



Autism Spectrum

The Official Publication of the Autism Society of New Hampshire

Vol. 1 ~ No. 1

P O Box 68, Concord, NH 03302-0068

Winter Issue

From The President's Desk...

Dear Members,

Happy New Year to you all. 2003 is behind us and 2004 awaits us with endless possibilities.

2003 was a year of change and transition for the Autism Society of New Hampshire. We welcome all new members, board members and volunteers and take time to thank and acknowledge all those who have served so tirelessly in the past. Please see inside for short bios on our newest board members.

We have big plans for 2004. Already plans are in the works for our first ever **Autism Awareness Walk, May 8th at the Audubon Center at Lake Massabesic**. See more details inside. We will again hold our **Annual**

From The President ~ See Page 11

Get To Know

Your Board Members ...

I am happy to announce the addition of several new board members. Please welcome Dawn Marquis, Janet Stafford, Joyce Ninness and Cory Collier. They are a stellar group who bring much enthusiasm and expertise to the table.

Joyce Ninness is also serving as our new Secretary. She is an amazing individual who runs a support group in Concord, is finishing up her Masters in Special Education and was recently awarded the NH Leader's Choice Award for personal advocacy. All this while raising a family and rooting for the Red Sox.

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Happy New Year!!

Janet Stafford is the founder and president of Kidz-play in Londonderry and was just named "Occupational Therapist of the Year". Her dedication to children especially those on the Autism Spectrum shines through. We are lucky to have her on board.

Dawn Marquis head up the NH Dietary Intervention support group, and works at the Parent Information Center, (PIC) most recently as their Best Schools Initiative Project Director. She is the mother of two boys and has recently built a new home in Pittsfield.

Cory Collier has the distinction of being our youngest board member. He is a 2003 NH Leadership graduate and a proud Senior member of the Civil Air Patrol in Concord.

The Jim Mullen Foundation Offers FREE Computers

Do you have a disability? Are you in need of a free computer?

The Jim Mullen Foundation is proud to provide free computers for people who have a disability. We specialize in providing computers for anybody especially for those individuals who think that they are unable to use one.

Just click on, or copy and paste the link below and print our official Computer Give-a-way Application. Tell us who you are. Tell us the nature of your disability (along with verification from your doctor), and we will provide you with a free computer, and we will attempt to provide you with the necessary adaptive hardware and software so that you will be most productive with your new computer.

The Application:

<http://www.jimmullen.com/Zoom-Seq.asp?id=7948>

The Jim Mullen Foundation
350 West Ontario Suite 4E
Chicago, IL 60610-4040
(312) 440-4251

~ Chris Collier

Leadership Series--Information Exchange

Generous Donation Will Provide Services To Seacoast's Children

I am excited to announce that through a very generous donation from Wal-Mart Distribution Center and Corporate Wal-Mart, Easter Seals has received a grant to provide a wide array of services to the Seacoast's children and families.

One of the programs to be developed is a Sensory Integration Clinic in Raymond. I am hoping for feedback from all of you as well as the children and families you serve so that this endeavor truly meets the needs for such a program.

The person coordinating this program will be certified in Sensory Intergration. We would like to partner with local school districts, families, Early Supports and Services programs, community partners and anyone interested in providing input so that this clinic is available and meets the needs of the community. Please feel free to pass this email onto anyone who you feel might like to provide input.

Thank you all for your interest, input, and support. We are very excited about this project and hope to be up and running by March.

Patti Rawding-Anderson
Director of Program Development for Early
Childhood Services
Easter Seals NH & Maine
The Family Place
Cozy Corners Plaza # 5
61 Rte. 27
Raymond, NH 03077
(603) 895-1522

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The Beyond Access Model: Promoting Learning of General Education Curriculum Content by Students with Autism and Other Significant Disabilities

Cheryl M. Jorgensen ~ ~ Rae M. Sonnenmeier ~ ~ Michael McSheehan
Institute on Disability/UCED ~ ~ University of New Hampshire

Jared's fourth grade class is working in pairs on writing a creative story. Jared and his partner are deciding on the topic for their story. The paraprofessional coaches the classmate to brainstorm choices of different topics, and to print two of his favorite choices on two pieces of paper (e.g., baseball or summer vacation plans, American Idol or robots.) Then, the classmate holds up each piece of paper so Jared can see it and reads it aloud to him. The classmate asks "Hey Jared, do you want to write about the baseball or about what we are going to do this summer?" Jared looks to the left and the classmate says "You want to write about baseball in our story. Great. I love baseball." The choice making continues as Jared and his partner collaborate to write the story.

The classmate writes words or phrases related to baseball (e.g., striking out the batter, watching the game, hitting a grounder, eating a hot dog) on pieces of paper and presents them to Jared two at a time to identify his preference. The classmate builds the story sentence by sentence, adding his own elaborations and looking to Jared frequently for direction, affirmation, or disagreement. The speech language pathologist and occupational therapist have collaborated to ensure that Jared is seated so that he can easily view the choices and that the choices are phrased appropriately. In this lesson and others in science, social studies, and math, the team is exploring how to present choices to Jared that will facilitate his participation in classroom activities.

Jared has labels of autism and mental retardation and seemingly has no effective and reliable means of communication. In past years, Jared's team was reluctant to allow him to participate in mainstream classroom activities until they were sure about what he "knows."

In another elementary school, a student with significant disabilities named Maria is enrolled in a life skills class. The class is making Rice Krispie bars to sell to students and teachers at snack time. Maria is the same age as Jared and her school records reveal that she, too, has label of autism and mental retardation. During this cooking activity Maria is asked to point to a picture of another student to indicate to the paraprofessional who she wants as a cooking partner. She is supported to grasp the spoon to stir the batter. She reaches out to each of the cooking ingredients as the paraprofessional reads them out of the cookbook. When Maria is given a taste of the batter her aide shows her two different Mayer Johnson symbols – a smile and a frown – and asks her to "point to the happy face if you like the taste of the batter" or "point to the sad face if you don't like the taste."

Why are Jared and Maria's educational programs so different? Does Jared's team know something about his abilities that Maria's team doesn't know about hers? Jared's team seems to be operating under the assumption that Jared might be able to learn the academic content of the general education curriculum and Maria's team seems to have concluded that she cannot. Furthermore, even in the absence of knowing exactly what Jared knows, his team seems to think that there is a benefit to his being included in challenging, age-appropriate academic activities. Which assumption has the potential to be more beneficial for Jared and Maria both now and in the future? What do families, educators, and therapists need to know and how do they need to work together in order to make the Jared scenario more common for students with autism and other significant disabilities?

The Beyond Access Project

The Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire was recently awarded a four year "Model Demonstration Project" from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs to try to answer these questions and to share with parents and professionals the

The Beyond Access ~ From Page 3

results of their work. During the 2002-2003 school year, the project worked with three students, their families, and their teams from an elementary school project site and during the 2003-2004 year we worked with a high school site, helping teams figure out supports that students need in order to help all students learn from the general education curriculum. As many parents and professionals know, the reauthorization of the federal special education law (IDEA 1997) requires that students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum; that they pursue learning goals that are "consistent with those of students without disabilities" to the "maximum extent appropriate;" and that they "make progress" within that curriculum. For students like Jared and Maria who have traditionally been given labels of autism, mental retardation, deaf-blindness, traumatic brain injury, and multiple disabilities, realization of these goals can present significant challenges.

In many schools, access to the general education curriculum occurs in segregated classrooms and the standards that students pursue are minimally related to the academic content of that curriculum. Students' programs often focus primarily on "access" skills, such as learning to use a switch to activate a computer program or who should take the next turn in an activity. The vast majority of student portfolios submitted for the NHEIAP-Alternate Assessment target these access skills rather than learning of general education curriculum content. And even when students are enrolled in general education classes, staff may not have access to high quality professional development around evolving best practices in augmentative communication, instructional support, positive behavior supports, and effective team functioning.

The Beyond Access Model

The Beyond Access Model of student and team planning consists of the four Phases. Phase 1 of the model involves completing a needs assessment of the student, family, and team. Phases 2, 3, and 4 are recursive processes that teams use under the direction of a school-based "mentor" who is experienced in supporting students with significant disabilities who are in general education classes. This mentor might be a special education teacher serving as the "Inclusion Facilitator" or a related service provider such as a speech-language pathologist or occupational therapist. During Phase 2, the team explores different curriculum and communication supports that were identified as priorities during the needs assessment. Supports for the team are also explored. Once the team learns what works best for the student and the team, they move to Phase 3 where they observe and document how the supports are used. In Phase 4, these data are reviewed and changes are made as needed, often recycling to any of the previous phases.

Year One Outcomes

Families and team members from the elementary school project site reported the following outcomes.

First, using the Beyond Access Model has made a difference in team members' views about students' potential for learning academic curriculum content. Team members report an increased willingness to develop students' augmentative communication systems so that they include academic vocabulary, where before the vocabulary was mostly comprised of vocabulary for social interactions and life skills routines.

Second, using the Beyond Access Model has made a difference in how teams work with one another. Prior to being part of the Beyond Access project, some teams only met a few times a year. Now, all three elementary students' teams meet once a week to do instructional planning.

Third, using the Beyond Access Model has made a positive difference in families' participation in their children's education. All of the elementary site's families have attended more meetings

The Beyond Access ~ From Page 4

to discuss their children's educational programs and have commented on the value of the home visits being conducted by project and site staff during the Needs Assessment Process.

Fourth, project site staff has noted the intense nature of the Needs Assessment process and has expressed concerns about their ability to devote this amount of time to individual student's programs.

Fifth, an outcome of using the Model's Needs Assessment process has been consideration regarding the amount of services each student receives from the team speech-language pathologist. An increase in service delivery time will be spent on development of students' augmentative communication systems and time in the classroom modeling and coaching paraprofessionals on effective ways to support students' communication and learning.

Sixth, teams are using Positive Behavior Support strategies more effectively and consistently. For example, one student who was having daily behavioral upsets, and was not toileting, is now having minimal behavioral concerns and is communicating his need to use the bathroom. This relieves the team and his family of a significant barrier that had prevented them from even thinking about issues related to general education curriculum access.

Seventh, the teams' related service providers (e.g., occupational therapist, speech-language pathologist) are shifting from a "direct instruction-pull out" mode of service delivery to more effective use of a consultative, embedded method of providing supports to students within the context of naturally occurring academic and social situations.

Eighth, one student has significantly larger vocabulary choices on his augmentative communication system and significantly greater numbers of opportunities to use his system within social and academic situations. Additional resources were also identified by the school district to purchase communication devices that go home with two students.

Conclusion

Schools are struggling to implement the promising practices that characterize successful inclusive education and to build their capacity for effective communication and instructional supports. Schools are struggling to develop positive family involvement in designing students' educational programs, and to foster productive team collaboration in a context of quality professional development. The Beyond Access Model presents a way for teams to improve student learning and team functioning. While using the model may at first require outside technical assistance, the recursive nature of the model encourages true capacity building for teams over time, leading to improved access and achievement for students.

References

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- Glennen, S., & DeCoste, D. (1997). Handbook of augmentative and alternative communication. San Diego, CA: Singular Publishing Group, Inc.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, PL 105-17, 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*

Acknowledgment

This project is funded by the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Grant # H324M020067. The opinions expressed by the project do not necessarily represent those of the U. S. Department of Education or the University of New Hampshire.

Mercury And Fish

The developing fetus and young children are thought to be disproportionately affected by mercury, which can interfere with many aspects of development, including brain maturation. While the American Academy of Pediatrics stated in 2001 that minimizing exposure to mercury is essential to optimal child health, state and national efforts to educate the public about today's leading cause of mercury exposure - contaminated fish consumption - are lacking.

Mercury levels in freshwater and ocean fish have risen in recent decades due to pollution from coal power plants and the incineration and landfilling of mercury containing products. As a result, 44 states now have consumption advisories for mercury, including every New England state. Clean Water Action, a national nonprofit organization with a NH office in Portsmouth, is committed to protecting public health and natural resources by working to eliminate sources of mercury. On behalf of the New England Zero Mercury Campaign, staff are available to speak to your community group or health care center about mercury in the environment and how we can protect our children from exposure. Please call Melissa at 430-9565 or e-mail mbernardin@cleanwater.org for more information.

~Melissa Bernardin

The NH Dept. of Health & Human Services has issued a warning urging pregnant women, women of child-bearing age, nursing mothers, and children under 7: Limit consumption of all NH inland freshwater fish to 1 meal a month. · Do not eat shark, swordfish, king mackerel, tilefish, or lobster tomalley. · Limit consumption of all other fish (including canned tuna) to no more than 12 oz (about 2 cans of tuna or 2 meals of other fish) per week. Very small children and toddlers should eat less. Mercury exposure is cumulative - keep track of all types of fish eaten to avoid exceeding recommended mercury limits. For more information contact: NH Depart. of Health and Human Svcs. Office of Community & Public Health 1(800)852-3345 x4664 healthrisk@dhhs.state.nh.us

From The Mailbag

MERCURY:

John Best, a father of a young son w/ Autism wrote a letter to us about his thoughts and strong feelings regarding the role of Mercury in his son's condition. It is an issue surrounded by controversy. John's letter will be available online or if needed we can mail you a copy. If you have similar strong feelings and would like to contact John his e.mail is bettwice33@juno.com

The Autism Society Of NH welcomes any and all letters to the editor. We may be subject to space available at the time of publication, please mail them to us at Post Office Box 68,

Crotched Mountain Celebrates 50 Years!

Since 1953, Crotched Mountain has been dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities and helping them live as independently as possible. This year marked the 50th Anniversary of Crotched Mountain Rehabilitation Center. To celebrate this milestone, several events were planned throughout the year. It is Crotched Mountain's hope that these events will provide opportunities to reunite former students and clients, and to recognize old friends of Crotched Mountain. The events planned included:

Late August – Student Art Show and 50th Anniversary Viewing of the Elizabeth Orton Jones and Nora Unwin Murals.

Sunday, September 14 – Crotched Mountain Brain Injury Center Walkathon/5k Race, and Reunion Picnic.

Saturday, October 11 – Homecoming Reunion for Crotched Mountain School of Special Education students.

All of these events were held at the Crotched Mountain main campus in Greenfield, NH.

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From The Mailbag

I recently spoke with a family who informed me of the idea of having a profile card. Here is their story.

My son decided to take a morning stroll this morning. In his underwear he managed to cross a busy side street and was on his way to Dairy Queen. I was awakened by a call by the New Phila Police Station and asked if my son was downstairs. I said "well, as far as I know he's sleeping, but I'll check". Nope, his bed was empty. I flew downstairs and the porch door was wide open as was the screen door to the outside. An officer was standing there, I said "Oh my God. Where did he go?" He said "I think he wanted an ice cream cone". One cop said "your profile card with his information and his picture on it was the best thing to do. Otherwise we wouldn't know who he belongs to".

So, I thought I would pass this information on to you. This card is especially useful for those children who would not be able to communicate their names, addresses, phone numbers, or parents names to strangers. A profile card would include: Name, D.O.B., Age, Height, Weight, Color Eyes and Hair, Address, Phone Number, Alternative/Emergency Phone and Parents Information.

Parent can then simply right the child's diagnoses and what some of there little quirks are, likes and dislikes, temper, disposition and other things parents might find important for others to do. Some families even include a recent picture and/or finger prints on the opposite side. Families can then make copies, give one to the police station, one to the fire department and keep one for home. This parent even conveyed that each year the dispatcher contacts her if she forgets to do her annual update! What a great way to collaborate with your community. Hope this helps a few parents.

~Becky Thomson

First Annual Moose March Nets NAAR \$150,000

Walk F.A.R for N.A.A.R. held their first annual "Moose March" on Oct. 5 at the Veteran's Park in Manchester. The Holy Moose Droppings of Northern New England wishes to congratulate the Moose Marchers! They broke \$150,000!

"There was never any doubt in my mind," said Kim Drelick, Northern New England Chairperson, National Alliance For Autism Research, "but what we would break the \$100,000 mark. In the back of my mind I secretly hoped for \$125,000. However, what actually happened was an incredible, \$150,000."

"The dedication and enthusiasm of all the participants and committee members is the reason we were able to achieve a level of success far beyond our wildest dreams and expectations," she continued, "I feel so fortunate and proud to be associated with such a great group of people. Through the efforts of everyone involved with the walk, your efforts have brought us closer to the realization of a cure for autism."

Jacob's Bridge Through Autism Classic Was Held In December

Jacob's Bridge Through Autism, held their annual basketball classic, to raise autism awareness, on Tues., Dec. 2 at the N.H.T.I. in Concord. There were two games featuring Plymouth State University vs. New England College and the second game featuring Keene State College vs. Colby-Sawyer College.

A free clinic for autistic children and their families was scheduled on Sun., Nov. 30 at the N.H.T.I. in Concord.

The Autism Society Of NH welcomes any and all letters to the editor. We may be subject to space available at the time of publication, please mail them to us at Post Office Box 68, Concord, NH 03302-0068.
~ The Editor

Name _____	<p style="text-align: center;">ATTACH CURRENT PHOTO OR FINGERPRINT HERE</p>
Address _____	
Home Phone: _____	
Height _____ Weight _____ Color Hair _____	
Color Eyes _____ D.O.B _____ Age _____	
Alternative/Emergency Phone: _____	
Parent's Information _____	

Disney Is Magical And Awe-tism Friendly!!

If you are considering a family outing to Disney ... whether it be Disney World or Disneyland ... make sure you stop by the Guest Relations at any one of the theme parks and request a "Guest Assistance Card" for your child with autism. The cast members are wonderful to work with and are very understanding. Having a child with a non-apparent disability is far different than a child and/or person with a highly visible disability in this world. Waiting in long lines is often impossible for a child with autism.

As a family, we all went to Disney World for Christmas vacation. Mommy, Joyce Ninness, secretary of the New Hampshire Autism Society; Daddy, Darin Ninness; Emma Ninness, five years old and her two year old brother, Ethan Ninness along with Grammie and Grampie Addario for a fun filled Christmas event.

While making the reservations, we inquired about the non-apparent disability pass but unfortunately we didn't get the answers we needed. Upon arrival, we went to the Guest Relations office outside Epcot and asked about the Guest Assistance Card for Emma.

There is an extensive guide book for guests with disabilities for each theme park. It specifically outlines everything you would need to know ... from parking to attraction access. They have braille guides and audio tape guides for visual disabilities. Break areas for service animals and any restrictions regarding them. They offer assistive listening devices, a system that utilizes a lightweight wireless device that receives an infra-red signal from overhead transmitters at certain locations in order to amplify sound, a sign

language interpretator for theme park shows, reflective captioning, handheld and video captioning although not all portions of an attraction experience may be captioned.

We were issued the Guest Assistance Card which alerts cast members to provide the assistance you have requested where applicable. It is NOT intended to provide immediate access but can use an alternate attraction entrance where available for your complete party. It also allows guests who have problems waiting in lines like our Emma. Guests with disabilities and up to five members of their party may enter through these entrances. It did not apply to lines waiting to meet and/or get autographs of characters.

Disney is very disability friendly. Cast members are very helpful and friendly.

We would strongly recommend that you take your child there and enjoy the theme parks. It was awe-some!!!!

The Autism Society Of NH welcomes any and all letters to the editor. We may be subject to space available at the time of publication, please mail them to us at Post Office Box 68, Concord, NH 03302-0068.
~ The Editor

*Once again we want to thank
Spectrum Monthly*

for their continued support and
generous printing donation of The Spectrum,
our official publication.

If you are in need of their services
please call them ~ 603-627-0042
and show your appreciation.

Spectrum Monthly

97 Eddy Rd., Manchester, NH 03102
or visit their web at www.spectrummonthly.com

DONATIONS:

The Autism Society of NH would like to thank the families and friends of **Robert Bergeron of Manchester, Salvi Columbus of Sandown , and Ralph Enos of Atkinson** for remembering the Society during a most difficult time. Contributors donated a total of \$400 during 2003 in the name of these individuals. Our deepest sympathy and thoughts are with you.

We would also like to recognize the generosity of newlyweds **Andre and Beth Cantelmo** who donated to the Autism Society of New Hampshire in lieu of wedding favors. What a novel and long lasting way to commemorate their new life together.

A huge thank you thank to **David Hall** who made a generous donation to us from the proceeds of "the Schwaz Open" Golf tournament that he runs every year. His contribution was inspired by a chance meeting with Jeremy Anderson , son of board member Steve Anderson.

Thank you to any and all who have donated in the past. Your donations are appreciated. Remember The Autism Society of New Hampshire receives no state or federal funding. We rely solely on the generosity of your donations and the success of our fundraising efforts. It is now possible to make a donation on line @ www.autism-society-nh.org

**GET
THIS
NEWSLETTER
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ON LINE ...
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nhautism@yahoo.com

THANKS!**

NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE:

We have recently purchased the following books for the Family Resource Connection housed at the NH State Library. Please contact the librarian Alice Nye who is most helpful and knowledgeable .Phone #603-271-7931 or FRC@library.state.nh.us.

These books are also available through the interlibrary loan system- Just request them at your local library.

A Parent's Guide to Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism: How to Meet the Challenges
Aquamarine Blue 5

Autistic Spectrum Disorders:Understanding the Diagnosis and Getting Help

Exiting Nirvana: A Daughter's Life with Autism

Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome

Helping Children with Autism Learn: Treatment Approaches for Parents and Professionals

Navigating the Social World: A Curriculum for Educating Individuals with Asperger's Syndrome

Raising a Child with Autism; A guide to Applied Behavior Analysis for Parents

Ride Together: A Brother and Sister's Memoir of Autism in the Family

Targeting Autism: What We Know, Don't Know, and Can do to Help Young Children with Autism

The Stolen Child: Aspects of Autism and Asperger Syndrome

COMING NEXT ISSUE: Recommended reading **BOOK REVIEW**. If you have read a good book lately - and would recommend it to others please tell us about. You can e.mail your suggestions to us at nhautism@yahoo.com

**HELP WANTED ~
TREASURER**

Are you interested in getting more involved with the Autism Society of NH? Or do you have a background in Finance? If so, a great opportunity is presently available. ASNH is looking for an individual to assume the rewarding activities of Treasurer. Call 679-2424 or email us at nhautism@yahoo.com

Support Groups And Contacts

Concord: Pre-Schooler Autism/PDD Support Group

Recently diagnosed families will be meeting 2004 on the following dates: Feb. 10; April 13, to discuss the Autism Awareness Walk; June 8, Summer issues; Aug. 10, Back to School Issues; Oct. 12 and Dec. 14, Holiday Issues at either the home of Joyce Ninness, 3 Dudley Dr., Concord or locations announced in their newsletters. Please Contact Joyce at 228-3771 or jminness@comcast.net

New Hampshire's NLD/Asperger's Support Group: Meetings are the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 at the Rundlett Middle School, Room 503, South St. Concord, N.H. For further information contact Beth at 635-9256 or e-mail to: nldnh@aol.com

Laconia: Lynn Carlson, Lakes Region Community Services Council, Streetcar Place, 63 Beacon St. West Laconia, NH 03246; tel. 524-7755. Call for meeting schedule and location.

Manchester Area: Manchester Regional Autism Support Group, meetings are held the first Monday of the month from 7-9pm in the Board Room of the Moore Center, Region V11 Area Agency, 132 Titus Ave., Manchester, NH. 03103. Contact Margie Louney at the Moore Center 206-2745 or co-leaders Josephine Fraser 627-7027, Dawn Rivard 647-6497 or Steve Hambleton 647-9567 for further information.

Manchester Developmental Pre-School: Contact Karen Davis at the Manchester Developmental Pre-School, 555 Auburn Street, Manchester, tel. 624-6340 for further information.

Region VI Area Agency for Developmental Services of Greater Nashua. 144 Canal St., Nashua, NH Meeting first Thursday of each month. Call 882-6333.

Broad Street School: Nashua, NH 03063. Simonne Perry, 594-4404. This group is held during the morning at the school while the children are in class. It is geared to all developmentally disabled in pre-school.

North Country: James and Tracy Ross, PO Box 822, Littleton, NH 03561 444-3302. Call for meeting schedule and location.

Seacoast Area: Seacoast Parent Support Group for ASD.

Meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday night of the month at the Newmarket Community Church. For meeting time and directions, call Tina at 603-659-1282.

Region 10 Area: Region 10 Autism Support Group meeting will be held on the first Monday of the month from 7-9 p.m. at the Kelley Library in Salem, NH. The library is located at 234 Main Street, Salem. This is the corner of Rt. 97 and Gerronomy Rd. Their phone number is 898-7064 for anyone needing further directions. The contact person is Kathy Waterson from Region 10, 893-1299.

Upper Valley: Beverly Pare and Maryellen, tel. 448-6311. Saturday morning meeting babysitting provided.

NH Dietary Intervention for Autism and Related Disorders: We are currently meeting the third Tuesday of each month at Community Bridges in Bow, NH. This may change with time. Contact Dawn for current meeting times and place at: heartmom2two@yahoo.com

**IF YOU PREFER TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER
VIA E-MAIL ~ PLEASE CONTACT US AT nhautism@yahoo.com
TO ADD YOUR NAME TO THE LIST TODAY!**

New Service Available To School Districts

The Bureau of Special Education is pleased to announce the availability of a new service to school districts: a cadre of people trained to facilitate a Special Education Team meeting in the place of the "Case Manager," or other district person who customarily conducts the Team meetings.

A facilitator is available for situations where the working relationship between the parents and the school has become unproductive.

The purpose is to assist the Team in working through the discussion and decision-making for one of the steps/meetings in the Special Education Process.

Who A trained facilitator

What Conduct a Special Education Team meeting* for the district using facilitation techniques

Where In the district, where the district would ordinarily conduct its own Team meeting (the facilitator will travel to the district)

When With the same 10 days' notice the district gives parents for a Team meeting**

Why Assist districts to have Team meetings with parents where parties are having difficulties working together and reaching Team decisions

How Contact Jackie Teague*** in writing, at the Bureau with the information in the 10 day notice:

- Purpose of the meeting
- Date
- Time
- Identification of the participants [by name, title, Team member role]
- Location

Please also provide the name, title, phone number and e-mail address of the person making the request for the district so Jackie may respond immediately regarding details and availability of a facilitator.

* Facilitators are available for any of the types of meetings the IEP Team/Special Education Team has:

- o Disposition of referral
- o Evaluation planning
- o Determination of eligibility
- o IEP writing and revision (including ESY,

From The President ... From Page 1

Golf Tournament- this will be our 7th year. Come join us at **Stonebridge Country Club** in Goffstown, May 26th. With new members come new ideas and we will be exploring some of these such as a concert, conference, internet auction and more. If you have a unique idea . Let us know.

In April we will be doing a strategic plan to map out the future of the Autism Society here in New Hampshire. In 2003 the Department of Education did a survey of all of the Special Education Departments in the state to assess the real numbers of school age children somewhere on the Autism Spectrum. The numbers came in at just under 1500. That's approximately 5 per 1000 or **1 in 200**. Numbers much too large for anyone to ignore any longer.

With this in mind our new vision is a permanent home for the **Autism Society of New Hampshire** to serve as a **Resource Center** for those families and children living in **New Hampshire** and dealing with Autism every day. Please help us to realize this goal in any way you can.

Volunteer, Donate, Participate, Care! Just like our kids , we all have special talents. Think how can you help out today.

May 2004 be full of progress, growth, change and abundance for you and your families.

Best regards,

Stacey Shannon , President

transition or vocational planning,
and graduation)

- o Placement selection
- o Manifestation determination (** requires a 5 day notice to the parent and Bureau)

***Jackie Teague may be contacted by email:
jteague@ed.state.nh.us

New twist on a well circulated story. Holland Schmolland by Laura Kreuger Crawford

If you have a special needs child, which I do, and if you troll the internet for information, which I have done, you will come across a certain inspirational analogy. It goes like this:

Imagine that you are planning a trip to Italy. You read all the latest travel books; you consult with friends about what to pack, and you develop an elaborate itinerary for your glorious trip. The day arrives.

You board the plane and settle in with your in-flight magazine, dreaming of trattoris, gondola rides and gelato. However when the plane lands you discover, much to your surprise, you are not in Italy --- you are in Holland. You are greatly dismayed at this abrupt and unexpected change in plans.

You rant and rave to the travel agency, but it does no good. You are stuck. After awhile, you tire of fighting and begin to look at what Holland has to offer. You notice the beautiful tulips, the kindly people in the wooden shoes, the French fries with mayonnaise, and you think, "this isn't exactly what I planned, but it's not so bad It's just different."

Having a child with special needs is suppose to be like this -- not any worse than having a typical child -- just different. When I read this my son was almost three, completely non-verbal and was hitting me over one hundred times a day. While I appreciated the intention of the story, I couldn't help but think, "Are they kidding? We're not in some peaceful country dotted with windmills. We are in a country under siege --dodging bombs, boarding overloaded helicopters, bribing officials --all the while thinking, "What happened to our beautiful life?" That was five years ago.

My son is now 8 and though we have come to accept that he will always have autism, we no longer feel like citizens of a battle torn nation. With the help of countless dedicated therapists and teachers, biological interventions, and an enormously supportive family, my son has become a fun-loving, affectionate boy with many endearing qualities and skills. In the process we've created... well ... our own country, with its own unique traditions and customs.

It's not a war zone, but it's still not Holland. Let's call it Schmolland. In Schmolland, it's perfectly customary to lick walls, rub cold pieces of metal across your mouth and line up all your toys end to end. You can show affection by giving a "pointy chin." A "pointy chin" is when you act like you are going to hug someone and just when you are really close, you jam your chin into the other person's shoulder. For the person giving the "pointy chin" this feels really good, for the receiver, not so much -- but you get used to it.

For citizens of Schmolland, it is quite normal to repeat lines from videos to express emotion. If you are sad, you can look downcast and say, "Oh, Pongo." When mad or anxious, you might shout, "Snow can't stop me!" or "Duchess, kittens, come on! Sometimes, "And now our feature presentation" says it all.

In Schmolland, there's not a lot to do, so our citizens find amusement wherever they can. Bouncing on the couch for hours, methodically pulling feathers out of down pillows, and laughing hysterically in bed at 4:00 am, are all traditional Schmutch pastimes.

The hard part of living in our country is dealing with people from other

countries. We try to assimilate ourselves and mimic their customs, but we aren't always successful. It's perfectly understandable that an 8 year old from Schmolland would steal a train from a toddler at the Thomas the Tank Engine Train Table at Barnes and Noble.

But this is clearly not understandable or acceptable in other countries, and so we must drag our 8 year old out of the store kicking and screaming, all the customers look on with stark, pitying stares. But we ignore these looks and focus on the exit sign because we are a proud people.

Where we live it is not surprising when an 8-year-old boy reaches for the fleshy part of a woman's upper torso and says, "Do we touch boodoo?" We simply say, "No, we do not touch boodoo," and go on about our business. It's a bit more startling in other countries, however, and can cause all sorts of cross-cultural misunderstandings.

And, though most foreigners can get a drop of water on their pants and still carry on, this is intolerable to certain citizens in Schmolland who insist that the pants must come off no matter where they are, and regardless of whether other persons are present.

Other families who have special needs children are familiar and comforting to us, yet are still separate entities. Together we make up a federation of countries, kind of like Scandinavia. Like a person from Denmark talking to a person from Norway, (or in our case, someone from Schmenmark talking to someone from Schmorway.), we share enough similarities in our language and customs to understand each other, but conversations inevitably highlight the diversity of our traditions.

"My child eats paper. Yesterday he ate a whole video box."
"My daughter only eats four foods, all of them white." "We finally had to lock up the VCR because my child was obsessed with the rewind button.", "My son wants to blow on everyone."

There is one thing we all agree on. We are a growing population. 10 years ago, 1 in 10,000 children had autism. Today the rate is approximately 1 in 250. Something is dreadfully wrong. Though the causes of the increase are still being hotly debated, a number of parents and professionals believe genetic predisposition has collided with too many environmental insults -- toxins, chemicals, antibiotics, vaccines --to create immunological chaos in the nervous system of developing children.

One medical journalist speculated these children are the proverbial "canary in the coal mine" there to alert us to the growing dangers in our environment. While this is certainly not a view shared by all in the autism community, it feels true to me.

I hope that researchers discover the magic bullet we all so desperately crave. And I will never stop investigating new treatments and therapies that might help my son. But more and more my priorities are shifting from what "could be" to "what is." I look around this country my family has created, with all its unique customs, and it feels like home. For us, any time spent "nation building" is time well spent.

Mark Your Calendar
Sat., May 8
WALK FOR AUTISM

LATEST CONFERENCES

SERESC in collaboration with Crotched Mountain Services Presents: Asperger Syndrome and Related Challenges in Young Children

A Case-Based Approach to Team Problem-Solving for Children with Autism.
Resources for team problem-solving, day-to-day, in life and working with children with Autism. With Ludwig von Hahn, M.D. and John Moran, Ed.D.

Thursday, February 12, 2004 Snow Date: March 3, 2004
SERESC 29 Commerce Drive, Bedford, NH

SERESC Presents: Asperger Syndrome and Related Challenges in Young Children

A Common Sense Approach With Teresa Bolick, Ph.D.
Tuesday, January 13, 2004 Snow Date: January 27, 2004
SERESC 29 Commerce Drive, Bedford, NH

SERESC Presents: Visual Communication Supports

A workshop for those who live and work with children with communication disorders.
With Jocelyn Lister, MA/CCC, Speech Pathologist and Judy Enos, B.S., Parent
Friday and Saturday, January 16 & 17, 2004
Snow dates of January 23 & 24, 2004

Volunteer Advocates for Special Education Program

October 9, 2003 - January 15, 2004
Thursday Evenings 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm
At the Parent Information Center in Concord, NH

!!!BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!!!

SERESC Presents: Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) in Educational Settings:

Using Direct Instruction and Discrete Trial Methods for Children with Developmental Disabilities.
With Thomas Benjamin, M.S., Behavior Specialist

NEW DATES: Thursday, March 11 and Thursday, March 18, 2004

At SERESC, Bedford, NH and by videoconference to North Country Education Services, Gorham, NH

Providing Individualized Support to Young Children with PDD/Autism and Related Issues: Intensive Training

A four-day training Series emphasizing the use of the Jumpstart Model 1/13, 1/28, 2/11, 3/11, 2004
With Ann Dillon, Institute on Disability, UNH Cost: \$250.00
Contact Ann Dillon 603-862-0793

Disorders of Regulation & Social Interaction in Young Children

With Teresa Bolick, Ph.D. January 13, 2004 with snow date of January 2004 at SERESC, Bedford, NH and Videoconference to NCEC in Gorham, NH. More information to follow.

If you would like further information on any of these events, please contact Robin Knight, **Autism Spectrum Disorders**. "Neurodevelopment & Early Adolescence" A series of five presentations to assist par-

LATEST CONFERENCES ~ From Page 13

ents, teachers, counselors, and school psychologist to help young adolescents deal with communication and socialization at school, at home, and in the community. The focus of the series is on children with high Functioning Autism, Asperger's Syndrome and Non-Verbal Learning Disability/Right Hemisphere Dysfunction. For more information contact Carolyn Woodman 603-434-0556 or e-mail cwoodman@seresc.net

AUTISM SUPPORT CENTER WINTER/SPRING WORKSHOPS:

Contact Beth at (978) 777-9135 ext. 207 to register, or e-mail:

Autism99 The National Autistic Society (UK) The Shirley Foundation and RMR Design have developed Autism99 a conference which will be held only on the internet in November 1999. In addition to the elements of a "conventional" conference, Autism99 also hosts a multi-media information center which contains more about the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Aiding Young Children With Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder.

The Aiding Young Children with Autism/Pdd series is designed as an introduction to children with Autism/PDD and emphasizes strategies based on development concerns for dedicated people to work with young children with Autism and PDD. Excellent starter course for new parents and families. This seven - session series is available in different locations throughout the state. For more information and locations please contact SERESC

UNH Institute on Disability sponsors Fall conferences and workshops, topics include Communication and Behavioral Challenges, School Inclusion and more. To receive a catalog of upcoming conferences contact the UNH Institute on Disability the Concord Center, 10 Ferry St., Concord, N.H. 03302. 603-228-2084.

AUTISM SOCIETY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE OFFERS

TOTE BAGS

They are heavy duty canvas with zipper top (natural color w/red trim) I Love Someone With Autism is stenciled on the outside pocket. They are great as gifts for teachers, paras, grandmothers and yourself!!

\$20.00 each plus \$4.00 shipping/handling

AUTISM RIBBON PINS

Colorful metal pins w/metal clasp **\$5.00 each plus 10% shipping**

CROSSING BRIDGES BOOK

Great first read for those with children newly diagnosed or to introduce someone to what Autism means.

\$6.00/ each plus 10% shipping Quantity Discounts Available

Call 603-679-2424 or email us at nhautism@yahoo.com today!!!

HELP SUPPORT AUTISM TODAY!

New Non-Profit LockBox Foundation To Aid Families And Children With Autism

Lockbox-griffin's hope Project is a not for profit organization established in June 2003.

The first of it's kind in the United States of America, LockBox's mission is to cease the bandaiding effects of the systems in place and truly elevate the families of children with autism. Our determination in instilling hope in these families is not overshadowed by our resolve to lead the nation in progressive actions in truly aiding the autistic and their families.

LockBox is multi faceted in it's efforts. Raising funds to distribute to individual applicants for alternative therapies and appropriate child care is one goal. We are also pioneering a program that will match applicant families with a millionaire, company or corporation that will stay with that family on their journey in "finding the key to unlock the child." The sponsor will have the ability through LockBox to maintain a written or oral progress report or, if both parties agree, direct contact.

A therapeutic riding program is being organized to operate out of Dream Catcher Horse Farm in Rochester, NH. To date a quarter horse named Melody has been donated by a family in Maine to enable the lessons to begin. We are actively pursuing a sponsor for the state of the art therapy barn and are hopeful. Relatively new over the past decade is the introduction of service dogs paired with autistic children. We are determined at LockBox, to have the first dog training facility in the country dedicated to solely training service dogs for children with autism.

Our focus is on the families and children affected by autism. We believe wholeheartedly that if people truly understand the plight of another, they will make a difference. We will look to those who have the means to turn around; extend their hand, grasp hold of the person behind them and lift them up. Ours is a leap of faith. Faith in humanity, and faith in our abilities to turn what some may view as a dead end, into a place to merely change direction. Upwards.

We are humbly looking for support in whatever way you are able, to enable us to blaze a new trail. Prepare to be inspired!

Our Board of Directors: Karen Belanger, Stephanie Bolduc, Kristen Sullivan-Crowell Rachel Hale, Dr. Barbara Frankel and Nichole Ernest.

Sponsorship Committee: Michael Libby, Stephen Oates and Anne Landeau

Founder/Executive Director: Maureen Crowell

Contact Information:

The LockBox Foundation - Griffins Hope Project
1 North Main Street Suite 201 A
Rochester, NH 03867
E-Mail: LockBox@comcastnet
Phone: 659-0031



Autism Society of NH

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Mark Your Calendar ...
**Walk For Autism Awareness
Is Set For Sat., May 8th**

The Autism Society of New Hampshire is pleased to announce their first annual Autism Awareness Family Hike.

The location will be the beautiful and peaceful NH Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary at Lake Massabesic in Manchester, NH.

All monies raised at this walk will remain in NH to support local families and to help set up a permanent location/office and resource center for our society.

We need help ~ lots and lots of help ~ to complete every detail needed to make this a success. Call or email us to Volunteer PLEASE ~ 679-2424 or nhautism@yahoo.com.

Book Corner:

"The curious incident of the dog in the night-time"
by Mark Haddon

A novel written by a man who has worked with children with Autism. The story is told in the words of a 15 year narrator who has Asperger's. A funny , quirky story in a British setting. This book puts you in the shoes of the narrator and helps you to understand the many differences in how he perceives the world. I thought he really captured how sensory overload must feel to some individuals.

~Submitted by Stacey Shannon

Rating: 3 ribbons

Have you read a book lately that you would like to share? email us your book review to nhautism@yahoo.com



**WALK AS A FAMILY
SAT., MAY 8**