



Steps to Success...

Volume 5, Issue 4



JULY-AUG 2008

APRI Moving to New Location

It's official... the Autism Project of RI will move to Atwood Avenue! "We are excited about the new space and the opportunities it offers," commented Joanne Quinn, executive director. "Our lease is due to expire in August so we took the opportunity to find more suitable space that works for our growing number of social skills groups and trainings," said Joanne. After many months of touring properties the Johnston location stood out as the best solution for more space that is affordable. "Rents are expensive and we needed to do a lot of research to find affordable space that's also big enough for future expansion."

The move will be the last week of August so that the office and staff will be set for the start of groups and trainings in the Fall. "We will share the building with a Gateway Healthcare program," said Joanne. "This is a terrific opportunity for us to work closer with Gateway to share knowledge and resources so we can reach more people in need of our support."



October 24th - 5th Annual Drive Fore Autism Golf Tournament/Carnegie Abbey

Come join us for a day of golf, spa treatments, dinner and auction at Rhode Island's premier golf club- Carnegie Abbey. Help us raise awareness and support children and adults with autism, their families and the many programs we provide. The cost per golfer is \$250.00 and includes breakfast, greens fees, cart, lunch and dinner. Registration begins at 9:00AM with a shotgun start at 10:30AM. Foursomes are limited and will be sold on a first come first serve basis. Please contact julie@theautismproject.org to register. There are still sponsorships available-T-Signs are \$150.00. Check out this beautiful location at their website <http://www.carnegienewport.com/rhodeislandgolfclub/>



From the Executive Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues:



The lazy days of summer seem to fly by quicker each year. Here we are in July already and our office continues to buzz with activity and planning for providing services to families and people with an autism spectrum disorder.

The big news is the Autism Project will be moving to Atwood Avenue in Johnston. Following months of searching and tours of endless properties we landed at 1516 Atwood Avenue. The floor plan is more organized for our social skills groups, trainings and staff and will allow us to grow our programs.

Also, the location will improve access to our programs for the northern region of the state without too much impact on families and professionals from the central and southern regions. It is easily accessible from 295 as well as Route 6. Our plan is to move the last week in August and be up and running for groups mid-September.

More good news, we were awarded a grant from the RI Foundation/The Newport Fund to begin to expand our social groups to Aquidneck Island. We plan to begin with Leaps and Bounds in January 2009 and to continue to recruit and develop staff for additional groups.

Once again our camp program is full and Connie Rinehart and her team are set to support close to 100 campers! This will be our fifth year at Camp Champlin and we are thankful to be able to provide a great camp experience for your kids at this beautiful location.

Thank you all for your support and during the past months as the Legislature and state agencies grappled with the budget and the imminent cuts. I will continue to fight for our families, work with state agencies to maintain programs and keep you all up to date on changes.

Sincerely,

Joanne Quinn

Executive Director

Executive Director

Ms. Joanne Quinn

Executive Board:

Mr. Chris Perrotti, Chairman

Ms. Nancy Merrill, Acting Secretary

Ms. Jean-Marie Coletta, Treasurer

Mr. Michael Andoscia

Mr. Cary Coen

Ms. Joan Colwell

Mr. Dave Dittman

Ms. Pam McLaughlin

Dr. Meg Murray

Dr. Anthony Regine

Mr. David Tassoni

Gateway, Mr. Jay Burdick

Advisory Board:

Ms. Barbara Dubois

Ms. Melissa Ferreira

Ms. Susan Morsilli

Ms. Joanne Weaver

Ms. Roberta Zimmerly

Ms. Deb Belanger

Ms. Gloria Bussell

Ms. Jennifer Parsons

Ms. Lisa Landry

Ms. Nancy Levin

Dr. Stephen Sheinkopf, Ph.D

Ms. Sue Constable

Ms. Susan Shanley

Ms. Glynis Forcht

Newsletter Editor:

Mr. James Golden

Updates

Commission on Educating Students with Autism

Representative Peter Palumbo and Sue Constable, director of the Autism Support Center at RITAP/DOE created a special commission to investigate how students with autism are educated in our state. Representatives from state agencies, the medical community, schools and area agencies have met several times. The initial meetings offered opportunity for the commission to learn about existing programs in RI. There were also several opportunities for families and educators to present their concerns to the commission.

The next step is research of other states' activities and to continue to invite parents to tell their story to the commission. The meetings will begin again in the fall. The long-term goal is to work on legislation specific to the education of children with autism. If you would like to testify, contact Joanne at:

Joanne@theautismproject.org for dates and times.

Respite Hours Available

There is still additional respite hours available for qualified children. Go to the DHS website for more information and an application.

Volunteer Hall of Fame

We receive so many comments and shocked expressions when we tell other non-profit colleagues how many volunteers we have at the Autism Project of RI. There is so much to be done, and we wouldn't be able to do many important activities and programs without the help of our volunteers. Their help comes in many forms and many different ages. Two new volunteers need to be highlighted.

The first story is about a brother's concern for his younger brother. Stephen Pennine organized a team to raise money and participate in our Imagine Walk 2008. The Strumming Strollers walked to raise enough money so a teacher from his brother's middle school could attend one of our professional trainings. Stephen's mom told us he did this because he was worried the teachers wouldn't understand his brother when he attends the school this fall. The Strumming Strollers raised over \$1,500 and a teacher will attend a training. Well done Stephen!

National Speakers Conference

Once again the Autism Project is pleased to host our National Speaker's Conference. The date is **Oct 24th** and the keynote speaker this year is Dr. Gary B. Mesibov. Dr. Mesibov is currently the Director of Division TEACCH. This internationally recognized statewide program is one of a kind in its pioneering approaches to research, service, training, treatment and the education of individuals with autism. Dr. Mesibov also serves as Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychiatry, and Clinical Professor, Department of Psychology. Dr. Mesibov will begin the day by defining the importance of successful inclusion for children with autism based on the TEACCH philosophy. What is a Free and Appropriate Education? What constitutes a Least Restrictive Environment? How do we determine the student's placement? The remaining breakouts will offer supports and interventions for school personnel to implement the successful inclusion within their classroom and community settings.



Our next volunteer is a young man named Ben Boyarsky. Ben doesn't have a relative with autism, but he wanted to help his mom who was volunteering for the Imagine Walk 2008. Ben's job was to make 500 buttons to sell at the Walk. One of the sayings was "I Love Someone with Autism". As Ben was making the buttons he asked "do you think there are 500 people who love someone with autism?" Ben learned a big lesson that day and he and his family continue to be important volunteers for the Autism Project of RI. Thanks Ben and all the entire Boyarsky clan!

Welcome to our Volunteer Hall of Fame!

From the Development Corner

Recent Fundraisers:

A huge thank you once again to the Frerichs Family of Frerichs Farm in Warren, for once again donating a percentage of April sales to our organization. Thanks to their generosity The Autism Project of RI received a very generous donation to support our programs.

The Autism Project of Rhode Island would like to thank our very own Fairy Godmother; Jenniefer Kirk and the entire Kirk family for including the Autism Project of Rhode Island in their recent Show on QVC. Kirks Folly generously donated a percentage of sales from The Autism Awareness-Solving the Puzzle- Tack Pin to our organization. The national awareness our organization received because of this amazing opportunity was priceless and we are forever grateful to Kirks Folly and QVC. If you did not view the show but wish to purchase the Awareness Autism Pin please visit www.kirksfolly.com to order one.

The King of All Bridges

Kudos to Brian Boog and New England Fishing.net for organizing our first fishing tournament on June 22, 2008 at the Turner Reservoir in East Providence. Because of their generosity we were able to raise an additional \$2657.32 to support our programs. Thanks also to the many volunteers and local businesses that helped make this event a great success.

Citizens Bank

We would like to thank Jeannie Johnson and all the employees of Citizen's Bank who participated in and organized a dunk tank fundraiser as part of employee appreciation week. We would especially like to thank John Quinn for taking a dunk for such a great cause. We are also grateful for the many toys which the employees donated that we will use for our social skills groups and summer camp.

Kudos to all those Kohl Store employees who participated in our 6th Annual Walk and Family Fun Day due to your commitment to our organization, we received a donation from The Kohl's Cares for

Kids Foundation.

Thanks to Wal-Mart Store in Swansea, especially Debbie Ganem who recently awarded the Autism Project of RI a \$1000.00 grant to help support our programs.



A Call To Artists to participate in a show titled:

'The Art Spectrum'

2 Opening Galas to be held:

Friday, September 12, 2008 (a fundraiser for The Autism Project of Rhode Island.)

& Thursday, September 18th (a free Gala open to the public) both at 5:30PM at TSETSE Gallery RI
101 Orange St., Providence RI 02903* 401.453.3337

TSETSE Gallery RI is inviting artists to submit applications to be included in an art exhibit in collaboration with the Autism Project of Rhode Island. This exhibit is an exciting opportunity for individual artists to display works expressing feelings, thoughts, life views and experiences related to Autism and Asperger's. The mission of "The Art Spectrum" is to build through art, community awareness regarding the needs of individuals with Autism and Asperger's while affording opportunities to gain cultural and educational awareness, along with community unity.

Media : Visual, Photography, Poetry, Pottery, Installations, etc.

Deadline: All entry request forms must be received no later than August 29th. Responses will be sent back to applicants no later than September 3rd via telephone or e-mail.

To Register: If you are interested in participating, artist will provide postage in advance for the return of any art submissions. There is no fee to participate, although 'individual artists not effected by autism or aspergers' will forward a 30% min. contribution to the Gallery for any sales resulting from this exhibit. This

contribution will help with the costs associated with the Gallery in sponsoring art programs for children with individual needs. **Contact:** Therese Lavallee, Director, TSETSE Gallery RI at:

tsetse@tsetsegallery.org or 401.453.3337

This exhibit is open to the public from September 12th through September 27, 2008.

School News

On June 9th, almost 300 students at William Winsor School in Smithfield met at Deerfield Park to walk for The Autism Project of RI. It was 90 degrees, but all the kids cheerfully walked (and later cooled off under the sprinkler) to raise money for our organization. They loved the Rhody Ram, the PC Friar, the Paw Sox mascot and of course the beanie babies from the Doug Flutie Foundation. Amazing things can happen when a community comes together. We would like to thank the school staff, the members of the William Winsor PTO, volunteers, guests and especially the walkers.

Upcoming Events

Recycle your unwanted cell phone

The Airtime Sprint Store in the Warwick Mall is accepting unwanted cell phones, batteries and chargers through the month of July and will donate all proceeds to the Autism Project. If you have unwanted cell phones, please stop by the Airtime store to make a donation for a great cause.

July 27, 2008

3rd Annual Puzzle Ride for Autism

Our 3rd annual puzzle ride for Autism will be held Sunday July 27, 2008 at:

Frances Farm – 151 County St., Rehoboth, MA --
(Rain or Shine)

Registration begins at 10:30am -- Ride Starts at 12:30pm

(Helmets Required) Donation of \$20 per person (\$15 passengers) Riders receive a Free T-Shirt. All are welcome - You don't need a bike to attend! If you are not riding, please arrive at 1:30. There will be Live

music, & buffet following the Ride as well as door prizes a 50/50 raffle and a mileage pool.

Tickets can be purchased in advance at the following locations:

Frerichs Farm	Nicole's Hair Design
401-245-8245	508-678-6300

Tickets can also be purchased at the event.

Any questions, please contact Pat Guida Salisbury 401-578-0039 or

Salute to Summer at the Newport Naval Station

Sunday, August 24th

Come join the Autism Project of RI and see Hewy Lewis and the News perform a free outdoor concert at Naval Station Newport on Aug. 24, 2008, during an open-base event ending with a fireworks display shot from a barge in Narragansett Bay. "Salute to Summer," an annual tradition, features food, music and fireworks, will be held at Dewey Field. Gates will open at 5 p.m. Spectators must provide their own lawn seating, either blankets or chairs. Rental chairs will be available for \$1 each. No coolers or picnic baskets are allowed on the base but plenty of concession stands selling clam chowder, hamburgers, hot dogs and other food will be available. Beer and wine also will be sold, along with water and soft drinks. Partial proceeds benefit the Autism Project of RI.

mary@theautismproject.org

Sept 6 & 7

Frerichs Farm Pumpkin Palooza

43 Kinnicut Avenue, Warren, RI

*Farm Fun Day for Autism on Saturday, Sept. 6th

All proceeds from this day go to the Autism Project. Have fun exploring the farm... visit the Western Town, Scarecrow Factory, Corn and Hay mazes and take a magical Pumpkin Coach Ride

Call (401) 245-8245 for more information

Sept 21

CVS Downtown 5K

Volunteers needed to collect chips at the end of the race-All volunteers receive a race t-shirt.

For More information please contact mary@theautismproject.org

October 15

3rd Annual Catwalk to Campground Fashion Show

Providence Marriott, Providence, RI

Join us for an exciting evening with dinner and Fashion Show

For more information call Mary at (401) 785-2666

In Memory of:

During a time of personal loss, families often find comfort in reaching out to help others in need through memorial donations.

The Autism Project gratefully acknowledges the donations we received on behalf of the family of Joan Bentley:

Laura Pouliot
Raymond O'Loughlin
Stephen & Debra Foisy
Cheryl Roy
John & Dorothy Whatmough

Last Minute Camp Details

We are putting the final touches on camp and want to remind parents of important information. We look forward to hosting close to 100 campers at camp this year.

✦ Camp will be at the Champlin Scout Reservation, Scituate Avenue, Cranston.

✦ Family Orientation for campers and their families will be on August 3, 2008 from 1:00 to 2:00 pm. You will have the opportunity to meet staff and tour the camp.

✦ Camp hours are:

- o Day Camp: 9:00 to 1:30pm (Yellow and Fuscia Groups ONLY)
- o Extended Day Camp: 9:00 to 2:30pm (Purple, Green and Blue Groups)
- o Camp is a PEANUT FREE ZONE. We have many campers allergic to peanuts and nuts so we cannot allow any peanut butter or products containing nuts at camp. Please check your child's lunch and snacks.



Lessons in Learning

Summer vacation is a time to slow down, ditch the hectic school year schedule and relax. This is true for people with autism too, but many of the supports and strategies used for success in the classroom need to be continued at home and out in the community to help people with autism to actively participate in family activities.

An important skill to learn and one that can be supported is waiting. Often the use of a WAIT card will help the child understand the expectation and what's happening. This tool needs to be taught to the child, but once the connection is made, the simple card is very powerful.

WAIT cards are easy to make. Any size can be used and you can type the word and print it on paper and then laminate it. Put pictures of a high interest on the back of your child's wait cards to provide something to do while waiting. The alphabet and numbers are also a high favorite. Keep them in a wallet or visor in the car for easy access.

Here are some steps to introduce the WAIT card:

Teaching a child to wait is a valuable skill. Children must wait their turn in games, conversations, when mom is on the phone, at the grocery store and in many other daily routines.

Visual Supports are more effective if an educator teaches the tool in a successful, errorless environment.

Teaching the "Wait Card"

1. Begin when the student is waiting for a non-preferred item or event.
2. Show the "Wait Card" and label the action. (i.e. "waiting, you are waiting.")
3. After a brief moment, while the student is still engaged in the act of waiting, remove the wait card and praise (i.e. "great job waiting, waiting is all done.")
4. Slowly, you will be able to extend the "waiting time." Bear in mind, it is important to maintain an errorless, positive learning environment.

Any time you see the student naturally waiting successfully, label the action.

When praising the student for their success, remember to react in a way that is reinforcing to that student. Some students may be reinforced with verbal praise while for others it may be a picture or a gesture.

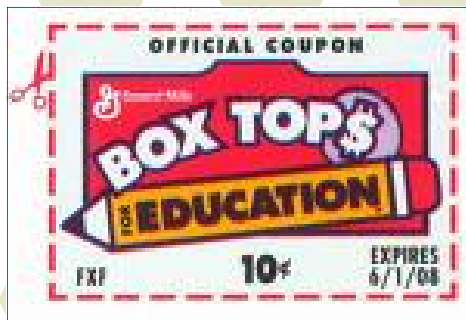
Remember, simply giving the student the "Wait Card" is not effective. The student must be allowed many opportunities to use the wait card.



Help support the Autism Project

SAVE your

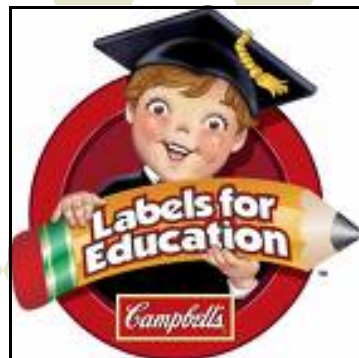
Shaw's Receipts,



Box Tops and

Campbell's Soup Labels.

Send us your receipts,
boxtops and labels and
the companies will donate
a percentage to us.





3rd annual
Shop for a Cause
at
Macy's

\$5.00 per person

children under 12 are admitted for free

For tickets and details call the

Autism Project of RI

401-785-2666



Saturday
September 20, 2008
10 am to 10 pm

Please join us for an evening of private shopping at Macy's
and raise funds for The Autism Project of RI.

**100% of the ticket price will go directly to The Autism Project of RI to support
programming specifically designed for children with autism spectrum disorders**

Don't forget to register to win the many raffle prizes.