



AUTISM

ASGC NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

First off, The ASGC extends our deepest gratitude to the Hartnagle and Shaft families. Like the Holtz family earlier this year, they put together a letter writing campaign to their friends and family that brought in over \$3000 for the chapter! Thank you to Dolly, Suzanne and your families. Your efforts and generosity are greatly appreciated.

There are some important new additions to your ASGC leadership. In May we welcomed Laurene Sweet as our new ASGC Secretary. She is a proven and dedicated volunteer and professional with a degree in physical therapy. We thank her for many improvements, including the look of the newsletter you are reading now.

Just added in June as Treasurer of the ASGC is our long-time friend, John Hearn. John is a graduate of Notre Dame University and the father of a beautiful 5-year old daughter with autism. His professional

experience, dedication and keen problem-solving skills made him an easy choice for the job. Thanks, John.

In sadder news, the mother of our good friend and parent advocate, Tom Bregar, passed away last week after a long illness. Tom is also the ASGC representative for the Ohio Autism Coalition (OAC). Please keep the Bregar family in your prayers at this difficult time.

Our June meeting saw the return of one of our favorite speakers, Sondra Williams. An adult with high-functioning autism, author and mother of four children with varying degrees of ASD, Sondra is a remarkable woman. She shared her wisdom with a grateful group of parents and professionals in a new presentation called "Baiting the Hook", helping us better understand the best ways to reach a person with autism as an individual.

For our July meeting we are very fortunate to have for the first time a very respected and experienced area expert on autism spectrum disorders and treatments, Ms. Barrie G. Galvin, OTR/L. Barrie Galvin is the owner and clinical director of Barrie Galvin and Associates, Ltd, a multidisciplinary pediatric focus clinic. She is also the founder of GERCF, The Galvin Educational and Resource Center for Families, a non-profit organization in Cleveland Ohio, with a primary mission of bringing new information to families of children with special needs. We hope you will join us on July 3.

Thanks to all of you for your continued support!
Sincerely,

Gus Gallucci

Autism Society of Greater Cleveland

JUNE, 2007

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Chapter Meetings

All are welcome to the monthly ASGC meetings!

When: 1st Tuesday of each month

Time: 6:30pm

Where: Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, 8001 Brecksville Rd. in Brecksville.

Your children are welcome, thanks to STEPS Behavioral Consulting!

(Please RSVP the number of children attending)

Info or RSVP (216) 556-4937.

Autism Society of Greater Cleveland Officers:

Rory McLean
President

Gus Gallucci
Vice-President

John Hearn
Treasurer

Laurene Sweet
Secretary

ASGC
P.O. Box 41066
Brecksville, Ohio 44141

NEWS FROM THE AUTISM SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

Sondra Williams Speaks at June ASGC Meeting

Those who attended the June meeting for the Autism Society of Greater Cleveland were treated to a fascinating presentation by Sondra Williams. Sondra is an amazing wife, mother, author, poet, advocate, and dear friend to the Autism Society of Greater Cleveland! Sondra, who lives in Columbus, is especially important to those of us in Ohio. As an adult with autism and as a parent for 4 children with autism, Sondra has effectively served in many capacities. She is a board member for the Autism Society of Ohio, an advisory member for OCALI, and she is a voting member for the Ohio Autism Task Force. Sondra's DVD "Define Me" and her book "Reflections of Self" can be purchased at www.thegraycenter.org. We are grateful to Sondra for sharing her life experiences with the ASGC!

"Autism is a part of me but doesn't reflect whom I really am inside."

Sondra Williams

Important Publications Available on ASGC Website

The Autism Society of Greater Cleveland strives to empower families to make educated decisions for and with their children. The following publications are available for download at <http://www.asgc.org/index.htm>:

- Service Guidelines for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- A Profile of Ohio's Publicly Funded Services for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Join the Autism Society of Greater Cleveland!

Dues for the Autism Society of Greater Cleveland are only \$5.00 per year. Checks for dues or donations can be sent to:

ASGC
P.O. Box 41066
Brecksville, Ohio 44141

We also invite you to check out our website at www.asgc.org!

Information, support, and important news is available online!

ASGC
Autism Society of Greater Cleveland

New book outlines steps for interacting with children with autism and including them in activities

The Child with Autism Learns the Faith

Parent and autism advocate Kathy Labosh has written a series of books to help families of children with autism. *The Child with Autism Learns the Faith* (2007) is the latest installment and while it's geared towards teaching children with autism about faith, the information is truly invaluable for everyone who interacts with children. For a review copy of *The Child with Autism Learns the Faith*, by Kathy Labosh (Labosh Publishing, 2007) or to interview the author, contact Rachel Damien at 727-443-7115, ext. 206, or email rachel@event-management.com. Please include your name, publication, and mailing address with your request. (Credit for this article: Autism Society of America)



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Childcare is Available at Monthly ASGC Meetings



The monthly meetings for the ASGC are held on the first Tuesday of every month. Parents can relax and enjoy the meeting while children are safely cared for by staff members from STEPS Behavioral Consulting. Please, call (216) 556-4937 to let us know how many children will be attending. During the meeting, parents have a view of the child care room through glass windows. Please, come and meet new friends, re-connect with old friends, and learn the latest information about autism!

Upcoming Speakers for ASGC Meetings

July 3rd: Barrie Galvin, OTR/L, Owner and Clinical Director, Barrie Galvin and Associates, Ltd.

August 7th: Leslie Sinclair, Program Director, Cleveland Clinic Center for Autism

September 4th: Dr. Phil DeMio, DAN Protocol Physician and Father of a child with autism

October 2nd: TBA

November 6th: TBA

December 4th: TBA

Meetings are from 6:30 to 8:30 PM

DIRECTIONS TO THE CUYAHOGA
VALLEY CAREER CENTER CAN BE
FOUND AT
<http://www.asgc.org/events.htm>

NEWS FROM THE AUTISM SOCIETY OF OHIO

You Can Raise Money for the ASO

You use GoodSearch.com like any other search engine - the site is powered by Yahoo! - but each time you do, money is generated for the ASO. Here's how it works:

1. Go to www.goodsearch.com
2. Type **The Autism Society of Ohio** into the "I support" box and click on "verify"
3. Search the Internet just like you would with any search engine
4. Since GoodSearch shares its advertising revenue with charities and schools, every time you search the web at GoodSearch, you'll be earning money for us.

GoodSearch also has a toolbar you can download from the homepage so that you can search right from the top of your browser.

You can keep track of our estimated earnings by clicking on "amount raised" once you designate us as your organization of choice. The more people who use the site, the more money we'll earn, so please spread the word!!



NATTAP International Conference to be Held in Ohio



NATTAP: Network of Autism Training and Technical Assistance Programs in co-operation with the ASA is sponsoring the 1st Annual International NATTAP Conference right here in Ohio! The event will be hosted by OCALI (Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence) in Columbus on September 26-28, 2007.

<http://www.autismohio.org/images/nattapfirstannualconference.pdf>

The Autism Society of Ohio: Advocating for You

The **Autism Society of Ohio** is working hard to advocate at the state level for individuals with autism and their families in Ohio. Some of the ways they are working include:

- Serving on the Ohio Autism Taskforce, the advisory board of the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence and various other statewide committees and taskforces.
- Promoting autism awareness through the Ohio Autism Awareness License plate and other activities.
- A comprehensive website.
- Legislative Advocacy.
- Email alert system.
- Support of local chapters.
- Promoting collaboration statewide through the Ohio Autism Coalition.

www.autismohio.org

NEWS FROM THE AUTISM SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Supreme Court Decides for Parents in *Winkelman v. Parma*



Court Rules 7–2 That Parents Can Represent Children’s IDEA Rights in Federal Court

Bethesda, MD (5/21/2007) – The Autism Society of America, the nation’s largest parent-led autism advocacy organization, applauds the Supreme Court for its landmark decision in *Winkelman v. Parma City School District*, 05-983.

The issue concerned the rights of a non-lawyer parent of a minor child with a disability—in this case, autism—to represent his or her child in a federal court under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Justice Anthony Kennedy, writing for the majority, concluded that “parents have enforceable rights at the administrative stage, and it would be inconsistent with the statutory scheme to bar them from continuing to assert those rights in federal court at the adjudication stage.”

Senator Kennedy to Reintroduce CLASS Act

Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) will reintroduce the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act of 2007 (CLASS Act). This legislation would help adults with severe functional impairments obtain the services and supports they need to stay functional and independent. The CLASS Act would address this problem by creating a new national insurance program to help adults who have or develop functional impairments to access services and supports in their community. The Autism Society of America strongly supports this legislation!

U.S. House Committee Passes Funding for Critical Autism Programs for 2008

Tuesday, June 12, 2007

By: Marguerite Kirst Colston

Bethesda, MD (6/12/07) -- The House Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee passed its funding bill for Fiscal Year 2008. This legislation, which is the first step in a lengthy appropriations process, would increase funding for several critical autism programs. Specifically, the legislation calls for \$16.5 million for the CDC's Disabilities Surveillance and Research Program. This program supports data collection, analysis, and reporting, so that we can better understand the scope of the autism epidemic. It also supports the establishment of regional centers of excellence to collect and analyze information on the number, incidence, correlates, and causes of autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Combating Autism Act.

**First Step in
Getting
Needed
Funding for
Families
with Autism**



Autism Society of America (ASA) is the leading voice and resource of the entire autism community in education, advocacy, services, research and support. ASA accomplishes its ongoing mission through close collaboration with a successful network of chapters, members and supporters. Check out the ASA website at www.autism-society.org.



The Voice of Autism.

PRC Introduces ECO™-14, a State-of-the-Art Communication Aid Featuring Windows® XP Compatibility

Wooster, OH, June 13, 2007 – Prentke Romich Company (PRC) announced the release of ECO-14, its first augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device to feature Windows XP compatibility in addition to superior communication capabilities.

"PRC has been committed to enabling speech-impaired children and adults to communicate without limitations for more than 40 years," stated President David L. Moffatt. "By consolidating our highly successful language-based vocabulary systems and today's most powerful computing technologies, our new ECO-14 device enables augmented communicators to express themselves independently, access the Internet, and run popular software programs, all in a single device."

ECO-14 comes pre-programmed with an array of proprietary and proven language and vocabulary software programs designed to sup-

port language learning and independent communication, including all versions of Unity®, WordCore™, and the popular WordQ™ word predication and next word prediction software.

The device also features an oversized, 14.1" XGA TFT display that is 35% larger than comparable aids, making ECO™-14 highly appealing to younger AAC communicators and easier to access for users with severe motor or visual impairments. The larger display also enhances online activities, such as viewing web sites and reading and editing documents.

ECO™-14 also offers users:

- Built-in DVD/CD player;
- "Visual Scenes" pages that enhance vocabulary instruction;



- AirCard® wireless phone capability;
- Integrated Bluetooth® connectivity.

Affordably priced at \$7,595, ECO-14 is available in four colors and two versions. The integrated ECO-14 includes the personal computing functions; a dedicated version without computer capabilities meets Medicare/Medicaid funding requirements.

Product demonstrations can be arranged by calling a PRC Regional Consultant at (800) 848-8008. Details about the new device and PRC's other AAC aids are also available online at www.prentrom.com.

Source: Prentke-Romich Company

OCALI Loans Assistive Technology and Other Items

Did you know that OCALI (Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence) has a lending library of assistive technology equipment that can be loaned *at no cost* to parents, educators, and therapists? Communication devices, software, books and other items are available from their lending library. OCALI will even pay for UPS shipping charges! In addition, their

website (www.ocali.org) offers information about autism and assistive technology. OCALI recently started a newsletter, called The Sphere, which is available online, as well. OCALI is in the process of compiling a database containing information about service providers. Interested providers can access the service provider form on the website.

Assistive Technology is any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

Local Events

Saturday, June 23rd: The **National Autism Association of Northeast Ohio** is sponsoring a 1st annual benefit concert at the Beachland Ballroom to raise funds to help families affected by autism. The concert features the Bottle Rockets and Robbie Fulks! Tickets can be purchased online at www.autismnortheastohio.org.

Sunday, June 24th: The **Achievement Centers for Children** is sponsoring the 17th annual "A Most Excellent Race" at Beaumont School to benefit Camp Cheerful. The event features a 5K and 10K race/walk with a division for persons using wheelchairs. You can register to participate in the race or you can make a donation at <http://race.achievementcenters.org/>.

Sunday, August 26th: **Bellefaire JCB** is sponsoring the 12th Annual Biathlon and Walk. There is a post-race picnic with awesome food and activities the entire family will enjoy, too! Register online at <http://www.bellefairejcb.org/announcements/events/12th-annual-biathlon-%26-walk/>

Website Review of the Month

Julie Maro, MA, CCC/SLP and Caroline Musselwhite, PhD., CCC/SLP have created the website www.aacintervention.com to offer tips, resources, and valuable information about augmentative and alternative communication interventions. One of the most helpful features on the website is a "Tip of the Month" with archives of past tips going back to 1999. This month's tip presents sample messages for conversation parts, including: attention getters; maintainers, holders, & interjections; starters / context setters; turn transfers / questions; repairs; topic closures / transfers. Visitors to the site may also benefit from tutorials, tips and tricks, activity ideas, and much more.



While you are visiting the site, be sure to check out their instructions in how to create a literature based communication board. They even provide you with a list of appropriate books to use for the project. If you use Board-maker, they provide links to ready-made items which are available on the web. Be sure to bookmark this website!

A few words about AAC:

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) refers to ways (other than speech) that are used to send a message from one person to another. We all use augmentative communication techniques, such as facial expressions, gestures, and writing, as part of our daily lives. In difficult listening situations (noisy rooms, for example), we tend to augment our words with even more gestures and exaggerated facial expressions. People with severe speech or language problems must rely quite heavily on these standard techniques as well as on special augmentative techniques that have been specifically developed for them. Some of these techniques involve the use of specialized gestures, sign language, or Morse code. Other techniques use communication aids, such as charts, bracelets and language boards. On aids such as these, objects may be represented by pictures, drawings, letters, words, sentences, special symbols, or any combination thereof. **Augmentative communication users don't stop using speech!** When speech is used with standard and special augmentative communication, not only does communication increase, but so do social interactions, school performance, feelings of self-worth, and job opportunities. **The goal of AAC is the most effective communication possible and, in turn, the greatest potential for personal achievement.** (Source: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association)

Do you have some news or information to share? Send information by email to laureneseet@yahoo.com by the 12th of each month. We will share information, provided that space is available. Thank you!

Autism Society of Greater Cleveland

P. O. Box 41066
Brecksville, Ohio 44141

Phone: 216-556-4937

"The mission of ASGC is to serve the autism community by providing information, coordinating support services, and facilitating communication for the benefit of those with Autism Spectrum Disorder from diagnosis through adulthood."

The ASGC is a 501(c)3 non-profit, all volunteer organization.

Your donations are tax deductible and we welcome your support!

To learn more, call us or log on to:
www.asgc.org

The information in this newsletter is for educational purposes only. The Autism Society of Greater Cleveland does not endorse any specific product, method of therapy or organization. Our aim is to provide information that assists our membership in making educated decisions.

Thank you for your support!

Autism Conferences and Events in the Area

ECIS Summer Institute at Kent State University

<http://www.ehhs.kent.edu/ecis07>

2nd annual ECIS (Early Childhood Intervention) Summer Institute will be held June 25 to June 29, 2007. It is designed for anyone who is interested in and/or working with young children with disabilities (birth to five) and their families.

The online registration form includes brief descriptions of each session. <http://www.ehhs.kent.edu/ecis07>

Questions: Mary Shumar at mjshumar@kent.edu or Sandy Robbins at srobbin4@kent.edu.

Siblings of Children with Special Needs: Unique Concerns, Unique Opportunities

www.toolsfortoday.com

Siblings of children with special needs have special needs too. Join professionals and other parents for an evening of information and discussion at Cuyahoga Valley Career Center on June 27th from 6:30-8pm (\$10 fee)

Contact Name: Linda Kresnye at 216-229-5757, Ext. 126 or lkresnye@clevelandrmh.org

Workshop will also be offered on July 11th at Ursuline Educational Center

Two-Day PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) Training Workshop,

July 23-24 from 8:00-4:00 at the Holiday Inn Cleveland South in Independence. The presenter is Anthony Castrogiovanni, Ph.D.
Course Fee: \$425

For more information, please email at pyramid@pecs.com or call Toll Free 1-888-732-7462 or visit www.pecs.com
