



The BCC-ASA News

January 2008

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide information regarding Autism, Asperger's Syndrome and related disorders.
We do not necessarily endorse the information printed in this newsletter.

BCC-ASA Receives Grant from The Wiessner Foundation for Children, Inc.

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During the fall of 2007, the Baltimore-Chesapeake Chapter of the Autism Society of America was granted an award from the Wiessner Foundation for Children, Inc. Mr. Joseph E. Smith, President of the Board of Directors of the Foundation, is the proud grandfather of a child affected by Autism. At Mr. Smith's suggestion, Heather Thoms-Chesley, President of BCC-ASA, submitted a grant proposal requesting funding for social events for the children of the Chapter, and their families. We have already had the opportunity to use this grant to offset the cost of the Bowling Social that we enjoyed hosting last fall. Additionally, this grant will support Movie Day this spring as well as a portion of the cost of the Annual Family Picnic at Cascade Lake. Our chapter is very fortunate to have such wonderful sponsors. The Wiessner Foundation for Children, established in 1905, was originally dedicated to serving children that had been orphaned. It served many children over the years, but has stopped operating homes and has evolved into a charitable foundation. It offers grants to area non-profit organizations that support children, and is pleased to support children and families in the area affected by Autism.



The President's Communication By Heather Thoms-Chesley

Happy New Year everyone!!! I hope you enjoyed a joyous and minimally stressful holiday season. Our house was busy during the season. Grandma Connie visited with us from Montreal for the holidays and met many of you on the boat cruise. It was nice watching Victoria enjoy interacting with her Grandmother; Victoria has not seen her Grandmother in two years. The children truly enjoyed every moment of the visit. Family and friends are such an important aspect to all children's lives.

At the beginning of each year I find myself thinking about the past year and looking forward to the next. I have reflected on the friends I have made over the years at the support group - you know what it is like to live day to day in the trenches with Autism and survive it!!!! It was a great pleasure to see so many of you at the events throughout the year. This February we will be offering our first movie day (see page 6 for details). The children will be admitted free of charge thanks to a grant from the Wiessner Foundation for Children, Inc.

We have many fun and exciting things planned for the year. Things that we hope will help you fill in the gap between Diagnosis and Cure. That is how I envision BCC-ASA, the support system that helps you deal with the day to day challenges, celebrate the uniqueness of our loved ones and cope while we wait for the Cure. BCC-ASA strives to improve the lives of all those affected by an Autism Spectrum Disorder.



Please join us at support group, a family event, an upcoming training, or just sit back and enjoy the newsletter. No matter how you are served by BCC-ASA, know that the all-volunteer Board works very hard to provide these services to you. If you appreciate the benefits you've received from BCC-ASA, won't you consider joining the board? Or do you know someone with the enthusiasm and interest who would be interested in serving? We are recruiting members and welcome all those interested in helping. I wish you the best for 2008 and encourage you to get involved in BCC-ASA.

Calendar of Events



- January 14 Baltimore *County* SECAC, Topic: Emotional Disabilities, Towson, 7:00 p.m.
- January 15 POAC of Central Maryland, Towson, 7:00 p.m.
- January 16 Baltimore *City* Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee, North Avenue, 6:30 p.m.
- January 16 *Tax Laws & Tax Tips for People w/ Disabilities*, KKI's Greenspring Campus, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- January 23 Family Resource Fair, William S. Baer School, Baltimore, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- January 25 *Autism Training with Sherry Moyer*, Baltimore, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- February 7 Asperger's Disorder and Autism Seminar, Towson, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- February 7 BCC-ASA Support Group, Speaker: Hilary Hellerbach on *Parent Self-care and Stress Management*, 7:00 p.m.
- February 11 Baltimore *County* SECAC, Topic: Adaptive/Functional Programs, Towson, 7:00 p.m.
- February 12 Adult Autism Resource Group (AARG), Towson, 7:00 p.m.
- February 13 *The IEP Team*, Arc of Baltimore, Baltimore, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- February 19 POAC of Central Maryland, Towson, 7:00 p.m.
- February 20 Baltimore *City* Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee, North Ave., 6:30 p.m.
- February 25 Developmental Disabilities Day at the Legislature, Annapolis, 8:00 a.m.
- March 6 BCC-ASA Support Group, Parent Panel on Toilet Training, 7:00 p.m.
- March 8-9 NARHA Region 2 Conference. Speaker: Dr. Temple Grandin, Hunt Valley.
- March 9 Camps and Summer Programs Fair/Camp for Everyone, Timonium, 12:00 p.m.
- March 10 Baltimore *County* SECAC, Topic: IST, SST, 504 & IEP, Towson, 7:00 p.m.
- March 11 Adult Autism Resource Group (AARG), Towson, 7:00 p.m.
- March 12 *Early Intervention Services & Response to Intervention*, Arc of Baltimore, 10:00 a.m.
- March 12 Autism Speaker Series: *Challenging Behaviors*, Loch Raven High School, 7:00 p.m.

Calendar Close-up

Join us at our next support group meeting, **Thursday, February 7th** for an informative talk on *Parent Self-care and Stress Management* being given by BCC-ASA Board Member Hilary Hellerbach, the social worker at Battle Monument School. Learn how to take care of yourself so that you can take care of those who rely on you.

On **March 6th**, our topic will be **Toilet Training** (*always* a popular subject at support group!). A panel of experienced parents will lead the discussion and there may even be some audio-visual aids to add to the program. Stay tuned!

And don't miss the latest installment of **The Partnership Project's Autism Speaker Series** on **Wednesday, March 12th at 7:00 p.m.** where dealing with **Challenging Behaviors** will be addressed. The program will take place at Loch Raven High School, 1212 Cowpens Avenue in Towson, just off Beltway Exit 29A (Cromwell Bridge Road). Look for more details in the March edition of *The BCC-ASA News*.

DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS . . .

(ABOUT THE CALENDAR ITEMS)

Monday, January 14, 2008, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Baltimore County Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting, Topic: Emotional Disabilities

Monthly meetings throughout the school year are held in Room 114 of the ESS Building, located on the Baltimore County Board of Education's Greenwood campus, 6901 Charles Street, Towson. For more information: Jan Thomas, 410-560-2613 or jan560@comcast.net.

Tuesday, January 15, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Parents of Autistic Children of Central Maryland Meeting

POAC of Central Maryland is a training, support and advocacy resource for families regarding Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) programs for children with autism. Monthly meetings to discuss parents' experiences creating and funding ABA programs, to share strategies and resources and to advocate together for needed services. Location: Coldwell Banker Offices, York Road, Towson. For directions and more information: <http://poacofcentralmd.org>.

Wednesday, January 16, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Baltimore City Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting

Monthly meetings throughout the school year are held in the 1st Floor Board Room at the Baltimore City Board of Education's North Avenue offices, 200 East North Avenue. For more information: Wendy Foy, Chair, SECAC at fox_foy@yahoo.com

Wednesday, January 16, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Tax Laws & Tax Tips for People with Disabilities

Kennedy Krieger Institute Adolescent Transition Lecture Series. Sponsored by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Genetics and Children with Special Health Care Needs. Speaker: David N. Pessin, Esquire. Location: Greenspring Campus, Bowles Building, Board Room, 3825 Greenspring Avenue, Baltimore. No cost. For more information: Jenny Jones, 443-923-2790, 800-390-3372, or ResourceNetwork@kennedykrieger.org.

Wednesday, January 23, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

William S. Baer School's Family Resource Fair

A Resource Fair designed to help parents and caregivers become familiar with the many community resources that are available to support them as they face the challenges of raising a child with special needs. A light breakfast will be available as well as door prizes. Location: William S. Baer School, 2001 North Warwick Avenue, Baltimore 21216. No cost. For more information: Debbie Straka, LCSW-C, 410-790-3849.

Friday, January 25, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Autism Training with Sherry Moyer

Sponsored by Pathfinders for Autism. Includes the biology, characteristics and strategies of Autism Spectrum Disorders, range of challenges facing persons on the spectrum, distinction of ASD from other disabilities and assisting persons with ASD in vocational rehabilitation. Location: Workforce and Technology Center auditorium, 2301 Argonne Drive, Baltimore, No cost, but registration is required. For more information: Melissa Pemberton at 410-554-9381 or mpember-ton@dors.state.md.us.

Thursday, February 7, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Asperger's Disorder and Autism: Advances in Understanding and Intervention

Presented by New England Educational Institute. Speaker: Celine Saulnier, Ph.D. of the Yale Child Study Center, Yale University School of Medicine. Seminar will provide participants with detailed information on the current research and media trends in defining, classifying, and treating ASDs, with an emphasis on the clinical implications of each. Location: Sheraton Baltimore North, 903 Dulaney Valley Road, Towson. Cost: \$149. For more information: 413-499-1489 or <http://www.neei.org>.

Temple Grandin Coming to Hunt Valley



BCC-ASA, in conjunction with the Anne Arundel, Howard and Montgomery County Chapters of ASA and Pathfinders for Autism, is pleased to be co-sponsoring two presentations by Dr. Temple Grandin at the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, Inc.'s Region 2 Conference in Hunt Valley in March. Temple Grandin, Ph.D. is a prominent presenter and author on both animal behavior and autism. She designs livestock facilities and is a Professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University. Saturday evening March 8th, Dr. Grandin will give a talk on Animal Behavior followed by a Sunday morning presentation, *Autism - Thinking in Pictures*. There will be a book signing after both presentations and her books will be available at discount prices. The conference is to be held at the Marriott Hunt Valley Inn. For more information, please contact Ross Braun, NARHA Region 2 Representative. 301-474-6044 or visit <http://www.narha.org/Regions/Region2.asp>.

DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS . . . (continued)

Wednesday, February 13, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 pm.

Meetings of the IEP Team and Who is a Member

Sponsored by The Arc of Baltimore and The Parents' Place of Maryland. Speaker: Rochelle Howell, Parents' Place of Maryland. This workshop looks at reviewing and revising IEP's. Participants will learn who is a member of the IEP team and when an IEP may be amended without a meeting. Location: The Arc of Baltimore, 7215 York Road, Baltimore (Towson). No cost, but registration required. To register contact Joseph Anastasio, 410-296-2272x5346, janastasio@arcofbaltimore.org or Rochelle Howell, 410-768-9100x109, Rochelle@ppmd.org.

Tuesday, February 26, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Developmental Disabilities Day at the Legislature Legislative Reception and Briefing

Sponsored by The Arc of Maryland, Maryland Association of Community Services, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, Maryland Disability Law Center and People on the Go of Maryland. An opportunity for citizens with developmental disabilities, families, providers and advocates to meet with legislators about critical disability issues. Location: Miller Senate Office Building, Annapolis. Cost: \$18. For more information: Dorothea M. Nikas, The Arc of Baltimore, 410-296-2272x5349 or dnikas@arcofbaltimore.org.

Saturday & Sunday, March 8-9

NARHA Region 2 Conference with Featured Speaker Dr. Temple Grandin

See article above for details.



Sunday, March 9, 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.

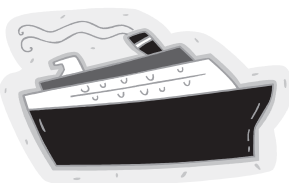
Camps and Summer Programs Fair/Camp for Everyone

Sponsored by *Baltimore's Child* and The Arc of Baltimore. Featuring programs for the summer of 2008. Meet the camp directors and ask questions. Children's entertainment provided. Enter a drawing at the fair to win a \$500 scholarship toward a camp at the fair. Location: Timonium Holiday Inn, 2004 Greenspring Drive. For more information: 410-367-5884 or info@baltimoresChild.com.

Wednesday, March 12, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Early Intervention Services and Response to Intervention (RTI)

Sponsored by The Arc of Baltimore and The Parents' Place of Maryland. This workshop looks at what early intervention services are and why they are part of IDEA 2004 and what Response to Intervention is and why it is part of IDEA 2004. Location: The Arc of Baltimore, 7215 York Road, Baltimore (Towson). No cost, but registration required. To register contact Joseph Anastasio, 410-296-2272x5346, janastasio@arcofbaltimore.org or Rochelle Howell, 410-768-9100x109, Rochelle@ppmd.org.



A "Wonder-Full" Time on a Breakfast with Santa Cruise

Thanks to a generous donation from **Harbor Cruises Ltd.**, BCC-ASA families and friends enjoyed a spectacular breakfast cruise on the *Bay Lady*. Chilly winds and overcast skies failed to diminish the warm holiday spirit that prevailed on our own private deck aboard the *Bay Lady*. Following a tasty breakfast buffet, Santa stopped by to visit any children (and adults) who hadn't had a chance to submit their wish lists. A lively Holiday Sing-a-long followed with a DJ and Santa (let's hear it for the Chicken Dance!).

BCC-ASA is very grateful to Harbor Cruises and Ami Taubenfield who facilitated this outing. Ami is the proud parent of a 17-year-old daughter with ASD and a participant in the Adult Autism Resource Group.



Scholarship Funds Available for BCC-ASA Members

Each year, current BCC-ASA paid members are able to access funds to offset the cost of trainings, conferences, or workshop attendance. These funds are available from the **Fowler Memorial Fund** established to honor the memory of Chuck Fowler. To utilize these funds, submit a request before the event detailing the date, the event and funds requested. After the training, submit a copy of the registration form to BCC-ASA, P.O. Box 10822, Baltimore, MD 21234 or electronically to questions@bcc-asa.org and reimbursement will be mailed to you.

Book Donation to BCC-ASA

At a recent support group meeting, a woman left a stack of books as a contribution to our library, and also offered the group her reassurance that raising a child with autism "does get easier" as they get older. We did not catch her name, but we want to acknowledge our thanks for her timely contributions, including the following:

- Teaching Developmentally Delayed Children: the ME Book* by O.I. Lovaas
- Autism: Handle with Care* by Gail Gillingham
- The Siege: The First 8 Years of an Autistic Child* by Clara Claiborne Park
- Somebody, Somewhere* by Donna Williams
- The Original Social Story Book* by Jenison Public Schools, Editor Carol Gray, et al

All of these books are classic resources on autism, and we are grateful that they are now available to BCC-ASA members.

--Elaine Williams, Librarian

OOPS!!!! Did you not get notice of the boat cruise??

If you were not aware of the Boat Cruise BCC-ASA members were offered in December, then we don't have a correct e-mail address for you. There are opportunities that present themselves that we are not aware of in time for placement in the newsletter. In these cases, we will use the BCC-ASA e-mail list serve. To subscribe, send an email to Bccasanews-request@bcc-asa.org and, on the Subject line, type: subscribe. Or you may visit <http://seven.pairlist.net/mailman/listinfo/bccasanews> and subscribe or unsubscribe there. We don't want anyone to miss out on time-sensitive information.!

The Baltimore-Chesapeake Chapter of the
Autism Society of America Presents:

Movie Day



The BCC-ASA Chapter would like you to join us
for a movie, popcorn and a soda.

Kids get in for free!! Adults only \$6.

Date: Saturday, February 9th

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Beltway Movies 6
7660 Belair Road
Baltimore, MD 21236

(to accommodate our kids, lighting & volume will be adjusted)

Movie: To be determined - check our website (www.bcc-asa.org)
in February for details

RSVP: rsvp@bcc-asa.org or
410-655-7933

To help your child prepare for Movie Day, here is a Social Story written by BCC-ASA member Elaine Williams:

GOING TO THE MOVIE THEATER

Watching a movie in a theater is like seeing a video on TV at home, except everything is bigger:

- a very big picture screen
- louder sound
- lots of people sitting in rows of chairs

It's fun to watch a movie together with friends.

We can laugh together.

We can see interesting things together.

In a movie theater we sit quietly and watch the movie together.

Movie theaters are dark while the movie is playing, but the lights go back on when the movie is over.

Some people like to eat popcorn and candy during the movie.

When the movie is over, we can talk about what we saw together.

I like to see a movie in a theater with my family and friends.

Next AARG Meeting February 12

The Adult Autism Resource Group will meet on Tuesday, February 12th from 7:00-9:00 p.m. This sub-group of the chapter meets the second Tuesday of every month at the home of Ellen Feifarek, 508 Hampton Lane, to work on issues that concern adults and transition-age youth with autism. Call Linda Pearl at 410-769-9500 during daytime hours if you plan to attend.

With so many excellent publications coming out about autism and related disorders, we're pleased to have added the following resources. Members of our chapter whose dues are up-to-date are welcome to take one book at a time from our library, which is open during support group meetings. These are great books! They offer terrific ideas and insights as you work with your family members who have autism.

— Elaine Williams, BCC-ASA Librarian



MORE NEW BOOKS IN THE BCC-ASA LIBRARY

Medical/Biological

Prescription for Success: Supporting children with autism spectrum disorders in the medical environment, by Jill Hudson, is a resource for supporting children with ASDs in otherwise overwhelming medical and dental environments. There are clear scenarios and sample activities which will serve as a great resource to help children successfully navigate the complex, confusing, and sensorially-overwhelming environments surrounding medical care.

Behavior Management

Using a question-and-answer format, Shira Richman's new book ***Encouraging Appropriate Behavior for Children on the Autism Spectrum*** is a practical guide to help parents and professionals address the most common behavioral issues posed by children on the autism spectrum. Shira Richman is a behavior specialist who proposes clear and easy to follow behavior plans for each problem (there are 100 FAQs in all), in a book which can be read from cover to cover or used as a handy quick reference.

John Clements, also a behavioral psychologist, offers ideas for intervention in his book ***People with Autism Behaving Badly: Helping people with ASD move on from behavioral and emotional challenges***. The book is organized around the common messages conveyed by behaviors and some of the underlying issues that drive these behavioral-messages. Another hands-on, practical manual, with many case examples.

Achieving best behavior for children with developmental disabilities, by Pamela Lewis, is a step-by-step workbook for parents and caregivers which offers practical advice to encourage positive behavior in children with developmental disabilities. Although not specific to autism, the techniques in this book are very relevant and useful.

Transition to Adulthood

Future Horizons sent us a copy of their newest publication, ***STARS—Skills Training for Assertiveness, Relationship-Building & Sexual Awareness***, by Susan Webster and Susan Heighway, a valuable guidebook which teaches positive sexuality and the prevention of sexual abuse for people with autism and Asperger's.

Chantal Sicile-Kira's newest book, ***Adolescents on the Autism Spectrum***, presents strategies for parents to help their children, whatever their ability level, through the physical and emotional changes of the teenage years and preparing them for adulthood.

Life and Love: Positive strategies for autistic adults is a comprehensive peer-written living guide by Zosia Zaks, an adult with Asperger Syndrome. Her book uses a very clear but thorough format to proactively tackle the many daily activities of life and helps readers to lessen anxiety and assists them in gaining independence.

How to Find Work That Works for People with Asperger Syndrome, by Gail Hawkins, is a guide for getting people with Asperger's into the workplace and *keeping* them there. It includes strategies on building a supportive team, choosing appropriate careers, finding and educating sympathetic employers, and creating an effective resumé, as well as how, when, and where to disclose a disability to an employer.

BCC-ASA was honored to receive a donation from **Mrs. Stella Diaz** in memory of **Marjean Funn**

Welcome, New Members

The chapter extends a warm welcome to anyone who recently attended their first support group meeting. The Autism Society exists as a resource for parents or anyone involved with a child or adult diagnosed with autism. We understand the challenges of autism and are here to help in any way we can. We hope to see you at our next meeting!



Essays About Autism 2008

Celebrating Differences

Are you an individual with autism? Do you have a brother or sister with autism? Are you the parent or grandparent of an individual with autism? Are you the teacher of a student with autism? Or, are you the friend of a person with autism? We'd like to hear from you! What are the special, positive things that have come from your experience? What have you learned? How have you been challenged to re-think your notions of autism? How have your experiences made you a better, more understanding person?

The Baltimore-Chesapeake Chapter of the Autism Society of America (BCC-ASA), in conjunction with the Baltimore County Public Schools, is accepting essays, poems and artwork to celebrate *Autism Awareness Month 2008*, which takes place in April. Winning entries will be awarded cash prizes and will be published in the Baltimore-Chesapeake Chapter of the Autism Society's newsletter.

Prizes will be awarded for each of the following categories:

1. Individuals with Autism
2. Family Members or Friends
3. Elementary School Students
4. Middle School Students
5. High School Students
6. Educators or Therapeutic Professionals

Contest Rules: Essays and poems are limited to 500 words. Please include your name, grade, school, phone number, and address. One entry per person. Entries must be postmarked by March 21, 2008. BCC-ASA reserves the right to publish entries. Entries cannot be returned. Please e-mail your submissions to: questions@bcc-asa.org.

Or mail to:
BCC-ASA Essay Contest
P.O. Box 10822
Baltimore, MD 21234



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 Newsletter: Mary Ellen Curtis
 Website: Will Cassano

Chapter Phone: 410-655-7933

Website: www.bcc-asa.org

E-mail: questions@bcc-asa.org

Support Group Meeting

The next support group meeting will be **Thursday, February 7th** at 7:00 p.m. at Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital. The support group meets on the **first Thursday** of every month.

Directions to Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital:

From North of Baltimore:

Take the Beltway (I-695) to the Jones Falls Expressway (I-83) south. From I-83, take the Northern Parkway exit, 10B West. Make a right turn off the exit ramp and make an immediate right turn onto West Rogers Ave. (the first street off the exit ramp). Go north on West Rogers Ave.; the hospital is on the right.

From Baltimore and South:

Take the Jones Falls Expressway (I-83) north to the second Northern Parkway exit, 10B West. Turn right onto West Rogers Ave. (the first street off the exit ramp). Go north on West Rogers Ave.; the hospital is on the right.

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 Baltimore-Chesapeake Chapter
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