



THE VOICE
 Anne Arundel County Chapter
 of the
 Autism Society of America
 January 2007 Volume 11, Issue 6

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.

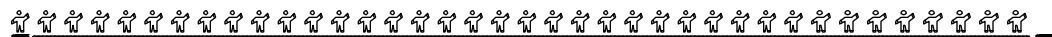
New members and new ideas are always welcome.

I hope everyone enjoyed a happy and healthy holiday, and is ready to start the new year with renewed energy and spirit.

Our January meeting will feature a discussion about **special needs trusts, wills, and guardianships**. It will be led by **Mark Leemon**, a local attorney who specializes in helping families with these matters.

I encourage parents and other family members, as well as professionals and other service providers, to join us on January 30th.

I want to thank **Barbara Fischkin**, an author and the parent of a 19-year-old son with autism, for contributing a copy of her new novel **"Confidential Sources"** to our chapter's lending library.



Book Friends meeting

On **Thursday January 11th** 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 contact **Chrystal Irving** at **(410) 969-5484** or GNL81@aol.com

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.

Aspergers Syndrome group

On **Monday January 15th** 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 Gambrills Road (in the 2nd floor of Fellowship Hall) in Severn. For further information, please go to <http://aspergers.meetup.com/243>.

Asperger support group meeting

On **Wednesday January 17th** from **7:00 – 9:00 pm**, the **Anne Arundel County Asperger Support Group** will hold their monthly meeting at St. Martin's in the Field Church on Benfield Boulevard in Severna Park. For further information, please contact **Sue Hayward** at **(410) 544-6661** or go to <http://www.aacaps.org>.

Phone line:
(410) 923-8800

Web site:
www.aaccasa.org

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



Workshop on helping children with disabilities

On **Friday January 19th** from **6:00 - 8:00 pm**, the **Family Involvement Group of St. Mary's County** will host a free workshop entitled **"My child may have a disability – now what?"** It will be led by Siobhan Ponder, M.A., Pediatric and Adolescent Counselor, and held at the library on Hollywood Road in Leonardtown. Registration is required. Please RSVP to **Robin Duke** at **(301) 475-4510**.

Presentation about behavioral issues

On **Tuesday January 23rd** from **9:00 am - 4:00 pm**, the **Developmental Disabilities Administration** will host a presentation entitled **"Portraits of Autism Spectrum Disorder"**. It will be held at the Charles Ecker Buisness Training Center on Gateway Drive in Columbia and led by Larry Lipsitz, M.Ed, Director of the Intensive Positive Training Program. The presentation will focus on techniques that can be used to reduce disruptive incidents by slowly shaping them into functional behaviors.

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

Presentation about autism

On **Thursday January 25th** from **7:30 - 9:30 pm**, the **Ivymount School** will host a presentation entitled **"Unstrange minds: Remapping the world of Autism"**. It will be held at the school on Seven Locks Road in Rockville and be led by Roy Richard Grinker, Professor of Anthropology and director of the Institute of Ethnographic Research at George Washington University.

For further information or to RSVP, please call **(301) 469-0223**.

Training on Verbal Behavior

Trellis Services is holding a series of free sessions entitled **"Introductions to the Verbal Behavior Approach"**. The sessions are designed to help children 18 months to 6 years old with autism or other language disorders develop communication and play skills in a motivating and nurturing environment. The focus of the sessions is establishing/ increasing requesting and expanding play interests while addressing overall communication skills. The two-hour sessions are held two mornings per week at the Love to Learn Clinic in Cockeysville.

Interested participants are asked to complete the intake form available at <http://www.trellisservices.com> (please be sure to write "VB Winter scholarship" at the top). The form is also available by calling **Tara Wagner** at **(410) 785-3845**. The deadline for applying is **Friday January 26th**.

Input sought from military families

TRICARE is creating a plan under the **Extended Care Health Option (ECHO)** to provide services for military dependent children with autism. They are seeking assistance from affected military families in the plan's development. Any affected military family can e-mail comments to ChildrenWithAutism@tma.osd.mil. The deadline for comments is **Wednesday January 31st**.

Forum on parents supporting parents

On **Thursday February 15th** from **9:30 am - 3:00 pm**, the **Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services**, in conjunction with Parents Place of Maryland and the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, will host a forum on parents supporting parents, focusing on cultural diversity and effective outreach strategies, at the Maryland School for the Deaf in Columbia.

For further information, please contact **Pam Miller** at **(410) 767-1019**.

Presentations about socialization and increasing independence

On **Wednesday February 21st** from **6:00 - 9:00 pm**, **Abilities Network** will host presentations entitled **"Socialization and your child with special needs: Increasing independence"**. The event will be held at Faulkner Ridge on Marble Faun Court in Columbia.

In the first presentation, participants will learn about a "Peer Buddies" program being used at a local middle school, including how the program started, its benefits, and how to incorporate peer buddies into their child's life.

In the second presentation, participants will learn about independence and what it mean for their child with special needs. The presentation will include role plays, case scenarios, and group discussion. Participants will discuss the importance of peers and group memberships and have the opportunity to create a plan for independence.

For further information or to RSVP, please contact **Kelly Dunning** at kdunning@abilitiesnetwork.org or **(443) 562-4772**.

Resources about friendship and inclusion

Maryland Family Networks has collected a wide range of resources related to friendship and inclusion for children with disabilities on their web site. The material is available at <http://www.family-networks.org>.



Information from Pathfinders for Autism

It is the middle of the school year, and you have ironed out as many of the kinks in your child's program as you can, at least for now. Hopefully you are enjoying a period of growth and you have a moment to relax and reflect. If you are like most people assisting someone with autism—a parent, grandparent, teacher, or professional—that is a fleeting moment as you begin to think about what's around the corner and the broader future.

Are these some of the thoughts going through your mind?

- Which skill should we work on next?
- What will we do for a summer program?
- Do we need to apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration?
- Do we need to find additional therapists?
- Would a new therapy make a difference?
- Do we need a Special Needs trust? Does the one we have need to be rewritten or reviewed?
- Do we need to schedule an appointment with a specialist (neurologist, psychiatrist) or a specialized service provider (dentist, developmental pediatrician)?

Let Pathfinders for Autism be a resource for you — free of charge. Pathfinders for Autism is a parent-sponsored nonprofit that can provide assistance as you explore answers to your questions about autism. You can search their on-line database or speak with a knowledgeable staff person to get information about autism and to locate programs and lifespan services throughout Maryland. The Pathfinders for Autism Resource Center can be reached by calling toll-free **(866) 806-8400** or going to <http://www.pathfindersforautism.org>.

Input sought about services for adults

The **Adult Autism Resource Group (AARG)** is a committee of the Baltimore-Chesapeake Chapter of the Autism Society of America made up of parents of transition-age youth and adults with autism spectrum disorders and professionals who work with them. Their goal is to work towards the improvement in the capacity and quality of services in Maryland.

They are writing a paper that will highlight the practices of good programs for adults with autism and explore the experiences that Maryland families face in finding quality supports for their adult children.

They are seeking feedback from parents of transition-age youth and adults related to their experiences with vocational supports, day programs, supported community employment, or residential supports. This feedback can be provided by completing the survey they have developed. It is available at <http://www.bcc-asa.org> or by contacting **Linda Pearl** at **(410) 769-9500** or AARG@comcast.net.

Participants sought for research study

Tara Clark, a doctoral candidate in **Counseling Psychology** at the **University of Kentucky**, is seeking parents of a child with an autism spectrum disorder or a typically developing child between the ages of 4 and 16 to participate in a research study. The study focuses on understanding the relationships between parent attribution, self-efficacy and stress for the parents of children with autism spectrum disorders (in comparison to parents of typically developing children). The result of the study will be used to develop a parent training program through which parent stress levels can be decreased and the developmental progress of children with autism spectrum disorders improved.

The study involves completing an on-line survey questionnaire. For further information, or to participate in the study, please go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=331382963802>.

Participants sought for survey

The **Maryland Disability Law Center** is seeking participants for a survey regarding emergency room experiences. The results of the survey will be used to work with hospitals and emergency room personnel to improve their ER procedures. For further information, please contact **Paula Lafferty** at **(410) 633-0643** or paula.lafferty@hotmail.com

Therapeutic riding program

The **Unicorn Center** in Bowie provides horseback riding for individuals with disabilities. All ages are welcome. For further information, please contact the center at **(240) 417-0981** or nkurtz@theunicorncenter.org. Information is also available at <http://www.theunicorncenter.org>.

Transition resources

The **National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)** has developed a five-part series of online resources of transition materials. The five parts are as follows: Transition 101, Transition for parents, Transition for students, Transition for professionals, and Transition for students with disabilities. For further information, please go to <http://www.nichcy.org/resources/transition101.asp>.

Chapter Basket Bingo

Our second chapter Basket Bingo event will be held on **Saturday April 21st at 12:30 pm** at the **Glen Burnie Moose Lodge** on Crain Highway. Please mark your calendar and look for further information in next month's newsletter about purchasing tickets and making donations.



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

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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.