



April 22, 2011

Join Our Mailing List!

APRIL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH



ABOARD *Autism Weekly*

Advisory Board on Autism & Related Disorders

412.781.4116 or toll free: 800.827.9385

ABOARD'S MISSION:

There is considerable debate throughout the autism community about the cause of autism and issues such as vaccination, diet, inclusion, and appropriate therapies. Legislative acts can also influence services to those with autism. Our policy is to inform. We trust that individuals will assimilate the information we provide and make the best decision for their children and clients.

The entire mission statement can be found at
<http://aboard.web.officelive.com/aboutus.aspx>



Support ABOARD at this local walk!

*100 percent of the money collected will go directly to ABOARD
because all expenses are underwritten by Highmark!*

This yearly event helps us provide much needed information, support services and awareness that our families and the community need.

Gather some friends and family and join us at Heinz Field.
To register, go to www.walkforahealthycommunity.org and select ABOARD as the organization that you would like to support.

***The 5K has a new route that will cross the river
and back to Heinz Field!***

WHERE: Heinz Field, Pittsburgh

WHEN: Saturday May 21, 2011

REGISTRATION: starts at 7:15am

5K WALK START: 9:00am

ONE-MILE FUN WALK START: 9:15am

After the walk, come visit the ABOARD table at the community tent at the Venture Outdoors festival. The fun starts at noon in Point State Park!

Can't make the walk? Please consider sending a tax deductible [donation](#) to ABOARD to help us continue supporting families in need.

Call ABOARD at 412-781-4116 or email www.autismwalk@aboard.org with questions. Thank you for your support

**ABOARD and the families that we serve
thank you for your support!**



Special Needs and Financial Planning Workshop

9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Saturday, April 30th, 2011

ABOARD OFFICE

35 Wilson Street, Pittsburgh (ETNA), PA 15223

Free but registration is required and limited to 40 seats!

The Duckworth Group at Merrill Lynch is happy to welcome Helen Sims to their team. Helen's experience in Special Needs Planning has been an excellent fit with their commitment to helping families and individuals with disabilities to plan for their care, as well as the future care of their loved one.

The workshop will be presented by Helen Sims, a Financial Advisor with The Duckworth Group at Merrill Lynch and Jillian Zacks, Principal of Zacks Law Firm, P.C.

For family members of a loved one with a disability, information about the following topics will be addressed:

- Planning for the future of their loved one
- Developing a care strategy
- Understanding the interplay between government benefits and programs
- Financial Planning
- Wills, Trusts and Estate Planning
- Age of Majority

For more information, or to RSVP for this workshop please contact:
Helen Sims at 412-566-6479 or helen.sims@ml.com

**Thank you to The Duckworth Group at
Merrill Lynch for sponsoring!**

WOW TWO GREAT FUN NIGHTS OUT THAT BOTH BENEFIT ABOARD!

APRIL 30th Spring Fling - Grazie in Wexford

May 7th - Masquerade Bowl - Prior's Tap & Tavern in Whitehall

Thank you to our supporters who are hosting these events for ABOARD.



[Purchase Tickets Now](#)

or Walk-ins Welcomed!

**We look forward to seeing you at the Spring Fling for Autism & Masquerade Bowl.
Contact the Office at 412-781-4116 for more information!**

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**Today's eblast is provided free to
the families through the support
of our sponsor!**

Spotlight on: Advisory Board on Autism & Related Disorders (ABOARD)

On March 15th, Michael Baltzer and Rayden Sorock met with Luciana Randall, the executive director of ABOARD, to discuss the resources ABOARD offers as well as ways to make the workplace environment more comfortable for those with ASD.



Part of UPMC Insurance Services, Community Care, a recovery-focused non-profit managed care company that manages mental health and substance abuse services, proudly supports the mission of ABOARD. Visit www.ccbh.com.

**THANK YOU TO OUR
SPONSOR FOR HELPING
PROVIDE THIS SERVICE
TO OUR FAMILIES FOR
FREE!**

[QUICK LINKS](#)

[ABOARD](#)

<http://www.thericblog.org>

Nurse-musician strikes up the band for inaugural autism fundraiser

There's a saying: Music heals the soul. Fredericka Stover hopes it at least will raise awareness about autism and generate involvement in the autism community.

Organizer of the inaugural Spring Fling for Autism, Stover, 53, of Harrison wanted to host a large event where the general public and the autism community could come together. It will benefit the Advisory Board on Autism and Related Disorders, known as ABOARD.

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

[NEWSLETTER](#)

Click here to learn about
What's Happening
at ABOARD and all our upcoming
events, conference and seminars for
2011!

Feature

New Research Finds Half of All Children With Autism Wander From Safety

Almost one year after National Autism Association urged the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) to address the absence of critical research on autism-related wandering incidents and fatalities, the Interactive Autism Network (IAN), the nation's largest online autism research project, revealed the preliminary results of the first major survey on wandering and elopement among individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

The wandering and elopement survey found that approximately half of parents of children with autism report that their child elopes, with the behavior peaking at age four. Among these families, nearly 50% say that their child went missing long enough to cause significant concern about safety.

This survey is the first research effort to scientifically validate that elopement is a critical safety issue for the autism community," said Dr. Paul Law, Director of the IAN Project at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore, Maryland. "We hope that advocates and policy makers use this research to implement key safety measures to

support these families and keep these children safe. In just three weeks, more than 800 parents of children with autism completed the survey. The findings highlighted below summarize the compelling results and crucial safety concerns identified by parents:

Dangers of Elopement

The tendency of individuals with ASD to wander or "bolt" puts them at risk of trauma, injury or even death:

- More than one third of children who elope are never or rarely able to communicate their name, address, or phone number verbally or by writing/typing
- Two in three parents report their missing children had a "close call" with a traffic injury
- 32% of parents report a "close call" with a possible drowning

Effect of Wandering on Families

- Wandering was ranked among the most stressful ASD behaviors by 58% of parents of elopers
- 62% of families with children who elope were prevented from attending/enjoying activities outside the home due to fear of wandering
- 40% of parents had suffered sleep disruption due to fear of elopement
- Children with ASD are eight times more likely to elope between the ages of seven and 10 than their typically-developing siblings

Resources, Support for Families

- Half of families with elopers report they had never received advice or guidance about elopement from a professional
- Only 19% had received such support from a psychologist or mental health professional
- Only 14% had received guidance from their pediatrician or another physician

Motivations for Elopement

Despite speculation that summer is the peak season for elopement, 67% of parents of elopers said they saw no seasonal pattern at all; only 25% felt summer was the peak season. The top five reasons parents believed their children eloped included:

- Enjoys exploring (54%)
- Heads for a favorite place (36%)
- Escapes demands/anxieties (33%)
- Pursues special topic (31%)
- Escapes sensory discomfort (27%)

National Autism Association Announces the Launch of Its "Big Red Safety Box" Program to Combat Wandering

In an ongoing effort to combat the rise in wandering-related tragedies and deaths within the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) community, the National Autism Association (NAA) announced today its launch of the "Big Red Safety Box Program" made possible by a generous grant from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. The safety box is designed to provide caregivers wandering-prevention educational materials and tools. Wandering, elopement, "running" or fleeing incidents within the autism community have led to a rise in fatalities among those with ASD.

The Safety Box will include educational materials, door alarms, a waterproof ID, and visual prompts to deter children and adults from exiting their homes or classrooms. Regardless of any tools caregivers may have in place, NAA says it's critical that caregivers maintain close supervision and security in all settings. "Wandering prevention takes a multi-faceted approach, and because different types of wandering exist, there is no one answer in solving this issue," added Fournier.

Those diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, and who are at risk of wandering/bolting from a safe environment, qualify to receive a Big Red Safety Box while supplies allow. To apply, visit <http://nationalautismassociation.org/bigredsafetybox.htm>

Research



"Promising" Research on Autism by Craig Erickson '99 is

HighlightedGreencastle, Ind. - "In small, early clinical trials, adults and children with autism and Fragile X syndrome have shown improved communication and social behavior when treated with acamprosate, according to Craig Erickson, M.D., assistant professor of psychiatry at the Indiana University School of Medicine and chief of the Riley Hospital for Children Christian Sarkine Autism Treatment Center at Indiana University Health," notes the Behavioral Medicine Report.

<http://www.depauw.edu/news/?id=26939>

Work of UC Davis autism researchers to be featured on PBS series

Like other researchers at the UC Davis MIND Institute, epidemiologist Irva Hertz-Picciotto is determined to reduce the prevalence of autism.

She and others at the MIND Institute - the acronym stands for Medical Investigation of Neurodevelopmental Disorders - dedicate their careers to understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder, a group of developmental disabilities that's diagnosed in an average of 1 in 110 children, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<http://www.sacbee.com/2011/04/18/3559381/work-of-uc-davis-autism-researchers.html>

Refractory Seizures Common in Autism

Among 127 patients with autism who had experienced at least one seizure, the epilepsy was treatment resistant in 33.9%, according to Orrin Devinsky, MD, and colleagues from New York University in New York City. Seizure onset was earlier, at an average age of 5.9 years, among patients with treatment-resistant epilepsy compared with patients who had been seizure-free for at least one year and whose average age of onset was at 10.9 years ($P=0.008$), the researchers reported online in Epilepsia.

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/Neurology/Autism/26045>

Education



Carryover: Practice for Parents

With all these factors at play, we know how important and helpful it is to have parents reinforcing the work we do in the classroom and in homecare. In addition, many parents may not be certain how to help their child, so it is our job to point them in the right direction and provide hands-on communication-based speech and language activities for them to do with their children at home.

http://community.advancweb.com/blogs/sp_1/archive/2011/04/19/carryover-practice-for-parents.aspx

Drexel's Fry plans campus overhaul, new autism center

Like Fry, Newschaffer said Drexel's focus on public health would make it different from any other autism research center. That means in part focusing on ways to identify autism early to increase the chance that a child gets treatment as quickly as possible, he said. It also means studying which interventions work, and seeking ways to make them more widely available. For example, if an intervention works in a controlled university setting, Drexel's center might look for ways to train parents to do it in their own homes. "The goal is to translate some of the leaps of knowledge that I think are going to be happening in the next few years," Newschaffer said. Fry said the lack of understanding about autism drove the decision to create the new institute, but he also had a personal motive. He has an autistic nephew. "This is not just in my head but in my heart," Fry said.

http://articles.philly.com/2011-04-15/news/29421608_1_drexel-university-constantine-ta

Of Interest



Op-Ed: For the autistic, potential is not defined by condition

The problem is that by ignoring autistic adults, we miss the most important thing that they have to teach us: it's possible to lead a meaningful, fulfilling life as an autistic person. It may not be exactly "normal," but it can still be a satisfying life.

And that means that we don't have to cure our children's autism. We simply have to accept who they are and then try to help them get along in a world that's not made for them.

As for me, I'm not observing Autism Awareness Month. I believe that our kids are who they are, whether there is a label attached to them or not. And the only thing we have to be aware of is that their potential is not defined by their condition.

<http://www.appeal-democrat.com/articles/defined-105732-don-autism.html>

Eric Chessen on Autism and Fitness

Autism Awareness Month is a good time to explore the wider world of autism and to examine

Autism Awareness Month is a good time to explore the wider world of autism, and to examine some topics that are rarely mentioned in the media. Autism and fitness certainly fits the bill! With so much time spent in non-physical therapies, sitting at desks and driving around in cars, our kids with autism - and we, their parents - get precious little time to exercise. Add to that the fact that kids and teens with autism are rarely engaged in sports and find it tough to take part in ordinary playground play, and it becomes clear that physical fitness can be a heck of a challenge. Yet, argues Eric Chessen, creator of [Autism Fitness](http://autism.about.com/b/2011/04/17/eric-chessen-on-autism-and-fitness.htm), physical fitness is not something to take lightly. <http://autism.about.com/b/2011/04/17/eric-chessen-on-autism-and-fitness.htm>

Karate class helps autistic students learn to socialize

"Autistic kids are very tactile, so they like touching things and feeling different sensations," said Neal. "They like the pads they get to hit, they like how they're soft."

Autism affects each person differently, as Neely says their minds are wired in a different way. Another child in the class, 6-year-old Laithan Pratt, is high functioning. His father has noticed improvements in his behavior since joining the class in December.

"It's taught him, it's actually built on what he's learning at school - the paying attention, the listening to directions - big one," said Grant Pratt, Laithan's dad. "And, that's really what we've seen the most improvement in."

<http://www.wlbz2.com/news/article/156084/9/Karate-class-helps-autistic-students-learn-to-socialize>

Finding Meaning through Volunteering

Toora Arsala honored for his volunteer efforts.

Since being diagnosed with Asperger's, a disorder that is characterized by significant difficulties in social interaction, he's been able to take open-note test with more time. Through all the school though, he was never able to call anyone his friend. That is, until he started volunteering.

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/article.asp?article=350042&paper=63&cat=104>

Events/Info



[Click Here for General Conference Information](#)



2011 Conference on **ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICITY AND NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS**

ABOARD Support Group Meeting

For a complete listing of the ABOARD Support Group Meeting, see our website at www.aboard.org!

CONFERENCE DATES

Pittsburgh, PA—June 24, 2011

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF APRIL AUTISM AWARENESS EVENTS SEE

APRIL AUTISM AWARENESS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Morgantown, WV—July 15, 2011

www.envirototoxicityandkids.com

Perspective Program: Intervention Research Study for Adults with ASD

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

Camp Sequoia Open House

Camp Sequoia is an innovative overnight summer camp for children ages 8-18 who are diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome, high-functioning Autism and high-functioning PDD-NOS. The focus of our camp is building social skills through a traditional camp program combined with utilizing the principles of the Social Thinking curriculum. Located on the campus of a prestigious boarding school in Pottstown, PA (40 miles northwest of Philadelphia) Camp Sequoia serves a segment of campers diagnosed with ASD who are bright, creative kids who need help developing their social cognition. We offer two separate 3-week sessions, a full 6 week season and a "First Timers" week for campers who are new to the overnight camp experience. We are hosting an Open House on Saturday April 23rd, please RSVP if your family would like to attend. 610-771-0111

FBR and AERI Bring William Stillman to Western PA - FREE WORKSHOP!

Oftentimes parents, caregivers and educators are at a loss about how best to support individuals with autism because they are overwhelmed by out-of-control, aggressive "behaviors," inundated with disrespectful prognoses and clinical jargon, or confused by technical information. This workshop is the perfect introduction for participants to begin to discern the functions of

mental health issues from autism. William Stillman demystifies such perplexing challenges using language, examples and anecdotes that are concrete and understandable for all. Join us April 26, 2011 from 9AM-4PM at the Four Points Sheraton for this FREE event! Registration begins at 8:30AM. For a registration form, visit www.familybehavioralresources.com or send email to autismservices@familybehavioralresources.com. Events also listed on our Facebook page!

Camp R.O.C.K. -Recreational Opportunities Connecting Kids with Autism Spectrum Disorder

An outdoor inclusive day camp for youth ages 14 to 21 with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their peers. The camp focuses on introducing youth to a variety of lifelong physical activities, while building recreational and social skills. These physical activities include: music and movement, track events, hiking, low and high ropes course activities, rock wall, aquatics, biking, canoeing, horseback riding, and fishing on Slippery Rock's campus. June 20-24, 2011. \$50.

<http://www.sru.edu/academics/colleges/education/pe/apa/Pages/camprock.aspx>

Westmoreland IU & University of Pittsburgh Greensburg Autism Conference Wednesday, May 4, 2011

The First Annual Autism conference sponsored jointly by the Westmoreland IU and UPG offers practical ways to respond to youth on the Spectrum. The opening keynote presentation by Dr. Nancy Minshew will focus on understanding the cognitive and physical basis of autism. Dr. Minshew, Director of Pitt's Autism Center of Excellence will review her 25 plus years of research on brain connectivity and information processing for persons on the spectrum. Afternoon sessions feature practical responses to "Sensory Processing", "Social Skills Training", "Responses to Agitation, Escalation & Meltdown", and "Career Development/Employment Experiences". Sessions on "Parent Partnership Development" and "Advances in Assistive Technology" are also scheduled. Contact Ms. Kelly Heitchue, (724) 836-2460 Extension 2324

www.wiu.k12.pa.us

DASH Advocacy Training

DASH is presenting a skill building training for disability advocacy groups at six different locations from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Different Advocacy Approaches and Advocacy with State and Local Government. To enroll, email Lan Do at Ldo@drnpa.org. The training is held on April 26 at the Luzerne County Annex Building, on May 9 at the Three Rivers Center for Independent Living, on May 10 at Voices for Independence in Erie, on May 23 at Vision for Equality in Philadelphia.

Children with Hyperactivity & Autism Research Study For more information please contact: David Maloney at 412-235-5407 or maloneydj2@upmc.edu The UPMC Center for Autism & Developmental Disorders at Merck Child Outpatient Clinic is conducting a study to examine the use atomoxetine and/or parent training vs. placebo for symptoms of ADHD in children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. It includes 10 management sessions and an optional 24 week follow-up involves monthly visits to our outpatient clinic. This is open to children 5-13 years of age who are not on medication or are on medications that are not working well.

Theiss Early Autism Program of Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC) Open Enrollment for Spring 2011

The Theiss Early Autism Program (TEAP) provides care for 6 children ages 2-5 years of age. The children follow an individualized program and receive one-on-one instruction through Applied Behavior Analysis, including Discrete Trial Teaching, Applied Verbal Behavior, and Natural Environment Teaching. Each individualized treatment program is designed to address a child's cognitive and language skills, self-care and adaptive behavior, and social-emotional development. Daily activities also include circle time, gross motor, playground activities, pretend play, early language arts, art and sensory activities, early cooperative play in small groups, self-help activities, meal time (lunch and snack), and socialization activities (play opportunities with typically developing children from an adjacent child care facility twice a week). The program is located at the Hill House Association, 1835 Centre Avenue, WPIC Autism Suite 200, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Hours are 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. The program runs for 12 months a year, Monday through Friday. Although transportation is not available, families can enroll in MATP (Medical Assistance Transportation Program) for reimbursement for travel. To discuss our services, schedule an observation of our program while in session, take a tour of our facilities, or to make a referral, contact Danielle Saad at Saadd@upmc.edu or call 412- 235-5386.

Sensory Friendly Showin of Rio

Saturday, April 30, 2011, 10:00 am

AMC Theatres® and The Autism Society have teamed up to bring families affected by autism a special opportunity to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment on a monthly basis. With Sensory Friendly Films, the movie auditoriums will have their lights brought up and the sound turned down. For tickets to this unique experience, please visit the theatre's box office the day of the event. AMC Waterfront 22, 300 West Waterfront Dr. West Homestead, PA 15120 412-462-6550

The NH TOPSoccer (The Outreach Program for Soccer)

Team is for children ages 8 to 19 with any disabilities. Our goal is to give children exercise and a sense of pride in themselves while teaching them sportsmanship and teamwork. They even learn to play soccer in the process!

Sponsored by the North Hills Soccer Club since 1997, the program is open to children from any community. The cost is only \$10 per player per season.

We meet on Saturday mornings beginning in April, 10:15 AM to 11:30 AM, at Tyler Field on Sangree Road in Ross Township.

For more information and a registration form, contact Janet Wargo, by April 12, 2011, at coachjanw@aol.com or 412-366-0984.

Family Fun Day at New Story School

Thursday, May 12, 2011

3 to 8 p.m.

New Story School, 715 Bilberry Road, Monroeville, PA 15146

www.newstory.com, phone 412.373.5235

A fun-filled event with all sorts of activities including a bounce house, games, crafts, and fun food!

Also, a panel discussion on "Navigating the Systems-What to Do if a Child is Diagnosed with Special Needs. . .". Performance by M&M Dance Academy and a performance by Magician, Bill Heh! Free Admission, All are Welcome!

CINCO DE MAYO DANCE

FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2011

7:00 PM-10:00 PM

\$10.00 Per Person

Dance For Teens with
intellectual and developmental disabilities
(Ages 13-21)

You must be between ages 13-21 to attend.

Enjoy soft drinks, cookies, cheese and pepperoni, and chips, take home your own party favor, get a chance to win door prizes, receive 3 tickets for our special drawing and enjoy music from our professional DJ. We have a Chinese Auction raffle and we have friendly volunteers to get everyone up and dancing!

These dances are a fun way to help teens develop social skills and healthy friendships with their peers.

The dances listed above will be held at Peters Place Restaurant,
1199 Washington Pike Bridgeville, PA 15017, Kirwin Heights - Exit 55 (Old Exit 12) off I-79.
You must be between ages 13-21 to attend.

Ways to register: Mail or fax the form attached below to Exceptional Adventures ▪ Email sblonski@pfq.org or acampbell@pfq.org ▪ Register online at www.exceptionaladventures.com ▪ Register by phone. (Phone registrations are only acceptable with a Credit Card Payment.) We recommend that you pre register for this dance to ensure admission; however, we will take registrations at the door - if space is available. If you have questions about registering please call 412-446-0713.

HANDICAPABLE SQUARE DANCING

WHEN: Starting, Thursday, May 5, 2011

WHERE: Dorseyville Alliance Church

3703 Saxonburg Blvd.

Pittsburgh, PA 15238

(not a handicapped facility)

TIME: 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm, weekly- \$2.00 each week

QUALIFICATIONS: 16 years of age or older, Ambulatory, Desire to learn and have fun

We are requesting that the Caregiver stay with the student at the SQUARE DANCE

For more information, please contact: Marti or Gary Beatty

Cell Phone: 412-915-8486 Home Phone: 724-443-2616

E-Mail: beatty3@consolidated.net

Joni and Friends - Through The Roof Seminar: "Welcoming All God's Children: Steps for Inclusion in the Church"

Saturday, May 21, 2011 9am- 1pm at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 616 N. Highland Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 •"Impact of Disability: A Fifty Year Journey From Exclusion to Church Inclusion - A Siblings' Perspective" Keynote Speaker: Deb Petermann, Joni and Friends Ohio •PLUS - 8 Workshops focused on ways to include families affected by disability in the Church. •A Pastor Forum will follow from 1 - 3pm. Please contact Rev. Calvin Clark if you are interested or need more information. 724-678-6390 or calclark@livesrestored.org.

AERI BHS's FAMILY BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM AND FAMILY BEHAVIORAL RESOURCES TO PRESENT FREE EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS FOR THE COMMUNITY

April 15, 2011 - AERI Behavioral Health Services (AERI BHS) and Family Behavioral Resources (FBR) are teaming up to present three free educational seminars as part of its new COPE (Community Outreach Preservation and Education) Series for the community: "How Does Depression Affect the Family?"; "Trauma, Grief and Loss"; and "Dealing with ADHD."

Susan L. Roop, MA, NCC, LPC is the Director of Family Based Mental Health Services at AERI BHS who is partnering with Shannon Adkins, MSCP, Clinical Director of Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services at FBR to write and present the series.

The opening topic, being presented April 27 at the AERI BHS/FBR Hermitage site on North Buhl Farm Drive, is especially relevant to today's families. Ms. Roop and Ms. Adkins agree that symptoms of depression in children are often masked by agitation and irritability. "Often it is easy for parents to mistake depression for something else," says Ms. Adkins.

The team will share risk factors, the effects of depression, coping skills, and available resources in the community to help families. Roop and Adkins agree that families are often tempted to ignore mood changes in children. "Moodiness is often seen as a normal part of growing up, but the reality is that ignoring the signs and symptoms of depression can have severe negative consequences for children and families," Roop states.

AERI Behavioral Health Services' Family Based Mental Health Services program works to help keep families together by providing mobile services including family therapy, case management and crisis intervention. Family Behavioral Resources offers a comprehensive array of clinical services to children and families affected by behavioral health disorders using evidence-based treatment grounded in research, including Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). Both organizations serve families throughout the lifespan and are committed to quality care that is delivered with the highest integrity.

Seminars will be presented every other Wednesday, beginning April 27 from 6:30pm to 8:00pm, until May 25 in Hermitage. For more information or to make a reservation, please call or e-mail AERI BHS's Ginger Slater at 724-282-9010 or butlerfamilybased@aerionline.com.

How to Improve Focus and Memory in Easily Distracted Children - Coalition of Education Advocates May Meeting

Dr. Carol Utay will be presenting Improve Attention & Focus for Students with Attention

Dr. Carol Utay will be presenting *Improve Attention & Focus for Students with Attention Issues* on May 6, 2011, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Total Learning Centers in Wexford, Pa. This informative presentation will be the final Coalition of Western Pennsylvania Advocates meeting for the 2010-2011 year.

Dr. Carol Utay, national speaker, author, and ATHENA Award Winner, is the Executive Director and Co-founder of the Total Learning Centers (TLC). Since 1999, TLC has helped countless children through direct, intensive, research-based methods to ensure significant gains including reading, writing, math, attention, processing, and working memory. TLC's Wexford office is located at 12045 Perry Highway, in the Pine Tree Shoppes, right off of Route 19.

Have you ever wondered what it is like to live with attention/focus issues? Would you like to know what your child or student must go through to try and pay attention for hours on end? This event will include a realistic simulation of what it is like to live with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). You will also learn how to improve attention/focus by working with your school and your child's IEP goals.

For parents, teachers, and advocates interested in learning more about focus and attention, this is a must-see event. The meeting is free and open to the public. If you would like to know more about the event, please call 724-940-1090.

ACTION ALERT: KEEP ALL STUDENTS SAFE!

DEAR PARENTS AND AUTISM SUPPORTERS:

Over a year ago, the Keeping All Students Safe Act passed in the House of Representatives with bipartisan support. Later in 2010, it failed to reach the Senate floor for a vote. With the support of the National Autism Association, the Alliance to Prevent Restraint, Aversive Interventions and Seclusion (APRAIS), and advocates like you, this critical legislation has now been re-introduced into the House of Representatives by Rep. George Miller, D-Calif.

The Keeping All Students Safe Act would, for the first time, put in place minimum safety standards to prevent abusive restraint and seclusion in schools across the country, similar to protections already in place in medical and community based facilities. As you have in the past, please again join us in supporting the Keeping All Students Safe Act!

ACTIONS TO TAKE:

- 1) **DOWNLOAD & REVIEW** "The Cost of Waiting," a report from TASH detailing the consequences of not passing this legislation a year ago. <http://tash.org/the-cost-of-waiting/>
 - 2) share this report with your networks, social media contacts, congress members and media in your area.
 - 3) **CONTACT** your U.S. Representative and urge them to co-sponsor this legislation*
- *Contacting Your Representative

Online: [find your representative](#) and click on their contact form to submit your letter

- Online: [find your representative](#) and click on their contact form to submit your letter.
- In your letter, identify yourself as a constituent and urge your representative to "Please support the Keeping All Students Safe Act (H.R. 1381)."
- Phone: call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for your representative's office. Once connected, ask to speak with an office aide who handles education issues. Identify yourself and ask the aide to "Please tell Representative (NAME) that I support the Keeping All Students Safe Act (H.R. 1381) and to please co-sponsor this Bill."

For additional background and information, visit the APRAIS website at <http://tash.org/advocacy-issues/restraint-and-seclusion-aprais/>

CPC Presents "Ask the Advocate" with Rebecca Valeri of MHA, Westmoreland County

CPC Family Support Network presents "Ask the Advocate," an open-forum discussion, led by Rebecca Valeri, Parent/Child Advocate with Mental Health America, Westmoreland County, on Wednesday, May 11 from 6:30 - 8 p.m. at the CPC Greensburg office, 814 E. Pittsburgh Street. To register or for more information, contact Desiree Pollard at 724.875.1675 or email dlp0721@gmail.com. You can email your questions early to make sure they are discussed. Childcare will be provided. CPC Family Support Network is a community of parents, families and caregivers touched by autism.

NAMI Presents Conference on Embracing Diversity

NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania presents its 11th annual education conference Embracing Diversity: Cultivating Respect and Inclusion for a Stronger Mental Health System on Saturday, April 30 at the Pittsburgh Airport Marriott.

Mental illness reaches into every community and touches people from all walks of life. It affects males and females of every age, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and income level. It affects individuals and families from every culture, each experiencing mental illness in a unique way.

Through inspiring presentations, an interactive panel discussion and a variety of workshops, the conference will explore how people from different cultural backgrounds perceive and experience mental illness. Our ability to work competently and effectively in cross-cultural situations will unify our voice as we work to improve and strengthen the mental health system in Southwestern Pa. For more information or to register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/EmbracingDiversityConference> or call 412-366-3788.

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Join the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Resident Conductor Lawrence Loh for the eighth annual PSO Community Partners Concert. This year's performance features the sounds of Boyz II Men and the winner of the renowned 2011 Sphinx Competition, Paul Laraia. The PSO's Community Partners Concerts have raised more than \$539,000 for partnering nonprofit groups since they began in 2004.

Pittsburgh Symphony Community Partners Concert Featuring BOYZ II MEN

Location: Heinz Hall

Thursday, June 23, 2011 at 7:30 PM

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

- Tickets may be ordered in any of the following ways:
- calling the PSO Box Office at 412.392.4900 or toll-free: 1.800.743.8560
- ordering online at pittsburghsymphony.org/communitypartners
- coming to the PSO box office in person (600 Penn Ave., in Heinz Hall)

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**100% of your ticket purchase benefits
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REGISTER NOW For

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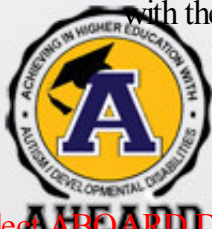
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OUR MISSION

ABOARD IS DEDICATED TO MAXIMIZING THE SOCIAL, EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL POTENTIAL AND POSSIBILITIES OF PENNSYLVANIA CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS WITH AUTISM AND RELATED DISORDERS. THROUGH FAMILY SUPPORT, INFORMATION DISSEMINATION, EDUCATION & TRAINING, AWARENESS BUILDING AND COLLABORATION, WE PROVIDE HOPE AND HELP TO PENNSYLVANIANS CONFRONTED WITH THE CHALLENGES OF AUTISM.

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