



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

Supporting children with autism and their families since 1989

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Statehouse Vigil

Written by lynn myers and jamie oltmans

The Massachusetts disability community held a week of vigils to remind Governor Patrick who would be affected by his proposed 9C budget cuts due at the end of October. Leo Sarkissian from The Arc of Massachusetts says the proposed cuts “will destroy the Commonwealth’s safety net for the most vulnerable people in the state. Creating a loss of residential placements, employment and family supports.”



Each day from October 8-16, hundreds of individuals with disabilities, their families, support staff, and professionals gathered in the lobby of the State House’s Executive office.

“Where will I work?” “Don’t forget about us.” Statements such as these were worn throughout the vigil by those with disabilities and made a powerful impact. Governor Patrick attended the first day of the vigil, speaking one on one with those in attendance. Each day after, he had two aides meeting with attendees throughout the day. This gave everyone who attended an opportunity to be heard and express the devastating affects further cuts would bring.

We were able to attend the vigil on October 13th to represent the concerns of Community Resources for People with Autism and meet with members of the Eastern MA disability community. Suzanne Nadwory, the Northeast Coordinator of Mass. Organizing Families for Change, stated the importance of attending the vigil, “We need to be involved in helping the government do its best for the individuals that need the system to work for them. We need to be pro-active to make sure we will not be cut anymore.”

Suzanne Morse-Fortier is a developmental disabilities consultant and mother to Lucy. Lucy is about to turn 22, has Downs Syndrome, and has received DDS support for the past 16 years. Lucy has been anticipating turning 22 with the hopes of getting a job and earning a paycheck. Suzanne recently learned that the funding to place Lucy in a job coaching program does not exist. “The investment DDS has been making over the past 16 years is going to be wasted. The options are for me to give up my career and teach Lucy the skills she needs or for Lucy to go into a day habilitation program where she will learn no marketable skills to help her move forward toward independence.”

The budget crisis is forcing families and agencies to make tough choices. The May Institutes’ adult employment program in Mashpee, MA, had 1:1 staff/client ratio prior to the July budget cuts. Today that ratio is 1:7. Further cuts will end their employment program, leaving the question “Where will I work?” unanswered.

We encourage everyone to call Governor Patrick’s office at 888-870-7770. Please let him know how further cuts will affect you, your family, and those you care for. For more information, please contact Community Resources for People with Autism at 413-529-2428.

November 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 <i>An IEP For My Child</i>	11 <i>Veterans Day (office closed)</i>	12 <i>Insight Into Autism</i>	13	14
15	16	17 <i>Asperger's 101</i>	18	19	20	21 <i>Berkshire Sibshop</i>
22	23	24	25	26 <i>Thanksgiving Day (office closed)</i>	27	28
29	30					

COMMUNITY RESOURCES' NOVEMBER HAPPENINGS

An IEP for My Child

Date & time: Tuesday, November 10; 6:30 - 8:30 pm; RSVP by Friday, November 6.

Speaker: Federation for Children with Special Needs

Location: Community Resources; 116 Pleasant Street, Ste. 366; Easthampton

Every child with a disability who receives special education services must have an Individual Education Program (IEP). This workshop takes parents step-by-step through the development of the IEP including how to articulate a Vision, using evaluations to write annual measurable goals and how to measure their child's progress.

For more information or to register, please contact Community Resources at (413) 529-2428

Insight Into Autism Spectrum Disorders

Date & time: Thursday, November 12; 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm; RSVP by Monday, Nov. 9

Speaker: Jason Litto

Location: BCARC Social Development Center-65 Depot St. Dalton

An interactive workshop designed to introduce families and caretakers to Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Characteristics and strategies to help individuals are discussed, as well as some of the social and cognitive difficulties that people with autism experience. The workshop will also provide an opportunity to meet other parents of children and young adults with an ASD. We encourage friends, family members, and support persons to attend this valuable workshop.

For more information or to register, please contact Megan Sherman at (413) 443-4780 x 15, or shermanm@theassn.org

(A collaboration of Community Resources, Central Berkshire Regional School District - SPED PAC, Pittsfield Public School District—SPED PAC, Berkshire County ARC, United Cerebral Palsy of Berkshire County, and the Department of Developmental Services Berkshire Area Office)

Asperger's 101

Date & time: Tuesday, November 17; 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm; RSVP by Friday, November 13.

Speaker: Jason Litto

Location: Holyoke Community College--Kittredge Center 203 (303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke)

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.

For more information or to register, please contact Community Resources at (413) 529-2428



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Insight Into Autism Spectrum Disorders

Speaker: Jason Litto

An interactive workshop designed to introduce families and caretakers to Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Characteristics and strategies to help individuals are discussed, as well as some of the social and cognitive difficulties that people with Autism experience.

This workshop will also provide an opportunity to meet other parents of children and young adults with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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

Date and Time: Thursday, November 12, 2009 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Location: BCARC Social Development Center (65 Depot St.; Dalton, MA)

*R.S.V.P. by Monday, November 9, 2009, to
Megan Sherman at (413) 443-4780 x15 or shermanm@theassn.org*

(A collaboration of: Community Resources for People with Autism, Central Berkshire Regional School District - SPED PAC, Pittsfield Public School District—SPED PAC; Berkshire County ARC, United Cerebral Palsy of Berkshire County, and the Department of Developmental Services Berkshire Area Office)

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

116 Pleasant Street, Suite 366
Easthampton, MA 01027

Phone: 413-529-2428

www.communityresourcesforautism.org

a division of **THE ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING**

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

* ATTENTION PARENTS OF SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN *

Designed for parents and caretakers of school age children who are on the autism spectrum.

An educational series offered by
Community Resources For People With Autism
as part of our Parent Education Program.

We encourage attendance at all five sessions to gain the most from the workshops:



Basic Rights



An IEP For My Child



Strategies for Effective Communication



Strategies for Effective Advocacy



The Hidden Curriculum



Please refer to the next page of this page for session topic details, dates, and times.

Workshop Series Location:

Community Resources for People with Autism
116 Pleasant St., Suite 366; Easthampton, MA 01027

For more information or to register, please contact:

Community Resources for People with Autism
Phone: 413-529-2428; Email: greaneyk@theassn.org

Basic Rights

Date & time: Tuesday, October 27; 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm; RSVP by Friday, October 23.

Speaker: Julie Sinclair--Federation for Children with Special Needs

Location: Community Resources for People with Autism

This workshop provides families with an introduction to their rights and responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Massachusetts Special Education Law and No Child Left Behind (NCLB). It is designed to help parents learn how to be effective partners with the school, to decide the child's eligibility for special education, to plan, make decisions and to monitor the educational progress of their child.

For more information or to register, please Community Resources at (413) 529-2428

An IEP for My Child

Date & time: Tuesday, November 10; 6:30 - 8:30 pm; RSVP by Friday, November 6.

Speaker: Julie Sinclair--Federation for Children with Special Needs

Location: Community Resources for People with Autism

Every child with a disability who receives special education services must have an Individual Education Program (IEP). This workshop takes parents step-by-step through the development of the IEP including how to articulate a Vision, using evaluations to write annual measurable goals and how to measure their child's progress.

For more information or to register, please Community Resources at (413) 529-2428

Strategies for Effective Communication

Date & time: Wednesday, January 13; 6:30 - 8:30 pm; RSVP by Friday, January 8.

Speakers: Laurel Peltier (Educational Advocate); Susan Hackney (Mediator); Jeanne Troxell Munson

Location: Community Resources for People with Autism

This *interactive* workshop will focus on communication skill building and conflict resolution for parents as members of their child's IEP team through role-playing and one-on-one advice from the panel of speakers.

For more information or to register, please Community Resources at (413) 529-2428

Strategies for Effective Advocacy

Date & time: Tuesday, February 9; 6:30 - 8:30 pm; RSVP by Wednesday, February 3.

Speaker: Jeanne Troxell Munson

Location: Community Resources for People with Autism

Does your child need a 1:1 paraprofessional, longer day or longer year, social skills training, or a particular related service not currently in your IEP? This workshop will help you learn how to use strategies for effective advocacy to turn your child's needs into appropriate services and supports.

For more information or to register, please contact Community Resources at (413) 529-2428.

The Hidden Curriculum

Date & time: Tuesday, March 2; 6:30 - 8:30 pm; RSVP by Friday, February 26.

Speakers: Jason Litto and Jeanne Troxell Munson

Location: Community Resources for People with Autism

This topic introduces you to the importance of the "hidden curriculum"—the unwritten social rules and expectations of behavior that we all know but were never taught—and how a lack of these skills impacts individuals with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Individuals who have ASD do not come equipped with the same ability to understand the hidden curriculum. As a result, they break many social and behavioral rules without intent or even knowledge that they are doing so. This, coupled with their difficulty in generalizing information from one situation to another, leads them to making the same mistakes over and over again at a tremendous social cost. This workshop includes strategies and techniques to help children and adults understand social cues and unstated expectations, guidelines for what to do (or what not to do) in specific social situations, and practical tips.

For more information or to register, please contact Community Resources at (413) 529-2428.

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Asperger's 101

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.

Speaker:

Jason Litto

Date and Time:

Tuesday, November 17, 2009; 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Location:

Holyoke Community College—Kittredge Center 203
(303 Homestead Avenue; Holyoke, MA)

Community Resources for People with Autism
116 Pleasant Street; Suite 366
Easthampton, MA 01027

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Community Resources for People with Autism

Cordially Invites You to Our

Annual Family Holiday Party

Friday, December 18, 2009
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Holy Cross Parish Hall
23 Sycamore Street
Holyoke, MA

So that we have a gift for every child, please R.S.V.P. by December 11 to:

*Community Resources for People with Autism
greaneyk@theassn.org
(413) 529-2428*

*****We will need each child's name, age, and gender*****

*Potluck—if your last name begins with:
A-G please bring a dessert
H-Z please bring an appetizer*

*Let's enjoy the evening with
friends, food, entertainment, Santa,
and a present for every child!*

Sibshops

Community Resources For People With Autism and United Cerebral Palsy of the Berkshires, with the support of a grant from the Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation, will be offering four Sibshops – workshops for school age siblings of individuals with special needs in Berkshire County. Sibshops are designed to provide siblings of individuals with special needs peer support in a supportive, structured, and recreational environment.

"Giving Thanks"

Saturday, November 21, 2009, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
United Cerebral Palsy of the Berkshires, Northern Berkshire Office-
420 Curran Highway, North Adams, MA
For school age siblings of children with special needs, join us for fun, games, and sharing.

"Winter Carnival"

Saturday, January 23, 2010; 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Location in Pittsfield to be determined
Join us for snowman soup, games, and fun.

"Animal Party"

Saturday, March 27, 2010; 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Location in Southern Berkshire County to be determined
Join us for fun, games, and sharing.

"Sports Center"

Saturday, May 15, 2010; 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Location in Dalton to be determined
Join us for sports, games, and fun.

FOR ALL WORKSHOPS:

Please RSVP by Monday, November 16, 2009, to
Megan Sherman 413-443-4780 x.15 or shermanm@theassn.org
or
Erin Cote 413-664-9345 or ecote@ucpberkshire.org



FAMILY SUPPORT

DIVISION

a division of THE ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

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for children and adults with developmental disabilities since 1952*

**“Siblings of Children with Disabilities—
Understanding Their Special Needs”**

A Conference with Don Meyer

As the award-winning director of the Sibling Support Project of The Arc of the United States, speaker, author, and creator of the Sibshop model, Don Meyer has presented on issues facing families of children with special needs all over the world. Don was a founder of the SEFAM (Supporting Extended Family Members) program at the University of Washington, which pioneered services for fathers, siblings, and grandparents of children with special needs. His Sibshop model provides peer support and information to young brothers and sisters of children with significant health concerns and intellectual disabilities.

November 20, 2009

*Holyoke Holiday Inn and Conference Center
245 Whiting Farms Road, Holyoke, MA 01040*

- 8:30 am Registration (beverages provided)
- 9:00-9:15 Opening remarks by Doug McCallum, Dept. of Developmental Services,
Director of Family Support Central/West Regional Office
- 9:15-12:00 Brothers and Sisters of People with Disabilities: Unique Concerns, Unique Opportunities
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch (deli buffet provided)
- 1:00-3:00 Panel of Adult Siblings of People with Disabilities

For more information, contact the Family Support Division at 413-586-8196.

This conference is made possible through the generosity of Westfield Bank, and with the support of the following professional partners: Department of Developmental Services, Franklin/Hampshire Area Office; Behavioral Health Network; Casa Latina, Inc.; Community Resources for People with Autism; Down Syndrome Resource Group of Western Massachusetts; Springfield Jewish Community Center Special Needs Department; Thom Springfield Infant Toddler Services; Unified Sports Program; The United Arc; and Whole Children, Inc.

Registration deadline: November 13, 2009

Registration Fee: \$20 (scholarships are available for families)
Please make checks payable to The Association For Community Living.

Please return completed registration form along with payment to:
Family Support Division,
243 King St. Ste. 108,
Northampton, MA, 01060

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Number Attending _____

Total Enclosed _____

BERKSHIRE SWIM

Community Resources for People with Autism's Berkshire Autism Projects Committee has joined the Berkshire County ARC and Berkshire Family and Individual Resources to sponsor an hour of family swim at the Gladys Allen Brigham Community Center (165 East St., Pittsfield) every Thursday evening (excluding holidays) beginning October 1, 2009, and running through the middle of May, 2010, from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm at no cost to families. There will be lifeguards on duty; however, children will need to be accompanied by parents or care providers. If you plan on attending, please call the Gladys Allen Brigham Community Center by 3:00 pm on the day you plan to attend to ensure that they have enough lifeguards on duty. If you have any questions, please call Megan Sherman at (413) 443-4780 x 15.

Parent Support Group in Amherst

A new parent support group has started with the generous help of several parent volunteers. Starting this fall, groups will meet once per month at the home of Chris and Laurel Peltier. The meeting format will alter from having formal topics to family outings. Childcare will be provided, so be sure to let us know if you will be bringing your child.

Saturday, November 21st, 2009 at 10:00am – 12:00pm
 Saturday, December 12th, 2009 at 10:00am – 12:00pm

For more information or to RSVP, please contact:

Beth Stoddard at CRPA (413) 529-2428 ext 115,
stoddare@theasn.org
 or
 Chris and Laurel Peltier at (413) 230-3287,
cnlpeltier@aol.com

Positive Parenting

Positive parenting—a program serving parents with learning challenges who have a child five or under—offers parent education, referrals, home visiting, and weekly support groups designed to benefit those needing a concrete and slower paced approach.

The focus is on Health and Wellness,
 Financial Literacy and Family Literacy.
 Transportation and childcare are provided.
 Groups held in Northampton and Amherst.

For more information, contact:

Kris Larson
 (413) 834-3344

THE SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT SYSTEM

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. The group meets the first and last Tuesday of every month from 6:00 -7:30 pm at the Tabernacle Baptist Church (603 New Ludlow Road, Chicopee).

We offer parents: topic support meetings, guest speakers, family nights, relaxation ideas, and more.

We offer children activity time based on learning styles such arts and crafts, puppets, play dough, music therapy, sensory awareness, movies, and more – all with the goal of promoting social and life skills.

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

Parent to Parent

**Free! 3 boxes of pull ups.
 Size youth large/xlarge, 70+ lbs.**

**If interested, call
 Community Resources
 for People with Autism
 (413) 529-2428.**

Attend your next IEP meeting informed, educated, and empowered.



A concise guide to special education, eligibility, regulations, the IEP, and more!

\$20 (plus \$2 shipping and handling)

***Quantity discount: 5 or more \$15 each plus \$6 s/h (based on 5)
(Call for s/h charges for larger orders)***

~ Loan Program available to families ~

Ring of Rights ~ Order Form

Make checks payable to:

Community Resources for People with Autism
116 Pleasant Street; Suite 366
Easthampton, MA 01027

Name:	
Street:	
City, ST, Zip:	
Phone:	Email:
Quantity:	Amount Paid:

The Book Corner

A parent of a young adult that was served by Community Resources has written a short book, in cartoon format, about her son and securing services for him after age 22. Hamburger Syndrome portrays the story of one man diagnosed with classic autism as a child. He retains many of the problem features as an adult, including cognitive deficits. Yet he is living on his own and working in the community with supports from various agencies.

The author of Hamburger Syndrome, “Dr. Kascia Hanska,” is a college profess at a small, private college in New England and a licensed Psychologist.

Hamburger Syndrome by Kascia Hanska is available from the publisher at www.parkwaypublishers.com or from www.amazon.com.

Our Information Packets are now online!

Visit our website at www.communityresourcesforautism.org to learn more about:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| ◆ Asperger’s Syndrome | ◆ Autism | ◆ Behavior |
| ◆ Diet and Medication | ◆ Early Intervention | ◆ Floortime |
| ◆ Inclusion | ◆ Kids and Siblings | ◆ Prior Written Notice |
| ◆ Safety | ◆ Sensory Integration | ◆ Sexuality |
| ◆ Sleep Issues | ◆ Social Skills | ◆ Stress |
| ◆ Toilet Training | ◆ Transition: 14-22 | ◆ Transition: Turning 3 |

Information can be accessed by clicking on
Parent Information Packets under the *Services* drop-down menu.

The Disability Law Center (DLC) is a private, non-profit law firm providing legal advocacy on disability issues that promote the fundamental rights of all people with disabilities to participate fully and equally in the social and economic life of Massachusetts.

DLC has received a grant from the Massachusetts Bar Foundation to provide three trainings on special education and transition services in cities with large African American, Hispanic and other linguistic minority populations. The first training will take place on November 14, in Holyoke, the second one on January 30, in Fitchburg, and the third on March 27, in New Bedford. The purpose of the trainings is to inform families about the rights and opportunities available to their child. To register for the trainings on the web at www.dlc-ma.org, phone 800-872-9992, and fax 617-723-9125 or TTY 800-381-0577.

Please visit the DLC website for more information about DLC and the trainings www.dlc-ma.org

Sincerely,
Richard X. Villavicencio, Intake Paralegal/Outreach Coordinator

CONFERENCE ON TRANSITION PLANNING

A Free Training And Clinic For Parents About Special Education Transition Services
For Children With Disabilities, Ages 14-22

Morning Session:

- Group Presentations
- Presentation on Transition services and planning for children with disabilities

Afternoon Clinics:

- Individual consultation time with attorneys from the Disability Law Center and other legal services agencies

Date & Time: Saturday, November 14, 2009; 9:30 am—3:30 pm

Location: Holyoke Community College (Kittredge Center—Peoples Bank Conf. Room)
303 Homestead Avenue: Holyoke, MA 01040

***Lunch will be provided.

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### **CONFERENCIA DE PLANIFICACION TRANSICION**

Un Entrenamiento Gratuito y Clinica Para Padres Sobre Educacion Special de Servicios de  
Transion Para Los Ninos Con Incapacidades, Edades 14-22

Sesión Matutina

- Presentación del Grupo
- Presentación sobre Servicios de Transición y planificación para niños con incapacidades

Clínicas en la Tarde

- Consultas individuales planificadas con los abogados del Disability Law Center y otras agencias de servicios legales.

Cuando: Sábado, 14 de Noviembre de 2009; 9:30 am—3:30 pm

Donde: Holyoke Community College (Kittredge Center—Peoples Bank Conf. Room)  
303 Homestead Avenue: Holyoke, MA 01040

\*\*\*Se ofrecerá almuerzo

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Registration is FREE by website, mail, email, fax, phone or TTY

Website: www.dlc-ma.org

Email: mail@dlc-ma.org

Telephone: 800-872-9992 Fax: 617-723-9125 TTY: 800-381-0577

Registration is required and to schedule a half hour consultation.

This conference is co-sponsored by the following organizations:

The Massachusetts Justice Project

DLC Disability Law Center, Inc. ~ Western Mass Legal Services
Federation For Children With Special Needs ~ Children's Law Center of Massachusetts