

Financial Highlights 2005

Support and Revenue

Services and Seminars	191, 638
Memberships	2,566
Fund Raising	314,731
Grants	46,000
Contributions	49,453
Interest Income	753
Net assets released from restrictions	50,314
Total Support and Revenue	609,455

Expenses

<i>Total Expense</i>	641,382
Net Assets	
<i>Beginning of Year</i>	111,203
<i>End of Year</i>	79,276
Change in Net ASSETS	(31,927)

*94% of all revenue is dedicated to our programs.

Board of Directors

2005-2006

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Thank you to the many community partners and national organizations for their generous support of our organization this year.

Advanced Financial Services, Autism Speaks, Centerville Savings Bank, Citizens Bank, CVS/pharmacy, Dr. Pepper/7Up, Inc., Frerichs Farm, Hasbro, Inc., Kiwanis of Newport, MasterCard International, Mortgage Guarantee and Title, Neighborhood Health Plan of RI, Newport Yachting Center, Inc., Ocean State Charitable Trust, RI Foundation, Inc., Verizon, Inc., VSA Arts, Washington Trust, WCM Service, Inc.

Mission Statement

To develop a comprehensive system of care and resources that meet the needs of children and adults with autism and their families including education, health, vocational, career, social and community needs.



Letter from the Director



Dear friends and colleagues:

It is with great pride that I report to you on the accomplishments of The Autism Project of RI for our last fiscal year May 31, 2005 to June 1, 2006. Great strides were made to improve the education, support and lifestyle of people with autism in Rhode Island. Thanks to a talented and dedicated staff, consultants and volunteers, a relatively small group of individuals accomplished the work of many.

The Autism Project continued in its role as a leader in the field, offering new programs and effectively advocating statewide for the needs of our families. There were many wonderful successes—the staff and volunteers of the Autism Project supported more than 3,000 people who are living with autism. We grew a lot, and learned even more, but there's more to be done.

Following a year of rapid growth we are committed to enriching our programs, keeping our trainings fresh and filled with practical ideas and expanding programs to catch up to the growing need. We will also work to improve access to care and services for many of our families.

Thank you all for your commitment and generosity. We appreciate your support and continue to work hard so 94% of our budget is program related.

Warmly,

Joanne G. Quinn

Who are we?

The Autism Project of Rhode Island is a unique collaboration of parents and professionals. It is our mission to develop a comprehensive system of care and resources that meet the needs of children and adults with autism and their families including education, health, vocational, career, and social and community needs.

We work to support individuals with autism in many areas: we educate their parents and caregivers on best practices for supporting individuals with autism; we educate and train teachers, speech professionals, occupational therapists, teacher assistants, day care providers, community members and other professionals on the current best practices; and, we offer direct services to individuals with autism. We also work to advocate for individuals with autism and their families to increase availability of programs to support them. Finally, we offer support services for families from early diagnosis through transition to the work force through our Parent Support Liaison, support groups, Parent Trainings and Parent Resource Center.

The Autism Project of Rhode Island works to ensure children with ASD benefit from an appropriate education and related therapeutic services within their local school, community and at home. Our programs educate parents and families in their newest role as teacher, but more importantly as Mom and Dad.

We work to our mission by: providing multiple training programs, consultations, social skills groups and a summer camp for children with ASD and related communication disorders, hosting a national speaker conference, by increasing awareness of the disability and by lending support to families across our state at our annual *Imagine Walk and Family Fun Day*.



Campers enjoyed many activities and time with friends and counselors at this year's camp.



When we first received the autism diagnosis we were stunned, in denial and knew the professionals were crazy. We began to receive treatment at the CDC from Dr. Regina Gargas, although we were still in doubt we cooperated. The one thing Dr. Gargas stressed was that when summer arrived I should look into getting Tracy into the Autism Project's camp. All she ever talked about was camp. I could not imagine what could be that great!

When summer arrived my school department suggested that they send Tracy to the Think, Move, Create and Communicate camp that the Autism Project offered for one week.

And there our relationship with the Autism Project began.

Tracy fit right in. Here these children with their unique personalities, brilliant minds, and many quirks blended in. From swimming to crafts, it was the best week of her Life. Now I knew what Dr. Gargas raved about!

When Camp ended Tracy was sad, and I was too. In this one week we took our first real journey into the autistic world and it wasn't as frightening as I had imagined. It was the turning point for us.

Tracy now attends social skills groups and Karate through the year and both she and I have developed friendships. We get together often and do outings and play dates.

At the Autism Project we are all family, when you walk in the door, you are greeted with warmth compassion, sincerity and understanding. The Parent Resource Center is another resource that I've used often to get information, literature, help on navigating the system, or support when I've had a really bad day.

The Autism Project is our happy place. It's a place where people understand, where people help, and anyone is welcome.

Written by Joanne Lee, Tracy's mom



Programming Notes

Training

A Starting Point remains our premier training. We presented the nine-week series eleven times to parents, school districts and community partners. Three new trainings were introduced this year to meet the needs of different families. **ASpire**, a five-week training on the unique characteristics of Asperger Syndrome was offered both at our Cranston location and across our state at local school districts. **Parent to Parent**, a parent coaching model training, was developed and piloted thanks to a grant from the RI Foundation, Inc. This beginning course was designed for parents of children with autism to coach parents of newly diagnosed children through the early stages of diagnosis. This rich program is also offered in Spanish. **Padres a Padres** is the only parent education in Spanish in RI. In total 385 people attended trainings.

Consultations

We continue to support teachers, students and autism programs in schools across the state. Consultations were completed to 100 children, professionals and programs in public schools.

Children's Programming

Camp

Move, Think, Create and Communicate was a great success. Eighty four (84) campers, ages 5 to 21, enjoyed traditional activities throughout the week and the addition of a Bounce House was met with rave reviews.

Social Skills Groups

Social Groups expanded to offer five levels of groups including the preschool music group Rat a Tat Tat, Leaps and Bounds Foundation, Leaps and Bounds, The Club, Jr. and The Club. Karate classes were added in the spring and were a favorite activity at camp. Groups are full and expansion is planned dependent upon staffing and space.

Parent and Professional Support

Parent Liaison

Our Parent Support Liaison provided resources and information to over 1,200 parents, community partners, educators and professionals. We expanded our outreach efforts to strengthen ties with community collaborators and to increase awareness of autism across our state.

Parent Resource Center

This popular resource moved into its own space this year. We now support a resource center with a library, visual samples, access to autism-specific software, community partners' information, and a parent working at the center 18 hours per week to lend support to questions about navigating the system and applying for Katie Beckett. The Resource Center was also available to professionals looking for resources and information. More than 275 people visited the Center in its first year of operation.

Imagine Walk and Family Fun Day

This is our Flagship event and it was a banner year! More than 3,000 people attended this year to offer support, meet other families raising children with autism, to help us raise money, and to enjoy a well-supported day out as a family. It was a picture-perfect day and we look forward to next year's event.