



New Mexico Autism Society

PO. Box 30955
Albuquerque, NM 87190

Voicemail: 505-332-0306
<http://www.nmautismsociety.org>

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2012

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January Workshop: Behavior - Why does he/she do that?!

When: Saturday, January 21, 2012

Time: 10:00am – Noon

Where: Unitarian Universalist Church

Speaker Mary Ann Trott will be presenting a workshop on understanding some of the behaviors individuals with ASD exhibit. Maryann Trott is an autism resource teacher with the Albuquerque Public Schools Autism Resource Team. She is also a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. She has taught special education classes in the public schools since 1974, serving as both a classroom teacher and consultant. She is the author of *SenseAbilities – Understanding Sensory Integration and Oh Behave! Sensory Processing and Behavior Strategies Working Together*. She loves helping families, teachers and others understand behavior and often says “it’s the detective work that is so rewarding and has kept me going for 37 years.”

February Workshop: Creative Arts with Nita Hughes

When: Saturday, February 18, 2012

Time: 10am - Noon

Where: Unitarian Universalist Church

Join Nita Hughes, a Certified Creative Arts Therapist, for a family-fun event to explore our creative sides and experiment with painting, working with clay and assembling collages with everyday objects. Parents and siblings are encouraged to participate.



Painting done by child with ASD

Nita feels that individuals with ASD are some of the most creative people she has encountered, because they are not burdened with the learned knowledge of how things should look. Why can't an apple be purple or a sky be green? Creativity is all about seeing things in a different way.



Look up New Mexico Autism Society on Facebook



We are on Twitter! @NMAutismSociety

Deadline for March/ April issue is February 11th

Submit articles to: Becky Roybal, Editor at bexandlex@gmail.com.

For other matters call: NMAS: (505) 332-0306 CDD/Autism Programs: (505) 272-1852

We hope to see you at these events! Childcare is FREE!

Unitarian Universalist Church is located at the SW corner of Carlisle & Comanche:
3701 Carlisle Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110

NMAS President's Letter

Dear Autism Community,

There has been a lot of press about autism lately, and some of it has been hard to stomach for our students with autism. The incident of the 7 year old boy with autism being handcuffed to the chair at an Albuquerque public school outraged many in this community, and rightly so. Restraining a child with autism is a controversial thing to do in any instance, and especially so when done against all protocols of appropriate intervention. We have seen restraints being used on students with autism for generations now, and it's wrong headed.

The New Mexico Autism Society is committed to addressing the issue of restraint. We have been working with New Mexico's Children, Youth and Families Department to address the issue of restraint in residential treatment centers for kids with autism. We want to see the licensing rules changed so that expertise in any disability must come with training in that disability, the use of evidence based interventions, and oversight from experts and parents in that disability.

At the same time, the 7 year old boy who was handcuffed now faces the juvenile justice system to contend with charges of battery against a teacher and a police officer. The juvenile justice system is particularly ill equipped to handle kids with autism. Once a student enters this system, the likelihood of that child growing into an adult offender increases dramatically. This "school-to-prison" pipeline leaves students with behavioral challenges with a murky future, and it must be stopped.

The cuts in education funding have led to larger class sizes, fewer staff on campus, and reductions in training for our educators. Adequate interventions are possible to address maladaptive behaviors, but teachers need support to implement any behavior plan that's outside the box at school. There are teams of experts in autism in our state who can help teachers and schools develop successful plans for students. Are teachers supported in their classrooms with educational assistants, co-teachers, and understanding and trained principals? Or are they left alone in a portable with a classroom full of kids with autism, expected to manage eight students with radically different behaviors?

Let's educate our Legislators this session about autism. Join us in Santa Fe for Autism Day, January 18th at the RoundHouse at 9:30am in the Rotunda. We'll be passing out information about autism to every Representative and Senator in the building, as well as to our Governor and her staff. We will be asking the Legislature to study the school-to-prison pipeline, and the issue of police involvement in managing behaviors at school. We'll be asking our representatives to preserve funding for education and Medicaid in our state. Your help is critical. Even if you can't go to Santa Fe, we ask that you make phone calls when we ask on our list serve, and help create a safe climate at school, where our children can receive their Free and Appropriate Public Education.

Finally, please notice our call for nominations to be on the Board of the New Mexico Autism Society. We are a diverse and dynamic group, and because all meetings have Skype access, you don't even have to be in Albuquerque to be on the board. We're looking for good people who can make the commitment, and help lead this incredible organization.

Thank you for all that you do.

Katie Stone
President, NMAS

Friends & Relationships Course

The Friends and Relationships Course is an education program for adults with developmental disabilities. The classes are presented by the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division of the New Mexico Department of Health. Over the past eight years classes have been held in ten cities throughout New Mexico. The Course is made up of three separate series of eight two-hour classes. The Friends and Relationships Course was developed by Jill Ryan, Ph. D., and Mark Gordon, M.A.

We view relationships as the opposite of isolation and loneliness. Anything done to connect with others breaks the isolation in our lives and may lead to building friendships and possibly romantic relationships. The classes provide opportunities for anyone to have more contact with others in their lives.

Some of the skills and knowledge that we present in the classes are:

Conversations – Students practice trading information with other students to learn about each other's interests, jobs, families, etc. Each student creates a list to prompt them in providing information about what makes them interesting and one-of-a-kind to others. Students learn to ask questions and make comments as means of keeping conversations going, and getting closer to someone who could be a friend.

Getting together socially with others – Getting together is a complicated process that usually requires help from a support person. We practice making plans in class and reviewing and critiquing what happened. Did the plan happen? Did you have conversations where you traded information? Did you get to know each other better?

Working with support people – It is important for most people to have someone they trust to support them in making plans, making good decisions when building a good friendship. Making an agreement with a support person means deciding that the two of you will work together to help you get more of what you want in your life.

Sexuality – Sexuality education is important for everyone, but especially for those who have difficulty understanding and processing information. In the Course we provide fact-based education about sexual body parts, sexual health and sexual acts at the appropriate level of comprehension.

A classroom setting is a safe place for people who have difficulty socializing and meeting new people to relate to others. The curriculum is made up of concrete activities that include conversation practice, planning get-togethers, role plays, brainstorming activities, open discussions in small groups, problem solving puzzles, videos, writing assignments, and opportunities to present to the whole class. No information is presented in lecture form. Each student has a handbook with homework assignments, handouts, and lesson summaries. Throughout the course, we often refer to the Rules of Friendship (continued on page 5).

The January/February classes are already filled. The next sessions are for September/October and it is advised to **sign up now** if you are interested. They are usually held at Mesa Verde Community Center, 7900 Marquette NE, Albuquerque, NM 87108. For more information contact: Mark Gordon, M.A. at mgordon@cybermesa.com or 505-231-5363.

Camp Rising Sun: Get Ready for Another Summer of Adventure!

Celebrating our seventh year as New Mexico's Summer Camp for Kids with Autism, camp will be held at the established Manzano Mountain Retreat in the Manzano Mountains approximately an hour and a half southeast of Albuquerque, New Mexico. The site is accredited by ACA. For additional site information, go to www.manzanoretreat.com.

Camp sessions are designed specifically for children ages 8-17 years old. Camp Rising Sun provides an inclusive summer camp environment that includes children with an autism spectrum disorder and their same-age peer campers. Children sleep in male or female dormitories and will be supervised by adults at all times.

Determination of camp/counselor ratio is dependent upon each child's needs. One to one staffing is available for those campers who need more supervision. Volunteers are university students, community volunteers, and professionals from the community desiring additional experience working with children with autism. All undergo a rigorous screening process; including reference checks, interview, and criminal background checks. Most positions are volunteer assignments and may provide a small stipend. Counselor Applications available online now! Please apply at www.camprisingsunnm.org

Important Dates:

- Teen Camp: Monday June 25- Friday June 29, 2012
- Kids Camp: Sunday July 29- Thursday August 2, 2012
- On **January 23, 2012**, Applications for both camps go live online at www.camprisingsunnm.org

News from the Albuquerque Public Schools Autism Resource Team

The APS Autism Resource Team is celebrating its tenth year of serving students with autism spectrum disorders. Since 2001, the district has worked to develop the following:

- Consultation services for school staffs working with any student with an autism spectrum disorder
- A system that complies with state and national recommendations for working with school teams and diagnosticians to determine eligibilities
- Staff development opportunities that include instruction in evidence based practices and

follow the guidelines established by the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Autism specific classrooms for students with a variety of core deficits from preschool to high school ages.
- A library of materials and resources that is available for school teams and families
- Offices at the Highland North Autism Center

Consultation is available for any school serving students with an educational eligibility of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Families interested in a consultation should dis-

cuss their concerns with the school staff who can then request a consultation. Concerns regarding the possibility of an Autism Spectrum Disorder should be referred to the school diagnostician. The Autism Resource Team only accepts referrals on students who have an educational eligibility of ASD or on those in the process of an evaluation or re-evaluation. Following a consultation, copies of the report are sent to the school with a request to forward a copy to the family. If a family is concerned that they have not received a copy of the report, the family member should contact the school and ask for a copy of the report.

APS Opens Highland Autism Center

Following significant time and effort in the planning as well as construction process, Albuquerque Public Schools has opened a site and associated offices dedicated to the education of students with autism. This site is designed for students experiencing significant educational impact due to their diagnosis of autism. Students attending at the center are placed according to the Individual Educational Program (IEP) process. The site at Highland High School houses four classrooms, therapy rooms, a life skills room, a multi-purpose room for district trainings, conference rooms, an office for the Autism Resource Team, and an Autism Resource Library.

Partners in Policymaking Leadership Program

NM Partners in Policymaking is an intensive leadership program for individuals with disabilities and their families to learn the skills and techniques needed to change the policies and systems that affect education, employment and inclusion opportunities. This unique training program is based on a national curriculum that is used throughout the United States and in several other countries. The individuals who participate in the program are selected through an application process.

The ARC of New Mexico offered the program in the early 1990's and many advocates graduated from the program and continue to be active and effective leaders throughout the state. The Center for Development and Disabilities and the Au-

tism Programs offered the training program this year, and are pleased to announce that 27 people successfully graduated in November!

NM Partners in Policymaking is now accepting applications for the class of 2012. If you are interested in applying to be a participant in the program, contact Lauriann King at laking@salud.unm.edu or (505)272-5304.

One of the handouts that we refer to frequently in the class is the “Rules of Friendship.”

Rules of Friendship

Friends:

- Talk to each other about their interests and feelings
- Get together to do things with each other
- Have things in common to talk about and do together
- Care about each other
- Feel safe and calm around each other
- Are equals

Presented once again by Disability Rights New Mexico and The Disability Coalition, the 2012 Pre-Legislative Forum will offer a preview and discussion of disability-related issues to be addressed in this year’s legislative session. If you and/or your organization/ agency are planning to be involved in any way in this year’s legislative session – making calls, sending letters, meeting with your legislators, attending committee meetings, etc. – or even if you’re just interested in what’s going on with disability issues in New Mexico, we hope you’ll plan to attend.

The Forum will take place in the morning and will be followed by a workshop on the new federal

health care reform law (the Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act, also known as PPACA or the ACA) in the afternoon. If you’d like to learn more about this law, the benefits it’s already providing for health care consumers, and the changes in health care coverage it will bring when fully implemented in 2014, we encourage you to stay for the afternoon workshop as well as the pre-legislative forum.

When: Saturday, January 7, 2012

Where: UNM Continuing Education Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Contact Jim Jackson at 505-256-3100 or jjackson@drnm.org for more information.

Autism Day at the RoundHouse:

January 18th, 9:30am - 1pm

The New Mexico Autism Society is hosting an official Autism Day at the Legislature in Santa Fe. A proclamation will be issued in both the House and Senate declaring January 18th, 2011 “Autism Day” in New Mexico. We will be visiting every Representative’s and Senator’s office, distributing information about autism, and helping to raise awareness. There will be tables for non profits related to autism to present information, and plenty of good company.

This year is a short session for the Legislature: only 30 days in total, so we don't anticipate any autism specific legislation to come forward. We do, however, want to support funding for public education and Medicaid, and we want to support a memorandum to study police involvement in school discipline.

Keep an eye on the ASDnMore list serve for information about all things related to disability and autism in the Legislature, and join us on Wednesday, January 18th at 9:30am in the Rotunda of the RoundHouse to help spread the word



SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 1, 2012



BENEFITING
THE CIVITAN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER
&
THE NEW MEXICO AUTISM SOCIETY



Sponsored by the Great Southwest Civitan District

Save the Date!

New Mexico Autism Conference:

Imagine - A Learning Journey Through
Autism Spectrum Disorders

March 28, 29, 30, 2012 in Albuquerque
Local breakout sessions as well as
presentations by Carol Gray and Michael
John Carley. Please join us!

Save the Date!

Ellen Reavis Race for Autism
Saturday, April 14, 2012
Balloon Fiesta Park,
Albuquerque, NM



Wanted: Race Sponsors

We need your help finding Race Sponsors. Included in this newsletter is a sponsor letter or you can download a copy of the letter from our website. If you know of someone who might be a sponsor please leave us a message on our voicemail (505) 332-0306 or leave a message on "Contact Us" on our website www.nmautismsociety.org. We appreciate your help!

NMAS Silent Auction

NMAS will be hosting a Silent Auction on March 30, 2012 in conjunction with the Statewide Autism Conference. We need **everyone's** help in making this a successful event. If you own a business or offer a service, please consider donating a gift certificate or item. NMAS is a 501©3 so your donation is tax deductible. If you would like more information or would like to have some letters requesting donations, please call Yoko Zeigler, 821-0731 or George Thompson, 799-1751. Items/Gift Certificates can be picked up or be mailed to New Mexico Autism Society, PO Box 30955, Albuquerque, NM 87190. We will also be needing volunteers so if you have some free time, please give us a call.



Annual Ribbon Pin Making Party

We need LOTS of volunteers – of all ages. We plan on turning 400yds of ribbon into 2400 ribbon pins in 1 day! We pass these pins out throughout the year but especially through the month of April which is Autism Awareness Month. No special skills needed and it's a great networking opportunity. Since we work through the lunch hour, we appreciate folks bringing a dish to share but it's not necessary to participate. Drinks will be provided.

Join us! Saturday, March 3, 2012, from 10 am to 3 pm at the Center for Development & Disability, 2300 Menaul Blvd, NE, Albuquerque, NM.

Welcome Lauriann King!

The NMAS Board of Directors is pleased to announce the addition of Lauriann King as a director, filling a vacancy. She will stand for election by NMAS members in our next Board of Director's election in April. Lauriann King works as Senior Program Therapist for the Autism Programs at the University of New Mexico, Center for Development and Disability. In this position, she works with individuals with autism and their families, and is a member of the training team. Also, Lauriann is one of the coordinators for Partners in Policymaking, an intensive training program for future advocates and leaders in New Mexico. For the past two summers, Lauriann has enjoyed working at Camp Rising Sun. Lauriann has a 13-year-old son with autism and a 15-year-old daughter.

Donations:

Thomas Luebben

United Way of Central New Mexico

7 Anonymous Donors, Nov, Dec
Barbara Ayres, Nov, Dec
Tina Chan, Nov, Dec
Lynn Chavez, Nov, Dec
Geoffrey Freeze, Nov, Dec
Dr. Cynthia King, Nov, Dec

Grizelda Meyers, Nov, Dec
Tammie Neill, Nov, Dec
Nilda Sosa, Nov, Dec
Liz Thomson, Nov, Dec

United Way of New York City, Nov

New Members:

Kyle Wortman, Albuquerque
Kristen Kramer, Portales

United Way of Central NM

A great way to donate to the
New Mexico Autism Society!

*When you receive your United Way
Donations page, just indicate that
you want your donation to go to:*

**New Mexico Autism Society,
P.O. Box 30955, ABQ. NM 87190**

We are a 501(c) 3 organization and

all donations are tax deductible.

Thank you for thinking of us!

April Wheeler, Los Alamos
Anne Delling, Ranchos de Taos
Rhonda McMinn, Albuquerque
Scott Tyson, Albuquerque
Janet Macaluso, Roswell
Jim Sydow, Albuquerque
Lisa, Ken & Ella Houser,
Albuquerque

Support Groups

Autism Parent Support Group for Sandoval County

Next Meeting Dates: January 18, 2012 and February 15, 2012

Our meetings are held every third Wednesday of the month, 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the International House of Pancakes (IHOP) 980 W. Highway 550, Bernalillo, NM 87004, near the Santa Ana Start Casino. Parents, individuals with Autism and other interested members of the community are all welcome.

For further information, contact: indigogiftedasd@gmail.com or (505) 382-3578

Alamogordo Autism Support Group

If you live in the Alamogordo area and would like more information about this group please contact Chinda Lucoski at 575-491-3188.

Las Cruces Action for Autism with Dignity

Wanted:
Families for Support
& Advocacy

Contact: Sue Moore
(575) 373-0265
mtmoore@q.com

Gallup ASD Support Group Forming

If you are interested in getting more information, please email:

Christine.White@ihs.gov

Parents Reaching Out

www.parentsreachingout.org/

(505) 245-0192
or 1-800-524-517

Silver City Support Group for Individuals and Families Affected by ASD

Please contact
Susie Trujillo
at 575-313-3604 or
strujillo@grmc.org

Autism/Asperger's support group

For date & time, please
sign up at
www.grasp.org
or contact Ian at
ilf@ianford.com or
(505) 908 9426

New Mexico Autism Society

Membership/Donation Form

Join the New Mexico Autism Society and add your voice to the growing number of families and professionals helping those with autism. You can help!

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

- \$20 Household/Family/Individual
- \$50 Champions \$100 Professional
- In addition to my Membership payment, I'm enclosing a donation of \$ _____
- I'm interested in becoming a member and would like to request a scholarship.
- I'm not interested in becoming a Member, but I'm enclosing a donation* of: \$ _____

Total amount enclosed: _____

Name (s) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
E-mail _____
Phone # _____

By providing your e-mail, you will be signed up for our New Mexico Autism list-serve, ASDnMore. E-mail will be kept confidential.

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

- Check enclosed
- PayPal, credit, debit card online

Please go to nmautismsociety.org to join online, use PayPal to join or make a donation using our secure server, or mail this form to:

**New Mexico Autism Society
P.O. Box 30955
Albuquerque, NM 87190**

Members of NMAS will receive our monthly newsletter, have voting rights and all benefits of membership.

* Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowable under the law.

Thank you for your support!



New Mexico Autism Society

P.O. Box 30955
Albuquerque, NM
87190-0955

Return Service Requested



January/February 2012

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

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