



# THE VOICE

## Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Autism Society of America

February 2004

Volume 8, Issue 7

### President's Message

**AACC-ASA meetings are held on 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.**

**Chapter Phone Line:  
(410) 923-8800**

If Anne Arundel County public schools are closed or close early due to weather, our chapter meeting will not be held.

To check the status of Anne Arundel County Public Schools, visit <http://www.aacps.org/>.

**Next Meeting:  
February 24th  
7:00 pm**

As we all know, Mother Nature and Father Winter brought us snow and ice on the evening of our January meeting. For the first time in many years I had to pull out our "inclement weather policy", which is provided on this page and is now also posted on our web site and included on the message for our chapter phone line. I hope we won't have to use it again any time soon!

I am pleased to report that **Roxanne Sporrer** and **Bill Bowers** have been re-scheduled; they will present information about **Alt-MSA** at our **March meeting**. As a reminder, Alt-MSA is the alternative assessment designed for students with disabilities who are unable to participate in a regular assessment, even when accommodations are provided. Please be sure to mark your calendar for this discussion.

**Kirsten Basore** of the **Kennedy Krieger Institute** has also been re-scheduled. She will join us at our **February meeting** to briefly share information and answer questions about two new research studies that are being conducted at the Center for Autism and Related Disorders.

In addition, our **February meeting** will feature an opportunity to meet with and ask ques-

tions of our school system's new **Director of Special Education, Diane Black**. She is in her 24th year of working in the Anne Arundel County Public School system, primarily with the Division of Special Education. Prior to becoming Director, she spent three years as principal of Marley Glen School.

I encourage parents, as well as professionals and service providers, to join us on February 24th. Ample time will be provided for questions and discussion.

In closing, I have wonderful news to share about the status of the project being led by **Patricia Prescott**, one of our board members. This project involves developing models, methods, and materials to assist children in dealing with the sensory issues that impede learning and often create classroom behavior problems. It was initiated with the award of a \$1,000 grant by Maryland Family NetWorks.

In her efforts to find ways to further develop and expand the project, Pat has been able to secure an additional award of \$2,500 from WalMart!! My congratulations to Pat and her hard-working colleagues; we all look forward to hearing about the results of this important pilot project.

### Behavioral Consultant available

**Heather Partanen** is a Behavioral Consultant who recently moved to the Baltimore/Annapolis area. She works with families and children with autism and develops in-home Applied Behavior Analysis programs. She has eight years of experience and is available on a private basis to work with families in this area.

She has worked as a consultant with the Lovaas Institute for Early Intervention in both Minnesota and New Jersey. She has also worked with Families for Effective Autism Treatment in Minnesota. She is currently serving five families privately and is looking to develop her client base in this area. Her rates are available on request. She can be contacted at **(443) 629-3894** or [hphawk@yahoo.com](mailto:hphawk@yahoo.com)



## Workshop on language and behavior

On **Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>** from **7:00 – 9:00 pm**, the **Chapel Forge Early Childhood Center PTO** will host a free workshop entitled **“Enhancing language and improving behavior”**. It will be led by **Dr. Joanne Cafiero** and held at **Chapel Forge**, 12711 Milan Way, Bowie.

The workshop will focus on strategies to help children communicate more and more effectively. She will also discuss the link between communication and behavior, and what language-related strategies could also positively impact behavior.

Registration is required by going to <http://www.evite.com/clambert@nw.org/languageworkshop>. For further information, please contact **Carol Lambert** at **(301) 218-3974**.

## Workshop on AAC interventions for students with autism

On **Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup>** from **9:00 am – 4:00 pm**, the **Maryland Assistive Technology Co-op** will offer a workshop entitled **"Engaging Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Six AAC Strategies"**. The workshop will be led by **Dr. Joanne Cafiero**, and held at the **Savage Fire Hall** in Howard County.

The workshop will describe six Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) interventions from their research basis to defining objectives, designing tools, strategies, protocols and data collection. Included will be research-to-practice models for activity schedules, literacy learning (reading and writing), self-monitoring behavior programs, and video modeling.

The registration fee is \$75 for parents/guardians and \$95 for professionals. For further information or to register, please contact **Maryland A.T. Co-Op** at **(410)747-7643** or go to their web site at <http://www.matcoop.org>.

## Stephen Shore presentation

On **Monday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**, the **Howard County Chapter of the Autism Society** will host a presentation by **Stephen Shore** entitled **“IEPs, accommodations, and self-advocacy”**. He is the author of **“Beyond the wall: Personal experiences with Autism and Asperger Syndrome”**. In addition, he gives workshops on how to use IEPs as a tool for self-advocacy and on classroom accommodations for children with autism and Asperger Syndrome.

For further information on the presentation, including time and location, please contact the **Howard County Chapter** at **(410) 760-5595** or go to <http://www.howard-autism.org>.

## Workshop on testing

On **Saturday, March 13<sup>th</sup>** from **7:00 – 9:00 pm**, the **Family Advocacy and Parent Education (FAPE) Program**, in partnership with the Howard County Autism Society, the Parents' Place of Maryland, the Howard County Family Support and Resource Center, and the Abilities Network, is hosting a workshop entitled **“Understanding psychological and educational testing data”**.

The workshop will be led by **Dr. Larry Larsen** of Johns Hopkins University and will be held at the **Gateway Building**, 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive in Columbia.

For further information or to register for the workshop, please contact **Julie Foley** at **(410) 465-1193** or [FamilyAdvocacy@comcast.net](mailto:FamilyAdvocacy@comcast.net).

## Workshop on friendships and social skills

On **Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup>** from **7:00 – 9:00 pm**, the **Family Advocacy and Parent Education (FAPE) Program**, in partnership with the Howard County Autism Society, the Parents' Place of Maryland, the Howard County Family Support and Resource Center, and the Abilities Network, is hosting a workshop entitled **“Can friendships and functional social skills be taught in the classroom?”**

The workshop will be led by **Carol Tashi**, the author of many articles and books on inclusive education and friendship, and the co-producer of the **“Voices of Friendship”** videos. It will be held at **Faulkner Ridge Center**, 10598 Marble Faun Court in Columbia.

For further information or to register for the workshop, please contact **Julie Foley** at **(410) 465-1193** or [FamilyAdvocacy@comcast.net](mailto:FamilyAdvocacy@comcast.net).

## Assistive technology conference

On **Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>** from **8:30 am - 4:00 pm**, **UCP's No Boundaries Assistive Technology Center** will present their 2nd annual **“AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) in the New Millennium”** conference. The event will be held at the **Pikesville Hilton Hotel** in Baltimore.

The conference will include a keynote address on **“Combining sensory integration voice output devices to increase spontaneous verbal speech in children”**. There will also be breakout sessions and an opportunity to learn about the latest devices.

The registration fee is \$150. For further information, please contact **Angela Strauch** at **(443) 279-0209** or [as-trauch@earthlink.net](mailto:as-trauch@earthlink.net).



## Autism and Asperger's conference

On **Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup>** and **Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>** from **8:30 am—4:30 pm**, **Future Horizons** will present a conference on autism and Asperger's Syndrome. It will be held at the **Sheraton Baltimore North**, 903 Dulaney Valley Road in Towson.

This two-day conference will include the following speakers:

**Dr. Temple Grandin:** "The autism continuum"

**Jerry Newport:** "Your life is not a label"

**Eustacia Cutler** (Temple Grandin's mother): "Raising Temple"

**Rebecca Moyes:** "Addressing social and behavioral needs in the classroom"

**Dr. Jed Baker:** "Social skills for Asperger Syndrome kids and teens to energize communication"

The registration fees are as follows:

Professionals - \$180 for two days; \$135 for one day

Family members/students - \$160 for two days; \$120 for one day

For further information, please call **Future Horizons** at (800) 489-0727 or go to <http://www.FutureHorizons-Autism.com>.

**Note:** If you are planning to attend, we ask that you consider registering for the conference by following the link to the Future Horizons site which is located on our chapter web site (<http://www.aaccasa.org>). Because we participate in the Future Horizons Affiliate Program, our chapter will receive 40% of the purchase price of the conference registration. By registering through our web site, you will help fund our chapter's projects and activities. Thank you!

## Wrightslaw conference

On **Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup>** and **Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup>**, **Psychological Resource Associates**, **The Learning Network**, and **Anne Arundel Community College** will host a two-day conference entitled "**Special education law for parents and professionals: Understanding the issues and processes**".

The conference will be led by **Peter and Pamela Wright** and will be held at **Anne Arundel Community College**, 101 College Parkway in Arnold.

The registration fee is \$250 for professionals and \$150 for parents.

For further information or to obtain a registration form, please go to <http://www.wrightslaw.com> or call (410) 647-8840.

## Workshop on literacy skills

On **Wednesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>** and **Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>** from **9:00 am – 4:00 pm**, the **Maryland Assistive Technology Co-op** will offer a workshop entitled "**Language and Literacy First! Strategies for Students with Disabilities**". The workshop will be led by **Pati King-DeBaun** of Creative Communicating and will be held at the **Savage Fire Hall** in Howard County.

The presenter uses the Early Reading First Initiative and the Building Blocks Curriculum as a model for suggested activities that set the stage for emergent literacy success. The workshop will focus on adaptations that build skills specifically related to communication and language, phonological awareness, alphabetic knowledge, and print awareness. Day one will focus on infants to preschool, and day two will focus on kindergarten to school age.

The registration fees are as follows:

Parents/guardians - \$80 for one day; \$136 for both days

Professionals - \$110 for one day; \$187 for both days

For further information or to register, please contact **Maryland A.T. Co-Op** at (410)747-7643 or go to their web site at <http://www.matcoop.org>.

*Mark Your Calendar!*

## Training workshop on assessment, diagnosis, and intervention

From **Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>** to **Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**, **Drs. Stanley Greenspan and Serena Wieder** will present a training workshop entitled "**Assessment, diagnosis and intervention for developmental and emotional disorders, autistic spectrum disorders, multisystem developmental disorders, regulatory disorders involving attention, learning, and behavior problems, cognitive, language, motor, and sensory disturbances**". This four-day event will be held at the **Hilton McLean** in Tysons Corner, Virginia.

The sessions will focus on the following areas:

- \* Assessment, diagnosis, and intervention planning
- \* Intervention using the DIR (Developmental, Individual-Difference, Relationship-Based) model and Floortime
- \* Advanced clinical seminars on a variety of subject areas

Registration fees vary, based upon the number of days attending and participant status (regular or student). For further information, or to obtain registration materials, please contact **The Infancy and Early Childhood Training Course** at (301) 320-6360 or go to <http://www.stanleygreenspan.com>



## Rapid Prompting conference

On Friday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, TALK, Inc. (Teaching Autistic, Apraxic and Language-disordered Kids) will sponsor a conference on the **Rapid Prompting Method**. The conference will be held in **King of Prussia, Pennsylvania** and led by **Soma Mukhopadhyay**, the originator of the Rapid Prompting Method. In the conference, Soma will discuss and demonstrate her method and how she is using it to teach non-verbal autistic children to communicate. She developed the Rapid Prompting Method to meet the educational and communication needs of her son Tito.

In Rapid Prompting, the individual is taught to communicate by pointing to letters arranged in alphabetical order or in keyboard format on a piece of paper. It gradually evolves into typing and writing skills as these are slowly introduced. It allows parents and professionals to gain access to a child's comprehension and provides the child a way to communicate. The child responds independently -- no facilitation is involved.

To receive further information about the conference, please send your name, address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address by e-mail to [RapidPrompting@aol.com](mailto:RapidPrompting@aol.com), by fax to (610) 644-6128, or by regular mail to TALK, Inc., 1416 Berwyn Paoli Road, Berwyn, PA 19312.

## New transition web site

The **Maryland Interagency Transition Council** has established a web site at <http://www.mdtransition.org>. The site is organized and formatted for transitioning youth with disabilities, as well as parents and professionals.

Topics on the web site include the following:

- \* What is transition?
- \* Maryland graduation requirements
- \* Maryland state agencies
- \* College disability services
- \* Parent supports
- \* National links on transition
- \* Employment
- \* Independent living
- \* Assistive technology
- \* Transportation
- \* Self-advocacy
- \* Disability-specific information

## Special Olympics sports

**Special Olympics Anne Arundel County** is offering a variety of sports for their upcoming season, including the following:

**Aquatics** will be held at the Annapolis Swim Center on Fridays from 7:00 – 8:00 pm (for munchkins and one-on-one swimmers) and 8:00 – 9:00 pm (for lap swimmers) beginning February 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Duckpin bowling** will be held at the Glen Burnie Bowling Center on Saturdays from 6:00 – 8:00 pm, beginning March 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Equestrian** will be held at Arden Farms in Crownsville on Wednesdays from 6:00 – 8:00 pm, beginning March 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Bocce ball** will be held at the Ruth Parker Eason School on Mondays from 6:00 – 7:30 pm, beginning March 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Softball** will be held at Marley Middle School on Mondays from 6:00 – 7:30 pm and Saturdays from 10:00 – 11:30 am, beginning March 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be both team and individual skills.

**Track and Field** will be held at Annapolis High School on Wednesdays from 5:30 – 7:00 pm beginning March 31<sup>st</sup>.

For further information, please go to <http://www.soamd.org> or call (410) 923-0383.

## New report on special education

**Education Week** has just released "**Quality Counts 2004: Count Me In: Special Education in an Era of Standards**". The report is Education Week's eighth annual state-by-state report card on public education.

Quality Counts 2004 is divided into four sections:

- \* "Enveloping expectations" examines the special theme for this year's report.
- \* "Put to the test" tracks state policies and indicators related to the theme.
- \* "State of the States" includes more than 100 indicators of the health of each state's public education system.
- \* Profiles and report cards for the 50 states and the District of Columbia appear at the back of the report.

It is available at <http://www.edweek.org/products/special-reports/>. Viewing portions of the report will require registration, which is free.

*Happy Valentine's Day*



## Benefit raffle

A 2004 Harley Davidson Softail Deuce raffle is being held to benefit **Matthews Center**, a non-profit school for children with autism in Manassas, Virginia. 500 tickets are being sold at a price of \$100 each. The entry form is available at <http://www.matthewscenter.org>. For further information, please contact **Mark Heilman** at (703) 621-1510.

## Participants sought for research study

The **Human Neuropsychological Laboratory** at **American University** is conducting a research study on the neurocognitive and emotional correlates of autism spectrum disorders. The purpose of the study is to better understand how individuals in the autistic spectrum process information, and to evaluate hypotheses regarding the brain areas involved in these disorders.

They are seeking individuals, ages 16 and older, who have been diagnosed with high-functioning autism or Asperger's syndrome to participate. Participants will undergo several neuropsychological tests designed to measure different functions, including memory, attention, and emotional processing, in two separate testing sessions (each lasts 1-1/2 to 2 hours). Testing sessions take place at American University or, if more convenient, at the participant's home.

For further information, please contact **Ann Sollinger** at (240) 506-2294 or [AS6361A@american.edu](mailto:AS6361A@american.edu).

## Alternative medicine use common with autism: 1 in 3 autistic children use alternative treatments

By Jennifer Warner, WebMD Medical News

Up to one-third of autistic children may have received complimentary or alternative medicine treatments, and a new study shows that nearly one in 10 may have used a potentially harmful type.

Researchers say the increasing number of children with autism has sparked interest in new services and treatments to care for them. There is no cure for autism, and experts say the best treatment includes intensive use of behavioral and educational methods.

But the study shows that parents of autistic children are also turning to complimentary and alternative medicine (CAM) treatments in hopes of alleviating some of the symptoms of the condition, such as gastrointestinal and sleep disorders.

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In the study, which appeared in the December issue of "Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics", researchers reviewed the charts of 284 children recently diagnosed with autism at the Regional Autism Center of The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to see how often use of complimentary or alternative treatments was reported.

Researchers divided the nontraditional treatment approaches into four main categories:

1. Unproven, but harmless biological treatments that have no scientific basis, such as vitamin supplements including B6 and magnesium, gastrointestinal medications, and antifungal agents.
2. Unproven, but harmless biological treatments that have some scientific basis, such as gluten-free diets, vitamin C, and hormones.
3. Unproven, potentially harmful biological treatments, such as chelation, antibiotics, high-dose vitamin A, immunoglobulin, or withholding immunizations.
4. Nonbiological treatments, such as animal therapy, auditory integration training, and others.

Overall, the study showed that more than 30% of the children were using some CAM, and 9% were using a potentially harmful type.

Researchers found that children who had other medical ailments or were mentally retarded were also less likely to use complimentary or alternative therapies than others. Having to wait longer for an appointment at an autism center also seemed to increase the likelihood of CAM use.

Researchers say that previous studies have shown that about 2% of all children use some type of complementary or alternative medicine and that number is higher among those with specific health conditions.

The study shows that frustration may drive many parents of autistic children to seek alternative treatments as evidenced by the fact that older children, those who had been seen by a previous health care provider, and those who had to wait longer to get an appointment with the autism center were more likely to have used CAM.

Researchers say the goal of many of these treatments is usually not to treat autism per se, but to address some of the problems faced by children with autism, and healthcare providers should address those issues. "If parents believe that clinicians do not respect their beliefs and decisions or are unwilling to negotiate around the use of additional treatment strategies, these strategies may become alternative rather than complimentary," writes researcher Susan Levy, MD, director of the Regional Autism Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and colleagues.

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:  
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Autism Society of America  
P.O. Box 1304, Millersville, MD 21108

*Join us!*

*Dues are only  
\$10 per year!*

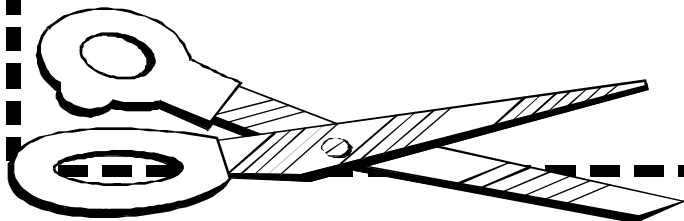
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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

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

Interest:  Parent  Self-Advocate  Friend  Relative  Professional



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