



Autism Weekly

Social Media
Connections



January 10, 2014

ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA Hosts the 10th Annual All Abilities Camp, Care & Legal Fair

(Summer Camps, Qualifications for Personal Care Services and Legal Information)

Saturday, February 1, 2014

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Shoppes at Northway *(Upper Level)*

8000 McKnight Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15237



FREE LECTURES**

10:30-11:15 Attorney **Art Feldman**
Special Education Law, ESY

12:00-12:45 Attorney **Jillian Zacks**
Helen Sims, Financial Advisor
Guardianship, Special Needs Trust

1:30-2:15 Attorney **Jennifer Modell**
Social Security Issues

**** NO CHILDCARE PROVIDED**

FREE & OPEN TO ALL!

For more info contact: Marie Mambuca, Marie@autismofpa.org
or call 412.781.4116

Event sponsors:



**Please
Remember
ABOARD's Autism
Connection of PA
during the
UNITED WAY
CAMPAIGN**



**Agency Code
9817**

Further support our mission by asking your friends, family, or co-workers who participate with United Way to designate ABOARD'S Autism Connection of PA as the recipient of their

pledge dollars as well!

For Campaigns outside of Allegheny County, please include our contact information on your registration form to help expedite the processing of your pledge.

A copy of the official registration and financial information of ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free (within PA) 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

The Autism Connection of PA
14th Annual Gala
Saturday, February 8, 2014

at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens
EVENT BEGINS AT 6:30 PM

Cocktail attire

Honorary Chairperson - Frank Coonelly,
President, Pittsburgh Pirates
Special Honoree - The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust

INDIVIDUAL ADMISSION \$150

To purchase your admission(s) online,
please [CLICK HERE!](#)



ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA Support Groups

For a complete listing of the **ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA Support Groups** please click [HERE](#) to visit our website!

Autism Connection of PA Vision and Mission

Vision Statement:
We envision a community where people with autism achieve their maximum

potential as they live, learn, and work.

Mission Statement:

The Autism Connection of PA provides a lifeline for families and individuals affected by autism. We provide advocacy, education and support.

AUTISM
a look at where we are

1 out of every

102 ADULTS has an ASD

88 CHILDREN has an ASD

BOYS ARE 5X MORE LIKELY TO BE DIAGNOSED THAN GIRLS

And amazingly...
Autism can be accurately diagnosed at 2 years old

If you learn anything, though, it's most important that you know...

THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY

All statistics except adult prevalence are cited here: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/autismdata.html>
The adult prevalence rate can be found here: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2238073/>

Compiled and shared by  Lots more autism research available at autismusa.org

Need help finding food or know someone who does?

3rd Annual **Pittsburgh, PA**
AUTISM FROSTBITE 5K
& KIDS FUN RUN





Where: N. Park Rose Barn
Allison Park, PA
Registration: 8:00 am

**Saturday
March 1st**

Contact: TJ Burke
tj@positivemovementz.com
www.positivemovementz.com

Together we can overcome



verbal beginnings

Meet some of our sponsors:






POSITIVE MOVEMENTZ
PROMOTIONS + EVENT MANAGEMENT

Be sure to visit www.positivemovementz.com to find more information, past event photos, and much more.
Thank you for your support!



MAY 4, 2014





WhyHunger

1.866.3hungry

Do you have
children and need
food assistance?

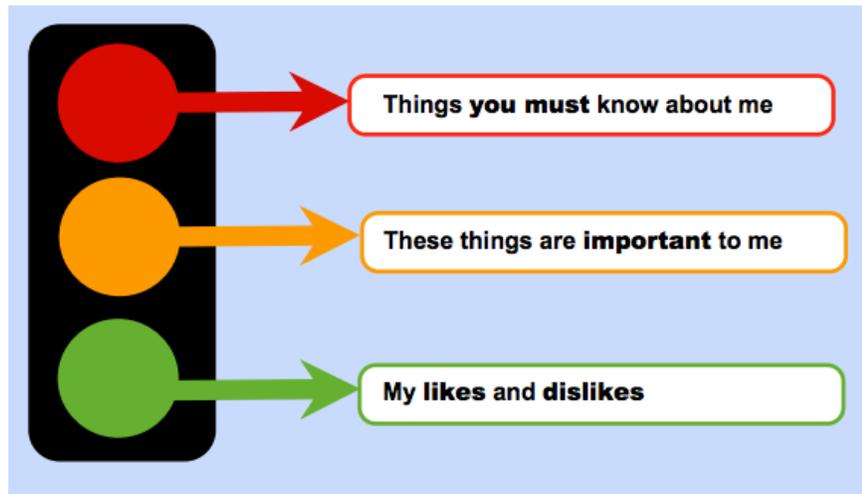


We are looking for runners and walkers for all events on race weekend, May 3-4, 2014: kids run, 5k, marathon relay, half marathon and full marathon

Contact Jennifer at autismrunpgh@gmail.com for more info
or

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Communication Passport *Accident and Emergency*



"Nursing and medical staff please look at my passport
before you do any interventions with me."



*Empowering Leadership : A Systems Change
Guide for Autistic College Students*

and Those with Other Disabilities

Read the free PDF [HERE!](#)



The organization for Autism Research (OAR) is excited to announce that it has released two new components of its [Kit for Kids](#) peer education resource.

[Kit for Kids Animated Web Video](#)

&

[Kit for Kids Activity Workbooks](#)

The Weekly Eblast is brought to you by:
The Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust

We would like to also thank the following supporters:

RIVER PEDIATRIC THERAPIES

*Conveniently Located in
Fox Chapel & Monroeville Mall!*

We Serve God, by Helping
Children Surpass what others
said they would never achieve.

(412) 767-5967
www.RiverPediatric.com

PASSAGES
Providing Autism Support Services to Achieve Gainful Employment

Providing Autism Support
Services to Achieve
Gainful Employment

www.goodwillswpa.org/Passages
412-632-1905

Goodwill
Southwestern Pennsylvania



**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS WHO ALLOW US TO PROVIDE THIS E-
BLAST TO OUR FAMILIES FOR FREE!**

ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA does not endorse any products or services.

In this Issue:

(Click on a topic to navigate through the E-mail)

[Featured Topic](#)

[In the News](#)

[Research](#)

[Events](#)

[Continuing Education and Act 62 Credits](#)
[Research Projects Requesting Participants](#)
[Advocacy in Your Area](#)

Welcome to the Autistic Community!

This is a Project of the Autism NOW Center and the Autistic Self
Advocacy Network

[Download the Booklet HERE](#)

Contents

How To Use This Book	5
What Is Autism?	7
What Does It Mean?	10
Am I Okay?	15
More Alike Than Different	17
Positives	19
Am I The Only One?	21
Where Are The Other People Like Me?	23

What Are My Rights?	25
Resources	27
What Does My Future Look Like?	30
Glossary	33
Contributors	34

In the News

[The Part of Parenting We're Too Scared to Talk About](#)

Occasionally a post circulates the internet in which the author describes witnessing a mother in the midst of a public tirade against her child or children. The mother may have screamed in a way that could only be an overreaction to a small child's mistake or incessant crying. Maybe it was in the checkout line. Or a parking lot. Or at a coffee shop or on a bus.

[Autism, parenting and feeling judged](#)

I saw a woman the gym the other day that I really wanted to avoid. I used to see her a lot when Matthew was small. It seemed she was always there when he was bolting away from me at the grocery store, the swimming pool, the park. She watched me as I tackled Matthew before he wandered into the street, and while I tried to defuse a big bad meltdown. She was always sitting right behind us in church while Matthew flapped and tapped and giggled. Her pale blue eyes followed us everywhere and her frown was constant...

[A shot of confusion: Doctors, parents vexed that some choose not to vaccinate their kids](#)

[Asperger's and High-Functioning Autism: Do Symptoms Improve with Age?](#)

Thanks to new statistical techniques, researchers can now group their study participants based on shared characteristics that unfold over time. A handful of long-term studies, each including up to several hundred participants, have now followed individuals with Asperger's for nearly 20 years. As the young people in these studies come of age, researchers are piecing together how the disorder progresses through the life span.

Research

[Mounting evidence implicates cerebellum in autism](#)

The cerebellum was thought to be responsible only for actions such as walking, reaching and grasping, and pedaling a bicycle. The subtleties of social interaction and language belonged to the cerebral cortex. But that view is changing say Mostofsky and others. "There's an emerging body of data that the cerebellum is important for a lot more than regulating your motor movements," says William Dobyns, professor of genetic medicine at the University of Washington in Seattle.

who cares for children with malformations of the cerebellum. "It regulates your emotions as well - your affective state - and your attention."

[Skill lag and loss common in children with autism](#)

There are numerous reports of children with autism learning how to do something, such as wave goodbye, and then losing that skill abruptly weeks or months later. But there is little information about the exact age at which a new skill develops or disappears. That may be because children with the disorder lose skills in no particular order...

[Scientists identify genetic link between language impairment and autism](#)

"A genetic cause of language impairment may help explain why some kids with ASD have language impairments and others don't, as well as why some members of a family have language impairment only and others have ASD as well."

[Researchers implement program in China that allows for early detection of autism](#)

An Australian researcher has partnered with a Chinese city to implement a program that allows medical experts to diagnose autism in young children. "We designed a program called the social attention and communication surveillance study and we trained maternal and child health nurses to monitor these very early markers in very young children, from one to two years of age."

Events - Stay Connected - Stay Informed

TGIF Adult Social Group for AS/HF in Moon

We'll be meeting as usual tonight in the YCC lounge from 7-9pm playing video or board games and eating snacks while we get to know one another better. We hope to see you there. Friends are always welcome. Spread the word so the group can grow in size. Making plans for a Dr. Who party are still on the agenda for some time this winter and we'd like to have your input. Contact Terry Doughty at tgif.asgroup@gmail.com / 724-457-1088.

Support Group for Partners/Spouses of Those with Diagnosed or Undiagnosed Autism

Is your spouse or significant other on the autism spectrum or do you suspect that to be the case? Do you want to talk about it with others in the same situation? Please join us, Rebecca Klaw and Pam Bram, for a new, monthly support group for partners of individuals on the spectrum (diagnosed or undiagnosed), sponsored by ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA. Please come if this is a good fit for you and you want support, solidarity, and to laugh a little about the crazy moments. Location: Panera (Blvd of the Allies) Time: 6pm, Second Monday of the month. Panera hopes that we will come a bit early to purchase something in exchange for the private space, located in the back reserved room. RSVP to rebeccaklaw@aol.com so we know about how many folks to expect.

Resiliency and Coping; Strategies among Family Members

The support group, AIM, is a collaboration of Jewish Family & Children's Service and Jewish Residential Services. On Monday, January 13th, Wendy Levin Shaw, psychotherapist at JF&CS, will present on the subject of Resiliency and will also explore coping strategies for family members of teens and adults with disabilities. Meeting will take place on Monday, January 13th - a light dinner will begin at 6pm; program will take place 6:30 - 8:00 at JF&CS office, 5743 Bartlett St in Squirrel Hill. RSVP to Linda Marino at lmarino@jfcspgh.org or 412-904-5945. Free and open to the public.

HConroy Consulting Social Group at Carnegie Mellon University

On Tuesday evenings at CMU, HConroy Consulting hosts a weekly social group to assist members learn skills related to nonverbal communication, online communication, dating, and building and maintaining relationships. Join us to meet new people, learn new skills, and have a blast! This group is for individuals ages 19-29. For questions, please contact heather@hconroyconsulting.com with questions. \$20/session, 15 week semesters (Save \$5 per group by paying for the 15 weeks in advance). Our first group takes place on Tuesdays beginning January 14 from 6:00pm until 7:30pm.

21 & Able Community Meeting on Housing

Learn about the potential of new models in housing for people with disabilities. Help us develop unique solutions in Allegheny County. RSVP to Mary Hartley mhartley@uwac.org - 21 & Able Meetings 1/15/14 10-12pm (cake) 1/16/14 6-8pm(pizza). Meetings at United Way of Allegheny County 1250 Penn Ave Pittsburgh PA 15222.

Health Committee for People with Disabilities (HCPD)

C.L.A.S.S.: Oakland (4638 Centre Ave)

On the agenda for our time together will be: Update and Game Plan for our ongoing advocacy to move PA to "YES!" for [Medicaid Expansion](#). Continue our Community Mapping - we will focus on "Infrastructure." Opportunities for our continued Education of Medical Providers in regard to Persons with Disabilities. Setting our course for 2014 - PA Governor Election, DPW meeting, Community Education and Awareness. Contact: Sally Jo Snyder at 412-456-1877 x203 / ssnyder@consumerhealthcoalition.org.

Community Outings Group for Adults with ASD

On January 19, join us for bowling at Arsenal Lanes in Lawrenceville (212 44th St at Butler) from 1-4pm. Go to the [Arsenal Lanes website](#) to see the specials for that day. To RSVP, join the [meetup.com](#) group by clicking the headline link above or by contacting Heather at heather.a.conroy@gmail.com or 724-787-5194.

Just Us Parents Autism Support Group

Support one another by sharing ideas on what works, getting resource information, and just meeting new parents. Location: 778 Thompson Run Road Pittsburgh Pa 15237. 7-9pm 3rd Tuesday of each month - beginning January 21. Contact Lisa Gordon at 412-443-0142 or at lisagord1@msn.com.

Sibling Social Group/SibShop in Washington, PA

The Washington Health System's Children's Therapy Center will host a SibShop sibling

social group on January 25, 2014 at its Waterdam location (1000 Waterdam Plaza Dr. Suite 120 McMurray PA 15317) from 9:30-11:30am. The gathering is for sibs ages 7-13 and will feature games, crafts and snacks. Participation is free of charge. Please RSVP by Jan 23, 2014 at 724-942-6100. Contacts: Jodi Shemansky, Ellen Cicconi, or sibshopsphg@achieva.info.

New Story Fund will Award \$50,000 to Families in PA

Applications accepted until January 31.

Families can be nominated for an individual award of up to \$1,500 each year. Nominees must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the New Story Fund:

- legal resident of PA;
- younger than 21 years old; and,
- diagnosed with one (or more) of the following: ASD, serious emotional disturbances, intellectual disability or other developmental disability.

Soft Skills for Workplace Success

Volunteers of America of Pennsylvania's Project for Freedom Summer Youth Program for students with disabilities is four weeks in length from 9:30am - 2:00pm Monday through Friday July 7 - August 1, 2014. The program consists of hands on exercises, group work, field trips and job search. It focuses on employment goals, job readiness, tools for successful employment and communication. Students are taught using a modular approach in a workshop environment that is fun and interactive. Each student is evaluated at the beginning and end of the program and progress is measured and evaluated by the instructor based on preset rubrics. At the end of the program, students have a better understanding of the employment process from start to finish. This program provides the foundation for building appropriate workplace skills. Please contact brubin@voapa.org or call 412-246-4434 x201 to learn more.

Property Tax & Rent Rebate Reminder

If you are a PA resident age 65 and older, a person with a disability age 18 and older, or a widow or widower age 50 and older, you may be eligible. The deadline has been extended to December 31st to file for the Property Tax & Rent Rebate Program. Income limits are \$35,000 for homeowners and \$15,000 for renters and half of Social Security income is excluded. The maximum standard rebate is \$650, but supplemental rebates for qualifying homeowners can potentially boost rebates to \$975. You can stop by any legislative offices to obtain a claim form (PA-1000), receive help from staff in completing and filing your application and check on the status of your claim. Eligible residents who submit their application will receive their claim approximately eight weeks after it is processed. You may also check the status of claims online by visiting the Department of Revenue website or by calling 1-888-222-9190.

Attention ACCESS/EBT Card Participants:



Present your Access/EBT Card at any of our museums and you'll receive discounted admission for up to *four people*: \$1 per person at the [Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh](#) in Oakland and at [The Andy Warhol Museum](#), and \$2 admission at the [Carnegie Science Center](#). Not valid with any other offer or group rate. Visitors must present an Access/EBT Card, **along with a photo ID**, to receive the discount. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

>>>To list your event in the weekly E-blast, [THIS FORM](#) and email it to info@autismofpa.org.

Continuing Education and Act 62 Credit Opportunities

[Bureau of Autism Services Virtual Training & Resource Center](#)

The trainings posted in this section count toward the 90 hours of ACT 62 Behavior Specialist License (BSL) requirements.

Research Projects Needing Participants

[Investigation of Natural/Alternative Therapies used by Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#)

Hillary Branum-Tamski's Senior Tutorial Project, Chatham University. 724-594-4150 (c) hbrantumtamski@chatham.edu. Parents/Guardians of children with autism please complete this survey.

Adult Autism Quality of Life

This dissertation research focuses on the quality of life for adults diagnosed on the autism spectrum. This research involves a face to face interview lasting approximately one hour. Participants are compensated \$20 for their participation. Please contact Diane Snyder at dssnyder@live.carlow.edu or 412-916-1509

The Perspectives Program

The Perspectives Program at the University of Pittsburgh is developing non-drug interventions to meet the unique needs of adults with autism spectrum disorders. Individuals with Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, or Pervasive Developmental Disorder NOS, between the ages of 16-40, are now being accepted into the program. All eligible participants will receive one of two experimental interventions, Cognitive Enhancement Therapy or Enriched Supportive Therapy, at no cost. Participants must be able to come to the University of Pittsburgh on a regular basis. A new session is beginning soon. To enroll or to learn more about the program, contact: 1-866-647-3436 or autismrecruiter@upmc.edu.

Lifespan Study

Are you an adult or do you know an adult with an autism spectrum disorder? The Center for Excellence in Autism Research at the University of Pittsburgh is exploring

how older adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) think and how areas of the brain communicate. This research study is one of the first comprehensive investigations of brain structure and function in autism that takes aging effects on the brain into special consideration. We are in need of a few individuals with an ASD diagnosis between the ages of 40-45 years and 60 years and over to help us finish the study. Testing includes computer, paper and pencil testing and an fMRI scan. There is no cost involved in participating. Participants will be compensated. Please contact autismrecruiter@upmc.edu or 1-866-647-3436 to participate.

Parent Training for Young Children with Autism

We are looking for families to participate in a research study that uses parent training to reduce behavior problems in children with autism spectrum disorders. To be eligible to participate in the study your child must have an autism spectrum diagnosis, be between 3 and 7 years of age and have significant behavioral issues (tantrums, noncompliance, aggression). If you would like more information please contact Kelley Sacco at (412) 692-5884 or kelley.sacco@chp.edu.

Pitt Early Autism Study (PEAS)

The Pitt Early Autism Study is seeking infants and toddlers up to 22 months of age who have an older sibling with an autism spectrum disorder. Pregnant women who already have a child can also inquire. Our goal is to understand the earliest signs of ASD. Children participating in this research study will visit the University of Pittsburgh or have home visits beginning as early as 2.5 months of age and extending until 3-4 years of age. We will observe your younger child's development, which may include measures of motor skills, looking patterns, communication and language, play behavior, and social development. Assessments for autism will be given at no cost. Contact: autismrecruiter@upmc.edu or 412-624-5402 for additional information or to participate in the program.

SURVEY FOR AS & HFA Hoping to Obtain & Keep Gainful Employment

Adults with Asperger's syndrome (AS) and high functioning autism (HFA) often experience difficulties obtaining and keeping gainful employment despite their potential for work. Moreover, unemployment rates for adults with Autism have been estimated to be as high as 80%. Because work is often a gateway to independence and there are numerous negative health consequences attributed to unemployment (e.g., depression, anxiety, and chronic illnesses), employment among adults with AS and HFA is of particular concern from both an occupational therapy and public health standpoint.

To gather useful information on the employment experiences of adults with AS and HFA, we have developed an online survey. The survey is anonymous, takes less than 15 minutes to complete, and has SUNY Downstate institutional IRB approval (Reference #363846-1).

We are asking that Adults with AS or HFA, who are also 18 years or older, and have held at least one paid job participate in this survey. The information received will be used to provide a better understanding of the current employment experiences of adults with AS and HFA. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Professor Alisha Ohl, PhD, at 718-270-7737 or Alisha.Ohl@downstate.edu

If you are interested in having your research project listed in the weekly blast please complete [THIS FORM](#).

Advocacy in Your Area

[GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES](#)

[Evaluative Conciliation Conference \(ECC\)](#)

The Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) is committed to seek out and offer varying alternative dispute resolution activities and options for constituents. ODR understands the importance of due process; however most special education disputes settle without the need for a fully adjudicated due process hearing, and many of these might benefit from the assistance of someone knowledgeable and impartial to offer risk assessment towards reaching agreement.

To that end, ODR is launching a pilot called Evaluative Conciliation Conference (ECC). This pilot is available for parents and local education agencies involved in a special education dispute.

[Job Accommodation Network: Employees with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#)

[Join the Conversation for Change](#)

Help shape federal agency strategies for helping youth and young adults with disabilities successfully transition from school to work

[Find Your Local Task Force Here](#)

The Local Task Force Right to Education in Allegheny County (LTF3) holds meetings the first Wednesday of the month from 7-9pm (except July and August) at the AIU Bldg. in the Waterfront. The LTF serves as a resource for children with all disabilities and their families in the 42 school districts in Allegheny County. (The City of Pgh. has their own LTF.) The role of the LTF is to communicate needs and problems to the appropriate sources. The LTF is comprised of parents, professionals, educators and agency representatives. The Local Task Force offers a Parent Assistance Line at 412/394-5930 to answer questions or provide information to the caller concerning special education issues. The LTF also takes part in the cyclical monitoring of school districts. If you have any questions, please contact the Chairperson, Susan Wuenstel, at pjwuenstel@yahoo.com or 412/276-2497. Hope to see you at the next mtg!

[Opportunity for Parents of Students with Disabilities in the Pittsburgh Public Schools](#)

Education Law Center-PA is sponsoring FREE *Education Rights Legal Clinics* in conjunction with meetings of the Pittsburgh Local Task Force on the Right to Education. To schedule an appt., email Kate Welch at kwelch@elc-pa.org.

[On-Demand Webinar](#)

Four-Part webinar series on Autism Spectrum Disorder and Navigating the Medical System ACHIEVA and the I FND Center and the Autism Treatment Network have

partnered to bring you this Four-Part webinar series on Autism Spectrum Disorder and Navigating the Medical System, including: The Concept of the Medical Home, Accessing Community Resources, Common Health Conditions Associated with ASD, and Preparing for Doctor's Visits.

Disclaimer

ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA disclaims and does not endorse or support any individual or entity included in this publication, makes no representations, warranties, guarantees or promises on behalf of or for those listed, and assumes no liability nor responsibility for any service or product provided or advertised. We strongly recommend that readers of this e-blast and related publications such as newsletters, exercise their own best judgment when making the decision to use the services, products, interventions or advice from any entity listed herein.