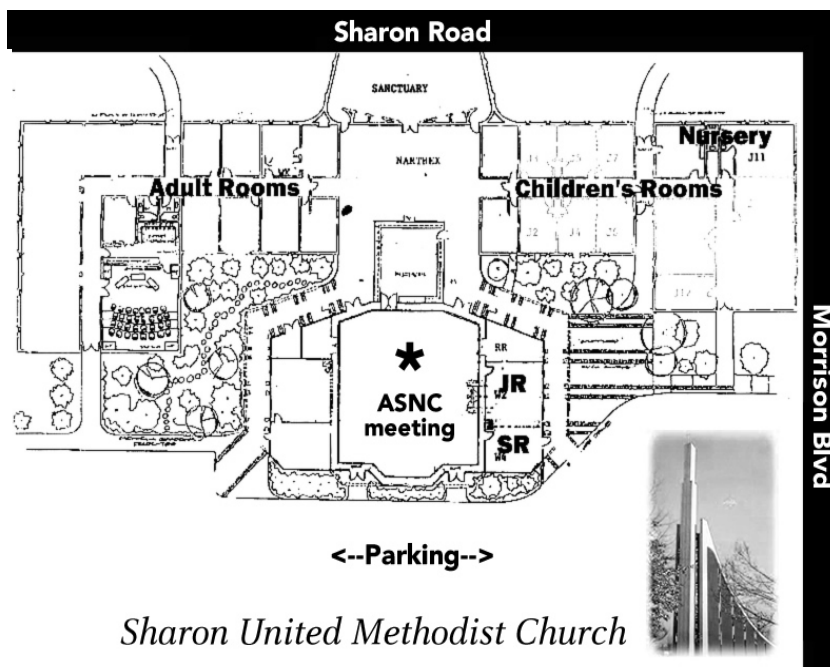


Our Final Meeting - June 1st!

Come Join the Bingo Party!

We are ordering pizza, so please **RSVP if you are coming**. Contact **Kathy Snyder by May 30th** 704-341-0199 or kos101@earthlink.net . Doors open at 7 pm with pizza and drinks! **Announcements begin at 7:15. Bingo begins at 7:25!**

Need Childcare at the Meeting?
Call Kathy Snyder by May 30th 704-341-0199 or kos101@earthlink.net



Sharon United Methodist Church

Remember, our meeting room has been changed to the Multipurpose Room -middle of the building on the parking lot side. Enter the door by the portico.

Meeting Location: Sharon United Methodist Church-4411 Sharon at Morrison Blvd, Charlotte. (Across from South Park Mall – Cheesecake Factory side) Use Morrison Blvd. Entrance to park around back. Our room near the middle of the building.

President's Note:

It is here. We have made it through another year. Things have happened: our kids have taken two steps forward and one step back- that frustrating thing that all kids do. As group, we have done that too. You don't learn to ride a bike without skinning your knees at least once, but you get back on for the joy and freedom of riding overtakes the fear of failure. We hope you have found benefit in our efforts to ride this group in new directions. The longer we do it, the easier it will get and the more ground we can cover.

With the changes that have occurred at federal levels, it is obvious that our need to advocate for our autistic community is far from over. Although our society has become more aware of what autism is, too many people don't get it when it comes to the ability of our children to conform and direct their lives in a successful manner without support. The unfortunate thing is that many of those people are in charge of making laws or directing programs that provide for the needs of our family members. At the state level, funding has been increased to beef up the new programs to replace CBS programs. In looking over the information from the state, an increase in spending for substance abuse is earmarked, but nothing is mentioned about services for developmental disabilities- which is where autism currently falls. Treating those with substance abuse problems is important; however, we can't turn our back to those with autism who will need lifelong support of special employment, group home living arrangements, or just extra support within their family in order to remain at home. These necessities are not cheap; few families have the income to secure services without outside help. This is an area where our board must grow; this is an area where we all must pull together and let our voices be heard, regardless of the level of our own family member's autism.

Within our community many good things have happened for school-aged children. This summer, our kids can attend a couple of local YMCA day camps with typical kids for a month's time- between the two. For many families, these options are a wonderful slice of normal that everyone else gets to enjoy. It is nice to see the world open up for us. For those who can not afford this slice of normal life, the YMCA has scholarships, as does the Parker Autism Foundation, which sponsored several children to attend camp. I hope you are able to enjoy these offerings, as well as all the other places in our area that are "autism friendly". So go have a wonderful summer with your unique and special children. Maybe we will see you at the fish fountain on the Green!

Nancy Nestor, ASNC-MCC President

June Events

June 1st: ASNC Support Meeting.

We will play Autism Buzzword Bingo.

June 1st: Deadline for TEACCH Summer Classroom Training Registration

Call Jean Williams at 704-563-4103 or e-mail jeanw@med.unc.edu

June 4th Shine: Church for people with ASD

Huntersville United Methodist 3:30 – 3:50 pm contact:
Rev. Monica Humpal at 704-875-1156
monica@huntersvilleumc.org.

June 17th Carolinas Computer Access Center of the (CCAC) Open Lab. Free and open to the entire family. Registration required by June 2nd. Call 704-342-3004.

June 19th – 30th: CCAC Herzog System Typing Keyboarding Classes- For students ages 9 and up. Fee -\$100 for all 9 sessions. Students have to be able to attend one hour classes 9 week days in succession. *Registrations accepted by June 2. Please call 704-342-3004 with questions and to register.*

June 20th STAR Support Group

7:00 PM. Longhorn Steakhouse, Pineville
Contact: pammccarthy@carolina.rr.com ~ 704-849-7991

June 23 & 24, Great Plains Labs Outreach Clinic

For Adults and Children with Autism, PDD,
AD(H)D, Allergies, Behavior Disorders.
Carolina Family Healthcare
1932 Weddington Road
Weddington, NC 28104
(Southeast Charlotte)

June 26th-30th : TEACCH Summer Institute for Educational Professionals, Myer's Park High School, Contact Jean Williams for application at 704-563-4103 or jeanw@med.unc.edu

Coffee Time: See you in September

July Events

July 2nd Shine: Church for people with ASD
Huntersville United Methodist 3:30 – 3:50 pm
contact: Rev. Monica Humpal at 704-875-1156
monica@huntersvilleumc.org.

July 15th: Carolinas Computer Access Center of the (CCAC) Open Lab. Free and open to the entire family. Registration required. Call 704-342-3004.

July 10-14th, July 17-21st, July 24-28th: TEACCH Summer Institute for Educational Professionals, Myer's Park High School, Contact Jean Williams for application at 704-563-4103 or jeanw@med.unc.edu

STAR Support Group Supper- dates TBA 7:00
Outback Steakhouse –Pineville contact Pam
McCarthy : pammccarthy@carolina.rr.com ~
call 704-849-7991

August Events

August 7-18th: CCAC Herzog System Typing Keyboarding Classes- For students ages 9 and up. Fee -\$100 for all 9 sessions. Students have to be able to attend one hour classes 9 week days in succession. *Registrations accepted by June 2. Please call 704-342-3004 with questions and to register.*

August 12th: Carolinas Computer Access Center of the (CCAC) Open Lab. Free and open to the entire family. Registration required. Call 704-342-3004.

**TEACCH Summer Classroom
Training Program for
Professionals who work with
Autistic Students**

Sessions: June 26-30th
July 10-14th
July 17-21st
July 24-28th

Location: Myers Park High School
2400 Colony Road
Charlotte NC. 28209

Training Staff: Dr. Joyce Lum and
TEACCH Charlotte staff

Training is classroom oriented and will provide direct, supervised experience in a demonstration classroom that has students with autism. Participants will experience working with children of different ages and different skill levels. TEACCH Staff will make use of an intense period of learning, as well as, presentations and demonstrations while working with autistic students. Through the experience, participants will gain a familiarity with the characteristics of autism, classroom assessment for students with autism, structured teaching methods, communication strategies, social and leisure training, behavior management strategies, and skills for working with families.

Cost: \$525. for five days which includes training manual, snacks, lunch, and CEU credits. Attendance is required for five days to receive CEUs.

Contact Jean Williams for application at 704-563-4103 or jeanw@med.unc.edu

CCAC Summer Programming

Carolina Computer Access Center, an assistive technology resource center located on the campus of First Ward Elementary School in Charlotte, offers programs throughout the year to teachers, parents, individuals and groups. Demonstration and training on use of various educational software is ongoing. CCAC's Lending Library has over 400 software program titles from which to choose from baby/ toddler levels up to adults. A number of books and augmentative speech devices are also available.

This summer's Offerings:

1. Open Lab to explore software--the whole family is welcome- Free, but reservations are needed to insure computer and staff availability.

Three Saturday Dates:

June 17, July 15, & August 12

Times: 10 AM - noon or 1:00- 3 PM depending on preferences of those registering

2. Herzog System Typing/ keyboarding an alphabetic approach to typing.

For students ages 9 and up

Dates available:

June 19-30 or August 7-18.

Fee -\$100 for all 9 sessions. Students have to be able to attend one hour classes 9 week days in succession.

**Registrations accepted by June 2.
Please call 704-342-3004 with
questions and to register.**

If you are unable to attend any of the programs, you may still wish to visit CCAC and perhaps join our Lending Library. Once again, our phone number is 704-342-3004.

**Walk for Autism Research
Carolinas Chapter**



**NAAR and AUTISM SPEAKS
working together**

**Walk Date: Sat. Oct. 7, 2006
Lowes Motor Speedway- Concord, NC**

Want to Help?

**Contact: Mary Brooks-Brown
@ 704-321-3352 Home
704-968- 9796 cell or
www.autismwalk.org/carolinas**

Got extra stuff to donate?

TEACCH is looking for donated items to use in their summer institute for teachers. They could use school related or home items. If you have gently used educational materials or games that could be used in their demonstration thrift shop, please consider a gift to TEACCH. The teacher training begins soon, so if you have been thinking about clearing out your closets, please contact Renee Loiselle at Charlotte TEACCH Center- 704-563-4103

**Charlotte Speech and Hearing Offers
Summer Speech Groups**

For Adolescents: ages 12 and up or on this developmental level- sessions will deal with conversational skills

Tweens: 9-11 developmental level- sessions will deal with feelings

Elementary: 5-8 developmental level- sessions will deal with feelings

Rising Kindergarten: 4-6 sessions will focus on pre-reading skills

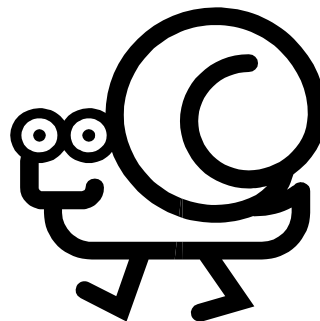
Contact Julie Hermsen: 704-523-8027 ext. 23

**We are here when you need us-
Even in the summer**

Please remember if you need help with advocacy issues over the summer, our parent advocates are still at work!

ASNC Parent Advocates:

*Nancy Popkin and Kim Tizzard
Call: 704-941-6992*



Save the Snails! Use e-mail

Help ASNC –Meck save on postage by receiving Autism Matters in email.

Email nipopkin@aol.com to sign up.

Note of Thanks:

If you were unable to attend our last meeting, you missed a very informative and hopeful presentation by Kathy Fallin and Gina Smith about educational options in CMS and the skills best attained in each setting. Parents may not be aware of the changes which have been underway for several years. With guidelines of "No Child Left Behind", many of these transformations are becoming more obvious. To prepare for these changes, CMS applied for several grants and was able to enlist the help of UNCC, and the University of South Florida to create innovative programs that improve student achievement and smooth transition into mainstream settings. Although new programming and placements can cause anxiety for families and schools alike, the results of their on-going research have shown that these changes provide the best academic and social outcomes for our children. Many parents are concerned about the loss of supportive, self-contained settings and the increased inclusion of our children in the mainstream settings; however, CMS teaching staff will make certain that students are served in the best setting to meet their academic, social, and emotional needs. Even with these improvements, difficulties can sometimes arise. When they do, please remember our wonderful parent advocates and their proven skills in conflict resolution. The information presented was impressive and again we express our thanks to Kathy Fallin and Gina Smith for their commitment to our children and their expectation of good things for them.

We can help you earn credit!

At our May meeting, Luis Pedatto helped with set-up, close down, and helped with childcare. We benefited by having extra hands to get things going on time and he was able to fulfill his community service hours for school. We truly appreciate the great job Luis did. Last month's meeting was informative and we were glad to have Luis's help to run errands so that we could remain in the meeting. Thanks Luis!



Help us get over the hill! Please??

300 applications needed for DMV to produce the plate.

Current count – 190 still =
Interested? Visit www.autismsociety-nc.org and download an application

For our September Support Meeting we present:

Well actually we don't know yet, but you can give input. Send your meeting ideas to Nancy Nestor – nnestor@carolina.rr.com or call 704- 545-1902.

Teacher Appreciation

“I nominate **Mrs. Cara Schaeffer**, 2nd grade Regular Ed Teacher at Garr Christian Academy because she is nice, pretty, kind, patient, encouraging, great, supportive, and awesome! I love her & I know she loves me because she brings out the best in me. I love her so much I gave her flowers twice this week. I wish she could be my teacher the rest of my life. Everyone in my class feels the same way I do. Mrs. Schaeffer is the BEST!”

~**Dylan Mask, age 8 / ABA Inclusion – Garr Christian Academy**

I want to recognize the professionalism, heart & soul of all the **ABA Staff at Garr Christian Academy**. Dylan has achieved academic & social potential this year that all the “experts” said was impossible! ABA at Garr works! (And Dylan’s right—Mrs. Schaeffer is the BEST!)

~**Lisa Mask, Age 28**

“Cheryl?! You want **CHERYL????!!** HA! ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!!!.Hee-hee-hee-heeHAAAA, ha-ha-ha!... (Repeat).”

~**Cole Kolker-Hicks, age 6 /ABA – Garr Christian Academy**

“**Nancy Ross** at Winding Springs Elementary has made such a difference in our lives. Coming from a homeschooling environment, I wasn't sure how my 8 year old son would do in school period. I was afraid the autistic tendencies would only add to his stress and I was very worried. From the very beginning Evan loved school and has made so much progress. He started in the cross cat classroom and as we approach the end of the year, he is almost completely mainstreamed. I have seen him grow so much as a person this year and I know that it is only through her diligence and dedication that this has happened. A good teacher can make or break a child's learning experience and Mrs. Ross has made ours very special and positive.”

~**Meliea Holbrook, mom to Evan Barber, 2nd grade**

“**June Horne**, what can I say about June? She has made such a huge impact on my son, Parker's first year at school. The progress Parker has made this year is mind blowing. June has helped him to interact with his peers, learn the do's and don'ts of Kindergarten, and has helped with all his self help needs. Parker would not have made it though this year without her, her understanding, willingness to try new things and her ambition to get him to do things I never thought he would be able to do. She has been there for all of the ups and downs and never wavered, this is the sign of a very special person. She is a wonderful person and we are blessed to have her in our lives. She and her family have truly become part of our family. Thank you June for all you do.”

~**Shelley Reilley, mom to Parker, Blythe Elementary (K)**

Teacher Appreciation, Cont'd

“My son is a student in **Davidson Elementary’s** self-contained autistic class. I was apprehensive at first since this was a brand new classroom in a school that had not yet before dealt with a special-needs classroom of any kind. **Christine Norris** has been his teacher for the past two years. Christine has demonstrated qualities nothing short of sainthood. She is so personally involved with children in her classroom, and I am always amazed at all of the ground she covers with each of them. My son has achieved goals that I never thought he could, and continues to do so. Christine has had to deal with a significant personal hardship that might have stopped others short in their tracks, but the commitment to her students has persevered as heartily as ever. Her professionalism is paramount, but at the same time her nurturing ways will melt your heart. Since my son is non-verbal, I am especially grateful that she finds the time to communicate with me frequently. She has my utmost respect and admiration for her commitment to children with autism. Thanks.”

~**Diane Arledge, mom to Dillon, EC student at Davidson Elementary**

Helen Silvius (A.G. Middle, EC Teacher in Autistic Classroom 5-8) has been my son Chris’ teacher for two years. She is young but that certainly doesn’t mean she’s inexperienced. She is organized, enthusiastic and open to parents’ suggestions. She challenges the students without pushing them. The best indicator for me that things are going well is the fact my son runs to the bus and gets upset on days when there is no school. I love the fact she pushes or pulls back depending on how much Chris is able to handle on a particular day. We are sad to lose Ms. Silvius as our teacher but pleased that we’re moving on to Myers Park, another stronghold of good teachers.

~**Lois Stickell, mom to Chris / A.G. Middle**

Mary Zalecki (Myers Park, EC Teacher in Autistic Classroom) left another career because she’d always wanted to be an EC teacher. It shows. She is smart and patient and has great intuition. In addition to work in the classroom, she takes students out to work in the community. Because my son loves to be “in charge,” she allows him to “supervise” and that has helped enormously in his self-esteem. She is always quietly directing without making the students feel she is hovering. Why can’t we all be that smart?

~**Lois Stickell**

Wanda Sowell (Myers Park, EC Teacher in Autistic Classroom) has been at Myers Park for several years. She isn’t actually my son’s teacher but since both classes are combined in one room, I see her often. Her tranquil demeanor has a calming influence on all the students. She’s practical in her suggestions and a good listener to parent concerns. Next year she will teach my older son and I’m looking forward to working with her.

~**Lois Stickell**

Wanda Sowell (Myers Park case manager) and **Phyllis Alston** (Myers Park administrator) who have gone above and beyond in helpfulness! Thanks to regular classroom teachers Sarah Blackburn and Tracy Zornow for helping with the eternally challenging details of assignments. Thanks to Phyllis Hampson, assistant principal, for showing support.

~ **Betsy Gustafson**

Teacher Appreciation, Cont'd

Mrs. Daniels (Garr Christian Academy third grade) is my teacher. She helps me when I'm frustrated. She helps me in history, math, and spelling. She is always nice to me. Mrs. Daniels is a great teacher!

~ **Ryan Jenny, age 9**

Wyndie Stitt (ABV Coordinator at Garr Christian) is an angel for children with autism! Her skill and knowledge on how to successfully teach children on the autism spectrum is vast. Wyndie's dedication and commitment to developing a dream-come-true school for my son and all the other children at GCA has been inspiring. She has the amazing talent and understanding needed to teach Ryan in a way that brings out the best in him and lets him be independent and successful way beyond others expectations. I feel very blessed to know her and honored that my son is in her care.

~ **Colleen Jenny**

With dancing eyes and a warm embrace, **Ms. Donna Birnbaum** (TK teacher at Cyzner Institute) welcomes each of her special students every morning because she knows their morning routine at home can be especially challenging for them. With respect she attends to their emotional outbursts because she is an expert at helping them find their voice and come capacity for understanding. Incredibly, Ms. Donna is at home with the unexpected because she knows how to operate within the context of these special students' lives, which in a moment, can be turned on its ear by an adjustment in medication or the odor of shampoo, and because that is when miracles can happen.

~ **Ellen Engelhardt**

Kerri LaMontagne (preschool teacher at Cyzner Institute) is every parent's dream of a preschool teacher for their special needs child. Her dedication and commitment to her students is only surpassed by those of the parents. She begins each morning with renewed energy and enthusiasm for the challenges of the day. Her focus and attention to the uniqueness of each child combined with her ability to make learning fun allows her to create an environment in which every child thrives. She believes in each child and relishes watching them achieve every little milestone. The word "impossible" is not in her vocabulary.

~ **Lori Schleicher**

Tam Robinson (teacher at Cyzner Institute) is a multi-talented school teacher. On any given day, she plays the role of teacher, disciplinarian, playmate, and surrogate mother to the children. She is an incredibly warm person who has such a personal touch with each of these highly unique children. She knows how to soothe and calm them so they can settle in and learn. She knows how to be stern and provide structure so that a child feels secure. She knows how to play and sing so a child engages and feels connected. She can put herself aside and become what each child needs.

~ **Lori Schleicher**