



THE VOICE
 Anne Arundel County Chapter
 of the
 Autism Society of America
 December 2006 Volume 11, Issue 5

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.

Thanks to everyone who attended our November meeting, which featured a discussion about **meeting the needs of students with autism spectrum disorders**. The discussion was led by **Mary Tillar**, our school system's new Director of Special Education, as well as **Laura Phipps**, our school system's new Social Skills Specialist for elementary and secondary students with High Functioning Autism and Aspergers Syndrome.

For further information about this subject, please contact Ms. Tillar at **(410) 222-5410** or mtillar@aacps.org or Ms. Phipps at **(410) 222-5474** or lhipps1@aacps.org.

Also in attendance at our November meeting was **Kristy Dennsteadt**, a general education teacher and also a **Discovery Toys Educa-**

tional Consultant. Ms. Dennsteadt has generously offered to provide us with a portion of the proceeds if you reference our chapter when making a purchase.

If you are interested in obtaining a catalog or making a purchase, please contact her at **(240) 295-0074** or kristysellsdt@hotmail.com

As always, we will take a holiday break and not hold a chapter meeting in December. Be sure to check our January newsletter for information about the topic of discussion and guest discussion leader for our January meeting.

In closing, I want to wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season, and a prosperous new year.

Book Friends meeting

On **Thursday December 14th** 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. People choose the book they want to share. There is a different theme each month to guide members on what to bring. Other ways to share are through a magazine article, pictures, or from books on tape.

For further information and to reserve a seat, please contact **Chrystal Irving** at Service Coordination at **(410) 923-5751** or clirving@servicecoordination.org.

AA-SECAC meeting

On **Thursday December 14th** at **6:30 pm**, the **Anne Arundel County Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee** will hold their monthly meeting at the Board of Education Building on Riva Road in Annapolis. It will feature a presentation by the Director of Special Education on a variety of issues, including the Superintendent's measures of attainment, the student support process, the goals for the Division of Special Education, and the budget process.

For further information, please contact AA-SECAC at **(410) 224-3122** or AASECAC@fastmail.fm.

Phone line:
(410) 923-8800

Web site:
www.aaccasa.org

Next Meeting:
Tuesday,
January 30th
7:00 pm



Presentation about surviving the holidays

On **Friday December 15th** from **6:00 - 8:00 pm**, the **Local Management Board of St. Mary's County** will host a free presentation entitled "**Continuing to survive the holiday's with children with special needs**" at the Carter Building on Leonard Hall Drive in Leonardtown. Registration is required.

For further information or to RSVP, please call **Robin Duke** at **(301) 475-4510**.

Holiday Fun event

On **Saturday December 16th** from **10:00 am – 2:00 pm**, the **Anne Arundel County Recreation and Parks, Division of Therapeutic Recreation** is hosting a Holiday Fun event for children with disabilities (ages 6 - 16) and their siblings (ages 5 – 12) at the Ruth Eason Special School in Millersville. Participants can purchase items ranging in price from \$1 – 8 for family and friends in a holiday gift shop. The proceeds will support the Recreation Deeds for Special Needs program. To participate in the holiday gift shop, each child will need to bring a list of the people for whom they wish to buy a gift and either cash or a check payable to Rec Deeds for Special Needs.

The fee for the event is \$5 per child, and they will need to bring a lunch. Pre-registration is required to ensure proper staffing. For further information or to register, please contact **Wendy Scarborough** at **(410) 222-7313 x 3554**.

Aspergers Syndrome group

On **Monday December 18th** at **7:00 pm**, a meeting of the newly formed group for local people affected by Aspergers Syndrome and other autism spectrum disorders will be held at the Severn Covenant Church on Gambrells Road (in the 2nd floor of Fellowship Hall) in Severn. For further information, please go to <http://aspergers.meetup.com/243>.

Workshop about benefits

On **Tuesday December 19th** from **6:30 – 8:30 pm**, the **Developmental Disabilities Administration** is hosting a workshop for self-advocates, families, and friends entitled "**The changing face of benefits: Understanding the myriad of rules governing SSI/SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare and related work incentives for people with developmental disabilities**". It will be held at the Charles Ecker Business Training Center on Gateway Drive in Columbia and provide information about the benefit programs offered by the state and federal government.

For further information or to register, please contact **Donna Shreve** at **(410) 902-4560** or shreved@dhhm.state.md.us.

Celebrating Friends

Celebrating Friends provides social opportunities for young adults (age 16 and older) with cognitive disabilities who are living at home. The upcoming schedule of events is as follows:

Tuesday December 19th from 5:00 – 9:00 pm **Chocolate pizza and movie day**

The cost is \$25, which includes transportation and food.

Friday December 28th from 5:00 – 9:00 pm **Holiday supper and Lights on the Bay**

Celebrate with dinner at a local friend's house, and then take a drive to enjoy the Lights on the Bay at Sandy Point State Park. The cost is \$20, which includes transportation and food.

For further information or to register for an event, please contact **Ouida and Melanie Fluck** at **(301) 912-3220** or CFRegs@gmail.com

PECS training

On **Wednesday December 20th** and **Thursday December 21st**, a two-day training session on the **Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)** will be held at the Burkshire Marriott conference center in Towson. PECS is an initial language-training package that is used to teach communication skills rapidly to those with limited functional speech. Participants will learn how to implement the six phases of PECS.

For further information or to obtain registration materials, please contact **Amanda Hunter** at ahunter@pecs.com or **(302) 368-2515**. Information is also available at <http://www.pecs.com>

Capitals Autism Awareness Night

On **Saturday January 6th** at **7:00 pm**, **Athletes Against Autism**, **Cure Autism Now**, and the **American Special Hockey Association** will host an autism awareness night at the Verizon Center for the Washington Capitals vs. Atlanta Thrashers game. For further information or to order tickets, please go to <http://www.capstickets.com/cureautismnow.html> or call **Sam Levitt** at **(323) 549-0500 ext. 747**.

AA-SECAC meeting

On **Thursday January 11th** at **6:30 pm**, the **Anne Arundel County Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee** will host a free presentation about the **Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education**. It will be led by **Judy Terle** and **Raj Kudchadkar** and held at the Board of Education building on Riva Road in Annapolis. For further information, please contact **AA-SECAC** at **(410) 224-3122** or AASECAC@fastmail.fm



Presentation on assistive technology

On **Wednesday January 10th** from **9:00 am – 3:30 pm**, the **Maryland Assistive Technology Cooperative** will sponsor a presentation entitled “**Multi-modality supports for communication, cognition and play: Strategies for children on the severe end of the Autism Spectrum**”. It will be led by Linda Burkhardt and held at the Savage Firehall on Lincoln Street in Savage.

The presentation will focus on practical strategies for motivating and communicating with young children on the severe end of the autism spectrum. It will look beyond teaching simple requests and compliance to the three components of communication that can be adapted for these children: receptive language, expressive communication, and language used for cognitive processing.

For further information or to obtain registration materials, please call **(410) 381-COOP** or go to <http://www.matcoop.org>.

Comments sought on IACC report

Public comments are being sought on the progress report about the state of autism research developed by the **Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC)**. The deadline for providing comments is **January 16th**. The draft report and procedures for submitting comments are available at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/autismiacc/index.cfm>.

Background: The Children's Health Act of 2000 mandated the establishment of an Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) to coordinate autism research and other efforts within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). In April 2001, authority to establish the IACC was given to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), with the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) designated as the lead agency. The primary mission of the IACC is to facilitate the efficient and effective exchange of information on autism activities among the member agencies, and to coordinate autism-related programs and initiatives.

Conference on waivers and other services

On **Friday January 19th** and **Saturday January 20th**, the **Arc of Maryland**, the **Developmental Disabilities Administration**, and several other related organizations are sponsoring a conference entitled “**New tools, new connections: Waivers, innovative services, and how to make change happen**”. It will be held at the Holiday Inn on Baltimore Boulevard in College Park. Saturday's session will include a youth leadership training.

For further information or to obtain registration materials, please contact **Sarah Basehart** at the Arc of Maryland at **(888) 272-3449**.

Job announcement

The **Howard County Chapter of ASA**, in partnership with **Civic Works**, is seeking to fill a part time position for 6 – 10 hours per week. The individual hired will receive an educational award of \$2,500. To receive the award, the individual hired must complete 300 hours of service. The position starts immediately and will last through September of 2007. Hours are flexible but may include some evening and weekend work for special events.

The individual will be trained in three areas: administrative support functions, community education and outreach, and special event planning and execution. The individual will work directly with the Executive Director to facilitate the goals and mission of the group.

Candidates must be at least 17 years old, a U.S. citizen or naturalized citizen, have personal transportation, and be drug free. Candidates should possess a strong desire to serve the community, the ability to commit to 10 months of service, and have a positive attitude. Preferred skills include excellent oral and written communication skills, strong organizational skills, ability to work independently, creativity and initiative, knowledge of autism spectrum disorders, and computer skills (Microsoft Word, Excel, and Access).

To apply, please send a resume to the Howard County Autism Society at 6206 Longleaf Pine Road, Sykesville, MD 21784. For further information, please contact **Kim Manning** at Kamanning5@yahoo.com.

Job announcement

The **Arc of Maryland** is seeking a **Director of Education and Childrens Advocacy**. The position is 20 hours/week at the Annapolis-based non-profit organization. Qualified persons with disabilities and family members of persons with cognitive and developmental disabilities are encouraged to apply.

Responsibilities include staff leadership, formulating and implementing action plans, representing The Arc on coalitions and task forces, coordinating the annual inclusive education essay and poster contest, coordinating meetings, organizing forums, and grant writing.

Interested parties should submit a letter of interest, a resume that includes your advocacy accomplishments and activities at the local, state, and/or federal level, a one-page typed writing sample that describes your position on inclusive lives for persons with developmental disabilities, and three references with contact information. Completed packages should be sent to **Cristine Marchand** at cmarchand@thearcmd.org or 49 Old Solomons Island Road, Suite 205 Annapolis, MD 21401, or (fax) 410-974-6021 by **December 20th**.



Participants sought for survey

Family Voices and the **Tufts University School of Medicine** research team are seeking families of children, ages 6-18, to complete an on-line survey related to health and wellness for children with special health care needs (this includes special mental health/behavioral/emotional needs). The aim of the survey is to learn how families promote health and wellness for their children with special needs in the areas of food choices, physical activity and screen time (TV and computers).

The survey will be on-line until **December 31st**, and the results will be shared broadly with health professionals, government agencies, other families and researchers in the hope they will be better able to support healthier lifestyles for children with special health needs, directly or indirectly through their agencies. For further information, please go to http://go.tufts.edu/family_matters.

Participants sought for research study

Jamie Cho, a doctoral student in the **Education Department** at the **University of California at Berkeley**, is seeking participants for a study investigating the beliefs and practices of Anglo-American and Asian-American (second generation Chinese, Japanese, or Korean American who were born in the United States with immigrant parents or immigrated to the United States before the age of 14) mothers of preschoolers and kindergarteners with autism spectrum disorders. Specifically, the study will examine parents' beliefs about disability, their roles and beliefs about parenting, and their involvement in their child's education. The study involves completing a survey. Participants will receive a \$15 gift certificate to Target, and be entered into a drawing for a \$200 Spa Finder gift certificate. For further information, please contact Jamie Cho at (510) 594-1065 or jamie118@berkeley.edu.



Speech-language services

Speech Pathways in Carroll County offers pediatric speech-language services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Their services include screenings, evaluations, individual therapy and group therapy; family training and home programs; co-treatments with pediatric occupational therapists, physical therapists and registered movement therapists (yoga); sensory-motor based speech therapy for children with motor planning disorders and sensory integration deficits/disorders; Fast Forward; PROMPT; Hanen; Affect-Based Language Curriculum (ABLC); LIPs; Rhythmic Entrainment Intervention (REI); and Auditory-Verbal therapy.

For further information, please call (410) 374-0555 or go to <http://www.speechpathways.net>.

Speech-language services

The **Shafer Center** in Reisterstown offers pediatric speech-language services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders in Baltimore County and surrounding areas. Services are available on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between 1:30 - 5:00 pm. For further information, please call (410) 517-1113 or go to <http://www.shafercenter.com>.

Winter sessions

OT Ventures in Ellicott City is offering the following programs:

"Sensational babies" is a caregiver-infant group for infants with and without special needs. The multi-sensory group encourages optimal development in infants while educating caregivers on how best to play at home.

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

"Socialites" is co-led by an Occupational Therapist and Speech Language Pathologist. Each weekly session addresses 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. Writing groups are tailored to children of all ages and skill levels, including Pre-Writing, Printing, and Cursive.

For further information, please contact **Jamie Levine** at (443) 812-6396 or ot_ventures@hotmail.com. Information is also available at <http://www.ot-ventures.com>.

Prescription assistance program

Astrazeneca has a prescription assistance program that offers free medicines to people who earn \$30,000 a year or less, or a family of four making up to \$60,000 a year. The program is for people of all ages who are uninsured. In addition, people with insurance to cover their medication costs who are experiencing financial hardship may apply to the program for interim assistance. The program also provides one-on-one education and information about health insurance coverage. For further information, please call (800) 424-3727 or go to <http://www.astrazeneca-us.com/drugassistance>.



News from National ASA: House passes the Combating Autism Act

The **Autism Society of America (ASA)** commends the U.S. House of Representatives for its passage of **S. 843, the Combating Autism Act**. This critical legislation authorizes \$860 million through 2011 in federal funding for autism-related research, early detection, and intervention. It first passed in the Senate on August 3rd and contains many important provisions to strengthen autism research and diagnostics, including the following:

Developing and implementing a strategic plan for research related to autism spectrum disorders;

Reauthorizing Autism Centers of Excellence and providing funds to the centers for coordination of services and information for patients;

Supporting basic and clinical research into the fields of developmental neurobiology, genetics, epigenetics, pharmacology, nutrition, immunology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, psychopharmacology, and toxicology;

Improving coordination of the various federal, State, and local supports and services available to persons with autism and families affected by autism;

Increasing the number of providers that can screen, diagnosis and provide interventions to persons with autism; and,

Promoting research to determine evidence-based best practices for diagnosis, early detection, prevention, intervention and possible/potential cure for autism spectrum disorders.

News from National ASA: Dr. Bernard Rimland

The **Autism Society of America (ASA)** announces with profound sympathy the death of its founder, **Dr. Bernard Rimland**. A pioneer in the area of autism diagnosis and treatment, Dr. Rimland transformed the prevailing pessimistic view of autism in the medical and scientific community and built the largest parent support organization in the United States. Along the way, he inspired hundreds of thousands of parents, advocates and professionals to treat individuals with autism with respect, dignity and care.

Dr. Rimland's 1964 book, "Infantile Autism: The Syndrome and its Implications for a Neural Theory of Behavior," was responsible for challenging and changing the long-held belief that autism was an emotional disorder caused by poor mothering. Rimland devoted himself tirelessly to conducting and disseminating the results of research on methods of diagnosing and treating the full spectrum of autism. His determination was spawned by his son's diagnosis of autism, at age two, in 1958.

News from National ASA: Autism Society of America and Autism Research Institute announce partnership

The **Autism Society of America (ASA)** and the **Autism Research Institute (ARI)** have announced a strategic partnership to collaborate on conferences, publications, and services that will improve the lives of all those affected by autism in the United States. By joining forces, ASA and ARI aim to continue the important stewardship of their founder, Dr. Bernard Rimland. A pioneer in the area of autism diagnosis and treatment, Dr. Rimland transformed the prevailing pessimistic view of autism in the medical and scientific community and built the largest parent support organization in the United States.

A major purpose of the ASA/ARI partnership is to promote awareness that autism must be treated as a whole body condition. Projects in 2007 will include biomarker conferences, distribution of scientific journals, and collaborative efforts to serve over 100,000 members and supporters of these organizations.

News from National ASA: House passes Lifespan Respite Care Act

The **Autism Society of America (ASA)** applauds the passage of **H.R. 3248, the Lifespan Respite Care Act**, by the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill authorizes competitive grants to states to make quality respite available and accessible to family caregivers, regardless of age, disability, or family situation. For families of minor and adult children with autism, respite can help provide the relief necessary to maintain their own health, bolster family stability, keep marriages intact, and avoid out-of-home placements.

The legislation is based on model systems that provide easy access to an array of affordable, quality respite services; ensure flexibility to meet diverse needs; and assist with locating, training, and paying respite providers.

Autism Speaks and Cure Autism Now announce partnership

Autism Speaks and **Cure Autism Now (CAN)** have signed a memorandum of understanding to combine operations, uniting their programs for research, biomedical treatment and advocacy. The consolidated organization will be known as **Autism Speaks, Inc.**

Both groups share a commitment to accelerate and fund biomedical research into the causes, prevention, treatments and cure for Autism Spectrum Disorders; to increase awareness of the disorder; and to improve the quality of life of affected individuals and their families.



Special couples and the relationship factor: When special needs challenge a household

By Cindy Ariel, Ph.D. and Robert Naseef, Ph.D
(Reprinted with permission from the authors)

Becoming a parent for the first time changes our identity forever. There is a balancing act between caring for the needs of children and putting time and effort into the maintenance and growth of ourselves and our relationships. Frequently we must redefine our values and relationships with others. This transition in the development of family life is challenged even further by disability or chronic illness. "There is a strain on any marriage whenever a baby is sick. And we always have a sick baby" according to Josh Greenfeld, the father of a child with autism, in *A Child Called Noah* (1970).

The kind of chronic stress that raising a child with special needs entails can affect relationships at their weakest points. This is just as true for families who have "volunteered" by adopting children with special needs or providing a foster home. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), 47% of first marriages fail and 57% of all marriages end in divorce. Although the findings are inconsistent, there is general consensus among experts that while the divorce rates are comparable, there appears to be more reported marital distress among families of children with special needs (Seligman and Darling, *Ordinary Families, Special Children*, 1997).

Together you and your partner dreamed of a healthy child - now you face a life very different from what you imagined. Your overwhelming feelings, both individually and combined, are normal and natural in the situation but very difficult nonetheless. The needs of the children are often complex and illusive. Searching to find the cause of children's developmental problems and the best treatment can be a long hard journey. Getting wrapped up in the stresses and strains of everyday life, relationships inevitably suffer from lack of attention. Communication problems, lack of time and energy for personal, marital, and family activities, and social isolation affect many families. When a disability or chronic illness is discovered, powerful emotions surface and may put relationships on trial. How can couples understand each other in the wake of such devastating pain?

For a relationship that is fragile or unstable disability can be "the last straw." On the other hand, challenging life events can serve as catalysts for change. Some families disintegrate while others thrive despite their hardships. People can emerge from crisis revitalized and enriched. Hope for relationships really can spring from the crises people experience when their child has a disability.

If you and your partner are parenting a child with special needs,

here are some suggestions to help your relationship:

Work to understand each other's needs.

Family life can be a test of love and resilience, so taking good notes and working to understand each other's wants and needs are vital to the success and survival of an intimate relationship. Life has veered sharply from what you had expected it to be. Try not to blame each other for the situation. It takes time to sort this stuff out. Be kind to yourself and each other about how difficult this can be.

Spend alone time together.

While the issues in any particular relationship are complex, it can be a good start to plan time together alone, even if only for a few hours. In study after study, people who report their marriages to be satisfying describe their spouses as their best friends, and people who are best friends have activities that they enjoy together. Most people get married, in large part, because they enjoy each other and make each other feel good. Who would have married their spouse if the last time they relaxed and/or had fun together was months ago? A close bond between partners can help parents through the rough spots. You can start with sharing a cup of coffee or tea, dinner out, or a movie or concert.

Take care of your individual selves.

Your children have conditions that may require lots of care and supervision. In the struggle to advocate for our children's needs, our own needs as individuals and as couples get lost. Many people stop focusing on their marriage, but this never helps. As hard as it may sound at first, think about taking care of yourself and adding some fun and enjoyment into your life, even though it can take a long time for this to feel okay. Take some time for yourself to doing things you enjoy. This can be anything from physical exercise or journaling to just grabbing time to read the newspaper or start a good book.

Reach out.

When possible, share the responsibilities at home by working together on chores, childcare, and education. It is helpful when couples both work to learn about their child's disability, prepare for and attend IEP meetings, etc. Get involved in the special needs community if you can. There's so much to manage everyday that reaching out to your partner, relatives or friends can help lessen the burden.

Communicate.

When a person is in pain he or she may withdraw, or become frustrated and angry. It's hard to talk about something we have no power to change or fix. At times the reactions of couples can become polarized or opposite. For example, one may notice problems in the child and tend to worry and feel negative while the other holds hope and optimism that in time everything will be fine. Try to consider all of your feelings toward your child

(continued on next page)



(both positive and negative) and discuss issues in ways that will help both of you feel understood and find solutions to problems. In general, the way out requires working through the painful feelings with one's partner and arriving at some form of joint acceptance and effective co-parenting strategies.

Seek assistance.

Sometimes a mental health professional (a social worker, psychologist, or psychiatrist) can be helpful to you in understanding the needs of the children, yourself, and your marriage. Some people are reluctant to take this step, but when it becomes hard to function from day to day, this kind of help may be in order. Just as you would consult more than one specialist for your child if necessary, do likewise for yourself. If your partner is too discouraged, then start by yourself. Sometimes a change in one partner changes the chemistry of the situation for the better. It is intelligent and wise to acknowledge the needs of yourself and your marriage over time as well as your child's needs. Your special family is worth it!

Tips for enhancing your relationship: In spite of grim statistics and feelings of being overwhelmed, having a disability in the family can have a positive impact as well. Here are some suggestions to offer comfort and direction for couples as well as singles who are parenting a child with special needs:

- * Communication is key so resist the tendency to blame. Ask for what you need from others; also take good notes about your partner's needs. Listen actively and with compassion to each other; tell your partner what he or she is you're doing right.
- * Add some fun and enjoyment in your life - alone and with your partner. If you worry too much about leaving your child with someone else, take your beeper or cell phone.
- * It helps to be as active as you are comfortable being in the community as a whole and in the special education community in particular.
- * Exercise - almost any form of exercise will lift your sagging spirits if you do a form of exercise that you enjoy and do it regularly.
- * Journaling - writing down thoughts and feelings and experiences is helpful for many of us trying to put things into perspective.
- * Support groups - it is often helpful to share experiences, thoughts and feelings with others who are in the "same boat" and can understand.
- * Break problems down into more manageable pieces.

- * Remember that you are both on the same parenting team - not competing or fighting against each other.
- * Seek professional guidance when necessary. It is not a sign of weakness to seek help when you need it. On the contrary it is wise to think of your needs as well as those of your children.
- * Keep in mind that a hard life can still be a good life!

About the authors:

Cindy Ariel, Ph.D. and **Robert Naseef, Ph.D.**, are psychologists who specialize in helping couples cope with special needs in their family. They are the co-editors of "Voices from the spectrum: Parents, grandparents, siblings, people with autism, and professionals share their wisdom". Dr. Naseef is also the author of the book, "Special children, challenged parents: The struggles and rewards of raising a child with a disability".

Information about their practice is available at <http://www.alternativechoices.com/specialfamilies.htm>. A video presentation about how autism impacts a parent is available at <http://www.talkautism.com/Components/Video/Video.aspx?v=1>.

On-line disability information

DisabilityInfo.gov is a comprehensive online resource designed to provide people with disabilities with quick and easy access to the information on numerous subjects, including benefits, civil rights, community life, education, employment, housing, health, technology and transportation.

The site is managed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), in partnership with 20 other federal agencies. For further information, please go to <http://www.disabilityinfo.gov>.

New publication on transition planning

In conjunction with **National Inclusive Schools Week** (December 4th - 8th), a new publication is available. Entitled "**Charting an inclusive journey through school, work, and life: Successful transition planning for all students**", the publication is a collection of inclusive strategies and ideas focused on the critical transitions that all students encounter, while also addressing the experiences of students with disabilities and those of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

For further information about obtaining the publication, please go to <http://www.inclusiveschools.org>.



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. 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.