
❖ AUTISM ACTION ❖

May/June 2004

The Newsletter of the
San Diego County Chapter
Autism Society of America
Serving the needs of individuals with autism and their families
through advocacy, education, public awareness and research.

MONTHLY INFORMATIONAL MEETING SPEAKERS

Thursday, May 6, 2004

6:30 — 8:30 PM

Annual Teacher Appreciation Night

Special Guest Speaker—Paul Dores, PhD

ABA:

What We Really Know, What We Think We Know and What We Don't Know

Thursday, June 3, 2004

6:30 — 8:30 PM

Annual Meeting and Election

Guest Speaker — Angela Desideri and Michele Lazar

Integrating Music and Speech Therapy

Support Group Meetings are held at
TMI Conference Center
4740 Murphy Canyon Road—2nd Floor
San Diego / Kearny Mesa

IN THIS ISSUE

Scheduled Meetings	1
President's Message	2
For Your Information	3
Resource Information	4
Autism Advice	5
Upcoming Events	7
Membership Application	8

MONTHLY MEETING FORMAT

6:30-6:45 P.M.	Informal/Social/ Networking Time
6:45-7:00 P.M.	President's Message
7:00-8:00 P.M.	Guest Speaker
8:00-8:30 P.M.	Questions/ Answers

*Autism Action is published bi-monthly by the
San Diego County Chapter of the Autism Society of America
3731 6th Avenue Suite 200, San Diego, California 92103
P O Box 420908, San Diego, California 92124
(619) 298-1981 • Fax (619) 278-0885
e-mail : info@sd-autism.org
Web site: www.sd-autism.org*

A Member of the Combined Health Agencies and the Combined Federal Campaign—Agency Code 5580

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am often asked, as the parent of two sons with autism, what advice I could give to a parent who has just learned their child has autism. I can certainly pass on some personal observations about things that have been very helpful over the years.

Speed is of the essence. Once you learn of the diagnosis, contact your school district and the regional center to get the necessary services started as soon as possible. Early intervention is key to optimizing progress. A "wait and see what happens" approach will only delay your child's potential progress.

Start a crash program of self-education. We all must become experts on the nuances of autism. Read as much as you can and talk to professionals and other parents. Often I am asked, "Who manages my children's programs?" The answer is "My husband and I". You are the case manager for your child, so the more you know, the more effective you will be. Be an active participant in your child's development and future.

Solicit help from families and friends. Like diamonds, autism is forever, so the sooner you surround yourselves with a support system, the better you'll be able to deal with the rocky times ahead. This will help them understand what it is to have autism in their life.

Join our local ASA chapter. The knowledge gained from parents and professionals in the community is invaluable. You won't find this information on a website or in a book. Networking with others at our monthly, informational group meetings and other social events is a great and on-going resource. We share information about services, therapies and educational programs. More importantly, we offer each other emotional support and camaraderie.

As soon as you can manage the time and emotion, start advocating in the community. If you are a professional, learn as much as you can about autism, give assistance to those who need it, and be open to new ideas and suggestions. As a parent, become your child's strongest advocate.

We will be holding our annual meeting and election of the board in June, 2004. Please consider becoming an active part of the ASA. Consider running for the board. Real change only comes when people make it happen. The common thread that is shared by all of us is our love and commitment for persons with autism.

Never, never stop or give up.
Shirley Fett

Board of Directors

President	Shirley Fett
1st VP Membership	Marilyn Rosenberg
2nd VP Programs	Victoria Ikerd-Schreider
3rd VP Newsletter	Jennifer Oke
Treasurer	DeeDee Spangler
Secretary	Shelly VanBrabant
Immediate Past President	Gregory Fletcher
Director	Kay Freeman
Director	Sandi Hayslip
Director	Bobbie Kohrt
Director	Bill Cary
Director	Tammy Anderson-Lee
Director	Angela Desideri
Director	Cathy Schieffer
Director	Rachel Zijlstra

Mission Statement

The mission of the **Autism Society of America** is to promote lifelong access and opportunities for persons within the autism spectrum and their families, to be fully included, participating members of their community through advocacy, public awareness, education and research related to autism.

Endorsement Policy

The Autism Society of America does not endorse individual programs. References appearing in the *Autism Action* regarding programs, resources, treatment, etc. should not be interpreted as an indication of endorsement by the Autism Society of America. They are provided for information only.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

SDASA POOL & PIZZA PARTIES

Mark your calendars to attend our fun and popular monthly pool parties. They're held the 2nd Friday evening of each month at the Boys & Girls Club in Clairemont. 4635 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. 6:00-8:00 pm. Free pizza & drinks! The whole family can swim in an indoor, heated pool. Lifeguards provided. **Please RSVP at least FIVE days in advance to insure sufficient food and beverages for all 619-298-1981 or info@sd-autism.org.**

Upcoming dates:
May 14, June 11

PLANNED CHARITABLE GIVING

As we confront the challenges of the future, we know that the generosity of those who assist us will make all the difference in our success. And there are many ways that your philanthropic giving can accommodate your financial situation and tax planning.

One of the easiest ways to make a gift to the ASA is with a Bequest in your will or revocable living trust. Bequests work particularly well for those who are unable to make an immediate gift, but would like to support the future work of ASA. Please contact the ASA at 619 298-1981 if you would like more information about Planned Charitable Giving. All gifts, large and small, make a difference to the future of ASA.

HORSEMANSHIP FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Horsemanship for the Handicapped is a rehabilitation and therapy program in La Mesa. It is a non-profit organization so it provides free 20 to 30 minute riding sessions to participants on Saturday mornings. The interaction with the horse and instructors builds social skills, confidence, and a feeling of security. For information call (619) 441-7868.

WALK F.A.R. FOR NAAR

June 5, 2004, Qualcomm Stadium. 9:00 am registration, 10:00 am walk starts. NAAR (National Alliance for Autism Research) funds scientific research for autism spectrum disorders. Join family and friends to raise funds that will go directly to this research. See www.autismwalk.org for more information.

PIANO TEACHER WANTED

A family with a 13-year old HFA seeks a patient piano teacher to give beginning piano lessons. Interested individuals can respond to studyaide1@aol.com.

MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASE

Please note that our membership dues have been increased. This is the first increase since 1999. Thank you for your continued support of ASA, and especially the San Diego County Chapter.

IN MEMORY OF EDOUD KOEPEL

The SDASA would like to acknowledge and thank the numerous family and friends that recently made monetary donations to the chapter in memory of Edourd Koepfel, a grandfather of two children with autism.

SWIM-A-THON A SUCCESS

The first ever San Diego ASA Swim-A-Thon was a huge success! Held on February 28th at the Clairemont Boys and Girls Club, there were 10 teams who went the distance and swam for 10 hours!!! Our chapter raised \$10,000.00 with the proceeds going to our Pool PALS program. A special thanks goes to Ralph Carrasquillo and the San Diego City Fire Department for their terrific help with all of the food preparation and great service. The place was "rockin" with the Catillacs performing for all of us--thanks to them for their donation. Thanks to Tammy Anderson and Aqua Pros Swim school for providing us with the location

and their expertise. Keep on Splashing!! We look forward to seeing you all next year!!!

ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION

On June 3rd the Chapter will hold its Annual Meeting for the year ending June 2004. The event promises to be an enjoyable evening of socializing and delicious hors d'oeuvres. Definitely an evening you will not want to miss!

Also planned for the Annual Meeting will be the election of Chapter officers and directors. All members in good standing of the Chapter are eligible to vote.

Are you interested in serving on the board? We are actively seeking parents, professionals and community members interested in committing to this outstanding organization. Want to learn more? Want to nominate yourself or someone you know? Contact Rachel Zijlstra from the Nominating Committee at rachel@soundtherapiesinc.com or 619-641-7744

PARENTS WORKSHOP

Neurodiagnostic Concerns & School-Related Interventions: Gaining a Better Understanding of ADHD, Aspergers, & Nonverbal Learning Disabilities presented by The Youth and Child Committee of the San Diego Psychological Association, Mark McDonough, Ph.D. and Jessica Maxwell, Ph.D. May 8, 2004 9 am — 12 pm Encinitas Community Center. The workshop will focus home management issues, how to communicate with the schools, (e.g., daily logs on school or home issues, homework, family dynamics etc), developing the IEP, appropriate goals, services that the schools can provide and cannot provide, transition to post secondary education, getting and working with aides, and accommodations and modifications. To reserve your attendance call 858-277-7407.

RESOURCE INFORMATION

SUPPORT GROUPS

Autism Society of America, San Diego County Chapter. ☎ (619) 298-1981 info@sd-autism.org 📧 www.sd-autism.org Meets 1st Thursday of the month, 6:30—8:30 PM at the TMI Building, 4740 Murphy Canyon, 2nd Floor Conference Center, San Diego.

Autism Society of America, North County Chapter. *North County Coastal Group* meets 2nd Thursday of the month *Inland Group* meets 3rd Tuesday of the month *HF/Asperger Group* meets 1st Monday of the month. For more information contact info@nccasa.com or (760) 479-1420 www.nccasa.com

Autism of Imperial County. George Mcfadden 760-353-3191

East County Children's Disability Council Focuses on children with physical, developmental and emotional disabilities, ages 0-22 years. Janet Light 619-465-2288

EFRC & HOPE Infant Family Support Group. ☎ Mary Sebastyn (858) 569-5370 or Tessie Salcedo (619) 409-3127. Meets in Chula Vista. English and Spanish groups.

Families & Autistic Children Together Succeed (FACTS). Cheryl Cisneros PO Box 89-0685, Temecula, CA 92589-0685 F A C T S f a m i l i e s @ a o l . c o m 📧 www.factsfamilies.org

Fragile X Center of San Diego ☎ Cindy de Gruchy (619) 697-6468. Will meet May 13 & Oct 14, 2003, 7-9PM Children's Hospital. www.fragilexsandiego.org

Kaiser Support Group Meets the second Tuesday at the Vandever Kaiser location 5:30 to 7:00. Must be a Kaiser member to attend. Krissy Hallauer 858 573-5216

Parent Advocates Seeking Solutions (PASS). Parents of children 15 & older with disabilities. Beverly Andreos (858) 748-2594. Meets 3rd Thursday of each month, St Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 16275 Pomerado Rd, Poway.

Parent Support Group for the Resources for Students with Autism Program of San Diego Unified Schools. Contact Bobbie Kohrt or Mary Lou Evans 858-490-8520

Spanish-Speaking Support Group — For families with children under 5: 1st & 3rd Fridays, 9:30-11AM. For families with children 5 and over: 2nd & 4th Friday, 9:30-11AM. Contact Laura Cervantes (619)498-8171 or Tessie Salcedo (619)594-7391.

SibShop Sibling support group for kids ages 6-12. Contact Nicole Hadley CCLS (858) 966-7411.

Supporting Parents of Autistic Young Adults (SPAYA) Sophia (858) 560-0555 or SPAYA@san.rr.com Meets at San Diego Regional Center, Rm. 101, 4355 Ruffin Road.

TACA Parent training and support group addressing issues of younger children on the spectrum TACAnow@ansite.net

Understanding Autism Together. ☎ ASYMCA (619) 532-8156. Meets 3rd Monday of each month, 6:00 p.m., Pediatric Conference Room, Building 2-1 of the Naval Medical Center. www.asymcasd.org

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Autism Society of America, National Organization. 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste 300, Bethesda, MD 20814. ☎ 1-800-328-8476. 📧 www.autism-society.org/.

Autism Society of California. P.O. Box 8600 Long Beach, CA 90808. 1-800-700-0037 DWilson80@aol.com

Autism Research Institute. Research center, publishes quarterly journal, information packet on autism. Bernard Rimland, Director. 4182 Adams Ave., San Diego, CA 92116 ☎ (619) 281-7165. 📧 www.autism.com/ari/.

Children's Hospital and Health Center - Autism Intervention Center Inclusion Assistance Program offers specialists assistance to children in inclusion settings. Gabriella Albaisa ☎ (858) 966-7453.

Children's Hospital Laboratory for Research on the Neuroscience of Autism Volunteers needed for research studies. La Jolla, CA 858-454-7239

Exceptional Family Resource Center. Provides information & education for families of children with various disabilities. 9245 Sky Park Ct., Suite 130, San Diego. ☎ (800)281-8252. www.EFRCOnline.org

Kids Included Together (KIT). Assists children with disabilities to be included in community recreation and social programs. ☎ (858) 794-8154.

Protection and Advocacy, Inc. (PAI). Non-profit agency for protection of individuals with disabilities. ☎ (800) 776-5746. 📧 pai-ca.org.

San Diego Park & Recreation Therapeutic Recreation Services Program. Organized activities for various age groups. Siblings & friends welcome. ☎ (619) 525-8247 FAX: (619) 533-3930.

San Diego Regional Center. Information, referral, evaluation and advocacy services for the developmentally disabled. 4355 Ruffin Rd., Suite 204, San Diego CA 92123. ☎ (858) 576-2996.

Team of Advocates for Special Kids (TASK). Workshops & advocacy training for parents. ☎ (858) 874-2386.

Valeries Email List information, announcements and networking. To subscribe email Val Saraf at ValeriesList@aol.com

UCSD Autism Research Laboratory Pivotal Response Training 858-534-6144

SERVICES

ACES, Inc - Comprehensive Educational Services Behavior Intervention programs, Assessments, Tutoring, Parent training, Program consultation 3731 6th Avenue, Suite 100, San Diego 92103 (619) 278-0884 acesangels.com

ACES, Inc - Dolphin Assisted Therapy Program Structured, interactive behavioral program utilizing swim and contact between dolphins, trainer, one-on-one aide and child at Sea World. 619-497-2450

AquaPros Swim School offers swim lessons for children with autism. Home pool programs or at Boys & Girls Club in Clairemont. 619-209-2990 www.aquapro.org

Autism Friends Club. Social skills training for children on the high functioning end of the autism spectrum, 4-18 years of age. Comprehensive Autism Services and Education (CASE) in Carlsbad 760-720-4964 www.casefamily.com

Autism Spectrum Consultants (ASC) social skills groups, ages 7-13, on Mondays 4-6pm, 6 week sessions in Scripps Ranch. Cindy@autismconsultants.com

Auditory Integration Training Terri Silverman, MS Conducts sessions several times a year in San Diego 858-278-9534

Center for Autism Research, Evaluation & Service (CARES)- Academic and Behavior Clinic, 6160 Cornerstone Ct. East #262, San Diego, CA 92121 (858)623-2777 x397

Center for Autism Research, Evaluation & Service (CARES) - Intensive Behavior Intervention, (858) 623-2777 x397

CARES Family Services Center- Providing therapeutic services (including individual, family, and child therapy) for families with children with developmental, behavioral and/or social problems. Now accepting TRI-CARE. Nancy Cason, Psy.D. 858-623-2777 x397.

Children's Hospital and Health Center - Autism Intervention Center parent training, professional workshops and inclusion services. Cynthia Carter Ph.D 858-966-7453

Coast Music Therapy Provides music/assisted learning approach in special education, or adapted music lessons in home. Michelle Lazar 858-453-5211 mlazar@coastmusictherapy.com

Community Coaching Center Community & Behavioral Life Skills Training and supervision for after school, Saturdays, school vacation. Tina Waters (858) 603-9835 www.ccckids.net

RESOURCE INFORMATION

AUTISM ADVICE

Comprehensive Autism Services and Education, Inc. (CASE) In home programs, school consultation, social skills groups. 580 Beech Avenue, Suite B Carlsbad, CA 92008 (760) 720-4964 CASEandi@aol.com www.casefamily.com

Coyne & Associates Offers In-Home Early Intervention programs; In-school services; psychological, educational and behavioral assessments. Dr. Paul Coyne PhD 760-634-1125 coyneandassociates.com.

Susan L. Daniel, O.D., Developmental Optometrist 2624-A El Camino Real Carlsbad, CA 92008 760-434-3314 drsusdan@pacbell.net

DTC - Developmental Therapy Center Direct Occupational Therapy assessment and treatment, sensory integration, activity-based groups including yoga, art, and sensory motor for children of all ages. 3731 6th Avenue, Suite 103, San Diego 92103 Bridgette Anderson 619-295-4500

Excel Speech Therapy Center (Katherine Medeiros) **OT Etc** (Val Plummer) 7927 Ostrrow St. Suite B San Diego 92111 858-565-6910 www.excelspeech.com

Kara Dodds and Associates Kara Dodds (619)692-0622 or KaraDoddsandAssoc@sbeglobal.net

Giant Steps Therapy Center Berard Auditory Integration Training (AIT) & Interactive Metronome (IM) Training. Jackie Rockwell 800-952-0288 email giantsteps@earthlink.net

HorsemanSHIP for the Handicapped. A rehabilitation and therapy program offered at no cost to participants. San Diego Center, (619) 441-7868.

I Can Too Learning Center Offers behavioral intervention for children with autism between 2-6 years. Kevin Dotts 760-815-4800 www.icantoolc.com

Kidspiration Physical Therapy and Yoga, Inc. 909 Prospect Street, Suite 224 La Jolla, CA 92130 www.kidspirationPT.com info@kidspirationPT.com 619-804-1630 Michele Rooney Harriman, MS, PT. Yoga, craniosacral therapy, 'breath play' and aquatics. Parent and professional training workshops.

Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center Inclusion Program Offers recreation and social programs for children with special needs 858-457-3030 x222

Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes Learning Center 445 Marine View Drive, Suite 290, Del Mar CA 92014 858-259-3206

Kelly McKinnon, M.A. – Autism & Behavior Consultant specializing in social skills. www.kellymckinnon.com

N. Jennifer Oke, Ph.D. Clinical Psy-

chologist. Psychological assessment and treatment for children with autism spectrum disorders and their families. Many insurances accepted. CA License #PSY14603 (858) 452-9596.

Pacific Therapy, Inc. Angela Desideri, Speech-Language Pathologist, 14667 Via Azul San Diego CA 92127 (858) 442-3072

Promising Futures, Inc. Residential services for adults with autism (619) 390-4277 www.promisingfutures.net. Vocational services (619) 440-3300.

Pyramid Educational Consultants, Inc. staff development, program design and family training for Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). 888-732-7462 www.pecs.com

STAR Program, Inc. Socialization Training and Reinforcement. After-school social skills program for children with pervasive developmental disorders. Dr. Linda Collins, Exec Dir. & President 6440 Lusk Blvd. Suite D203, San Diego, California 92121 (858) 450-4785

Vivo Music Therapy Services Julie M. Guy, MT-BC Music Therapist Board Certified Fax & 24-hour Voice Mail 1.866.493.6097 www.vivomusictherapy.com

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES:

Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CACSE)

San Diego ☎ (858) 627-7270 ext 3160.

Poway ☎ (858) 748-0010 or (858) 679-2534.

California Department of Education. Special Education Division. ☎ (916) 445-4613. Parent Information Line: (800) 434-2465. 📧 www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/sed.

Hope Infant Family Support Program. ☎ (858) 292-3700. FAX (858) 569-5394.

San Diego City Schools Special Education Programs Division web page: 📧 www.sdcs.k12.ca.us/specialed.

Special Education Local Planning Areas

East County ☎ (619) 590-3920

North Coastal ☎ (760) 471-8208

North Inland ☎ (760) 788-4671

Poway ☎ (858) 748-0010

San Diego ☎ (619) 225-3606

South County ☎ (619) 498-8171

Special Education Parent Facilitators:

Poway ☎ (858) 748-0010

San Diego ☎ (619) 225-3623

South County ☎ (619) 498-8171

Please send updates to info@sd-autism.org

Getting Started: Introducing Your Child to His or Her Diagnosis of Autism or Asperger Syndrome

Contributed by:

Marci Wheeler, Social Worker
Indiana Resource Center for Autism
Abridged by: Jennifer Oke, Ph.D.

Discussing an autism or Asperger Syndrome diagnosis with your child is a very important issue and one for which many parents seek advice. This brief article will focus on aspects of explaining your child's diagnosis to him or her, and about resources that can assist and guide you.

Why Tell?

Parents go through a range of emotions when given their child's diagnosis and hopefully find support as they begin their journey with this new information about their child. Isn't it reasonable to consider that the child themselves should also be given information about their diagnosis and support for understanding and coping with this new information? Shouldn't children with an autism spectrum diagnosis have the chance to understand and accept themselves by being given information about their disability?

Parents may fear a number of things if they tell their children about their disability. These problems may or may not happen, but can be dealt with if needed. Most of these problems and others may also surface whether or not the child is told of the diagnosis.

Certainly, the possibility of problems occurring is more likely when someone is not told about their disability and given the support they need. Consider the stories told by many individuals with an autism spectrum diagnosis who were not told, and/or not diagnosed until they were adults. Not understanding others or social situations for many leads to poor interactions with others and results in ridicule and isolation. Being told, "You should know better" or "stop being so stupid" and not having a clue what they did or how to "fix" or change the situation lead to frustration and confusion.

When to Tell?

A child's personality, abilities and social awareness are all factors to consider in determining when a child is ready for information about their diagnosis. Starting too early can cause confusion. If older when told, they may be extremely sensitive to any suggestion that they are different. You can look for the presence of certain signs that the child is ready for information. Some children will actually ask,

AUTISM ADVICE

"What is wrong with me?," "Why can't I be like everybody else?," "Why can't I _____?," or even "What is wrong with everyone?" These types of questions are certainly a clear indication that they need some information about their diagnosis. Some children, however, may have similar thoughts and not be able to express them well.

Some children do not get a diagnosis until they are in their teens or older. Frequently those who are diagnosed later have had some bad experiences that can influence the decision of when to share information with them about their diagnosis. They may not be emotionally ready to cope with the new information because of the toll the bad experiences have taken on their self-esteem and confidence. On the other hand, an older child may already know about a previous diagnosis such as Attention Deficit Disorder, Conduct Disorder, and/or an emotional disorder of some kind. Because of this history with another label or diagnosis, it may be an appropriate time to share the diagnosis and some concrete information about the disability.

Many families have found that setting a positive tone about each family member's uniqueness is a wonderful starting place. Everyone is in fact unique with their own likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses, and physical characteristics. Differences are discussed in a matter of fact manner as soon as the child or others their age understand simple concrete examples of differences. Matter of fact statements such as "Mommy has glasses and Daddy does not have glasses" or "Bobby likes to play ball and you like to read books" are examples. The ongoing use of positive concrete examples of contrasts among familiar people can make it easier to talk about other differences related to your child's diagnosis with him or her.

What/How to Tell?

It is important that the process of explaining an autism spectrum diagnosis to a child is individualized and meaningful to them. A child should not be given too much information. It can be hard to decide what and how much information to begin with. If the child has asked questions, it will give you a place to start. Make sure that you understand what they are asking. Recall that it is easy to misinterpret the meaning of their words.

Remember your child's ability to process

information and try to decide on what and how to tell. For those children who have a keen interest in their diagnosis and those whose reading ability is good, there are currently a few books written by children with an autism spectrum diagnosis that may be of interest to them (Hall, 2001; Jackson, 2003).

There are also many more books being written by adults with an autism spectrum diagnosis. Some of these books are meant to be read by any interested persons, but a few are meant to be read by others with a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder.

Most children may need minimal information to start. More information can be added over time. Your positive attitude and the manner in which you convey the information is important. To make what you discuss with your child meaningful, you can begin by talking about any questions that s/he has asked. You may want to write down key points and tell him or her that others with this diagnosis/disability also have some of the same questions and experiences. Let them know they can ask any question they want at any time they want.

Individuals with an autism spectrum diagnosis can sometimes better understand themselves and the world by interacting with others who have an autism spectrum diagnosis. Interacting with others on the autism spectrum can help individuals realize there are other people that experience the world the way they do, and that they are not the only one.

Currently, there are a few workbooks that provide a structured guide for the process of telling a child with an autism spectrum diagnosis about their disability (Gray, 1996; Faherty, 2000; Vermeulen, 2000). The workbook format is designed to provide activities that help organize information about an autism spectrum diagnosis as well as making the information more child specific and concrete. The different lessons suggest how the information is shared with the child. The worksheets can be completed together by the child and a trusted adult. In many cases they can also be modified for the different ages and functioning levels of the child who would be using the materials.

Who Tells/Where to Tell?

If your child is asking questions don't put off

answering them. You should be forthcoming and not suggest talking about it later. Not providing an answer could increase the child's anxiety and make the topic and information more mysterious.

For many families, using a knowledgeable professional to begin the disclosure process instead of a family member or a friend of the family might be the best option. Having a professional whose role is clearly to discuss information about the child's diagnosis and how the disability is affecting his/her life can make it easier for family members to be seen by the child as supportive.

The process of explaining an autism spectrum diagnosis is ongoing. Making the information meaningful from the child's point of view will greatly enhance the learning process. A positive focus helps maintain self esteem and an effective atmosphere for learning. There are materials available to help this learning process and hopefully you have others that know your child who can help support you and your child in this process.

Resources

Faherty, C. (2000). What does it mean to be me? A workbook explaining self-awareness and life lessons to the child or youth with high-functioning autism or Aspergers. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

Gerland, G. (2000). Finding out about Asperger Syndrome, high functioning autism and PDD. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, Ltd.

Gray, C. (1996). Pictures of me. Jenison, MI: Jenison Public Schools. (www.thegraycenter.org)

Hall, K. (2001). Asperger Syndrome, the universe and everything. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.

Jackson, L. (2003). Freaks, geeks and Asperger Syndrome: A user guide to adolescence. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.

Lawson, W. (2003). Build your own life: A self-help guide for individuals with Asperger syndrome. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Parent Support Group for the Resources for Students with Autism (RSA) Program of San Diego Unified Schools will meet on May 14th (GFCF Diet) and May 28th (Make-it & Take-it) Meetings will be from 9:30 — 11 am and are held at Whittier Center on Clairemont Drive in Room B26. Contact Bobbie Kohrt or Mary Lou Evans 858-490-8520 for more information or to get on the mailing list.

EFRC and HOPE Infant Family Support Group What is it like to parent a young child on the autism spectrum? Come meet other parents for an evening of sharing thoughts, feelings, ways of coping, and resources that might be helpful. Group meets Monday evenings from 6:30-8:00 on the following dates: May 10 and June 14. Vista Square Elementary School, 540 G Street, Room 700, Chula Vista. Supervised playtime is available by advance reservation. Please call Mary at 858-569-5370 to reserve a space.

Spanish Support Group — This new support group sponsored by the SDASA will be meeting for the first time on Thursday, May 13th, 6:30—8:30 pm at Greg Rogers Elementary School 510 East Naples Chula Vista CA 91910 Chula Vista. May 13th will be an Open House. The next meeting is on June 10th, (topic to be announced) Se complacen en invitarle a la gran noche de inauguracion del group de padres hispanicos. Tendremos un foro abierto para. Informacion, liderazgo, recursos en la comunidad, abogacia, y companerismo.

Fundraising Art Auction hosted by STAR Program, Inc. Saturday, May 22 at the Majorca Room at the Casa Del Prado in Balboa Park from 5-10 p.m. There will be wine and food along with viewing of the art from 5-6 p.m. with the auction to follow. A percentage of the art sold will be donated to STAR Program, Inc. to support social skills training for children diagnosed with a pervasive developmental disorder between the ages of 5-18 years. For further information please call STAR Program, Inc. 858-450-4785.

2nd Annual Charity Dogs Golf Day benefiting the SDASA is going to be held on Saturday, July 10th at the Chula Vista Municipal Golf Course. The event is sponsored by The Burlingame Bulldogs Softball Club. Cost is \$55. Contact Daryl Dotson 619-583-2921 or Karen Mitrovich-Dotson 619-962-2921 or email thedot@cox.net for more information.

Summer Music Enrichment Groups: An upbeat and interactive music program offered by Coast Music Therapy for children and teens with special needs. Classes are offered on Saturdays from June 19 to July 24 and held at the Kearny Mesa Recreation Center. Activities include singing, instruments, rhythm, and movement for all ability levels. Fee is \$90 for the 6-week series (\$15 per class). Adapted piano/instrument instruction is also available this spring/summer for individuals. Contact (858) 453-5211 or info@coastmusictherapy.com

Soaring to New Heights Autism Society of America is hosting it's 35th National Conference on Autism Spectrum Disorders July 7 — 10, 2004 at the Washington State Convention and Trade Center in Seattle. More than 65 concurrent educational sessions, powerful keynote speakers and over 130 exhibits. Early bird registration is available until May 7th (save \$115). Register online www.autism-society.org

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) Workshops: July 7, 2004: Incorporating PECS Across the Day. Presented by Donna Banzhof, M.Ed. Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside 0.6 ASHA CEUs. July 8 & 9, 2004: Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) 2-Day Workshop Presented by Donna Banzhof, M.Ed. & Susan L. Peterson, Ph.D., BCBA Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside 1.3 ASHA CEUs. Registration Fees One-Day Workshop: \$175, Two-Day Workshop: \$375 for professional and \$235 for parent/ student. One-day workshop includes a handout packet for note taking. Two-day workshop includes a 2nd Edition PECS Manual and a handout packet for note taking. For registration information, visit www.pecs.com or call 888-732-7462. For general information, contact Sarah Moore at smoore@pecs.com or call 302-368-2515.

New Services from C.A.S.E. Inc. *Parent Training* offers parents an intensive Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Therapy training. The cost is \$100.00 for five sessions. *Saturday Friends' Camp* is a day camp offered to children and teens on the Autistic Spectrum. The camp participates in activities like: rock climbing, laser tag, and surfing at the Carlsbad beach. The camp dates are April 24- , May 15, and May 29. Each day will be held from 9am - 3pm on Saturdays. The camp costs \$75.00 each day and there is an additional charge of \$15.00 on Laser tag day for admittance. *Summer Friends' Camp* is an opportunity to take Friends' Club out into the community. This camp is specially modified for children and teens on the Autistic Spectrum. Each child will explore activities like, rock climbing and going to the science museum in a socially structured environment designed to develop various aspects of social success. The costs is \$400.00 for Friends' Club clients and \$500.00 for new clients. The dates are: Boys camp- July 5-9, 2004; Jr. Friends' Camp- July 12 - 16, 2004; Girls camp- July 19 - 23, 2004. Each camp will be held from 9am - 3pm. Please call the C.A.S.E., Inc. office if you are interested at (760)720-4964.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

SAN DIEGO COUNTY CHAPTER / AUTISM SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA / AUTISM SOCIETY OF AMERICA

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ - _____
 PHONE: _____ E-MAIL _____

YOU MAY USE MY NAME AND ADDRESS AS A REFERRAL FOR OTHER PARENTS YES NO
 YOU MAY GIVE MY NAME TO OTHER PARENTS IN MY AREA YES NO

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE PERSON WITH AUTISM (CHECK ALL BOXES THAT APPLY):

- PARENT GRAND PARENT TEACHER AIDE
- CARE PROVIDER RELATIVE PHYSICIAN PSYCHOLOGIST
- FRIEND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR OTHER

DUES (INCLUDES NATIONAL AND STATE DUES):

- FULL TIME STUDENT: \$25.00
- INDIVIDUAL: \$40.00
- FAMILY MEMBERSHIP: \$50.00
- NEWSLETTER ONLY - 1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION: \$10.00

PLEASE CHECK IF:

- NEW MEMBER
- RENEWING MEMBER

APPLICATIONS CAN BE MAILED TO: Autism Society of America, P. O. Box 420908, San Diego, CA 92124

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: AUTISM SOCIETY OF AMERICA • **DUES AND DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE**

Website: www.sd-autism.org
 Email: info@sd-autism.org
 (619) 298-1981

San Diego, CA 92124
 P O Box 420908
 Autism Society of America
 SAN DIEGO COUNTY CHAPTER

