

AUGUST 2011



A Program of The Association For Community Living

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

*Creating Opportunities, Building Relationships, Improving Lives  
for children and adults with developmental disabilities since 1952*

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



**Staff**

**Jean-Claude Gerlus**  
Director  
Ext. 111

**Pamela Couchon**  
Autism Support Broker  
Ext. 124

**Jessica Dockendorff**  
Activities Coordinator  
Ext. 115

**Carla Doyle**  
Autism Support Broker  
Ext. 119

**Nancy Farnsworth**  
Educational Advocate  
Ext. 113

**Jason Litto**  
Family Support Manager  
Ext. 121

**Lynn Myers**  
Autism Specialist  
Ext. 114

**Amy Pinney**  
Adm. Coordinator  
Ext. 110

**Pam Powell**  
Adm. Assistant—  
Berkshire Office  
(413) 443-4780

**Betsy Rivera**  
Asst. Autism Specialist  
Ext. 112

**Megan Sherman**  
Family Support Manager  
Ext. 123

**Rhonda Ward**  
Autism Specialist  
Ext. 117



**Family Picnic**

**Sunday, August 14th  
11 AM - 2 PM**

**Look Park  
300 North Main St.**

**Florence, MA  
Mini Playground Pavilion  
(next to the water park)**

Enjoy a potluck barbeque lunch, fun & friends!



If your last name begins A-L, please bring a side to share  
If your last name begins M-Z, please bring a dessert to share

Community Resources will provide hamburgers, hotdogs & veggie burgers!

Parking for the day is \$7 per car

Rain or Shine!

**Please RSVP to Community Resources by Wednesday, August 10th  
(413) 529-2428**

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!

### Autism Insurance and Mass Health – Time Sensitive Information

Mass Health is not subject to the new autism insurance law known as ARICA. But for some people with Mass Health there is an upcoming window to purchase private insurance policies with financial assistance that covers some, or potentially all, of the cost of the policy. These private insurance policies are purchased through Commonwealth Choice, and are subject to the new autism insurance law. By purchasing a policy, people with just Mass Health are able to access the benefits mandated by ARICA. **The window to purchase private insurance policies through Commonwealth Choice is July 1- August 15.**

MassHealth has a premium assistance program which can help pay for private insurance premiums. This program is called MassHealth Standard and CommonHealth Premium Assistance Program (MSCPA). To obtain private insurance through Commonwealth Choice, first contact the premium assistance program for an application and direction regarding how to proceed. It will be important to coordinate the start date of your private insurance with the premium assistance program. Staff there can also confirm how much premium assistance is available for your family. For general guidelines, please refer to <http://www.disabilityinfo.org/ARICA/insuranceinfo.asp> The phone number for Premium Assistance is 1-800-862-4840 x7.

Once you have coordinated a start date and have confirmed how much premium assistance is available, contact the Commonwealth Choice Program and select a private insurance carrier that is affordable for you and best meets your families needs. To contact Commonwealth Choice, go to [www.mahealthconnector.org](http://www.mahealthconnector.org) or call 1-877-623-6765.

For more information about the Autism Insurance Law, contact the Autism Insurance Resource Center, go to [www.disabilityinfo.org/arica](http://www.disabilityinfo.org/arica) or contact us at [info@disabilityinfo.org](mailto:info@disabilityinfo.org) or 1-800-642-0249.



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## August 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Annual Family Picnic 11AM – 2PM Look Park	15	16	17	18 Insight Into Autism 5:30 – 8:30 PM CRPA	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

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## COMMUNITY RESOURCES' WORKSHOPS

### ***Insight Into Autism***

Speaker: Jason Litto

During this workshop we will discuss the strengths and challenges that are often experienced by individuals with autism. *Areas covered include:*

diagnostic criteria ~ communication  
sensory challenges ~ positive behavioral supports

We will also talk about practical strategies to facilitate growth and development, including social competencies. Friends, family members, and support persons are encouraged to attend this valuable workshop. Sandwiches and salad will be served.

#### ***Date and Time:***

Thursday, August 18, 2011  
5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

#### ***Location:***

Community Resources for People with Autism  
116 Pleasant St., Ste 366  
Easthampton, MA

***R.S.V.P. by Monday, August 15th to: (413) 529-2428***

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### ***Asperger's 101***

Speaker: Jason Litto

This workshop is intended to introduce families and caretakers to Asperger's Syndrome. Characteristics and strategies to help individuals are discussed, as well as some of the social difficulties that people with Asperger's experience. The workshop will also provide an opportunity to meet other parents of children and young adults with Asperger's.

We encourage friends, family members, and support persons to attend this valuable workshop.

#### ***Date and Time:***

Tuesday, September 20, 2011  
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

#### ***Location:***

SC@N 360 Family Resource & Learning Center  
11 Wilbraham Rd., 2nd Floor  
Springfield, MA

***R.S.V.P. by Friday, September 16th to: (413) 529-2428***

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## EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY SERIES



### **The Nuts & Bolts of Special Education** **Tuesday, September 27, 2011; 6:00 - 8:30 PM**

Is your child eligible for special education services? What assessments should be requested? Should the school be supporting your child in the area of social skills and emotional/behavioral strategies? What are the best practices for building a successful team? Can I get in-home training? IEP vs. 504?

Join us for this 2 ½ hour training to answer the key questions. We will focus on special education laws and principles which are grounded upon six basic principles: Parent and Student Participation; Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) Appropriate Evaluation; Individual Education Plan (IEP); Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and Procedural Safeguards.

### **IEP Boot Camp** **Thursday, December 8, 2011; 6:30 - 8:30 PM**

The Individual Education Plan is a document that is designed to meet a child's unique needs. It is the cornerstone of a quality education for a child with a disability. The IEP is a legally binding document. It establishes a plan for an individual student who meets specific eligibility criteria. This document can be confusing to navigate and understand. Sections such as Pleb A and Pleb B along with grids, goals and objectives can make your head spin.

Join us in our 2-hour IEP Boot Camp while we walk through the document page by page in order to understand its purpose, potential and plan lay out. We need not be experts in writing an IEP but instead need to know what questions to ask what the IEP can provide.

### **Let's Put the Individual in IEP** **Tuesday, February 28, 2012; 6:00 - 8:30 PM**

This 2 1/2 hour workshop will include a brief overview of the purpose and importance of and Individual Education Plan and how it is developed. After a 45 minute summary we will break out to offer 1:1 individual 30 minute support surrounding your child's specific needs (there will be two sessions held so individuals will have a ½ break). Meet with an advocate in training to express your concerns and develop a plan of action on how to move forward in building needed supports through your school district.

In order to make this effective, parents must provide their child's IEP and a bullet list of your top 10 concerns surrounding the student's current struggles and/or need for increased services prior to scheduled date. Those who participate must have either completed the "IEP Boot Camp" workshop or have a solid understanding of the IEP process including: Purpose of the Sections of the IEP Document (Pleb A/Pleb B/Grid/Additional Information/Goals/Objectives).

### **Parents' Choice Educational Advocacy Workshop** **Tuesday, May 8, 2012; 6:30 - 8:30 PM**

This 2-hour workshop will allow you, the parent, to tell us what you need. This is an opportunity to help educate us on how best to empower you. The training will be designed around the topics most requested by parents who will participate.



*\*\*Please note that details of this series are still being finalized. Dates, times and other workshop details are subject to change, so check back often!*

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## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### FALL SOCIAL SKILLS GROUPS @ SOCIAL PLAY, THINKING, AND MORE

Groups will begin the third week of September and are 12 weeks long

Themes include: Integrated play groups, Garcia- Winner's Superflex®, Social Detectives® and Social Fate or Fortune® programs, Story Grammar Marker® Autism Curriculum, the social thinking dragons of The World of Ryou™, Elizabeth DelSandro's WE CAN MAKE IT BETTER® stories and mindfulness based techniques to help emotional regulation.

Groups are individually tailored for all students, last 75 minutes, and have a period of coached free play. \$50/per session. Please call/email (413) 582-0683/[kmbecker42@gmail.com](mailto:kmbecker42@gmail.com) to set up an initial appointment to discuss what type of group would most benefit your child.

[www.socialplaythinkingandmore.com](http://www.socialplaythinkingandmore.com) for more information and group descriptions.

All groups are led by Kathleen Becker, a speech/language therapist with over 30 years of happily playing with and teaching children on the autism spectrum.

**JERICHO SUMMER GATHERINGS:** Join us at Jericho this summer for our annual gatherings for children with autism and other developmental disabilities and their families. Our gatherings are *free* and are held poolside, featuring: swimming, games, and a cookout! Dates: July 9 & 23<sup>rd</sup>, and August 6 & 20<sup>th</sup>. Space is limited, please call 413-538-7450 to RSVP at least a week in advance. The fun begins at noon each time!

Check out [www.spedchildmass.com](http://www.spedchildmass.com) for great summer activities for families and informative workshops for parents.

- ◆ Free Fun Fridays Across Massachusetts
- ◆ Summer Fun for All Abilities: canoeing, kayaking, horseback riding, cycling, hiking
  - ◆ Bike Riding 101 Workshop for Parents
  - ◆ Much More!



**57 Town Farm Road  
Monson, MA 01057  
Phone: (413) 267-9269  
Fax: (413) 267-3163  
[camp@sunsetview.com](mailto:camp@sunsetview.com)**

This seasons charity will be sponsored by: Advocating For Alyssa, Autism Awareness. Alyssa is a member of the Brodsky family, one of our seasonal campers. The Brodsky's are tireless workers in the Autism Community. All funds raised will be split between Autism Speaks and Community Resources For People With Autism. Throughout the summer, look for various events that will support this important cause.

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## *Parent & Teen Support Groups*

### **Asperger's Support Group Berkshires**

A structured and facilitated support group for young adults aged 18 to 30 with Asperger's syndrome.

Meetings will resume in September

For more information or to sign up call Megan Sherman at 413-443-4780 x15 or email her at [shermanm@theassn.org](mailto:shermanm@theassn.org)

### **The Special Needs Support System**

This group is facilitated by Stephanie and Charles McCormick, parents of a special needs child.

Support and activities for families who have a child with special needs of any kind.

Meetings: 1st and Last Tuesday monthly  
6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Tabernacle Baptist Church  
(603 New Ludlow Road, Chicopee)

Group activities for children!

For more information and to register, please contact Stephanie:  
[specialchildren@yahoo.com](mailto:specialchildren@yahoo.com) or (413)693-5188.

### **Spanish Parent Support Group**

Join Community Resources' Spanish speaking Parent Support Group. For more information, please contact Besty Rivera at:

(413) 529-2428 ext 112; [riverab@theassn.org](mailto:riverab@theassn.org)

### **Westfield Lunchtime Support Group**

Support Group for Parents/Caregivers of children with mental health challenges.

Meetings: 2nd Monday monthly  
12:15 - 1:30 PM

Carson Center conference room  
20 Broad St.; Westfield, MA

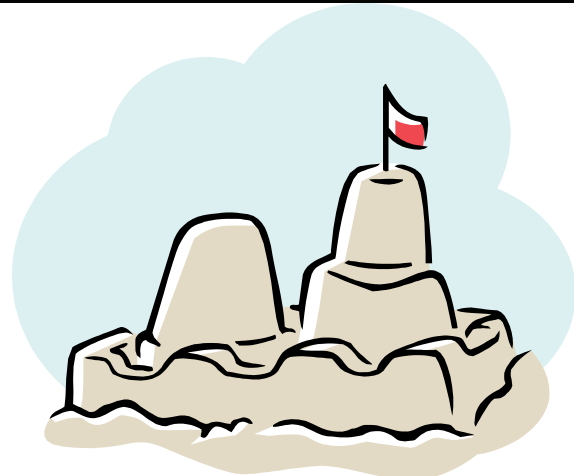
For further information, contact Jan Lamberg  
413-536-2401 x3002; 800-894-2401 x3002

### **GRASP Western MA Support Group**

Anyone on the spectrum is invited, plus those in support roles if they clearly identify their role. You must register before you can attend. This allows your membership to remain as anonymous as you desire.

The 3rd Saturday monthly 2:00 - 4:00 PM  
Westfield Athenaeum  
6 Elm St., Westfield

For more information, contact Michael Reinlagen  
[mreinlagen@gmail.com](mailto:mreinlagen@gmail.com)



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## *Support Groups & Programs*

### **Agawam Parent Support Group**

Facilitated by Angie Jordan, a mom of a child with autism.

Dates: 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month

Time: 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Location: Agawam Senior Center  
954 Main St., Agawam

No childcare—though children are welcome. For more information, contact: Angie Jordan (413) 786-3826; [jadey73@gmail.com](mailto:jadey73@gmail.com)

### **Social Thinking Groups with Kathleen Becker**

Everyday Heroes, Social Detectives, Social Thinking & Skills—are just a few of the programs offered! All of the listed groups have a focus on social cognitive development as well as social skills. There is also time for practicing these skills via play and conversational activities. All groups are led by Kathleen Becker, a speech/language therapist specializing social cognition and skill development.

Contact Kathleen at (413) 320-3408 or [kmbecker42@gmail.com](mailto:kmbecker42@gmail.com) or [www.socialthinkingandmore.com](http://www.socialthinkingandmore.com)

### **Karate Class!**

Starting in August the first two Saturdays of the month Tom DeVine the Sensei and owner of Inner Circle in Agawam, Mass. located on Springfield Street will be starting karate classes for all adults and children with Autism, Autism Spectrum Disorders, and Sensory issues as well as their siblings, family or a friend to join them in class. The first free class will be Saturday August 6th you can choose from 8:30am-9:30am or 11:30am-12:30pm. The following free class will be Saturday the 13th of August and the times again will be 8:30am-9:30am or 11:30am-12:30pm.

After the two week free trial period we will have sign ups. Classes will be done in a four week section and the class price for all four weeks is \$25.00 that's right only \$25.00 per person that is \$6.25 per person per class.

To sign up for class you can email me Angie at [jadey73@gmail.com](mailto:jadey73@gmail.com) or you can call me at 1-413-330-6376 or you can call Tom at 413-335-5196.

### **Autism Family Support Group of Southern Berkshire**

Join our group to discuss how to navigate life with someone diagnosed with Autism. Learn from others and share your own experience.

Community Health Programs  
Family Services (Blue Building)  
442 Stockbridge Rd.  
Great Barrington, MA

For more information and next meeting contact:

Luci Leonard  
413-644-0104 x1156

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**Jewish Community Center:** Many programs and classes offered for children with special needs. Check out their current offerings at [www.springfieldjcc.org](http://www.springfieldjcc.org)

**Unified Sports Program:** For information about the different sports and activities offered by Unified Sports Program, visit [www.unifiedsportsprogram.com](http://www.unifiedsportsprogram.com)

**All Out Adventures:** Our mission is to promote health, community and independence for people with disabilities and their family and friends through outdoor recreation. Call for summer schedule, more information: (413) 527-8980; or [www.alloutadventures.org](http://www.alloutadventures.org).

### *Yoga Classes*

Yoga classes for children with an autism spectrum disorder and sensory issues.  
Siblings are welcome, too!

When: Monthly—beginning Friday, September 24; 6:30 PM — 7:30 PM

Cost: \$15.00 per person

Location: Fitness First; Feeding Hills

For more information, contact Angie Jordan, (413) 330-6376 or [jadey73@gmail.com](mailto:jadey73@gmail.com)

### *Do You Have Something To Share?*

Community Resources would love to hear your story!

- ◆ If you have a story you'd like to see featured in our newsletter, we'd love to hear it!
- ◆ If you would like to advertise a workshop, research study, community activity, or other information, let us know!

Please contact Jess Dockendorff at (413) 529-2428 or [dockendj@theassn.org](mailto:dockendj@theassn.org)



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