

The Center Expands Hours and Services

This is my first newsletter article since becoming the Director of the Autism Center. Even though I have worked here for the past eight years, I am pleased and honored to have this opportunity to work with you in a new capacity.

First, I would like to announce that the Center staff has expanded to allow us to develop new services for families. We have been very fortunate to recruit Mary Oliva and Kris Gregoire as Case Managers. (Their profiles can be found on pages 2 and 4). In the past, families have had to travel to the Center to find information and assistance. Now these Case Managers will be able to bring that same information to families' homes. Given that the Center serves 63 communities, we have decided to split this larger area in half . Mary will cover the South Valley and Southern half of Worcester; Kris will cover North Central and the Northern part of Worcester. They will provide information and referral to state and community resources as well as connect families to the Center's services.

We have also increased the hours that the Center is open by increasing the hours of our administrative assistant, Jayne Paszko, who came on as part time staff last Fall. The Center is now open 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, with extended hours on Wednesdays when the Center is open until 6:00 PM . Jane has a brother with autism and has a special interest in sibling issues. (see page 9)

We are now recruiting to fill my former position as the Director of Family Activities. Since we want to increase the number of activities offered in all our areas, we have decided to hire two part time staff (15 hours each) as the most efficient way to cover the large geography. This will allow us to move even more activities out of the Center and closer to where families live. If you know of anyone you think may be interested in the position, please have them contact me at sloring@hmea.org. Some evening and weekend hours will be required of these highly organized staff!

It is such a pleasure to be able to announce an expansion of the services we can offer to families. This has come about through your advocacy to the Legislature and state agencies who responded by creating the new Autism Division at the Department of Mental Retardation. We continue to need your advocacy efforts as the proposed budget for the Division is to level-fund it for next fiscal year. Another concern is the funding available for those turning 22 and entering the adult service system. These children will receive less funding than those in past years unless you can convince your Legislator about this inequity.

Please consider joining us at the State House on April 11 to celebrate the Eighth Annual Autism Awareness Day. We will visit Legislators to inform them of the needs and priorities of the autism community and ask for their support. If you cannot travel to Boston, visit the Center's website and look for the link that provides the legislative contact information, and write or call your Legislator. Remember that they represent you and want to know your story. Consider joining AFAM www.afamaction.org. We need to make our voices heard in order to help one another.

The Center will host its Sixth Annual Walk for Autism Awareness at Quinsigamond Community College on April 30. Flippo the Clown will entertain children as part of the festivities. This is the major fundraiser for the Center and we use the funds to support Family Activities and the Family Camps, to subsidize the cost of the annual conference, and to acquire new materials for our Library. More information is available on our website.

Included in this newsletter is a Family Survey which I urge you to complete and return to the Center. We want to make sure that our services are based on your needs and interest, and we need to hear from you to do this. Please let us know what we should change and how we can continue to improve. The survey is also on our website if you would prefer to give your feedback electronically.

Please join us as we work together to strengthen our families and our communities. I ask you all to join the effort- the rewards are great.

Donations

Thank you to the following for their generous gifts:

**Catherine & Francis Joyce
Michael & Maryann Johnson**

**In Memory of
Edward Rafferty**

- Kathy & George Valeri*
- Edwin & Mary Atella*
- John & Barbara Jacques*
- Arlene & Joe Bigos*
- Nick & Rose Mastromatteo*
- Arthur Rafferty*
- Mr & Mrs. Michael Rafferty*
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- Scott and Patricia Martin*
- Steve and Sue Golebiowski*
- Rose Mary and Mike Pace*
- Paul and Yolande Beriau*
- Sarah Erricola*
- Margaret Patton*

**In Memory of
Barbara Dubrule
& Anne Duncanson**

Rosemarie Parker

**UNITED WAY
CONTRIBUTORS**

**Arben Tupja
Anna Rogers**

To designate the Center as the recipient of your United Way contribution use the Code UN00365 and name Autism Resource Center

Introducing Kristen Gregoire

My name is Kris Gregoire. I am the new Case Manager for the North Central area, here at the Autism Resource Center. I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself to you. I am a long-time resident of Worcester and there are six of us in our very unique family.

When your children are young your hope is that they will be happy and healthy and that their dreams will all be within their reach. You want life to be kind to them. You hope that their struggles will be small and nothing will be too difficult to overcome.

Then life happens. You find one day that the struggles have become very difficult. You find sadness where there should be happiness.

Two of my children struggle with learning disabilities. There have been countless hours of testing, IEP meetings, teacher conferences. Many hours of frustration. I have learned that not everything is easily attainable.

Most importantly I have learned that educating myself has been my biggest asset .

Many years have passed since those first days. I have watched my kids grow into wonderful people. They have learned to overcome many of their disabilities through hard work and determination. Everyday I am amazed at their abilities to prevail over the obstacles life chose for them.

I believe it is because of them I ended up at the Gates Lane Autism Program, in Worcester eight years ago. This public school program serves children with autism spectrum disorders. I felt I had something to offer to the program. I have been at Gates Lane as an ABA therapist ever since . I have had extensive ABA training. I also have experience working with children with autism in both the school inclusion setting and the home setting. I have had many opportunities over the years to interact with both children with autism and their families. I am also a Crisis Prevention Intervention trainer for HMEA. I am very excited to be here at the Autism Resource Center. I look forward to assisting you in whatever I can to make life a little easier. I am aware of how overwhelming navigating the maze of paperwork and dealing with school and home issues can be for families. I hope to be meeting with you all soon.



New Faces at The Autism Resource Center
(l- r)
Mary Oliva,
Jayne Paszko,
Kris Gregoire



Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts
and
The Statewide Autism Coalition
Invite you to attend
Autism Spectrum Awareness Day
Tuesday, April 11, 2006
9:30 - 11:00 AM
Grand Staircase Hall
The State House
Boston, Massachusetts

9:30 Registration and Refreshments
10:00 Guest Speaker: Author Susan Senator

Awards Presentation
Norfolk District Attorney William Keating
and the A.L.E.C. Program
Representative Robert A. DeLeo
Chairman of House Ways and Means
Senator Therese Murray
Chairwoman of Senate Ways and Means

11:00 Visits to legislators

If you would like a photograph of your child to be included in our photo display of children and adults with autism, please bring one that we can keep.

Save The Dates
Two Day Summer Institute on Autism
For Educators
July 10 - 11th, 2006
Day 1
Russ Maguire PhD
Functional Behavioral Assessments
Day 2
HMEA Staff
Functional Learning in the Classroom
8 :30 AM - 3:30 PM
Watch for Brochure in Mail

New On The Shelves

The Hidden Curriculum by Brenda Smith Myles (DVD)

Difficult Moments for Children and Youth with ASD

Brenda Smith Myles (DVD)

Social Skills Training for Children & Adolescents with Asperger Syndrome by Jed Baker PhD.

SOS Social Skills Training in Our Schools by Michelle Dunn

Power Cards - by Elisa Gagnon

The Incredible 5 Point Scale - Assisting students with ASD in Understanding Social Interactions and Controlling Their Emotional Responses by Kari Dunn Burton & Mitzi Curtis

My Best Friend Will by Jamie Lowell

Realizing the College Dream with Autism or AS A Parents Guide to Student Success by Ann Palmer

Asperger Syndrome & the Elementary School Experience by Susan Thompson Moore

First Responders - Parent & Teacher Education Resource By Jacqueline Sullivan

Coulter Video's (DVD'S)

Intricate Minds - Understanding Elementary School Classmates with Asperger Syndrome

Intricate Minds II - Understanding Elementary School Classmates with Asperger Syndrome

Intricate Minds III - Understanding Elementary School Classmates with Asperger Syndrome

Manners of the Real World - Basic Social Skills

Health & Medical Issues in Autism

DVD'S of November 19, 2005 Conference

Presentations by: Julie Przybyszewski RN,MA, LMHC, Pam Ferro RN, Martha Hebert MD Ph.D., Ilene Bucholz RN, Jayne Barese RN, Carol Wester MSN, APRN, BC

Introducing Mary Oliva

I came to the Autism Resource Center by choice, I did not come to autism that way. No parent does. However, I have learned that the choices we make in life are generally made for a reason. When I entered the world of autism, I didn't know which end was up. I searched endlessly for the "right" doctors, the "right" therapies, the "right" conferences etc. and through my search I made many choices. Seven years ago, when my son received the diagnoses of PDD-NOS I felt like a sentenced was put upon our family. I climbed into bed and pulled the covers over my head and cried myself to sleep, while my husband plowed through the internet, again, searching. When I awoke, together we made a decision that we were going to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps and do whatever was necessary to help our son. With his support and the

support from SO many others, I attended conferences and traveled up and down the highways. While sitting in the waiting room at the Ladders Clinic for 3 years, (2 hours a week) I met and spoke to many families such as mine and learned from everyone I met. This helped me choose to take the parent advocacy class offered at the Federation for Children with Special Needs. Then I chose to become an Educational Surrogate Parent, helping children in DSS's care oversee their education plans. Later when I was approached by our Pupil Personnel Director to "head up" our town's PAC - SPEAC, (Special Education Advisory Council). I said sure! I've been Co-Chair for the last 5 years, I now see the choices I have made have only enriched my life.

I hope that in my new role as Case Manager for the South Valley area, I will help the families in my care

to make educated and well informed choices for their son or daughter. Choices to help guide them through the Mass Health maze, choices to help foster a positive approach to team meetings, choices to make their life a little easier when trying to find the "right" whatever, and choices to help lessen the stresses associated with a diagnosis of autism. I look forward to meeting you as I call upon your area so that together we can make good choices!

"I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it. And so it is with you . . . we are in charge of our attitudes."

--Charles Swindoll

Notes From The Chair—Michelle Whitehead

Spring has finally arrived! How befitting a season to welcome new staff, old staff to new positions and growth to our beloved Center. The Center has been at top speed expanding services and developing conferences, summer camp, filling new case manager positions and let's not forget April Autism Awareness Month, and the Annual Walk for Autism Awareness.

Sam has finally a diagnosis after a year and a half of searching. We will be traveling in a new direction with this one. Isabelle, our neuro-typical child, brings different challenges. She has become smarter and more beautiful than we ever imagined. As for our Joshua, we're excited about his social growth! He is participating in Boy Scouts this year and has made a friend or two. He is already planning on learning how to ride a two-wheeler. He will be participating in Holden's TopSoccer program and learning about team work and having fun. School, continues to be a struggle, but have found that a great teacher can make all the difference.

Yes, change has come with the March winds and has taken root in our family, at the Center and DMR. We are all in a positive growth surge that can only bring with it the bright beautiful flowers of summer.

Michelle



HMEA Family Survey 2006 Family Satisfaction Survey

Program: Autism Resource Center of Central MA

The Autism Resource Center offers a variety of supports to families and professionals. Please let us know which of the services you have used and what services you would like us to provide in the future:

I have used the following:	Yes		No	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Informational and Referral Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> The Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Family-to-family networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual conference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational seminars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Autism 101 Series	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sib shops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> June Camp	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> August Camp	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Support Groups - Autism/Aspergers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mothers Brunch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mothers Retreat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Fun Activities/ Holiday Parties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Are there enough activities appropriate for your child: Yes No


2. What other activities would you like to see for your family? _____

3. What else would you like us to know? _____

Optional Information: Family Name: _____

Thank you for completing the survey!

When completed, cut this page and fold in thirds to form a mailing envelope, tape & mail



Autism Resource Center of
Central Massachusetts
360 West Boylston Street
Suite 204
West Boylston, Ma. 01583

Place
Stamp
Here

ANNUAL HOME SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY AWARDS

The goal of the Center is to promote the well being of people with autism at home, at school, and in the community. We do this through a variety of ways, but one of the most enjoyable is through the Annual Recognition Dinner which will be held this year on May 17th at Holy Cross.

If there is someone who has made a significant contribution to the success of your child in any of these areas? Why not tell them so by having them honored at the Dinner? The dinner is a lovely affair in an elegant setting where families and nominees gather to listen to inspiring stories and show their appreciation for one another. It is one of the most memorable events of the year and one we look forward to with anticipation. Not only do the awards provide great personal satisfaction but they also reinforce the values and relationships within our community. what a wonderful way to show your appreciation! Please take the time to thank someone who has made a positive difference in your life. Complete a nomination form and the Center will do the rest. All nominees will receive a certificate from the Center, while the winners in each category will be invited to the dinner.

CATEGORIES : Early Intervention (0-3) Preschool , Kindergarten (3-7), Elementary School (7-11), Middle School & Junior High (12-15) High School (15-22) Sports & Recreation, Service Organizations, Religious Organizations, Extended Family, Neighbors & Friends.

Your Name & Address _____

Name of Nominee: _____profession :

Address: _____ Category:

Tell us in 150 words or less why you feel this person deserves recognition and attach to this form Mail to the Autism Resource



Becoming Bullet Proof Parents by Dan Coulter

Ever been frustrated or embarrassed by something one of your kids said or did in public? The stares of strangers can feel like bullets. If your child has an Autism Spectrum Disorder, you may sometimes feel like you've been machine-gunned.

Wouldn't it be great to have a way to deal with these situations that made you bulletproof?

I found something that works sort of like a protective shield -- and it's basically a matter of perspective.

Most of us were raised to care a lot about what other people think. That's generally a good thing. It helps us be aware of social rules and interact politely with other people. But when our kids do something embarrassing in public, feeling those painful stares can sometimes cause us to get our priorities mixed up.

Maybe your son throws tantrums. Maybe your daughter makes inappropriate remarks in a loud voice. When my son, who has Asperger Syndrome, was little, he had a tendency to pick up and examine anything that caught his interest. This was a problem, particularly in stores.

People react in a lot of ways to their kids "misbehaving" in public. Too often, I've seen parents act embarrassed and say things to their kids that they might regret later. Most of us don't completely lose it, but I know there were times when my son was little that I was more impatient with him

in public than I should have been.

Now for the perspective part. At the moment our kids do something in public that we wish they hadn't, we're socially conditioned to react by focusing what other people think. But how important is that compared to what our kids need at that moment? Do you have a picture of anyone in the mall crowd on your dresser at home? Have you held anyone in the supermarket line in your arms and rocked him to sleep? Is anyone in sight more important to you than your child?

When you look at things from that perspective, it's easier to dismiss what other people think and focus on your child. First off, why did he do what he did? Many kids with ASDs are impulsive. Something in their brain triggers a behavior that's hard for them to control. What if your son is not defying you? What if he's responding to a stimulus that may take a lot of practice to overcome? In my son's case, it helped to remind him before we went out that he needed to ask and get permission before he picked things up to check them out. We'd remind him again just before we went into a store. Even so, it took quite a while for him to gain control of that behavior.

Knowing that our kids are prone to certain behaviors helps us mentally prepare to stop what we're doing and deal calmly with the situation. There's a saying in the retail business, "Customers are not an interruption of our work, they are the reason for it." I think the same thing applies to parents and kids. Our job of parenting doesn't stop when we're

busy and stressed and in a supermarket -- and kids aren't reduced to "interruptions."

If your daughter grabs a piece of candy from a shelf and screams when you try and take it from her, the best thing for her may be for you to stop shopping for a moment, kneel down and patiently but firmly explain why she has to put it back. At that moment, being bulletproof to what others might think of her outburst protects you both.

We don't flip a switch to teach our kids and then flip it off. We're teaching them with every interaction we have. If I think of every exchange with my son as one he may remember the rest of his life, will I act differently?

The twist to this is that stopping to deal compassionately and fairly with your child will probably make people who witness his behavior appreciate your parenting skills. And if they don't understand, that's their loss.

Do we care what other people think? Sure. But never as much as we care about our kids.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Dan Coulter is the producer of the video: "ASPERGER SYNDROME DAD: How To Become An Even Better Father To Your Child With AS," and other special needs videos. You can read more articles on his website at: www.coultervideo.com

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Calendar

Please call 508 – 595-9101 to register for all events, unless otherwise specified all events take place at The Autism Resource Center

APRIL

April 5, 2006

Asperger Support Group
Burncoat High School
Worcester MA
5– 8:00 PM

Autism 101

Autism Spectrum Overview
Presented by Sue Loring
Center of Hope
1 North Street ,Southbridge , MA
7-9 PM

April 11, 2006

Autism Awareness Day
The State House
Nurses Hall
9 :30 AM– 12 Noon
CENTER CLOSED

April 12, 2006

Autism 101
Accessing Supports
Cheri Hardiman—HMEA IFFS
Center of Hope
1 North Street ,Southbridge , MA
7-9 PM

April 14, 2006

Family Fun at Nature's Classroom
73 Pumpkin Lane, Charlton Ma
(Suggested Donation \$5.00/family)
10 AM– 2 PM Space limited

April 17, 2006, 2006

Family Fun at Camp Green Eyrie
69 Still River Road, Harvard MA
10– 2 PM
Catch the Science Bug
—Vernal Pools Program
(Suggested Donation \$5.00/family)

April 18, 2006

Family Fun at The Ecotarium
Harrington Way Worcester Ma
10—2 PM
Admission, Train Ride, pack a picnic
(Suggested Donation \$5.00/family)

April 19, 2006

Swim Pizza & Play

Whitins Community Center
9:30 AM– 1:30 PM
(Suggested Donation \$5.00/family)
Space limited

April 20, 2006

Friends & Family Movie –10 AM
West Boylston Cinema
Route 12 West Boylston
(Suggested Donation \$500/family)

April 21, 2006

Family Fun Day at Cogshall Park
Puppets Picnic & Fun
Electric Avenue, Fitchburg Ma
10AM—2 PM
(Suggested Donation \$500/family)

April 26, 2006

What Is ABA ?
Presented By Jan Bolton M.Ed.
Center of Hope
1 North Street
Southbridge , MA
7-9 PM

April 27, 2006

Autism Support Group
9:30 AM—11:30AM
HMEA offices Conf Room B
101 Constitution Blvd
Franklin, MA

April 28, 2006

Mother's Network Brunch
10—12 Noon

Sunday April 30, 2006

Sixth Annual Community Walk
for Autism Awareness
Quinsigamond Community College
Track
12:30 PM– 3 PM

MAY

May 3, 2006

Autism 101
Let's Get Organized
Barbara Donati– Family Ties
Center of Hope

1 North Street
Southbridge , MA
7-9 PM

Asperger Support Group
Burncoat High School
Worcester MA
6 PM– 8:45 PM

May 10, 2006

Autism 101
Overview of DAN! & Diets
Sue Loring
Center of Hope
1 North Street
Southbridge , MA
7-9 PM

May 11, 2006

Autism Support Group
Sturbridge Federated Church
8 Maple Street
Sturbridge MA
10 AM - 12N

Financial Planning for
Special Needs

Jill McPhee—Met Life
HMEA Offices Conf Room B
101 Constitution Blvd Franklin MA
7-9 PM

May 17, 2006

Annual Recognitions Dinner
Holy Cross
7 PM—10 PM
(Suggested Donation \$5.00/ person)

May 18, 2006

“First Responders”
For Parents & Teachers on
Emergency Situations & Autism
Presented by Jacquelyn Sullivan
Zion Lutheran Church
70 Main Street
Oxford, MA 7 –9 PM
(\$2.50 for materials)

May 23, 2006

Autism Support Group
9:30 AM—11:30AM

Please call 508 – 595-9101 to register for all events, unless otherwise specified all events take place at The Autism Resource Center

HMEA Offices Conf Room B
101 Constitution Blvd Franklin
MA

May 24, 2006

Autism 101

Basic Rights Workshop

Mary Loughlin

**Federation for Children with
Special Needs**

Center of Hope

1 North Street, Southbridge, MA
7-9 PM

May 25, 2006

“First Responders”

For Parents & Teachers on

Emergency Situations & Autism

Presented by Jacquelyn Sullivan

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

1200 John Fitch Highway

Fitchburg, MA

7 –9 PM

May 26, 2006

Mother’s Network Brunch

10—12 Noon

JUNE

June 3, 2006– June 4, 2006

Mother’s Retreat

Colonial Hotel

Betty Spring Road

Gardner, MA Check in at 3PM

Cost : \$35.00—includes Room (double occupancy) Dinner & Breakfast

June 7, 2006

Asperger Support Group

Burncoat High School

Worcester MA

6 PM– 8:45 PM

June 14, 2006

Autism Support Group

“First Responders”

For Parents & Teachers on

Emergency Situations & Autism

Presented by Jacquelyn Sullivan

7-9 PM

June 26—30 2006

Family Fun Days

Camp Bement

Charlton MA

9 AM - 4 PM M-F

Thursday June 29

Cookout 4– 8PM

Optional Overnight

**Watch your mail for
Camp Brochure**

Introducing Jayne Paszko

My name is Jayne Paszko, from Lancaster and I am the secretary at the Autism Resource Center. You probably hear my voice when you call the center. The last name may sound familiar. My mother, Ann, worked here for three years. My father, Hank, plays in the golf tournaments. My brother, Paul also comes to the center once a week to clean. We’re a very involved family.

I started working part time at the center back in November and did the videography for the “Health and Medical Issues in Autism” conference. As of the beginning of February my schedule was increased to full time to cover the office and become more involved with the center. I maintain the resource library, register attendees for activities, conferences and other programs, assist with the newsletter, mail information to

new parents, and basically help out Sue with whatever she needs.

Growing up with an autistic brother gives me an interesting view on life. I’ve been somehow involved with autism for as long as I can remember. I have worked at the Dr. Franklin Perkins School in Lancaster, The Worcester Area ARC, a group home for children with autism in Novato California and other summer day programs throughout the years. Every year I have participated in the Autism Walk in April. I have also been involved with many camps, done respite care and befriended a man named Jerry, whom I visit and check up on in Southbridge and is very close to my heart.

I enjoy spending time with my wonderful brother Paul, who is 3 years younger than me. We have just begun

doing FC together and I hope that we can both grow from this and learn to communicate with each other in a way that we have never done in the past. Paul and I enjoy cruising around town, listening to music, dancing together, laughing, doing our own secret handshake and, of course, bowling. My view on life would be a lot different if Paul was not in it and I am very grateful for his presence.

My specialty in college was media production, and I have established myself very well in this field, but I always end up coming back to the world of autism spectrum disorders. So far it has been a great learning experience working at the center and getting to know everyone. Please feel free to stop in and say hello and introduce yourself. I look forward to meeting you all.



A Program of HMEA Inc.

360 West Boylston Street
Suite 204
West Boylston, MA 01583

Phone: 508-595-9101

Fax: 508 -852-8410

Email: autism@HMEA.org

Sue Loring - Director

Jayne Paszko—Administrative Assistant

Julia Wild— Clerk

Mary Oliva , Kris Gregoire, Case Managers

Hours:

Mon-Tues-Wed -Thurs -Fri 9AM—4:30 PM

Wednesdays 9 AM - 6 PM

(9 PM if group scheduled)

Families Working Together



The Resource CONNECTION is a quarterly publication of The Autism Resource Center of Central Massachusetts

The Autism Resource Center does not endorse any treatments, programs or products. Articles, announcements and resources are provided for information purposes only.

Social Skills Groups Update

We are pleased to announce that through funding by the Division of Autism four programs will be offering social skills groups for youths ages 10 - 13 and 14 -17 with Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism. Parents interested in having their children participate should contact the programs listed directly.

Peter Pan Center

280 Ayer Road, Harvard Ma
978 -772 - 1255

Starting Monday April 24, 2006
8 weeks

3:45 - 5 PM 10 - 13 year olds

5 - 6:15 PM 14 - 17 year olds

Groups will use Ross Greene's Explosive Child collaborative problem solving approach with social

skills practice in a natural & relaxed setting as well as structured activities.

Pediatric Behavioral Health

148 Worcester Street , W. Boylston MA
508 835-1735

Starting Tuesday April 18

8 weeks

5 - 6:15 Pm 14-17 year olds

Group will utilize a group therapy model with specific focus on youth empowerment and self esteem . Curriculum and specific social skills to be addressed will be determined by participants and facilitators. The Social Skills Success Workbook for Teens will be used .

Medway PAC was awarded funding for their " Teen Hang Out Nights", as well as several scholarships to the Children's Friendship Network in Northborough.

Family Steering Committee

Co Chairs

Michelle Whitehead (Worcester)
Rebecca Blatz (Lunenburg)

Treasurer

Erica Ploof (Sterling)

Janet Amorello (Worcester)

Stacey Lavelly (Shrewsbury) AFAM

Kathy Hamelin (Fitchburg)

Brenda Waleski (Sturbridge)

Bridget Zietkowski (Brimfield)

Douglas McCallum

DMR Regional Children's and Family Services Director

Susan Darnell- (Franklin)

HMEA - VP Children's Services and Family Supports