



Autism Spectrum

The Official Monthly Publication of the Autism Society of New Hampshire

PO Box 68, Concord, NH 03302 ~ 603-679-2424 ~ www.nhautism.com

March 2011 Issue

President's Letter :

March 13, 2011

Dear ASNH Members.

As I write this, my first, letter to the membership of the Autism Society of NH, I am acutely aware of the fiscal insanity that has gripped our state. The NH legislature is poised to put forward deep cuts in vital government services accessed by many families that support someone who experiences an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). These include zeroing out funding for the Developmental Services waitlist, sharply cutting funding for the Children's In Home Support Waiver, and reorganizing regionalized service systems in order to reduce the number of community mental health and area agencies from ten to seven. Still more extreme proposals circulating in the NH House suggest eliminating family support funding in Developmental Services altogether.

As if this weren't enough, a bill introduced in the NH House threatens to rescind the modest consumer protections secured by Connor's Law. HB 309 would set aside guarantees for the treatment of ASD that only just became available for state-regulated insurance policies on January 1, 2011. I was immensely proud to the parents who attended or spoke at the hearing for this measure (*see testimony by one parent in this issue*). Thankfully, the House Committee on Commerce and Consumer Affairs was convinced to retain the bill for study. This is only a partial victory, however, as the mere possibility of rescinding this bill could deter some insurance carriers from working diligently to meet their obligation to make an expanded benefit for ASD available.

Nobody questions that these are tough times. However, some in government would use this economic downturn to shift our state's prevailing social contract with hard working families and caregivers. Parents and others who support an individual who experiences ASD are hardly looking for government handouts. As well we know, we put in more than our fair share of time as line therapists, case managers, crisis intervention workers, education advocates, and life coaches. We simply want what any other citizen in the Granite State would – fair value for the taxes and the insurance premiums that we pay. Thanks to a closer alliance between **the Autism Society of NH** and the **NH Council on ASD**, we are prepared to keep you informed about the issues in New Hampshire and nationally that may impact you and your family. This is hardly a time to hold information too closely, so our Board has recently reevaluated ASNH's membership policy. **Please read the statement about membership in this issue.**

Thank you for all that you do each day,

Best,

Kirsten Murphy

Interim President, Autism Society of New Hampshire

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A **BIG** thank you to our advertising contributors: **Butenhof & Bomster, PC** for their generous support of the ASNH

Changes to Membership in The Autism Society of NH

The Autism Society of America, the national organization of which ASNH is a chapter, recently elected to discontinue its membership sharing policy. As a chapter, ASNH had participated in this collaboration in order to bolster both national and local membership

In light of these changes, the Board of NH's Autism Society has decided to return to its previous policy of maintaining local membership under our own management. The Board has set New Hampshire membership at the previous rate of just **\$15.00/year**. To reach our goal of \$3000, we would need just 200 members annually. Given that there are over 2000 children in the NH public school system impacted by ASD, we believe that this goal should be easily attainable, **but only if you do your part!**

Note that when the Autism Society of America contacts you directly to renew your membership, this no longer includes membership in your local chapter. We encourage national membership.

We encourage families, self-advocates, providers, and others who care about the impact of ASD to join ASNH, your statewide organization for ASD awareness, information, and support.

Membership and donations are among our primary source of revenue. These funds insure that ASNH has a voice in important public policy decisions that impact individuals and families who experience ASD, support our outreach to those new to a diagnosis, and help us maintain the basic administrative supports that insure families impacted by ASD have someone to contact for assistance. Thank you.

For ASNH Membership, please send \$15.00 to:

Autism Society of NH
Box 68
Concord, NH 03302



<http://wzid.com/pages/3615069>

Kirsten Murphy

With 20+ years of non-profit management experience under her belt, and facing a lack of available services and funding, Kirsten Murphy started her own non-profit, The Upper Valley ARCH, to help families and their children with autism. As a single mom of 3 children, 2 of whom are affected by autism, Kirsten's professional and volunteer life revolves around autism advocacy: NH Council on Autism, NH Autism Commission, NH Council on Developmental Disabilities, The Family Advisory Board of the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth (CHaD), and the Board of Directors for Pathways of the River Valley, as well as the Vermont Steering Committee for the Autism Planning Group. She has pushed through NH legislation that will set precedents regarding health insurance discrimination and autism. Clearly, where there was only a footpath before, her efforts have paved the way for families of children with autism.



HOW CAN A SPECIAL NEEDS TRUST BE USED FOR THE BENEFICIARY?

By: Butenhof & Bomster, PC
e-mail: office@butenhofbomster.com

The primary purpose of a special needs trust is to supplement, and in most instances not disrupt or replace, services provided to a person with disabilities through public benefits programs, while at the same time maintaining financial eligibility for those public benefits. If drafted properly, the assets contained in a special needs trust will not be considered the trust beneficiary's assets, and thus will have no effect on *resource* eligibility for either Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") or Medicaid. However, when assets are distributed from the special needs trust, it is possible that the distribution will be counted as income to the beneficiary, and thus affect *income* eligibility for SSI or Medicaid. There are certain federal standards regarding the treatment of distributions from special needs trusts, as well as state specific requirements. Due to the complexity of the rules governing financial eligibility for SSI and Medicaid, as well as other public benefits programs, trustees of special needs trusts must carefully evaluate all available options for the use of trust assets before making a distribution to or for the benefit of a trust beneficiary.

Both SSI and Medicaid have income eligibility requirements, although the thresholds for the programs differ. This article focuses solely on eligibility for SSI benefits since the financial eligibility rules for Medicaid benefits vary state to state. However, it should be noted that New Hampshire law does require distributions from a special needs trust to be evaluated under the SSI standards when determining eligibility for Medicaid. See RSA § 167:4, V.

While wages are easy to identify as "earned income" to the worker for financial eligibility purposes, determining when a distribution from a special needs trust will be counted as "unearned income" is not as clear. For instance, if the trustee of a special needs trust distributes cash directly to a beneficiary, the cash will be counted as unearned income to the beneficiary, on a dollar-for-dollar basis, reducing or eliminating SSI benefits (please note that certain exclusions from income do exist under the SSI rules, including an exclusion for \$20/month of earned or unearned income). In addition, a distribution that otherwise may appear permissible could disrupt benefits if the beneficiary could convert a purchased item into cash. For instance, the purchase of a refundable airplane ticket in the beneficiary's name would be considered income to the beneficiary for SSI purposes, because the beneficiary could decline to travel and simply convert the refundable ticket into cash.

The rules become even more complicated when non-cash trust distributions are made. For instance, if a trustee buys groceries for a beneficiary or pays for the beneficiary's housing costs (i.e., rent, mortgage payments, utility expenses, etc.), these trust distributions will be considered "in-kind support and maintenance," or another form of "unearned income" to the trust beneficiary. The reasoning behind these rules is that SSI benefits are intended to provide for an individual's basic needs for support and maintenance – that is, food and shelter. It should be noted, however, that in-kind support and maintenance does not necessarily impact SSI benefits on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

There are a variety of trust distributions that supplement a beneficiary's needs without falling into the categories of cash, food or shelter. For instance, if a special needs trust pays for medical expenses or educational programs that otherwise would not be available to the beneficiary, those distributions never should interfere with SSI eligibility. Similarly, trust distributions to modify a residence in order to accommodate the beneficiary's disability or to purchase a handicap-accessible vehicle for the beneficiary's use would be permissible. A trustee also could pay for household furnishings, computers, entertainment equipment or the services of companions or caregivers for the

beneficiary without disrupting public benefits, as long as the payments were made directly to a vendor, and not the trust beneficiary.

The rules concerning the treatment of trust distributions are complex and the stakes are high when essential public benefits are at issue. Therefore, before any given trust distribution is made, it is highly important for a trustee to know precisely what public benefits the beneficiary is receiving and what types of trust distributions would be treated as countable, unearned income to the trust beneficiary.



Butenhof & Bomster, PC

132 Middle Street – Manchester, NH 03101

Phone (603) 296-0428 Fax (603) 296-0430

office@butenhofbomster.com

At Butenhof & Bomster, PC, we focus our practice in the areas of elder law, estate planning, Medicaid planning, special needs trusts planning, guardianships, and probate and trust administration. Simply put, our philosophy is that each client's circumstances are unique and deserving of individualized attention and planning, regardless of whether such planning involves the creation of a complex trust structure or simply the execution of a health care power of attorney.

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Enjoy a FREE overnight stay for parents and primary caregivers of individuals with special needs at over 30 host hotels located in NH and MA.

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email respitality@comcast.net

Attention All Baseball Fans

Autism Society of NH

has once again teamed-up with the



To recognize and support

Autism Awareness

Saturday, April 23, 2011

NH Fisher Cats vs. Binghamton Mets

Game time 1:35

MerchantsAuto.com stadium, Manchester

Tickets are only \$8/each (Each ticket sold includes \$3 donation to ASNH)

To purchase tickets, please mail the form below with your check or money order made payable to: Autism Society of N.H., PO Box 68, Concord, N.H. 03302-0068. Tickets can be purchased online at www.nhfishercats.com, go to 'Group Outings' click on SPECIAL OFFER CODE TICKETS and use the special offer code: ASONH, and select Section 104 for ticket location.

For more information, contact Susan Yardley at susan@nhautism.com.

Name: _____ No. of tickets: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone number: _____

****). Tickets will be mailed to the address you provide with your order . Tickets will not be held at the window on game day. The ASNH is not responsible for lost or stolen tickets.*

Hearing on the repeal of "Connor's Law"

By Kristine Caster



Both on the Spectrum - Timothy w/hat holding Baby Tad, Jimmy my tech-y child with his netbook for communication, and iPod Touch for comfort.

The Caster children at the State House opposing the repeal HB 309 on February 24th. They stood with us while we testified to the legislative committee. They were very brave, and they did a stellar job waiting patiently for 1.5 hours before we were able to finally testify.

Finding a place to park wasn't easy. I had my husband Steve drop me and the kids off at the curb, and I'll just meet him inside the courthouse. As we strolled down the side walk and up the stairs to the courthouse, we saw people in support of "Connor's Law" holding signs. The children and I finally reached the 3rd floor and it was crowded with people waiting to get inside the room. Jimmy took off down the hall to investigate the environment while I stood with my youngest in the hallway. It was warm and overwhelming to make sure Jimmy was in my sights. Some people could tell my kids were on the Spectrum as they offered to help watch Jimmy and follow him. I accepted their offer. Whew!

A spot on the bench cleared and laid my belongings down to free myself for just in case someone wandered off as Steve wasn't there yet. I heard a voice out of nowhere say to me, "There's hope, there is hope". I looked over at her and saw her sitting with reassuring eyes looking up at me telling me that she too has a child on the spectrum and he is twenty six years old. She said that he was like Jim and that it would be okay. Wow!

The courtroom finally opened and we all filed in. We found our four chairs and seated ourselves. I wasn't sure what to expect. Steve finally arrived. The committee convened and started to take testimony after Representative Hunt presented his case first.

After 1.5 hours of testimony the topic shifted to the reasons why we were there. They wanted anyone with small children that were there to go first in order to get them out of the warm room as soon as possible. The children's patience was wearing thin. We had to hide Timothy's Baby Tad, because it was playing lullabies during testimony. Needless to say, Timothy was growing agitated. I did everything in my power to distract his agitation by diverting his auditory sensitivity to tapping on paper and laminated paper signs.

Meanwhile, Jimmy was getting hungry. You can't put a 'whisper' voice on a netbook. So, during testimony most people heard a computer voice request, "I want mac'n cheese and hot dog French fries ice cream yes." Oh boy! I hand signed that he needed to wait.

Other children did stellar jobs waiting patiently, too. I saw a parent provide a Rubbermaid tub of motivators or distracters to keep her child busy.

As a family we sat before the committee, and my husband began his testimony. Steve showed the committee Timothy's first picture exchange icon 'bubbles' to show them the early intervention helped him to become an effective communicator starting under the age of 2.

We were asked by a committee member if our private insurance paid for Jim's Vantage Lite device. That claim was denied by our insurance company! I went on to explain the devastating impact that financial strain can have on the family structure.

We had to pay out of pocket thousands of dollars for sensory equipment that included therapy swings, ball chairs, body socks, ball pits, chew tubes and theratubing – communication needs that include a computer, Boardmaker software programs (denied by private insurance), printer, printer cartridges, paper, laminator, laminating sheets, and Velcro. Cha-Ching! Cha-Ching!

Even though, both children have aged out of the early intervention services, it was very important to us to let the committee members know that these services need to continue for other families.

HB 309 wants to repeal Early Intervention Services and Diagnosing and Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Apple Blossom

5K Walk for Autism

May 1, 2011 @ 1:00 pm

**Meet at the Moose Hill Kindergarten (150 Pillsbury Road)
\$25 registration for individuals; \$15 for additional family members
(personal pledge money raised will also be greatly appreciated)**

***First 100 registrants receive a free T-shirt
Proceeds benefit the Autism Society of NH***

**Make check payable to: Autism Society of NH
(note : Apple Blossom 5K in memo)**

**Mail check to: Town of Londonderry, Attn: Finance Dept,
268B Mammoth Road, Londonderry, NH 03053**

Or register online at:

http://www.active.com/event_detail.cfm?event_id=1941184

For more information contact: phamann@londonderrynh.org

***Organized by the
Town of Londonderry Joint Loss Management Committee/Wellness Committee***

FYI...

The next meeting of the Manchester Area Autism Spectrum Support Group is on Monday, March 7, 2011 at 7:00 pm at Moore Center Services at 195 McGregor Street, Unit 400, Manchester, NH (across from Catholic Medical Center). Enter through the "Center Entrance" and take the elevator to the fourth floor.

Our topic of the evening will be Social Skills. Elizabeth Webster, Easter Seals Autism Family Support Specialist, will present *It's So Much Work To Be Your Friend*, a video by Richard Lavoie that provides strategies for teaching friendship skills in the classroom, the home and the community.

A map to the Moore Center can be found at:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps?address=195+McGregor+Street&city=manchester&state=nh>

The support group is sponsored by Moore Center Services (<http://www.moorecenter.org>). There is no fee to attend the meeting, and it is open to all who may benefit from attending.

Please r.s.v.p. for the meeting to Steve Hambleton (s.hambleton@comcast.net).

In Celebration of Autism Awareness Month

Autism Unraveled with
Rebecca Proctor and
The Gallery at One Washington Center

Present

A Spectrum of Expression
During the month of April
At the Gallery at One Washington Center
Dover, New Hampshire

An Artists Reception will be held on Saturday, April 16, 2011

Artwork created individually or collaboratively can be submitted by persons on the Autistic Spectrum of all ages and abilities.

Creations must be ready for display by the last week of March. Each piece must be ready to hang and include name, age and phone number on back. Contact Samantha Battis at www.seacoastautismawareness.com for more information and pick-up arrangements.

Did you know?

The Autism Society of NH has a special message board just for Dads!!!

Dad-to-Dad Forum has been set up to give Dads a place to connect with each other and talk about their experiences and concerns. DAD'S ONLY PLEASE

Go to our web site @ www.nhautism.com, click on the message board tab, and then look for the Dad-to-Dad forum.

Become a Volunteer with the Autism Society of NH!

We are always looking for people who care about autism and want to support our *mission*.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact us at:
info@nhautism.com

Upcoming Events

Limited seating remains for [Facilitating Friendships in the Inclusive Classroom](#) on Tuesday, March 22, 2011 at the IOD Professional Development Center in Concord, NH.

Students' friendships are vital to creating community in the classroom. We know from Maslow's hierarchy of needs that students must feel a sense of belonging before they achieve and learn. What, then, is the educator's role in the facilitation of social relationships? And why do some students have difficulty making friends? This interactive workshop will discuss strategies for facilitating friendships as well as the barriers that keep those strategies from working. Participants will examine what needs to be done to ensure that all kids have friends, as well as what needs to be undone—some of which we have put into place with good intentions. Participants will also leave with an action plan to apply to their own school settings.



**Facilitating Friendships
in the Inclusive Classroom**

Date: Tuesday, March 22, 2011

Time: 9am to 3pm, *registration begins at 8:30am*

Location: IOD Professional Development Center, 56 Old Suncook Road, Concord, NH

Registration Fee: \$85, *includes continental breakfast, lunch, and materials*

Workshop Instructor: Susan Shapiro, M.Ed.

For registration information: <http://iod.unh.edu/> or call 603-228-2084 or e-mail contact.iod@unh.edu

Limited seating remains for [Supporting Friendships! Facilitating Social Networks for Young Adults with Disabilities in the Community](#) on Wednesday, March 23, 2011 at the IOD Professional Development Center in Concord, NH.

Friends magnify our joys and support us in our struggles. A facilitated social network can be a great way to assist young adults with disabilities in connecting with potential friends in the community. In this workshop we'll learn about the concepts of a social network and discuss the role that a facilitator can play in supporting friendships and developing a network. We'll discuss potential funding sources for facilitation and make plans for ongoing training, support, and mentoring for families and facilitators who are interested in forming a social network for someone.



**SUPPORTING
FRIENDSHIPS!**

*Facilitating Social
Networks for Young Adults
with Disabilities
in the Community*

This workshop is specifically designed for family members and anyone interested in becoming a network facilitator. Family members are encouraged to attend with a facilitator if they have someone in mind.

Date: Wednesday, March 23, 2011

Time: 9am to 3pm, *registration begins at 8:30am*

Location: IOD Professional Development Center, 56 Old Suncook Road, Concord, NH

Registration Fee: \$85, *includes continental breakfast, lunch, and materials*

Workshop Instructor: Lisa Hasler

Autism Workshop for Parents, Guardians & Caregivers

Thursday, April 14, 2011

8:30 am - 3:30 pm

At The Community Campus

100 Campus Drive, Portsmouth, NH

Join The Birchtree Center's autism specialists for a day-long workshop for families living with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). After a keynote address from Program Director Sandra Pierce-Jordan, Ph.D., BCBA-D, participants will split into breakout groups to discuss practical strategies for meeting the needs and challenges of children with autism.

Autism Workshop for Educators and Para-Educators

Thursday, August 25, 2011

8:30 am - 3:30 pm

At The Community Campus

100 Campus Drive, Portsmouth, NH

Join The Birchtree Center's autism specialists for a day-long workshop featuring practical classroom strategies for teachers and para-educators working with children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders. This workshop includes 5.5 hours of instruction; attendance certificates will be provided.

Space is limited; reservations will be accepted starting in May 2011.

For more information, visit <http://www.birchtreecenter.org/workshops>



Autism Plus! Management and Intervention for Co-existing Attention, Executive and Mood Disorders

This is an advanced workshop for professionals, paraprofessionals, and parents who have substantial knowledge about autism spectrum disorders and evidence-based interventions.

Date of Event: Friday, March 25, 2011

Time: 8:00 am Check-In, 8:30 AM - 3:45 PM Presentation. Lunch at SERESC.

Registration Ends: 3/14/2011 11:59 PM (ET)

Location: SERESC, 29 Commerce Drive, Bedford, NH 03110-6835

Cost: \$190.00 includes continental breakfast, lunch and a certificate of participation for 6 contact hours.

[Register and pay by 3/7/2011 for the early registration cost of \\$155.00!!](#)

Questions?? Contact Robin Knight @ rknight@seresc.net, text 603-661-4947 or call 603-206-6816 for more information



**Saturday, March 12, 8:30am-4:30pm
at the Radisson Conference Center in Manchester, NH**

Come learn about:

- Bullying
- Being a student with a disability
- Educational reform
- Student-centered learning
- Student emotional and behavioral health
- NH charter schools
- Special education partnerships
- Making friends with math
- Media diet for kids
- Creating your own books
- Engaging adolescent readers
- Kindergarten readiness
- Response to intervention
- Schools without walls and many more!

Please see the conference website at www.picnh.org/p4e2011 for full details and to register. The cost is just \$50 for adults, \$35 for students, which includes breakfast, lunch, snacks, and parking.

KEEPING IT ALL TOGETHER: Balancing Family, Systems and Life

(Or How to Do It All Without Losing It!)

April 15th & 16th

Waterville Valley Conference & Event Center

Waterville Valley

The 2011 New Hampshire Family Voices and Partners in Health Family Conference starts April 15th! Please join us Friday for a special evening of friendship and relaxation. Special guests are **Ryen Blackey** who will share with us his experiences of being his own best advocate, even as a young child, and his mother **Tammy Shaw** on how she supports him.

Saturday will have two breakout sessions. In session one, attendees can choose from

- **Working with Health Care Providers:** *How to prepare, what questions to ask, what tools and tips can be used to get the most of an appointment even when dealing with the chaos of everyday life.*
- **Systems of Care: Who pays for what, when and why?** *An overview of systems- what systems there are, who might fit within their criteria and what to do if you aren't sure where or when you fit.*

Session two will offer a choice of

- **Section 504 & IDEA** – *Have you ever wondered which law applies to your child- The Individuals with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act? Learn the differences with a brief overview of both laws with a focus on the purpose and eligibility requirements of each.*

- **Finding YOUR Voice** *Hear from experienced parents and advocates how they learned to speak up in their own way and in their own voice. Learn tips and techniques for effective communication.*

Lynn Lyons, LICSW, will present the **Keynote Presentation There's No Such Thing as Running on Empty: Caring for Children While Caring for Yourself.** Learn the "Hows" of emotional management and distressing, setting boundaries and replenishing your body and mind.

Lynn is a licensed psycho-therapist with over 19 years experience. She specializes in anxiety in adults and children and presents numerous workshops to parents and teachers on creating calmness. She has a private practice in Concord and is the mother of two young children.

New Hampshire FAMILY VOICES®



REGISTER: Please mail completed form and \$10 registration fee (includes meals and lodging) to:

NH Family Voices
129 Pleasant St—Thayer Bldg
Concord NH 03301

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

In Breakout Session 1, I will attend:

- Working with Health Care Providers
 Systems of Care

In Breakout Session 2, I will attend:

- Section 504 and IDEA
 Finding YOUR Voice

Lodging: Accommodations for one night are provided at the Black Bear Lodge. All rooms are double occupancy. If you have a roommate preference, please write their name here: _____

In order to guarantee a room, registrations must be received by March 30th.

Check in is Friday, April 15th, 4:00 pm
Please call your PIH coordinator or NHFV if you have difficulty accessing respite.

Over ▶

Questions?

Call Erika Downie at NH Family Voices

(603)271-8179 or in-state toll free

1-800-852-3345 ext 8179

Email ebd@nhfv.org



ATECH Workshop

Apps - The New Bag of Tricks in Assistive Technology



When:

Choose from one of **two dates** for this popular workshop:

Friday April 8, 2011 from 8:30am to 4:30pm EDT

or

Friday May 20, 2011 from 8:30am to 4:30pm EDT

Driving Directions

Where:

ATECH Services Training Room
57 Regional Drive, Suite #7
Concord, NH 03301

Apps - The New Bag of Tricks in Assistive Technology

April 8, 2011 or May 20, 2011

8:30am - 4:30pm

With roughly 100 new off-the-shelf apps added every day, an educator's bag of tricks is overflowing with choices. But which will work best? A fraction of these apps were actually created for individuals with special needs, yet many are a perfect match. In this full day, hands-on seminar, our assistive technology specialists will help you identify apps that will increase independence and aid communication, social skills, fine motor development, literacy and visual schedules. We'll discuss capability and access strategies for individuals with disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, CVI, stroke and developmental disability.

Speakers:

Phyllis Watson, CCC-SLP, AAC Specialist, ATECH Services
Jennifer Stylianos, MS OTR/L, ATP, Occupational Therapist, ATECH Services

Topic 1: Pocket sized AAC

Topic 2: Social Stories/Visual Schedules/Video Modeling

Topic 3: Literacy

Topic 4: Developing Fine Motor Skills

Topic 5: Organization/Prompts/Memory Aids

Fee: \$115 per person (includes continental breakfast and lunch)

If you have any questions about the workshop or how to register, please contact Lisa Demers at 603-226-2900, ext. 10 or info@atechservices.org

Easter Seals The Family Place Camp Connect Manchester & Somersworth Fact Sheet

Who: Easter Seals The Family Place are pediatric programs providing a comprehensive array of supports and services to children birth through adolescence with developmental, behavioral health or disability needs and assistance for their families.

What: Each summer we sponsor Camp Connect – A summer program to enhance social communication and sensory regulation for children who struggle with social competency.

Where: There are many Camp Connect Programs: Easter Seals Salem (603) 893-0984, Children Unlimited in Conway (603) 447-6356, Easter Seals The Family Place at the Works in Somersworth (603) 895-1522 or (603) 740-3534. and this year Easter Seals The Family Place is sponsoring TWO Camp Connects in Manchester, the elementary aged program and the middle school program.

When: Monday through Thursday, 9am to 2pm: July 5 to August 4 (Mandatory parent/child orientation prior to the start of camp)

Philosophy: Our Camp Connect Program is a fun educational program very different than those provided by school summer programs. The purpose of Camp is social pragmatic language enhancement and sensory regulation in an environment created to help children have fun through learning appropriate social interactions and the communication strategies of socialization. The goal is building competency to improve social communication amongst each other and within the community. We include lots of opportunities for practice in natural social situations when appropriate as each Thursday there is a field trip related to the skills addressed that week. The Theme this summer for Manchester and Somersworth is **THE WORLD AROUND US**, which enables us to build imagination, problem solving, group dynamics, science knowledge and critical thinking skills in support of academic achievement. We will accept: up to 16 students in our Somersworth Camp Connect Program; 16 students in our Manchester Middle School Camp Connect Program; and up to 20 students in our Manchester Elementary School Camp Connect Program. Our day is highly structured using picture schedules, visual supports, and social stories. Our approach is always positive utilizing the principles of PBIS for any issues that arise relative to transition, anxiety, or overwhelming circumstances. Our purpose is to assist children in learning how to handle those situations that are overwhelming for them. In addition, we utilize the How 'Does Your Engine Run / ALERT Program and assist children to understand their triggers and support their development of sensory regulation activities.

Our staff has extensive backgrounds in working with children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Social Communication challenges. The staff ratio is 1 adult to every 3-4 children. The staff composition includes certified educator / special educators, speech / language pathologists, occupational therapists, and camp counselors. We often have students in the fields of OT, PT, SLP participating as well. A consulting behaviorist is available.

Camp Connect Logistics: The Camp Connect summer program is for children in elementary and middle school with social pragmatic language challenge. Most of the children who attend have Asperger's Syndrome, High Functioning Autism or other issues that create difficulties in forming social relationships. The children must be verbal and able to follow directions. We have a very stringent screening process to ensure adequate peer matches so that camp will be successful for each child attending. There is an application process that requires a copy of the child's most recent IEP, Behavioral Plan, Immunization records, and completion of goals and objectives by parents. We work diligently to carry over IEP and parental goals to prevent any regression. In fact, in past years, school districts have commented on student readiness to engage in school when they return.

Once all the materials are received, we set up a phone interview with the parent to learn through a parent's eyes about their child. A formal screening is then performed. We do not accept children with concerns around self-injurious behavior or aggressive behavior toward others. Once the child is identified as appropriate, a deposit is provided by the parent. The cost of the Camp is \$2750 which must be paid prior to the first day of camp unless supported by the school district who will be billed. Confirmation must be obtained in writing prior to the start of camp if external funding sources will be provided.



Autism Society of New Hampshire
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Improving the lives of all affected by autism through education, advocacy, and support.

DISCLAIMER

All information provided or published by the Autism Society of New Hampshire (ASNH) is for informational purposes only. Under the Autism Society's Option Policy you are responsible for the choice of any treatment or therapy option or service provider. Specific treatment, therapy or services should be provided to an individual only at the direction of the individual's doctor, caregiver or other qualified professional. Reference to any treatment or therapy option or to any program, service or treatment provider is not an endorsement by ASNH of the treatment or therapy option, program, service or provider referenced.

