

Autism Matters

IN CHARLOTTE

April 2011

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina
Mecklenburg County Chapter

www.asncmeck.org

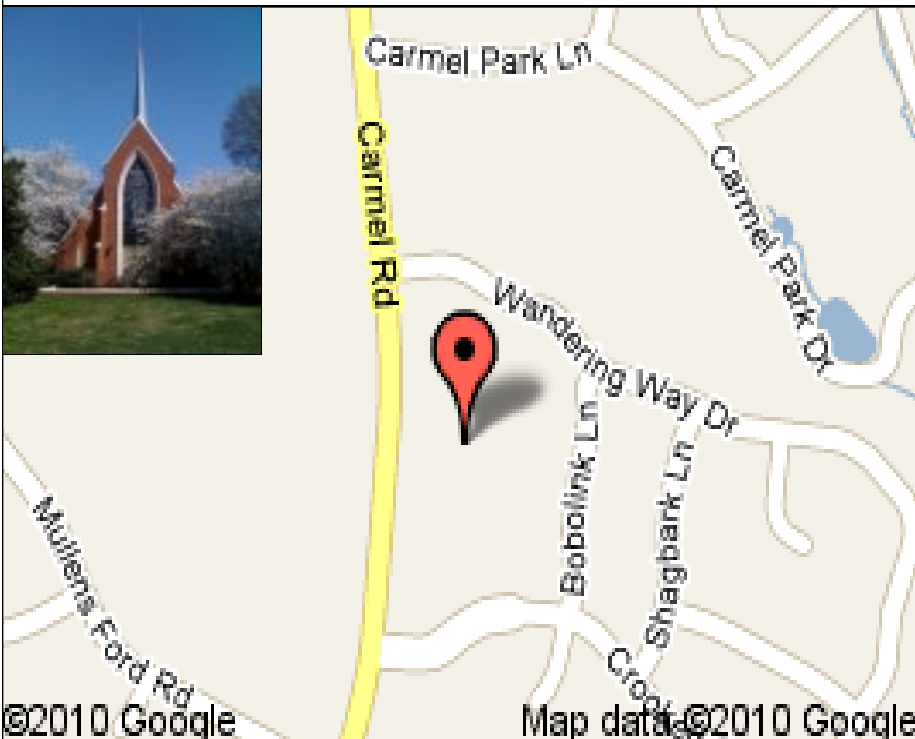
Is it Autism or is it just part of being a Kid??? Come to our April 7th meeting to learn more about what is normal for all kids. Sometimes it is hard to determine what is just part of growing up.

Jayne Earnhardt Yodice, MA, LPA, from Melange Therapy, will talk about child development, puberty, issues that occur when families are faced with stressors, methods for dealing with issues, and how to know when it is time to look for professional help.

This meeting should be helpful to everyone!



Park in the back of the church. Meeting is in rooms 204 & 205. Doors Open at 7:00. Announcements 7:10. Meetings are open to all regardless of membership. Come when you can and leave when you have to.



Free Childcare for the first 12 children registered. Those not registered will be turned away.

We must insure the safety of all children under our care during the meeting, so we must know how many will be in attendance before each meeting.

To register for childcare, contact Lauren Moore by Tues. April 5th: lpoeider@gmail.com or 704-649-7440.

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Meeting Location: - *St. John's Episcopal Church: 1623 Carmel Rd., Charlotte, NC 28226– 5097. The church is located across the street from the campus of Charlotte Country Day, close to the intersection of Fairview and Carmel Roads. It is located about 3 miles east of SouthPark Mall.*



Autism Society
of NORTH CAROLINA
Mecklenburg County Chapter

President's Note:

April is here. It is our month to share and celebrate the challenging realities and the good points of living with a loved one who happens to have autism. All over the world, country, state, and all over our county, families like yours are taking part in activities. You can learn more about the national and international events surrounding World Autism Day on page 10. Within our state, Surfer's Healing is hosting the first ever Autism Awareness Weekend at Wrightsville Beach: April 1-3. Those who are able to attend will find a weekend full of autism friendly children's activities, network opportunities, and chances to learn about valuable resources statewide. ASNC is one of the many participants. To learn more contact John Pike: john@surfershealing.org.

On Tuesday, April 5th from 8:30– 5:00, the General Assembly in Raleigh will mark Autism Awareness Day. ASNC staff and volunteers will provide informational presentations in the morning on legislative issues. They will also be on hand throughout the day to help those who need assistance meeting their legislators, one of the best advocacy tools we have. If you are interested in attending, please contact Maureen Morrell: mmorrell@autismsociety-nc.org.

Closer to home, on April 9th, our sister chapter, Autism Society of North Carolina- Cabarrus County will be holding their first annual Puzzle Run at Frank Liske Park in Concord (start time: 9:00 AM). For those of you who are athletic, a \$25.00 entry fee will get you registered for this Certified 5K run. If you are interested, go to: www.autismcabarrus.com for more information. This event will help with their local support efforts.

Just after Spring Break, we will be holding our Autism Aware Fare. This year it takes place on Tuesday, April 26th. Our event has grown to nearly 50 restaurants in Mecklenburg County. For many of our families, this is a time to venture out with loved ones on the spectrum to places where the acceptance and awareness have already been established. Each sponsoring restaurant is provided with information about autism. Most are given table tents to display for patrons with helpful tips about autism. Those dining out can learn about autism by reading the display while they wait for their meal. Quite often a group of families with children on the spectrum will make a date to go out to eat together that night. It's a fun way to spend an evening. For many this is an annual event! If you are not sure about our participating restaurants, go to our website: www.autismawarefare.org.

You may wonder what we do with all that Aware Fare profit. The monies raised support families here in Mecklenburg County through our newsletter, website, monthly support meetings, and recreational events. Our website provides free information 24 hours a day. Throughout the school year, we offer free monthly newsletters and 4 opportunities each month throughout the county for parents to connect with others for valuable support. Over the summer months, we have several inexpensive family recreational activities each week. In the past we have gotten block tickets to sporting events and rented Ray's Splash Planet for some free, private family fun.

In addition to supporting families, we also support those who dedicate their lives to working with our children. Each year teachers can apply for our annual ASNC-MCC Teacher Scholarships. This important program gives money for innovative materials that will create a better learning environment for our students with autism. Every summer we offer the Ruth Fuller TEACCH Scholarships for teacher assistants so that they can perfect their skills in working with our children in self-contained autism classes. This year we were fortunate enough to have funding for 16 teachers to attend the ANSC Conference in Charlotte. We would love to make that an annual commitment to our educators. Little of this could be done without the help of parents like Kathy Snyder, Trina Roeder, Sumi Ganesh, and Jen Frey who volunteer their time to make Aware Fare happen.

We are part of the larger group, Autism Society of North Carolina. This group was created 40 years ago by parents who worked to make services for their children. Now the Autism Society of North Carolina has nearly 50 chapters state wide where parents can turn to for free, consistent support. Compared to many places in our country, that is certainly something to cheer about. So put on your puzzle piece button, your Aware Fare shirt, and celebrate how far we have come!

Nancy Nestor, ASNC-MCC President 704-545-1902 : nnestor@carolina.rr.com



April Calendar



Apr 1st (F) Booking It! 3:00PM; Steele Creek Library, 13620 Steele Creek Road, Charlotte; stories and crafts for ages 9-12; Free; Register at 704-416-6800.

Apr 1st (F) Tweens & Teens at the Movies: 6:45-8:30PM; Myers Park Presbyterian, 2501 Oxford Place, Charlotte; ages 11-18; Free; RSVP Allyson Anderson 704-927-1271 allysonka@gmail.com

Apr 1st-May 27th (F) Dance & Fitness: 10:30AM-11:30AM; Marion Diehl Center, 2219 Tyvola; ages 18 and up; \$40.00; 704-432-4325 or

Karen.Howard@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Apr 2nd (Sa) - ASNC Sensory Friendly Films: HOP; 10:00 AM; Concord Mills 24; 2421 Concord Mills Blvd; Concord NC, \$5.00.

Apr 4th (M) Lunch and Learn: 12:00-1:00; Southeast Psychological. Blakeney Office: Picking Eating. Free; RSVP Lmccclurg@southeastpsych.com

Apr 4th (M) Fuel For Life: 6-7:30 PM; Bojangle's, 6555 Morrison Blvd; young men 16 and up; \$10.00; 704-432-4329 Angela.Conti@mecklenburgcountync.gov

Apr 4th (M) - Candy making: 6-8:00PM; Bethel Presbyterian Church; 19920 Beth Church Road, Cornelius, NC; ages 17-up; \$5-\$7; Elizabeth Hobson 704-892-6031 Ext.162 ehobson@cornelius.org

Apr 5th (T) Caregiver's Summit: support group; 6-7:00 PM Donato's/Bojangle's, 6555 Morrison Blvd; FREE; Karen Howard 704-432-4325

Karen.Howard@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Apr 5th-May 17th (Tu) Pool Pals 2-5 year olds: 4:00-4:30PM; Marion Diehl Center, 2219 Tyvola Road; \$60.00; Jana.McMullen@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Apr 5th-May 17th (Tu) Pool Pals 6-10 year olds: 4:45-5:15PM; Marion Diehl Center, 2219 Tyvola; \$60.00; Jana.McMullen@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Apr 7th (Th) ASNC- MCC Support Meeting~ Melange Therapy ; 7-9:00; St. John's Episcopal Church, 1623 Carmel Rd. Charlotte, 28227 Contact: Nancy Nestor 704-545-1902 nnestor@carolina.rr.com

Apr 7th (Th) Lunch and Learn: 12:00-1:00PM; Southeast Psychological. SouthPark Office: Picky Eating and Asperger's. Free; RSVP 704-552-0116 dbalcer@southeastpsych.com

Apr 8th (F) Language Circle Time: ImaginOn; 10:30-11:30AM; 301 East 7th Street, Charlotte; Free; Language therapy session led by licensed speech pathologist; register at <http://www.cmlibrary.org/programs>

Apr 9th (Sa) Sensory Story Time: 1:00PM; University City Regional Library; Register at 704-416-7200

Apr 12th (Tu) Bounce U Charlotte Victory Bounce: 5-6:00PM; families with Special Needs children; 10624 Metromont Pkwy Charlotte; FREE; 704-921-8771 www.bounceu.com

Apr 13th (Tu) Movie I Am Sam: 6:30-8:30PM Mahlon Adams Pavilion, 2435 Cumberland; Free; RSVP: Karen.Howard@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Apr 14th (Th) Downtown Brunch: 11:30AM Matt's Chicago Dog on the Green, 435 South Tryon St, #140. RSVP to Betsy Gustafson 704-904-2593 betsygustafson@me.com

Apr 15th (F) Supper Club: 6-7:00 PM; Marion Diehl Center, 2219 Tyvola; ages 13 and up; \$7.00; 704-432-4325 Karen.Howard@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Apr 15th (F) TR Dance-Spring Fling: 7-9:00 PM; Marion Diehl; 13 and up; \$8.00. 704-432-0237 TRinfo@mecklenburgcountync.gov

Apr 15th (F) North Coffee: 9:00 AM; Panera Bread Northlake Mall; 9309 Center Lake Dr. RSVP **Trina Roeder** 704-995-5292 theroeders@yahoo.com

Apr 16th (Sa) Super Saturday Chefs: 10:00AM-1:00PM; Marion Diehl Center, 2219 Tyvola; ages 13 and up; \$15.00; 704-432-4325 Karen.Howard@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Apr 16th (Sa) Wretches & Jabbers (Movie): Noon; Concord Mills 24; 2421 Concord Mills Blvd; Concord, \$7.50.

Apr 23rd (Sa) Sensory Story Time: 10:15AM; South County Regional Library; 704-416-6600, ext 2 to register

Apr 26th (Tu) Autism Aware Fare; Eat at [these restaurants](#) around Charlotte to raise money for the Autism Society of North Carolina, Mecklenburg County Chapter.

Apr 27th (W) Monkey Joes Free Bounce Time: 6-8:00 PM; kids 12 and under with autism & their sibs! Any Location in Mecklenburg!

Apr 28th (Th) South Coffee Time: 9:00 AM; Café Carolina; Promenade on Providence; 5361 Ballantyne Commons # 200, **RSVP: Jennifer Whitset** 704-756-9257 jkwhtsitt@gmail.com

Apr 30th (Sa) Growing Gardeners; 10:00-11:30AM; Davidson Community Garden; ages 5-17; \$5-\$7; Elizabeth Hobson 704-892-6031 Ext.162 ehobson@cornelius.org



News from ASNC...



Autism Society
of NORTH CAROLINA

Providing Support...
Promoting Opportunities...

Public Policy and Legislative Update

By David Laxton, ASNC Director of Communications

March 1, 2011

Autism Insurance Bill Introduced in North Carolina Senate. Senators Purcell, Garrou, and Mansfield, along with Co-sponsor Senator Atwater, have introduced NC Senate Bill 115, titled "Coverage for Treatment of Autism Disorders." The bill would ensure that health benefits plans in North Carolina will provide coverage for diagnostic and treatment services for autism spectrum disorders in individuals.

The Autism Society of North Carolina (ASNC) is working to secure bill sponsors for a House version of the legislation, and we hope to have more news for you soon. SB 115 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Insurance. Procedurally, the bill must be heard in committee and voted on favorably to be considered on the Senate floor. ASNC is following this legislation closely and will let you know when and how to take action.

State Budget Update

ASNC keeps close track of the state budget process; much of the funding for services and supports to people with ASD comes from a combination of state and Federal funding that is controlled by state Legislators. The estimated budget gap for the next fiscal year is \$2.7 billion and Legislative leaders have said that they will make cuts in the range of \$700 million to the NC Department of Health and Human Services to make up part of that gap.

As part of this process, the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services is looking at Medicaid, a critical program that supports many people with ASD including those in the CAP-MR/DD program. The Legislature is looking at a variety of Medicaid managed care options to control costs. Managed care, or HMO type programs, typically manage costs by focusing on preventative care and eliminating unnecessary treatment, but have been known to limit services as a cost saving measure. ASNC and other groups that advocate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have long opposed managed care for developmental disability (DD) services due to concerns about people losing needed services and being re-institutionalized. ASNC has joined with other groups in calling for DD services, including those funded with Medicaid, to be managed separately at a statewide level to make sure that the DD system continues core services, focuses on habilitation, eliminates duplicate (and costly) administration and monitoring, and maintains funds that serve people in the least restrictive setting.

In addition, the budget targets recently released by General Assembly Appropriations Chairs include the direction to eliminate or reduce funding to non-profits, including those that serve people with autism. Numerous non-profits, including the Autism Society of North Carolina, get state funds because of their expertise and efficiency in providing much needed services to specialty populations. Non-profits like ASNC sign contracts with state agencies to receive funding and must report on the use of funds. ASNC will be providing information to Legislative Committees and Fiscal Research in the coming weeks to show the effective use of state funds for providing education and training on ASD, housing, and other support and services for families and individuals on the spectrum.

How Can You Help?

- Introduce Yourself: In the coming weeks as we know more about the autism bill and the direction of cuts in HHS, we'll have specific actions for you to take. The best thing you can do is to introduce yourself to your state legislators in a letter or email and tell them why the issue of autism is so important to you. If you don't know your legislator, go to: www.ncga.state.nc.us, click on the citizen guide tab on the upper right corner, then scroll down to: "Who represents me?" under Useful Links.
- Stay informed by checking the ASNC Legislative Blog by Jen Mahan, Director of Government Relations for ASNC. You can find it at our website: www.autismsociety-nc.org



More from the Autism Society of North Carolina~

Bills, We Got Bills with a Capital B...

Posted on the ASNC Blog, March 11, 2011
by Jennifer Mahan, ASNC Director of Government Relations

The Autism Society of North Carolina tracks bills that could impact people on the spectrum, including legislation about the budget, education, the developmental disability system and health care, among other issues. During the long legislative session members of the North Carolina General Assembly introduce hundreds of bills; this session new House rules that limit each House member to sponsoring ten bills will significantly reduce the number introduced, though it doesn't seem that way when you are sorting through them daily.

Several bills have been introduced based on recommendations from the Legislative Oversight Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services and from the Institute of Medicine Study on Adult Care Homes. This year due to the state's budget deficit we are not likely to see any action on bills that require new money to implement, such as ones adding new programs, expanding existing programs, or requiring new training. Legislators are actively looking for ways to save money and reduce spending. Lack of funds is not the only reason that we'll see bills this session that study an issue; introducing a study bill gives the legislature time and information to determine what, if any, action should be taken in the future. Below are summaries of some of the bills that could impact people with autism spectrum disorder, including several study bills. North Carolina House bills are indicated with an "H" and Senate Bills with an "S" – if the bill has two bill numbers it has been introduced in both chambers.

List of Bills that could affect our family members with autism...

H 75 S328 "Report on Transfer of CAP MR/DD UR to LMEs" asks for a report on the costs associated with transfer/delivery of utilization review and management to the four Local Management Entities as compared to a statewide vendor, the number who got UR/UM in year, and the accountability measures used.

H 76 S333 "Revise DD Waiting List Process" asks the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disability and Substance Abuse Services (MH/DD/SAS) to report on a revised waiting list process that would have an unduplicated research based count of children and adults waiting for state and federally funded services and an estimate of how many of them would be eligible for Community Alternatives Program (CAP) waiver services.

H 81 S 336 "Develop Plan for Allocating DD Resources" asks for the North Carolina Department of Health and Human (NC DHHS) and the Division of MH/DD/SAS to report by July 1 on a plan for "a comprehensive statewide plan for the fair and equitable allocation of resources for all individuals eligible for developmental disability services." The plan must include a resource allocation model based on the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) or another valid tool for determining intensity of need, require independent assessment, include quality assurances, and a standardized formula for the use of the results of the assessment tool to determine eligibility for and type of services needed. Nowhere does it ask for the developmental disability community, families, researchers, etc. for input on the development of this plan. Advocates are also concerned that the SIS was not intended for use as a resource allocation tool and should be only one part of determining a person centered plan for an individual.

ASNC News

Continued from page 5...



*Providing Support...
Promoting Opportunities...*

Bills, We got Bills with a Capital 5

H 82 S 336 "Funds for Step-Down Unit for BART Program" asks NC DHHS identify and report on funding available to establish a step-down unit for BART. Does not ask for a specific appropriation for the program. Individuals in BART need a specialized step down unit due to their unique needs and the reluctance of community programs to serve individuals with a history of aggressive behavior, despite how well they may be doing in the BART program. This step down unit could also serve as a community training opportunity to ensure that other community programs have the skills needed to serve individuals with aggressive behaviors.

H 85 "Evaluate DD Residential Options for Children" asks for a report on a review of current congregate residential options available for children birth to 6, as well as an overview of all services available to this age group and after age 6.

H 71 "Funds for Housing of Persons with Disabilities" requests funding for the Housing Trust Fund to continue to develop housing options for people with disabilities. This bill has come partly in response to IOM report on adult care homes and to ongoing concerns about the lack of affordable housing options. It's estimated that thousands with developmental disabilities, mental illness and dual diagnosis are living in adult or family care homes because supported independent housing options are not available.

H 104 "ACH Pilot on Crisis Intervention Training" requests a pilot program be developed to evaluate Crisis Intervention Training in adult care homes, to modify existing training for this setting and for direct care workers.

H 106 "Direct Care Worker Wage and Benefit Study" (this is an aging study bill, but affects all direct care staff including those across the developmental disability system). Study wages, benefits, and turnover and makes recommendations about training in order to increase the supply of and retention of direct care workers.

H 107 "GAST (Geriatric/Adult Mental Health Specialty Teams) Training Pilot" funds a pilot program that would use GAST to train adult care homes in one LME region on prevention and de-escalation of crisis.

H 108 "DHHS Study of IOM Task Force Recommendation 3.1" asks NC DHHS to assess feasibility and an implementation timeline to transition adult care home residents with disabilities to independent community-based supported housing. The bill does not fund housing, supportive services or rent subsidies needed to obtain and stay in housing.

These are just a few of the bills we are monitoring. As always, if you have questions about any of these bills, other legislation, or public policies impacting people on the spectrum, please post your question or email Jennifer Mahan, ASNC's Director of Government Relations at jmahan@autismsociety-nc.org.

April 2011

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina
Mecklenburg County Chapter

www.asncmeck.org



We're going into the countdown to **April 26 and Aware Fare!**

Q. Why does Autism Aware Fare matter to me?

A. This is **the** major fundraiser for the Mecklenburg County Chapter of the North Carolina Autism Society. Money raised is used to fund grants to teachers for classroom supplies and equipment.

Q. Doesn't the school system buy supplies?

A. Yes. The school system heavily supports our classrooms but in these hard economic times teachers often need more resources than the schools can provide.

Q. My child isn't in the CMS school system so what am I getting from this?

A. The grants go to teachers across Mecklenburg County who works with students on the Autism Spectrum. Teachers don't have to be in the CMS system or in a self-contained classroom to be awarded a grant.

Q. Does all the money go to grants?

A. No, it goes to scholarships for autism training at TEACCH, assistance to families in crisis, newsletter publication, rental of spaces such as Ray's Splash Planet, and more!

Q. How can I support Aware Fare?

A. Eat Out! Choose a participating restaurants at www.autismawarefare.org

Q. How can I promote Aware Fare?

A. Buy a t-shirt or a pin. Although the deadline to order shirts has passed, we have a few extra to sell. Contact Trina for t-shirts or buttons at theroeders@yahoo.com



Front and back of Button

Special Thanks to Autism Aware Fare Supporters

This year 528 teachers, teacher assistants, OTs, PTs, and others purchased t-shirts to wear in the days leading up to April 26. Now, in addition to all they do for our children, they will be walking billboards for Aware Fare. Thank you so much! An additional thanks to OT Amy Dundon for putting information about Autism Aware Fare on her neighborhood



For more information: www.autismawarefare.org Or Kathy Snyder 704-904-0456 KOS101@bellsouth.net



Grab a friend and eat out April 26 at one of the restaurants below.

[Bombay Grille](#)

Tower Place Shopping Center

[Brooklyn South Pizzeria](#)

Cornelius

[Café Monte](#)

SouthPark

[Charley's](#)

Cotswold

[Dilworth Coffee](#)

Matthews Location Only

[Extreme Pita](#)

Ballantyne

[Karmale Café](#)

East Charlotte near TEACCH

[Marahani Indian Cuisine](#)

901 South King's Drive

[Matt's Chicago Dog](#)

Both Charlotte Area Locations

[The Melting Pot](#)

The Promenade and King's Drive

[Pinkberry](#)

Arboretum

[Pinky's Westside Grille](#)

1600 West Morehead St

[Rotelli Pizza and Pasta](#)

Hwy 51 and Carmel Rd

[Summit Coffee](#)

Davidson

[Trio](#)

South Charlotte

[Brixx Pizza](#)

All five locations

[Café 49](#)

Clover

[Carolina Soda Shop](#)

Park Road Shopping Center

[Charlotte Café](#)

Arboretum and Park Road Shopping Center

[Dilworth Neighborhood Grille](#)

E. Morehead at S. McDowell

[Jason's Deli](#)

Five Charlotte area locations

[Le Peep](#)

The Arboretum

[Lulu](#)

Plaza-Midwood

[McAlister's Deli](#)

10 Charlotte Area Locations

[Nothing but Noodles](#)

Stonecrest & Elizabeth Ave.

[Pinkberry](#)

Phillips Place

[Restaurant X](#)

Davidson

[Sangam](#)

Cornelius

[Toast Café](#)

Davidson & Huntersville



ecac
exceptional children's
assistance center

Empowering Families ★ Improving Lives

FROM ECAC's Online Newsletter

<http://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/index.htm>

This spring Congress is expected to take up reauthorization of the nation's primary education law — the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or ESEA, now known as No Child Left Behind. In an exclusive interview with Disability Scoop, Alexa Posny — the Department of Education's top special education official — offers an insider's take on what students with disabilities can expect and weighs in on academic standards, restraint and seclusion, teacher training, the future of inclusion and more.

Disability Scoop: Already 43 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards which call for students with disabilities to be “challenged to excel within the general curriculum.” Is this reasonable?

Alexa Posny: The goal is to hold everyone to high standards, and that absolutely I believe in. Now, when I think about kids who have significant cognitive disabilities — probably what we refer to as the 1 percent who are taking alternate assessments — they still need to be held to high standards. Will it look the same as kids who are at the same chronological age? The answer is no and it's part of what we deal with when we work with students with disabilities. They're receiving special education services and supports because they do not learn in a typical fashion. It does not mean that they can't learn and that they are not going to learn at the same high level as everyone else.

Disability Scoop: Last year Congress considered a bill to restrict the use of restraint and seclusion in schools, which was ultimately unsuccessful. Do you believe that federal legislation is needed to address this issue?

Alexa Posny: The bottom line is that there should be no harm that is ever brought to any child. I wish we could count on people to do the right thing, but if that's not occurring then we may need to legislate. One of the things that's already been put into place is we're collecting data to show how many times a child has been secluded or restrained, so the data will be the first place to take a look at what other things should be done.

Disability Scoop: What can we expect to see in the upcoming ESEA reauthorization? What does it mean when people talk about aligning this law with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA?

Alexa Posny: I think some people are thinking: are these two laws (ESEA and IDEA) going to merge? Alignment of the two does not mean the merger of the two. IDEA will always remain the civil rights protection act for students with disabilities. We need to break down parallel systems. ESEA has set high standards. Almost 60 percent of students with disabilities are in the general education classroom more than 80 percent of the day, so we have to think about the systemic effects on students with disabilities.

Disability Scoop: Nearly every state is in a budget crunch this year at the same time millions in stimulus funds are running out. What does this mean for special education?

Alexa Posny: The one thing about special ed. is that they (schools) must maintain the same level of funds year after year. The bottom line is they have to continue to ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) and that's not going to go away. I know at the beginning when students with disabilities were finally being allowed in the regular school system, there was a feeling in general ed. that we in special ed. were taking away from them. I don't want that to happen again.

Disability Scoop: Currently teachers who are just beginning their training through alternative programs like Teach for America can be labeled “highly qualified.” Do you believe this is cause for concern?

Alexa Posny: When we think about the teachers working with kids with disabilities, they need to be the most effective, the most highly qualified, the most skilled we have. If you can teach a child with a disability, I've always said you can teach any child. What we've got on the other side, is we know that within five to ten years, the majority of our teachers who are special educators are probably going to retire. I believe we're going to need 40,000 to 50,000 more special educators in the next ten years. That's a big pool. We need to make sure that the alternative route programs have teachers just as prepared as anyone else.

Disability Scoop: Lately several disability-specific charter schools have popped up. What direction do you think education should be taking with regard to inclusion versus more segregated settings?

Alexa Posny: I would like to have a national dialogue about this. I'll be honest, when I began to hear about the charter schools that are strictly for students with disabilities, that is not where I was headed at all, so it's interesting. You always think things are black and white and they never are, especially when we talk about students with disabilities.



Ask the Professional by UNCC Doctoral Candidate, Susan Flynn

Functional Communication Training and Autism Spectrum Disorders **Steps Three and Four: Teaching the Appropriate Response to the Child, Ignoring the Challenging Behavior and Reinforcing the Alternative Behavior**

Teaching the Appropriate Response

Teaching the appropriate response can be taught in both naturalistic conditions (i.e., when the situation arises), but also in contrived conditions as well. Teaching in naturalistic conditions promotes generalization; however, using this approach alone will provide fewer learning opportunities for the child to acquire the appropriate response. An example of teaching the response in a naturalistic condition could be the parent embedding Functional Communication Training (FCT) trials during nighttime self-care routines for the child whose challenging behavior is caused by a disruption in routine. An example of teaching the response in a contrived condition could be the parent repeatedly prompting the child to work on self-care tasks during training sessions. Using this approach limits generalization. However, both arrangements work well when used together to promote quicker acquisition of the response.

Another aspect to consider is using prompting and fading to promote appropriate communicative behavior. Techniques include:

Least-to-most prompting. The parent holds up a toy that the child likes. The parent waits 5 seconds for the appropriate behavior. If there is an error or no response, the parent provides a verbal, then physical prompt (i.e., guiding the child's hand to the picture symbol of "toy"). The child is then allowed access to the toy. Prompts are faded by delaying the prompt; that is, increasing the wait time from 5 seconds to 10 seconds. This is to prevent the child's dependence on prompting. The goal is to have the child pick up the card "toy" independently when he/she wants to play with a toy.

Most-to-least prompting. The parent holds up the toy that a child likes. The parent immediately provides a physical prompt (guiding the child's hand to the picture symbol). The child is then allowed access to the toy. In successive trials, the physical prompt is gradually faded until the child asks for the toy independently.

To encourage independent behavior, the parent or teacher can allow the child to play with the toy for longer periods of time when he or she requests the toy appropriately (e.g., when prompted, the child can have access to the toy for 30 seconds. When independent, the child can have access to the toy for 5 minutes.).

Ignoring the Challenging Behavior and Reinforcing the Alternative Behavior

Ignoring the challenging behavior and only reinforcing the appropriate behavior leads the child to discriminate between how to request something and how not to request something. Reinforcing the appropriate response is the easy part; consistently ignoring the challenging behavior (and knowing when not to ignore the behavior) is more difficult. Sometimes ignoring the challenging behavior is unethical. For example, a child who engages in self-injurious behavior (e.g., bites arm until it bleeds) to get access to a toy should not be ignored. The parent or teacher should block this response (e.g., immediately grasp the arm and guide that hand to the picture symbol of the toy) and then give access to the toy. The parent or teacher should not react to the child's behavior with reprimands, hugs, or other consequences after the child displays the challenging behavior.

I hope this series of articles on Functional Communication Training has been helpful. Please use the SurveyMonkey link to complete a very short survey on the series so I can receive feedback. Thanks!

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SMNXWSM>

Light It Up Blue



On the evenings of April 1 and 2, 2011, prominent buildings across North America and the world — including the Empire State Building in New York City and the CN Tower in Toronto, Canada — will turn their lights blue to raise awareness for autism and to commemorate World Autism Awareness Day on Saturday, April 2.

We're aiming to light the world blue all throughout April — city by city, town by town — by taking action to raise autism awareness in our communities.

What you can do to Light It Up Blue

Wear blue clothing or your Autism Speaks puzzle piece, and encourage your coworkers to do the same. Light your house up blue by putting blue light bulbs in any outdoor fixtures.

World Autism Awareness Day

The fourth annual World Autism Awareness Day is on April 2. People, schools, organizations, and companies are hosting events around the world. [Click here to find out more](#)



Empire State Building



Sydney Opera House, Australia



Why Summit?

Every Month Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, Therapeutic Recreation Division, hosts a meeting for caregivers of individuals with disabilities or all sorts.

The meetings are free and are held at Donatos/Bojangles across from SouthPark Mall on the first Tuesday of every month. These gatherings offer a chance for mothers or fathers or any caregiver to share knowledge, learn from the experiences of others or simply relax with others whose lives are also touched by having a family member with special needs.

If you would like to attend, please contact Karen Howard at 704-432-4325 or Karen.Howard@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov



Why Coffee?

Every Month in the newsletter we list three places around Charlotte where you can meet with others for coffee. These daytime coffees are organized by the Chapter for mothers or fathers or any caregiver of an individual on the Autism Spectrum.

The coffees offer a chance to socialize and find camaraderie and companionship with others who travel the same road as you.

If you haven't attended a coffee before, it might be something you would enjoy. Dates and times are posted in every newsletter (see Page 14) and are held in North, South and Downtown (Uptown) Charlotte.



Join us!

Movies with a Message

Movies with a Message is a monthly opportunity to view inspirational and thought-provoking movies and documentaries related to individuals with disabilities. The movie is free and is followed by discussion. This month's movie is *I Am Sam*.

Location: Mahlon Adams Pavilion, 2435 Cumberland

Date: April 13 (Tuesday) - *I Am Sam*

Time: 6:30-8:30PM

Contact: Karen Howard

Karen.Howard@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov



More on Movies

The first Friday of every month Myers Park Presbyterian Church graciously hosts a movie for individuals 11-18 years old who are on the spectrum. Drinks and popcorn are free. Chaperones oversee the evening. This month's movie is *High School Musical 1*. For more information, see page 15.

Also, each month AMC Concord Mills 24 offers a sensory friendly movie. There are no pre-show advertisements or movie trailers. The house lights are turned up, the sound is turned down and guests can get up and dance, walk, shout or sing as they please. The movies are \$5.00 and are always current shows. April's movie is *Hop*. For details, see page 14.

This month AMC Concord Mills 24 is also showing *WRETCHES & JABBERERS*, a special film about two men with autism. For more information, see page 13. This showing will offer the same sensory friendly benefits of all monthly movies.

What's a Survey Monkey?

Over the past several months UNCC Doctoral candidate Susan Flynn has been kind enough to write articles sharing her expertise about Functional Communication Training and Autism Spectrum Disorders. Her final article is on Page 9 (See Nov 2010 issue of Autism Matters for first article, Feb 2011 issue for

second article at <http://www.asncmeck.org>)



If you have found these articles helpful, please take a moment to complete an online survey at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SMNXWSM>

WRETCHES & JABBERERS

WRETCHES & JABBERERS follows two men with autism who embark on a global quest to change attitudes about disability, intelligence and communication. It is directed by Academy Award winner Gerardine Wurzburg. Showing in Charlotte is at AMC Concord Mills 24 on April 16 at 12:00PM. Price is \$7.50.

AMC partners with the Autism Society on the [AMC Sensory Friendly Films](#) program. House lights in the auditorium are turned up, sound is turned down, and guests are welcome to get up and dance, walk, shout or sing as they please.



At Joni and Friends Charlotte Family Retreats persons with disability and their families receive encouragement and care in the comfort of a safe and accessible family camp environment. Enjoy fully-accessible and age-appropriate fun activities, be nourished by hearty home-style meals, and glean from meaningful conversations from a network of families who understand the challenges of life with disability. Short Term Missionaries (STMs) volunteer and are assigned to serve families with Christ-like encouragement and friendship. A Quiet Track program and scholarships are available.



Where: [Bonclarken](#) Conference Center in Flat Rock, NC near Hendersonville.

When: August 1 – 5 or August 8 – 12.

Contact: Joni and Friends Charlotte, 704-366-5900, charlotte@joniandfriends.org

OPEN DOOR WORSHIP at Dilworth UMC

Join us for worship, fun, snacks and fellowship!
Interactive and faith-based service designed for adults with developmental disabilities

FIRST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH – 3:30 PM

Dilworth United Methodist Church
605 East Boulevard Charlotte, NC 28216

Contact Rev. Rhonda Hermann at 704-333-4173 or rhonda.hermann@dilworthumc.org



**OPEN
DOOR
WOR-
SHIP**

April 2011

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina
Mecklenburg County Chapter
www.asncmeck.org



THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHAPEL HILL



Division TEACCH
Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children

TEACCH Wednesday Forums: April 27, 2011

Introduction to TEACCH; offered at 9:00
General information and introduction to the TEACCH program, including information about diagnosis, assessment, and treatment for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Introduction to Visual strategies; offered at 10:30
Introductory information about using schedules, work/activity systems and visually structured teaching activities to provide support and improve learning. Recommended for parents who are interested in individual sessions with TEACCH staff.

Understanding Educational Programs and IEP's; offered at 9:00
Join us to explore successful advocacy strategies for your school-age child. This Forum will focus on developing IEP's and working on developing IEP's and working with your child's educational team as they implement the IEP goals.

To enroll call the Charlotte TEACCH Center at:
704-563-4103

Lunch and Learn Series

Free lunchtime groups for Parents of an Aspergers Child

Thurs, Apr 7th; Noon- 1:00 PM

Picky Eating and Aspergers

SouthPark Office

RSVP: 704-552-0116 or dbalcer@southeastpsych.com

Monday, Apr 4th; Noon-1:00PM

Picky Eating

Blakeney Office RSVP: Lmcllurg@southeastpsych.com

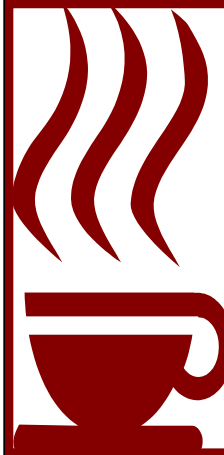


Coffee Times:

North Coffee: Apr 15th (F) 9:00 AM;
Panera Bread @ Northlake Mall~
RSVP: Trina Roeder 704-995-5292
theroeders@yahoo.com

Downtown Brunch: Apr 14th (Th);
11:30 —Matt's Chicago Dog on the
Green, 435 South Tryon St, #140 ~
RSVP: Betsy Gustafson 704-904-2593
betsygustafson@me.com

South Coffee: Apr 28th (Th); 9:00
AM; Café Carolina- Promenade on
Providence (Providence @485)~
RSVP: Jennifer Whitset
704-756-9257
jkwhitsitt@gmail.com



Sensory-Friendly showing of:

HOP

AMC Concord Mills 24
8421 Concord Mills Blvd
Concord, NC 28027
704-979-019721

Just in time for Easter
Sat. April 2nd 10:00 AM \$5.00



April 2011

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina
Mecklenburg County Chapter

www.asncmeck.org

*All 11 –18 year olds are invited to
Tweens & teens at the movies!*

April 1 (F) 6:45– 8:30PM



Myers Park Presbyterian Church
Room F-207

This month's feature:
High School Musical 1

Please RSVP to Allyson Anderson
allysonka@gmail.com or call 704-927-1271

*ASNC-MCC does not endorse any company, therapy,
or program. We offer information and it is your job as
the parent to decide what is most appropriate for your
family.*



Mecklenburg County, NC
Park and Recreation
parkandrec.com

*Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation's
April newsletter is at*

[http://www.scribd.com/doc/28572043/
Therapeutic-Recreation-Wire-April-2010](http://www.scribd.com/doc/28572043/Therapeutic-Recreation-Wire-April-2010)



★ Recipient of Library Journal Five Star Award!

Public Library
of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County



Library Programs

Sensory Story Time

Preschool to early elementary

University City Regional Library

Saturday, April 9 at 1:00PM

Call 704-416-7200 to register

South County Regional Library

Saturday, April 23 at 10:15AM

Call 704-416-6600, extension 2, to register

Language Circle Time

ImagineOn for 3-5 year olds

Friday, April 8 at 10:30AM

Register <http://www.cmlibrary.org/programs/>

Booking It!

**Steele Creek Library stories and crafts for
9-12 year olds**

Friday, April 1 at 3:00PM

Call 704-416-6800 to register.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library has many books for parents and caregivers of children with special needs or disabilities. There is also a collection of books geared toward children and teens as well as their peers and siblings. Check out the library's online catalog at www.cmlibrary.org or contact library staff at your local branch for help locating books and resources for you and your child or teen.



We Need Your Help - Become a Member!

Join the Autism Society of North Carolina
Membership Form

ASNC Membership (circle level)

Individual/Family - \$40
Contributor - \$75
Supporter - \$150
Agency/Service Provider - \$200
Life - \$1,250
Student - \$25

*indicate ASNC Chapter name below and ASNC will give back \$10 to your local chapter.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (h) _____ (w) _____

Email _____

ASNC Chapter Name _____

Type of membership(s) (e.g. asnc-family) _____ Total enclosed \$ _____

**Mail all memberships to ASNC to:
Autism Society of North Carolina
505 Oberlin Road, Suite 230, Raleigh, NC 27605-1345
To charge memberships call 1-800-442-2762**

ASNC – Mecklenburg County Chapter
c/o Nancy Nestor
3846 Lipton Ln
Mint Hill, NC 28227

If you would like to receive *Autism Matters* via email, send a request to nnestor@carolina.rr.com

Thank you!