America  
 P.O. Box 1304, Millersville, MD 21108  
 (410) 923-8800 <http://www.aaccasa.org>**

**Linda Carter-Ferrier, President (410) 551-0655**  
**Melinda Wise, Vice President/Treasurer (410) 647-0114**  
**Jean Dunaway, Secretary (410) 721-1385**

**Disclaimer/AACC-ASA Options Policy:**

Please note that 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.