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# Fall Conference 2013

## AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS AND CO-OCCURRING CONDITION



Friday, November 8, 2013  
 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
 Hilton Garden Inn  
 Pittsburgh/Southpointe  
 1000 Corporate Drive  
 Canonsburg, PA 15317

This conference will outline the most common co-occurring conditions in individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders, including intellectual disabilities, anxiety, tics, attentional issues, epilepsy (seizures), and the pathophysiology affecting gastrointestinal tract and brain functioning. Audience members will learn about both the overlap and distinguishing features of these disorders in relation to autism in order to better differentiate between them. This will lead to intervention plans that better target the true underlying difficulties of the individual.

**Presenters:**

- Judith Miller, Ph.D.
- Scott Faber, M.D.
- Miya Asato, M.D.
- Jessica Kettel, M.D.
- Carol Utay, Ed.D.

### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

- Fee includes lunch, refreshments and handouts
- Parent, Family Member, Student, or Individual with ASD - \$65
- Professional (without credits) - \$95
- Professional (including credits) - \$145

***VISION:**  
 We envision a community where people with autism achieve their maximum potential as they live, learn and work.*

**For more information visit ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA's website [www.autismofpa.org](http://www.autismofpa.org)**

## Executive Director Message



Luciana Randall  
Executive Director

**“The Autism Connection of PA starts with you.”**

We’ve had so much activity lately that we are all feeling a little breathless. Our mantra is “It’s all good!” In September alone, I was involved with teaching 312 people about autism. These were: grandparents, case workers from department of aging, Mt. Lebanon police officers, theater ushers, staff, event volunteers, and Disney producers and the North American Tour cast of the Lion King. These people ranged in age from 8 to 85 years old, and many were autism newbies. Add to that our fabulous staff doing the following: Jennifer Fulton coordinating our fall conference “Brainstorms: Autism and Co-Occurring Conditions” conference,

Marie handling the majority of 106 family or adult calls (as of this writing), Jennifer Salamon coordinating special events and communications, and Heather Conroy putting together our weekly e-news blasts.

Because of supporters like you, who attend our events, the Pirates and PNC Charities noticed, and awarded us with an Achiever Award last week – along with \$5,000! We were really thrilled to bring a young boy and an adult friend with autism on the field – representing the ages and stages of autism – prior to a Pirates game. It was an amazing experience to be recognized for such an award.

Between media interviews about autism and our supports, special events, seminars, conferences, long phone chats, and always planning more, we are busy and loving our jobs because they involve you – people who embrace difference and honestly acknowledge challenges. Thank you for including us in your daily lives. We really appreciate being connected!

Sincerely,  
Luciana Randall  
Executive Director



# Tickets on sale September 3!

Thank you so much for your interest in attending Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's Autism-Friendly performance of *The Nutcracker*!

Although the performance is called "autism-friendly," the adaptations and accommodations are good for people with other sensory-processing disorders, intellectual disabilities, and social disabilities. PBT welcomes all who feel that this inclusive environment will be one that would best support a positive and meaningful experience for them and their families.

**When:** Friday, December 27, 2013

**Time:** 2:00 pm

**Where:** Benedum Center for the Performing Arts



## **How to purchase tickets online for *The Nutcracker***

- Starting on September 3, 2013, visit the following website:  
<http://pbt.culturaldistrict.org/production/39289>
- In the upper right hand corner, enter the promotional code: **PBTAFP**
- Choose the December 27, 2013 at 2 pm performance.
- Purchase tickets anywhere in the theatre! Tickets range from \$13.50-\$43.75.
- Tickets will be mailed two weeks prior to the performance date.

*Should you not have the promotional code available when purchasing tickets, you can also purchase them by visiting:*

<http://www.pbt.org/plan-your-visit/autism-friendly-performances>

*Click on the "Buy Tickets" link. Patrons will be required to answer three simple questions regarding their group before being redirected to the ticket page; these questions are designed to protect the integrity of the performance and ensure a safe space for patrons.*

## **How to purchase tickets over the phone for *The Nutcracker***

Patrons who have questions about seating and accommodations are encouraged to call PBT to order their tickets. Please call 412-454-9101 or 412-454-9107 starting on September 3, and a PBT representative will assist you through the process. Patrons should have the promotional code available or be prepared to answer three questions regarding their group.

PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE

## Thank you to our Supporters!

JoAnne Kaylor	Carol Hribar	BYS Yoga	In memory of Elsa Baling Wilson:
Elsie Murray	In memory of Dominic Mignanelli	for their Benefit Meditation class	Allegheny County Bar Association
Tina Perry		Salt Power Yoga	Lee & T.L. Fahrney
Robert and Melissa Walls	Rebecca Bruno and the staff of the Canonsburg Shop N' Save	for their charity classes	Stephen and Deborah Gasparich
Dollar Bank Employee Gift Matching Program	for their Blue Jean Friday	Michelle and Marty Lubetsky	Lindsay and Jeanne Howard
PNC Foundation Gift Matching Program	Susan Winters and Chippewa United Methodist Church	In memory of Robert Hippert	Lawrence Kaufman
Sue Sherman and the Rowan Elementary School	for Vacation Bible School collection	Thank you to the following for book donations to our library	Flynn and Charmaine McCall
for their Bubbles for Autism fundraiser	Montour Elementary students and PTA	Cindy Meeder	Helen and Earl McKinley
	for Blue Out Day fundraiser	Wendy Hallows	Jim and Diane McMaster
			Marjorie McMaster
			Robert E. McMaster
			Maggie Sitko and Judy Bruno
			Charles Sheppard
			Mark T. Vuono

**Take Your Favorite Autism Organization to Work Day! - Lunch and Learn Presentations for your office!**

Executive Director Luciana Randall, an experienced autism trainer, brings autism to the workplace. Why?

1. **Better Work - Life Balance** - autism weighs heavy on the minds of our families. Learn about autism, from brain difference to communication and behavior challenges. Help co-workers understand and be more supportive and better able to talk about this often-taboo subject.
2. **Learn about autism.** Find out more about this most mysterious and increasingly frequent disorder and how your corporate team can help!
3. **Early detection is key!** Learn signs and symptoms of autism and find out where to turn for your children, grandchildren, or neighbors who are showing concerning behaviors.
4. **"I think I might have this!"** is a common reaction to Ms. Randall's presentations. Learn best practices to weave the gifts and challenges of brain differences into the workplace, and how to support co-workers who are gifted yet a little quirky.

**CALL OR EMAIL TODAY! [lu@autismofpa.org](mailto:lu@autismofpa.org) or 412.781.4116.**



Agency Code 9817

**Please Remember ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA**  
during the United Way Campaign

We depend on the generosity of people like you who believe in our mission of providing a lifeline to those affected by autism through advocacy, education and support.

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!

ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA

35 Wilson Street

Suite 100

Pittsburgh, PA 15223

412-781-4116

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

Recap of the 2013 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community to Benefit Autism Connection of PA!

ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA participated in the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community at Stage AE on May 18, 2013. The weather was perfect. There was entertainment, food, games and lots to see on the walk route. Thanks so much to those of you who came to Pittsburgh and walked with co-workers, family and friends. We really appreciate your time and efforts and hope that you had a great morning. And to the many of you who supported a walker or made a donation to the walk, we thank you!

In 2004 Highmark chose ABOARD as a representative of autism at the Walk for a Healthy Community. That year 12 organizations were represented at the walk held at Station Square. Every year a few more local nonprofits joined and by 2007 this walk had outgrown Station Square and was moved to Heinz Field. This year, with 70 nonprofit human services organizations participating, Stage AE was the new site of this event. Over 10,000 people registered to support these organizations. Highmark underwrites the cost of the walk so 100% of what is donated goes to these organizations.



Money continued to be donated after walk day until the grand total, reached \$28,098.55! We were recognized by Highmark as one of the Top 5 nonprofits at this year's walk. This money funds programs that support families affected by autism here in PA.

Autism Connection of PA is proud to be a part of this important event. Thank you to all that supported us.

ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA would like to thank all the Team Leaders and Teams that supported the 2013 Walk!

- Hattman Walkers
- Just a Lil Team
- Race for Jace
- Team Albinini
- Team Becca Boo
- Team David
- Team Ethan
- Team Freeport
- Team for Jean
- Team S & P
- Team Spencer



A special thank you to Diane Catterall and Donna Enzerra for obtaining free meal coupons from the **McDonald's corporate office which were used as walk incentive prizes**



## 2013 Pittsburgh Marathon Team Autism Connection of PA Recap



Autism Connection of PA was honored to be a nonprofit in the Run for a Reason program with the Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon. Our goal was to have at least one runner or team in every event -- full marathon, half marathon, marathon relay, 5k and kids run. We exceeded our goal in runners and more than doubled our fundraising goal, raising \$11,568. Our runners trained and fundraised for their events and were rewarded with a spaghetti dinner, team shirts and a raffle of prizes generously donated by local businesses.

A special thank you to all of our runners who participated and fundraised:

Greggory Allen, Astrid Arroyo, Debby Barnhart, Steve Bayer, Shawn Bell, Jeffrey Crum, Chip DiMonick, April Ford, Amanda Hartle, Suzie Hull, Jessica Lilja, Steph Moon, Brian Peglowski, Cindy Pofi, Karleen Preator, Lu Randall, Jennifer Rodgers, Matt Rosenberg, Jennifer Salamon, Michael Salamon, Roman Salamon, Mark Speicher, Marlene Story, Laura Wonderling, Nicole Woodard Carr



## Join Our 2014 Marathon Team

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

As a part of the Autism Connection of PA team, we will provide you with a shirt for race day, a spaghetti dinner and free registration to the race of your choice (with fundraising minimum)!

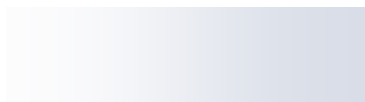
Contact team coordinator Jennifer Salamon at [autismrunpgh@gmail.com](mailto:autismrunpgh@gmail.com) for more information

## Support Group Happenings



### **ABOARD's Autism**

Connection of PA is the largest facilitator of autism support groups in Pennsylvania.



For a complete list of our support groups please visit our website [www.autismofpa.org](http://www.autismofpa.org)



GET CONNECTED TODAY TO A GROUP FOR ASD ADULTS, PARENTS AND SIBLINGS!

### THREE NEW SUPPORT GROUPS!

#### LACKAWANNA COUNTY NEPA AWARE

Elaine Jimenez  
570-766-0683  
[ejimenezsas@gmail.com](mailto:ejimenezsas@gmail.com)

#### TIOGA COUNTY

Sherri Summerson  
570-724-1315  
[autismangels\\_2013@yahoo.com](mailto:autismangels_2013@yahoo.com)

#### WASHINGTON COUNTY

Lori Sebetich  
724-518-5790  
[Starlightlove30@yahoo.com](mailto:Starlightlove30@yahoo.com)

#### ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Children with Special Needs-Sewickley  
Christina Meditch  
412-716-6415  
[cameditch@gmail.com](mailto:cameditch@gmail.com)

We are a group that meets every 4th Tuesday of the month for parents/caregivers with children that have been diagnosed with autism, ADHD, bi-polar disorder and mental disabilities. We have a mixed group of parents with children of all ages, from toddler to teens!

I Matter Too-Sibling Support Group  
Tammie Sauers  
724-351-2582  
[tammiesa@gmail.com](mailto:tammiesa@gmail.com)

My brother has autism. Although he drives me crazy, I know he still looks up to me. He does some of the same things I do. When we were younger, we never really got along. He was really loud (and he still is today). Now, when I'm not home he'd ask where I'm at. My brother also changes his interests. One month all he'll talk about is movie theatres. Next month, he'll talk about restaurants. Sometimes, he'll act up in public. On my birthday, we went out to eat. As soon as we got to our table, he started acting up because we weren't sitting at the table he wanted. So, we had to leave. My mom sat down with him and they wrote up a list of restaurant rules and now any time we go out we pull out the rules and go over them, sometimes they work and other times they do not, but it is getting better. When I have friends over, my brother gets excited. Despite his autism, my friends learned to accept him. I know people can be mean, but if you find a true friend, he or she will also learn to accept your sibling. If you feel neglected, tell your parents and they will try to make time for you. Tell them if you're angry or sad. They might feel the same way.

Raeanne, 13

#### BEAVER COUNTY

Western PA parents of Autism and Learning Differences (WPAL)  
Jane Stadnik  
phone, [724-462-7691](tel:724-462-7691)  
email, [jane.jschmitt@gmail.com](mailto:jane.jschmitt@gmail.com)

Wednesday or Thursday evenings once a month, 6:00 pm start. We usually meet at the Sewickley YMCA activity Center; but due to the needs of our families, we try to meet in libraries throughout the Beaver County (Beaver, Monaca, Baden). We also have a Facebook Page, which is a private group. For more info, please contact us. we will be happy to connect with you.

#### BUTLER COUNTY

Autism Support Group at Parents in Toto  
Catherine Lalonde  
724-473-0175  
[clalonde@zoominternet.net](mailto:clalonde@zoominternet.net)

We meet the 4th Thurs. of the month from noon to 2 at Parents in Toto Autism Resource Center in Zelienople. We don't meet over the summer. We will talk about summer experiences and going back to school. We talk about IEP's, schools, transition and housing for adults. We exchange a lot of personal experiences and try to keep a sense of humor about it.



## Support Group Happenings Continued

### ERIE COUNTY

Parents of Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (PAASD)

Bimonthly meeting with a presentation held at KaleidAScope, Inc.  
4934 Peach St. Erie, PA 16509  
For more information please call 814-824-4515 or visit [kas-erie.org](http://kas-erie.org)

### FAYETTE COUNTY

P.A.K.  
Carla Guthrie  
[charliebrown1023@gmail.com](mailto:charliebrown1023@gmail.com)

We are a family support group. We do outings into the community plus other fun activities.

### LANCASTER COUNTY

Kim Shank  
717-806-7428  
[kim@tommyland.org](mailto:kim@tommyland.org)

Lancaster County Autism Support meets the third Monday of the month from 6:00-8:00 pm. Meetings take place at Family Behavioral Resources located at 245 Centerville Rd. Lancaster, PA 17603. We have open forum discussion and support, as well as information exchange, presenters, and a book lending library.

### Sibling Support Groups at Easter Seals of Western and Central PA.

The groups are open to children ages 6-12. The groups meet in the South Hills, North Hills or in the East Hills. This is an opportunity for brothers and sisters of children to come together for their own social evening. They have the chance to share experiences and feelings with others who understand and can identify with their unique family situations. The first group will be in October. Contact Rita Costa, Social Worker, for information about the South or North group ([412-881-5010](tel:412-881-5010)). Contact Rhonda Picard, Social Worker, regarding the East group ([724-387-1287](tel:724-387-1287)).

### NORTHUMBERLAND, CSIU

CampEmerge and Autism and Related Disorders Support Group, Danville area  
Kathleen Baas  
570-275-8904  
[porkey72@aol.com](mailto:porkey72@aol.com)

We have had very little attendance at our Monday evening support meetings at other times of the year, so have suspended meetings until we re-establish a need.

One bit of news we are sharing with as many as possible is the new research going on at the Autism and

Developmental Medicine Center in Lewisburg, PA, which is a collaboration between Geisinger Medical Center and Bucknell University. We are hoping they will add services for families and children/adults affected by autism. Right now the Center is focused on research.

### WASHINGTON COUNTY

Monongahela Valley Parent Support Group  
Lori Sebetich  
724-518-5790  
[starlightlove30@yahoo.com](mailto:starlightlove30@yahoo.com)

The Monongahela Valley support group is a new local autism support group for parents and families that need help and support from other families who know what they're going through. For the next few months there will be different speakers at these meetings all from which are from Washington County. In the future I plan to have speakers from Allegheny and Westmoreland counties as well since there are some who come to these meetings from these counties. If anyone has any questions feel free to contact me.

### WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Biomed Buddies-Upper Burrell  
Ronna Hochbein  
724-493-2540  
[quasiaspie@outlook.com](mailto:quasiaspie@outlook.com)

Biomed Buddies is a biomed support group aimed at providing information and latest research on treating autism as a multi-faceted physical illness.  
[www.brynnchapmanauthor.com](http://www.brynnchapmanauthor.com)

We currently  
have  
73 groups  
in  
44 counties!

Call Marie Mambuca at **ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA** at 412-781-4116 if interested in attending or starting a support group!



Autism Connection of PA was honored to be asked by The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust for assistance with the nation's third ever autism friendly performance of Disney's *The Lion King*, on Saturday, September 21, 2013. To spread the word and get the community ready for the day we:

- broadcasted information about the event on our email list, netting 600 ticket buyers during week one
- trained over 200 individuals including: Cultural Trust leadership, ushers, professional volunteers, Benedum staff, Disney producers and the show's cast and crew
- edited the social story to prepare families, and participated in dress rehearsals to assess volume, light, action, and other elements

On the day of the show the house was 98% sold out and approximately 70 volunteers signed in and were assigned to stations covering 4 separate "break" areas for patrons needing a quiet place, an active place, or a dark, calming place (sensory room).

Families attended with their children. Adults with disabilities attended on dates.

Some large residential facilities sent residents and staff (one bought 106 tickets).

Along with the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, we continue to receive letters expressing very emotional thanks and relief that families and individuals were welcomed, helped, and accepted in this beautiful venue for an outstanding show.

# The Lion King (Autism-Friendly Style)

Jim Walter—an excerpt from his family's experience, for full text please visit his blog at [www.blogginglily.blogspot.com/](http://www.blogginglily.blogspot.com/)

This was big.

You play back all the rejection in your mind...kicked out of church because your daughter is too loud in the balcony and the organist doesn't want to detract from Easter Mass, kicked out of the front of the auditorium where your daughter is watching her cousins in a talent show because the woman in front complains she's too loud and it's hurting her sons ears, told to quiet her down in a theater before the performance starts and that maybe a theater isn't the right place for her if she can't quiet down...all the little hurts that build into chronic anxiety and stress and a feeling of "she can't do that"..."she's not welcome there"..."what if people complain"...any time any new experience is contemplated. If she "couldn't" do those things, how could she possibly attend a musical?

Musicals have protocols all their own, when to stand or clap figuring prominently among them, but chiefest of these always is remain quietly seated throughout. And there's just no way that can happen. Unless...unless someone put together a performance where the conventional protocols of musical theater were adapted...suspended...unless someone changed the way a musical's conventional performance was conducted.

Throughout the performance the mutters and shrieks and even what sounded like prolonged boos rang out from the crowd. It felt weird. It felt funny. It felt off. But we all knew. We all knew it was okay. And the performers knew it was okay. And nobody complained or hushed anyone. Not once. And believe me it was a full house. Everybody in that venue had a stake in the autism life. There was no judgement. If the ushers had negative opinions about this disruption to business as usual they didn't show it. I never saw one look of scorn or judgement. I saw only smiles. I experienced only friendly service.

We were allowed to get up and move around. We were allowed to make all the noise we wanted. We could leave if we needed to without complaint. We could take her to a quiet room to calm down. We were allowed to bring in our own food. The music was softer. The lights were dimmed but not extinguished. Extra volunteers were on hand. Performers and employees were instructed on what to expect. Women were in the men's room with their kids, men were in the women's room with their kids. And everyone knew why, and it worked. It worked so well.

This was big.

The Value of Sharing Art  
By  
Tess Lojacono  
President, Fine Art Miracles, Inc.

Someone's life was changed today.

To my great delight I had the opportunity to accompany an art therapist to her first art class for special needs clients in Greensburg, PA. There were about 28 participants in the class, twenty eight exuberant, excited, and for the most part, enthusiastic art warriors (along with four or five aides helping out). I truly did not know what to expect.

Teacher Jen and I passed out supplies to smiling faces and a few frowns. All were curious; many welcomed us, asked our names, ages, whether we liked cats... Finally we launched into a spirited presentation of Georgia O'Keeffe's floral portraits. As we talked, Jen showed reproductions of O'Keeffe's work and we gave an artificial flower to each student to draw with soft pastels and oil pastels.

Most of the students couldn't wait to dive in! They drew and drew furiously, as though their lives depended on being the first to finish. Jen and I made our way from table to table, student to student, encouraging, offering suggestions, occasionally fetching different colors for our artists. We talked a lot, getting to know our students who were open and forthcoming about their likes and lives. A few were reticent, but the more they drew and the more successful they were, truly enjoying the fruits of their labor, the more they relaxed and opened up. They laughed and joked, teased us and asked questions. They were joyful. They were playful. They worked really, really hard.

The results were amazing. In about fifteen minutes, all twenty eight participants had created their first masterpieces. They held up their pictures, grinning from ear to ear. I looked at the clock. "Let's do another one!" I shouted. And everyone traded flowers.

Again, the flurry of work and talk, excitement and satisfaction. This time we tried to slow them down: "It's not a race," I said. "You don't get a prize for finishing first."

"Sure you do," one boy slyly remarked, head down, hands at work.

I laughed.

It took another twenty minutes maybe, and then Jen and I went around with gold and silver markers, helping everyone to write his name and the date. The Program Director chose an 'art wall' on which to display the work and we all stood back and admired it, each person proud of his work and complimentary of his neighbors'. So much satisfaction, so much love! Yes, someone's life was changed today.

Mine.



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Fine Art Miracles, Inc. presents:

**PORTRAIT OF A HOLIDAY**



What does the holiday season mean to you? ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA and Fine Art Miracles, Inc. are teaming up to offer children and adults on the autism spectrum a chance to answer that question! We'll supply all the materials and the inspiration for lovely holiday pictures that can be framed and given as gifts...soft pastel, paint, collage... INSPIRATIONS BY PABLO PICASSO AND HENRI MATISSE. Explore a master and create your own masterpiece!

- When:** Friday, Nov. 1: Children: 4:30 PM  
Adults: 6:30 PM
- Where:** Union Project, 801 N. Negley Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206
- Who:** Children (with parents) and adults on the Autism Spectrum
- Cost:** \$15, including supplies

Registration ends Oct. 18 or when all spaces are filled.

Call Tess at Fine Art Miracles, Inc. to register: **412-432-9559**

Call now—don't be left out!

If interested in advertising in the this quarterly newsletter please contact Jennifer Salamon at 412-781-4116



*Grounded in research...  
Committed to education...  
Driven by hope.  
Together, we will find the answers.*

For more information on how our services can be of support to you please contact us at:

**OUR MISSION**

It is the mission of AERI Behavioral Health Services (AERI BHS) to be a leader in providing access to research-based services in order to assist individuals in reaching their ultimate potential.



**1-866-727-AERI**  
e-mail: [support@aerionline.com](mailto:support@aerionline.com)  
[www.aerionline.com](http://www.aerionline.com)

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Psychological Testing  
Advocacy

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Staff Training  
Emotion / Coping Skill Training  
Family Based Mental Health Services  
Transition Supports



**FAMILY BEHAVIORAL RESOURCES**  
FAMILY FOCUSED THERAPY



Family Behavioral Resources offers BHRS/Wraparound Services for children and adolescents with behavioral health needs. FBR is also proud to offer a specialized program and Autism Team, led by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst to treat children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in across Pennsylvania. FBR also offers:

-  Psychological Evaluations
-  Outpatient Therapy
-  Social Skill/Play Groups
-  Parent/Professional Workshops

-  Trauma Services
-  Family Support Groups
-  Focus Groups
-  Resource Packages for Families

-  Community Outreach
-  Sibling Support Groups
-  Trainings for School Districts
-  Summer Camps (STAPs)

FBR offers Family Support Groups, Social Skill/Play Groups, and Sibling Support Groups in areas where needs have been identified. All support groups at FBR are proudly hosted in collaboration with and support from ABOARD.

For general questions about services for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders, please contact us:  
1-866-4-FBR-ASD; [autismservices@familybehavioralresources.com](mailto:autismservices@familybehavioralresources.com)



A CARF Three-Year Accreditation has been awarded to Family Behavioral Resources for its Intensive Family Based Services - Mental Health (Children and Adolescents), Outpatient Treatment - Mental Health (Adults), and Outpatient Treatment - Mental Health (Children and Adolescents). \*BHRS is accredited under Outpatient Treatment. Ask us about CARF today!



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Phone: 724-443-4888  
 Email: [autism@wesleyspectrum.org](mailto:autism@wesleyspectrum.org)  
[www.wesleyspectrum.org](http://www.wesleyspectrum.org)

Wesley Spectrum's mission is to provide transformational support for children and families as they strive to become more independent, responsible and caring members of the community.

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412-363-8388

[nathanspeech@aol.com](mailto:nathanspeech@aol.com)

[www.nathanspeech.com](http://www.nathanspeech.com)

## The Autism ID Card

The autism ID card helps people on the autism spectrum explain their medical condition to Police, EMTs, and other first responders in the event of an emergency.

In November 2009, Autism Speaks hosted a National Town Hall Meeting to address the needs of adults with autism.

The number one priority agreed upon by the hundreds of autism service providers, parents, and people on the autism spectrum was improved training for first responders. To meet this need, SEO Pittsburgh, in collaboration with the Allegheny County Office of the Public Defender, have created an Autism ID Card for individuals on the autism spectrum to present to police, medical personnel, and other first responders in the event of an emergency.



### ABOARD's Autism

Connection of PA has produced these cards and are available for FREE for individuals! Larger quantities are available for a small fee.

To order Autism ID Cards, please contact us at (800) 827-9385 or at [support@autismofpa.org](mailto:support@autismofpa.org)

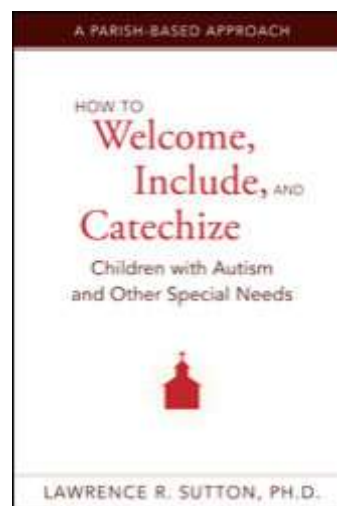
## Disability and Spirituality Workshop

On September 24, 2013, ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA had a seminar, "Disability & Spirituality for All Faiths". We had many different faiths represented by caring people who are interested in learning how to include the rising number of children, adolescents and adults with disabilities in their faith community. Dr. Larry Sutton presented and with his vast experience provided an understanding of autism and other disabilities and abilities. How do you teach the mysteries of faith to those who only see black and white?"

In the evaluation, attendees were asked "What about the training was most useful?"

"Working with families and listening to their needs. Inviting them to a positive loving experience where they and their children are accepted." "Ideas for getting my child to be able to attend mass." "Hope and a positive message for families—your child can have faith!" "The training was very helpful and informative. Deacon Larry has some great ideas and a wonderful program. I hope to get my church to use some of his ideas. And I most likely will have my son, who has autism, attend his CCD program." "I enjoyed the insights and different stories shared. That made things relatable and concrete."

He's the author of a new resource: [How to Welcome, Include, and Catechize Children with Developmental Disabilities](#). (To order, 800.621.1008, [www.loyolapress.com/store](http://www.loyolapress.com/store))





## *We Need Adult Protective Services: It Will Save Lives*

*Maureen Cronin*

*Executive Director, The ARC of Pennsylvania*

A horrific case of abuse was recently reported in the Scranton Times-Tribune: “Mom, daughters charged with starving family member with Down syndrome to death ... the 32-year-old Taylor man with Down syndrome wasted away to 69 pounds because his mother and sisters were starving him to death.” Gruesome details of scabies, lice, open sores and horrible living conditions were provided in subsequent reports. Readers were shocked and appalled, while advocates were devastated and discouraged. Some of my colleagues were so horrified they could barely think about it, let alone talk about it. Everyone asks, “How could this have happened? What protections should have been in place?” Some have said that even a fully functional Adult Protective Services system would not have helped because the family hid this man; neighbors didn’t even know he lived in the house.

After thinking out the report for a while, I believe that Adult Protective Services (APS) could have helped. Today there is common awareness of Child Line 800-932-0313, that abuse of children is wrong, and there are people who you can call for help. If that same awareness existed for vulnerable adults being abused, someone may have felt obligated or comfortable in reporting what may appear to be a level of abuse. The Times-Tribune reported “a relative said Susan Gensiak didn’t like her male children.” Had the relative known about a hotline to report abuse of adults, she may have taken the opportunity to anonymously report her suspicions. **Child Line doesn’t prevent all children from abuse but we know it has had tremendous impact on reducing child abuse.** The Department of Public Welfare recorded an average of 460 calls per day before news broke about allegations of child abuse by former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky. After that news broke, calls jumped to almost 1,000 per day.

Implementation of an APS system in Pennsylvania has been slow. The Act was signed in 2011 and money was set aside in the 2012-13 budget. **Yet we still don’t have a viable APS system. Development of regulations has stalled.** A draft Request for Proposal (RFP) was circulated for comment but has not been issued. There are more and more serious cases coming to light. The Arc appreciates that the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) is committed to developing an Adult Protective Services system as it fulfills its responsibility of addressing the full gamut of human service needs across all ages. However, resources have not been made available for them to have a sufficient number of staff devoted to moving the regulations and RFP through the required regulation and procurement process.

We call on those with the authority to increase personnel resources dedicated to the development of an APS system. Time is of the essence, as more and more horrific abuses are being reported. The Department has indicated that the RFP for APS will be made available shortly. A vendor needs to be selected and in place as soon as possible to promote a hotline number, train staff and be fully functional. Meanwhile the temporary use of Area Agencies for Aging needs to be in place for APS across the entire state.

# Join!

**2013  
Organization/  
Corporate  
Partners  
Membership**

Your membership has benefits! It supports our work in meeting the needs of Pennsylvanian families challenged with autism spectrum disorders. It also keeps your organization **“front and center”** in the minds of those very families.

Members will be acknowledged in our quarterly newsletter, a link on our website to yours, and discounted exhibitor rates at our conferences.

**Memberships available to include the remainder of 2013 and the year 2014**

**Dues: \$400**

Contact Jennifer Fulton at 412-781-4116 or [Jennifer@autismofpa.org](mailto:Jennifer@autismofpa.org) to become a member today and start experiencing the benefits!

## ***ABOARD’S Autism Connection of PA Organization/Corporate Partners***

ACHIEVA	Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration	Pediatric Therapy Specialists, Inc.
AERI Behavioral Health Services	Garland Agency, Inc.	PLEA
Alliance Health, Inc. - Allegheny	Glade Run Lutheran Services	Shamrock Solutions, Inc.
American Healthcare Group	Goodwill of Southwestern PA	Southwestern Human Services
Associated Occupational Therapists, Inc.	Green Acres Contracting Co., Inc.	TEIS
Augmentative Communication Consultants, Inc.	The Integrated Care Corporation	TELI (The Ealy Learning Institute)
Barber National Institute	InVision Human Services	Total Learning Centers
Bayada Home Healthcare	Ligonier Valley Learning Center	Tri Medical Rehab Supply
Burns White LLC	Metz Lewis Brodman <b>Must O’Keefe, LLC.</b>	Value Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania
Brain Balance Achievement Center of Pittsburgh	Monarch Center of Autism	The Watson Institute
<b>The Children’s Institute</b> of Pittsburgh	New Story	Wesley Spectrum Services
Community Care Behavioral Health	NHS Human Services	Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic
Family Behavioral Resources	PACE	Westmoreland Case-Management and Supports
Familylinks, Inc.	Paula Teacher & Associates, Inc.	
Farm to Table Pittsburgh	Pediatric Therapy Professionals, Inc.	

*Thank you!  
for your  
support!*

Autism Connection of PA will be having  
Autism Friendly Santa Visits at  
Ross Park, Westmoreland, and Monroeville Malls  
this Holiday Season



Dates and times will be provided  
online and through our e-mail list

To be included on our e-mail list, please  
contact Jennifer at [events@autismofpa.org](mailto:events@autismofpa.org)

AUTISM CONNECTION OF PA

35 Wilson Street,  
Suite 100  
Pittsburgh, PA 15223

Phone: 412-781-4116  
Toll Free: 800-827-9385  
E-mail: [news@autismofpa.org](mailto:news@autismofpa.org)

We are on the web!

[www.autismofpa.org](http://www.autismofpa.org)

MISSION:

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

VISION:

*We envision a community where people with autism achieve their maximum potential as they live, learn and work.*

Education - Advocacy - Support



**ABOARD's**

**autism**  
**CONNECTION**  
**OF PA**

*ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization.*

*Your donation qualifies as a charitable deduction. ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA is registered with the Pennsylvania Department of State Bureau of Charitable Organizations. To receive a copy of the official registration and financial information, please call 800-732-0990 within Pennsylvania or visit [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us).*

Yes, I want to help ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (in case of questions): \_\_\_\_\_

**Gift Amount & Payment Method**

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed

MasterCard # \_\_\_\_\_

Visa # \_\_\_\_\_

CID# \_\_\_\_\_

Expires \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Or click donate button online at  
[www.autismofpa.org](http://www.autismofpa.org)