



Steps to Success...

Volume 7, Issue 1

SPRING 2010

It's almost time for the 8th Annual Imagine Walk and Family Fun Day!

Remember last year's?



Save the date...April, 25th!



From the Executive Director

Dear friends and colleagues:



I think it's safe to start thinking about spring and warmer weather. Here at The Autism Project it means we are thinking and working hard on programming and events for Autism Awareness Month in April.

This is a terrific opportunity to bring the community together for support, to educate the larger community on autism spectrum disorders, raise awareness of needs of our children and families and work together to advocate at the local, state and national level.

Some of upcoming events are a new presentation at Bryant University "Autism and Business", members of our social group The Club will be venturing to Bryant for a night of fun and information on college living, art students are hosting an Art Show, group members are creating paintings, bracelets and other items with students from LaSalle Academy for sale to support group activities, grandparents are meeting weekly and learning how to support their grandchildren, and, of course, we are all focused on our Imagine Walk and Family Fun Day.

This year our Walk is even more important. Our state's fiscal crisis, international concerns and the poor economy are impacting our organization. Please consider forming a team to lend support to our programming. Also, our Community Challenge gives families, schools and community organizations an opportunity to support local schools and organizations and The Autism Project, a true win:win for everyone.

I hope to see you at one of our events or at our Walk. We remain committed to offering programming and events for families and professionals working to Making The Connection.

Sincerely,

Joanne Quinn

Executive Director

The Autism Project of RI

Executive Director

Ms. Joanne Quinn

Executive Board:

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Mr. James Golden

Summer Camp

It's time to think about Summer Camp at Move, Think, Create and Communicate! The orange group (the staff and counselors) is ready for a fun week of hiking, boating, swimming, arts and crafts, and much more.

Now we need campers!

Camp registrations are available at several locations. New this year, you can type your information into the online version. Then email it to jill@theautismproject.org. Applications are also available in the waiting room and the front desk. Camper-ship applications are part of the application.

Once again camp will be designed with the many strategies necessary to support our camper's success. There will also be a high counselor-to-camper ratio for fun and safety.



Camp this year will have two sessions, the first being from August 9-13 and the second will be from August 16-20.

Hurry up and get those applications in, because the deadline for applications is June 1st. The orange group is ready for another great week so get your swim suits and compasses ready!

New Electronic Newsletter

The Autism Project is excited to add another link to our families. We recently launched our new electronic newsletter for parents and family members of newly diagnosed children. It is our goal to connect with families and grow this relationship as children grow and develop. We also want parents of older children to have access to the information in the newsletter.

New Parents: (within one year of diagnosis) will receive a newsletter for the first year following diagnosis. This is intended to offer a wide range of stories on relevant topics for the autism community. Parents will receive an email newsletter once a week for the first 8 weeks and then every other week for 20 weeks.

Parents or family members of children, teens or adults with an older diagnosis can also sign up and you will receive the last few newsletters in your email. This will give you access to the archives of all 28 emails that you can choose to read at your leisure.

Families on our email list received an invitation last week to sign up and we will have sign up sheets available at all key doctor offices, CEDARR Centers and other locations in the state. We are excited to introduce this new service and look forward to meeting new families and to staying connected with our families we've known for a while.



From the Development Corner

KUDOS:

The Autism Project would like to extend their sincere appreciation to both the Johnston Fire and Police Departments for once again organizing and participating in The 4th Annual Guns and Hoses Flag Football Event last October.

Johnston's Finest Support the Autism Project



Left to Right, Lt. James Jacavone and David Calabro of the Fire Department, Lt. Frank Levesque and Officer Matthew Winsor of Johnston Police Department and members of Club, Jr..

Sincere thanks to the BankNewport's Warren Branch. They hosted a coin counting celebration at the bank from November 16th thru November 20th. The Autism Project was designated as one of the beneficiaries. As a result of this event, they made a \$500 donation to The Autism Project.

Thank you to **Mastery Martial Arts** for organizing and hosting a Confidence Board Breaking Seminar on February 6, 2010. All proceeds from this event were donated to The Autism Project. The event raised \$440.36. It was an empowering experience for both participants and spectators alike!

Thank you to the Strategic Management Class at CCRI for organizing The Holiday Madden Tournament at their Liston Campus. This event raised \$500 for The Autism Project.

Thank you to Becky Hanos for her continued fundraising efforts on behalf of our organization. She has recently organized two craft fairs which have raised a combined \$213.



We would like to send a special thank you to CVS for their extremely generous donations to The Autism Project. Due to our participation at last year's CVS Charity Classic and the CVS Downtown 5K, CVS awarded The Autism Project with a substantial donation. We are truly grateful to be the recipient of their philanthropic efforts. We are also grateful to our wonderful volunteers who help us at these events and enable us to participate as a working charity. Thank you to those at CVS for your continued support; Eileen Dunn, Lucille Bush, Jennifer Veilleux, Charlie Breagy and Sean Sullivan.

Upcoming Events.....

We are pleased to announce that the URI Baseball Team is raising funds for the Autism Project. To learn more please visit www.gorhody.com click sports, baseball.

Friday, March 12, 2010

Stage Door Dance, Inc.
Presents:

"A Benefit for The Autism Project"

7:00 p.m.
St. Philomena's School
Cory's Lane
Portsmouth, RI

Tickets \$10, Children 3 and under free
For more information, call Stage door at 683-5299 .

April 25, 2010 Imagine Walk and Family Fun Day

Mark your calendar for April 25, 2010, for our **8th Annual Imagine Walk and Family Fun Day** at Goddard Memorial State Park in Warwick. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. Please join us for this unique interactive experience where we utilize red flags to communicate awareness of autism. The walk is followed by a family fun day where we will host activities for all children.

Community Challenge

The Autism Project is once again hosting a challenge to schools and organizations where they can earn free autism training for their professionals by participating in this event. For more information please visit our website at www.theautismproject.org or email mary@theautismproject.org.

Game On!

This year the Autism Project is inviting Corporate Teams to join our walk and compete with other businesses. To learn more about this challenge or to register your team contact Julie@theautismproject.org. We are also seeking corporate volunteers to help us at the event.

What better way to show your support and create awareness of autism than to participate in this event. Last year we had more than 4,000 participants! Your patronage of this event brought many new programs to both children and their families this year. You can participate in this event by organizing a team, volunteering or just bringing your family and enjoying the day. Those who wish to pre-register, please visit www.firstgiving.com/autismproject.org. This site is very easy to use. Just access the site and follow the prompts. You can also create a team webpage to solicit donations at this site. If you have any problems with pre-registration, please contact

Julie Montalbano at julie@theautismproject.org or at 785-2666 x1004. You should also contact Julie to volunteer for this event.

April 25th

Save the Date

Committee Members

We are seeking people to join our walk committee. If you are interested in helping us please contact

Julie@theautismproject.org. See you in April!

Volunteers Needed for the CVS Charity Classic

The Autism Project is going to be working at the CVS Charity Classic as Marshals on June 27th-June 29th. The event will be held at The Rhode Island Country Club, 150 Nayatt Road, Barrington, RI.

We are in need of 20 volunteers to do programs and pairing, which entails distributing fan guides to suites, entrances and other hospitality locations. Volunteers need not have a basic knowledge of golf.

We need to staff the following shifts:

Sunday June 27th: 5:00AM-12:30PM
12:30PM-7:00PM

Monday, June 28th: 6:30AM-3:00PM

Tuesday, June 29th: 6:30AM-3:00PM

Each volunteer must work 2 of the above shifts and will receive 2 polo shirts, a hat, free parking, food tickets and tickets to the event for the shift not worked. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Mary@theautismproject.org.

Community Announcements:



MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, March 23, 2010

6:30-8:00

Groden Center

86 Mt Hope Ave Providence

RSVP by March 22 or call Lisa Rego with any questions

595-3241

Theatre Production on Autism Spectrum Disorders

David Payton, Executive Director of the Kaleidoscope Theatre in Cranston is researching a play on autism spectrum disorders. He would like to do a production that can be presented to school children across RI. David is looking for input from families raising individuals with autism. Here is a link to the questionnaire. Once completed, please email the response to him at

david.payton@kaleidoscopetheatre.com.

Kaleidoscope Theatre has been around for over thirty years and has tackled some difficult topics with much success. Any input of information, ideas, concerns, or whatever from you will be greatly appreciated. Click on the link to the [Autism Play Questionnaire](#) to begin.

Bailey's Team Hosts Training Series

Our community partner, Bailey's Team is offering a full slate of trainings on topics related to ASD.

April 14, 2010

What it's like to be Autistic

Presented by Stephen Shore, Ed.D.

May 12, 2010

Finding balance living with autism: family experiences & coping strategies

Presented by Barry Prizant, Ph.D.

June 16, 2010

Autism in the Community:

inclusion & acceptance

Presented by Susan Constable, M.Ed.

& Janet McTarnaghan, M.Ed.

All presentations will be held Wednesday evenings at the

Holiday Inn Mansfield-Foxboro

31 Hampshire Street, Mansfield, MA

Registration will begin at 6:30 pm

Lecture will begin promptly at 7:00 pm

Click on the link [Bailey's Team Trainings](#) for full descriptions

Sign Up for Surfer's Healing

It's official... the surfers are coming back to Narragansett Beach! Surfer's Healing is an organization that hosts surfing camps for children with autism. This is the second time Surfer's Healing will be coming to the northeast thanks to the hard work and dedication of many families.



Surfers Healing seeks to enrich the lives of children with autism and the lives of their families by exposing them to the unique experience of surfing.

The date for this year's Surfers Healing camp is up on the main Surfers Healing website at www.surfershealing.org. The camp will be held on Saturday, September 18 at Narragansett Town Beach. The time will be announced at a later date. For those who attended last year's camp, 60 children were allowed to surf from 12-4pm. It's likely to stay at that number, some kids were allowed to surf twice, and in general the surfers enjoyed the fact that it was a smaller more intimate affair. Nothing is etched in stone; we will have more info as the event approaches.



To participate, individuals **MUST** be pre-registered. The sign up date for the Rhode Island camp is up on the main surfers healing website. www.surfershealing.org It will be May 31st at 9pm. Spots fill up quickly. PLEASE, mark down this date and time. Remember, we have NO control over who gets to surf. It's strictly first come first serve.

Calling all Grandparents!!

Starting on February 22nd we began our very first training and information session for grandparents of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders. This program has been in the development process for the past year as a request from grandparents of some of the children that attend Autism Project groups, and we are happy to say that its first session was a huge success!

This is a unique 5 week program that educates grandparents of children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder or Asperger Syndrome on the characteristics of autism, how their grandchildren perceive and relate to the world around them, and how to assist their children and families to help raise, interact, and structure time with their grandchildren.

The series is a morning group held for 2 hours every Monday, which is a combination of teaching strategies and panel discussions with parents and educators of children with an ASD or Asperger Syndrome diagnosis. In addition to the educational portion of the series, there has also been time each week to talk with other grandparents and for program staff to assist in problem solving. Thus, grandparents have been able to leave with relevant strategies, including visual supports, to immediately help to increase the quality time they spend with their grandchild.

We are having our final session on Monday March 22nd, and will continue to support the many participants that have joined us for this session with follow up groups and parent support.

We want to thank all of the wonderful grandparents that have allowed us to share with them knowledge and strategies, while they have shared their stories, memories, and pictures of those dearest to them with us. We are so grateful to have been a part of this starting group and are looking forward to seeing its growth in the future!

Olympic Activities at the Autism Project

Athletes at the Autism Project participated in many different Olympic activities including the Obstacle Course and Speed Skating. Our inside track was constructed with vinyl tablecloths, lots of shaving cream and endless giggles and smiles! Super Heroes in our Social Thinking Academy work as a team to defeat villains like Rock Brain so they can be Flexible Thinkers.



Our Super Heroes!

HELP! Who Do I Call?

There's been considerable change at The Autism Project this year. It's time to update our phone directory so we can be accessible to you. Here is our most recent list of staff and their extensions and email. Please feel comfortable to call or email all staff with your questions, concerns and idea. We learn and grow our programs with your input.

Name	Job	Email	Phone
Joanne Quinn	Executive Director	Joanne@theautismproject.org	785-2666, ext. 1002
Jill Norwood	Program Administrative Assistant	Jill@theautismproject.org	Ext. 1011
Brenda Alpaio	Billing/Payments	balpaio@gatewayhealth.org	724-7800, ext. 290
Susan Stevenson	Director of Operations	sstevenson@gatewayhealth.org	ext. 1009
Meaghan Mahoney	Programs Administrator	Mhart393@gmail.com	Ext. 1009
Sue Baylis	Parent Rsource Specialist	Baylis@ripin.org	Ext. 1021
Joeanna Cruz	Parent Resource Specialist (Bilingual)	cruz@ripin.org	Ext. 1086
Mary Farhoumand	Fund raising and Events	Mary@theautismproject.org	Ext. 1023
Julie Montalbano	Fund raising and Events	Julie@theautismproject.org	Ext. 1004
Sue Connole	Curriculum Coordinator	SueConnole@theautismproject.org	Ext. 1005
Jen Garcia	Training Coordinator	Jennifer@theautismproject.org	Ext. 1012
Cheryl Cotter	Training/Consultation	Cheryl@theautismproject.org	Ext. 1053
Claudia Prior	Outreach/National Conference	Claudia@theautismproject.org	
Deb Langevin	Fund raising and Events Support	Deb@theautismproject.org	Ext. 1056