

OCTOBER 2009



## ***COMMUNITY RESOURCES***

**FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM**

*Supporting children with autism and their families since 1989*



### **Staff**

*David Specht*  
Division Director  
Ext. 111

*Pamela Couchon*  
Autism Support Broker  
Ext. 124

*Carla Doyle*  
Autism Support Broker  
Ext. 119

*Nancy Farnsworth*  
Development Coord.  
Ext. 113

*Lynn Ford*  
Autism Specialist  
Ext. 114

*Karen Greaney*  
Operations /Resource Mgr.  
Ext. 118

*Jason Litto*  
Family Support Manager  
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*Jamie Oltmans*  
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*Betsy Rivera*  
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*Megan Sherman*  
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Ext. 123

*Elizabeth Stoddard*  
Autism Specialist  
Ext. 115

*Jeanne Troxell Munson*  
Family Education Spec.  
Ext. 120

*Rhonda Ward*  
Autism Specialist  
Ext. 117

**PLEASE JOIN US**

**Community Resources for People with Autism**  
*Supporting children with autism and their families since 1989*

# STEPPING UP & STEPPING OUT FOR AUTISM

*An evening of food, drink, music and silent auction*

**Friday, October 23, 2009**  
6:00 pm to 11:00 pm  
Western New England College  
Rivers Memorial Hall  
Springfield, Massachusetts

*Make a difference in the life of an individual with autism!*

### ***Ticket Information***

\$30 per person

\$50 per couple

\$125 patron level \*

\$200 table of eight

\*includes 2 tickets and recognition in event program

### ***Special benefits available to***

Event Sponsors

Silent Auction/Raffle Item Donors

and

Participating Restaurants

**Call for Details!**

***For more information and to purchase tickets, visit:***

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

or contact:

Nancy Farnsworth  
(413) 529-2428 x113

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES**  
FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

**OCTOBER 2009**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	
4	5	6 Filling the Gaps	7	8	9	10
11	12 Holiday Columbus Day	13	14	15	16 integrated Play Groups (Day 1)	17 integrated Play Groups (Day 2)
18	19	20	21	22	23 Stepping Up And Stepping Out For Autism	24
25	26	27 Basic Rights	28	29	30	31

A Program of THE ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING  
Creating Opportunities, Building Relationships, Improving Lives  
for children and adults with developmental disabilities since 1952.

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES' OCTOBER HAPPENINGS

### **Filling the Gaps**

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

Speaker: Heidi Coleman

Location: Community Resources for People with Autism; 116 Pleasant Street, Ste. 366; Easthampton, MA

In these difficult economic times, it is difficult for families to stretch their income to cover their children's necessary health care, treatments, equipment, and supplements. This workshop will help family members and individuals in direct contact with children with disabilities learn the following:

- ◆ Examine private health insurance coverage, collect documentation necessary for requesting services, and resources for writing effective letters of appeal
- ◆ Discuss all services and supplies covered by MassHealth/CommonHealth, and how to obtain reimbursement for transportation, incontinence supplies, over-the-counter medications, and other expenses
- ◆ The state's Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund; what it is, how to apply, and how it can help your family
- ◆ Non-profit organizations that reimburse families' out-of-pocket medical expenses, as well as provide grants or loans for Assistive Technology, medication, treatments, medical food supplements, respite care, adaptive recreational equipment, personal safety equipment, and much more!

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

### **Transition Forums for Families of Students with Developmental Disabilities Ages 14 - 22**

Date & time: Thursday, October 15, 2009; 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Location: Mason Library, 231 Main St.; Great Barrington

and

Date & time: Tuesday, October 27, 2009; 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Location: DDS – Berkshire Area Office, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room, 333 East Street, Pittsfield

Parents, guardians and family members are invited to any one of these transition forums to obtain information about the transition process from school to adult life and the role of state agencies and the importance of connecting activities. Its never to early to get involved as transition activities, both inside and outside of the classroom, need to reflect an educational experience that prepares students to live successfully in their communities. Light refreshments will be available.

For more information or to ask for special accommodations contact the Department of Developmental Services – Berkshire Area Office at 413 447-7381.

### **Integrated Play Groups for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Dates & time: Friday, October 16; Saturday, October 17. (Day 2 full)

Speaker: Pamela Wolfberg

Location: Castle of Knights; 1599 Memorial Drive; Chicopee, MA

Visit: [www.communityresourcesforautism.org](http://www.communityresourcesforautism.org) for details and to download a registration form.

### **Stepping Up and Stepping Out for Autism**

Date & time: Friday, October 23; 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm

Location: Western New England College; Rivers Memorial Hall; Springfield, MA

An evening of food, drink, music and silent auction to help raise money to support children with autism.

For more details, visit our website: [www.communityresourcesforautism.org](http://www.communityresourcesforautism.org) or call Nancy Farnsworth at (413) 529-2428 x113.

### **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; 116 Pleasant Street, Ste. 366; Easthampton, MA

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

## Integrated Play Groups for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Instructor: Pamela Wolfberg, Ph.D.

~~~~~  
**Friday, October 16, 2009**  
**Saturday, October 17, 2009\***

(\*Day 2 is limited to a smaller, core group who attended day 1, and who are committed to carrying out the practices of the IPG model. Space on Day 2 is limited to 25—Register early. Confirmation letters will be sent.)

**Time:** 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (registration begins at 8:00 AM)

**Location:** Castle of Knights; 1599 Memorial Drive; Chicopee, MA

For a detailed description of the workshop, please visit our website:  
[www.communityresourcesforautism.org](http://www.communityresourcesforautism.org)

### **REGISTRATION FORM (please print clearly)**

Day 2 is full.

#### **Registration Fees (lunch included):**

School Personnel/Professionals: \$89 (day one only); ~~\$198 (day one and two)~~  
 Parents/Family Members: \$59 (day one only)

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

Address (Street, ST, Zip): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Teacher/School Professional: \_\_\_\_\_ Professional: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Relative: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration: Day 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Day 1 and 2: \_\_\_\_\_

**Certificate of Attendance provided.**

**Registration deadline: October 5, 2009 (register early—space is limited)**

*Please make checks payable to:*

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

Phone (413) 529-2428 \* Fax (413) 529-2567

Questions? Please contact Karen Greaney at x118

## \* 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@theasn.org](mailto:greaneyk@theasn.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 contact 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 contact 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 contact 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.



## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

### **FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM**

*Supporting children with autism and their families since 1989*

### ***Filling the Gaps***

**Speaker: Heidi Coleman**

In these difficult economic times, it is challenging for families to stretch their income to cover their children's necessary health care, treatments, equipment, and supplements. This workshop will help family members and individuals in direct contact with children with disabilities learn the following:

- Examine private health insurance coverage, collect documentation necessary for requesting services, and resources for writing effective letters of appeal.
- Discuss all services and supplies covered by MassHealth/CommonHealth, and how to obtain reimbursement for transportation, incontinence supplies, over-the-counter medications, and other expenses.
- The state's Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund: what it is, how to apply, and how it can help your family.
- Non-profit organizations that reimburse families' out-of-pocket medical expenses, as well as provide grants or loans for Assistive Technology, medication, treatments, medical food supplements, respite care, adaptive recreational equipment, personal safety equipment, and much more!

*About our speaker:* Heidi Martin-Coleman is the mother of an 11 1/2 year-old boy with autism. A Registered Nurse with 19 years of experience, Heidi most recently worked as a Developmental Nurse Educator and Service Coordinator for a local Early Intervention program, until, sadly, personal health issues made it necessary for her to resign. Despite multiple disabilities, Heidi has continued to assist families in meeting their children's medical and educational needs through public speaking, individual consultations via e-mail, and presentations via traditional and virtual workshops. Heidi has recently started her own disabilities consultation business, Coleman Connect, with a mission to "Educate, Facilitate, Advocate, Celebrate!"

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Tuesday, October 6, 2009

6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

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

Please RSVP by Friday, October 2, to:  
Community Resources for People with Autism

## 2009 Community Resources' Annual Family Fun Day & Fundraiser

Community Resources for People with Autism's 2009 Family Fun Day & Fundraiser was held on September 12th at Golf Acres in Westfield. Thank you to the families that joined us despite the rainy weather. Golf Acres offered families a wide array of activities: go-carts, batting cages, mini-golf, and a driving range.

*Community Resources' would like to extend a gracious thank you to all of our sponsors with whose support helped to make our day such a success:*

**YANKEE CANDLE**  
*America's Best Loved Candle™*

**ES EASTHAMPTON  
SAVINGS BANK**



C & S Wholesale Grocers (Westfield)

*Special thanks to the following local businesses that donated goods and services:*

**TAYLOR RENTAL**

Taylor Rental Party Plus—  
Westfield

**Golf Acres**



***Congratulations to Drew Glover for collecting more than \$100 in pledges!***

### **Our Information Packets are now online!**

Visit our website at [www.communityresourcesforautism.org](http://www.communityresourcesforautism.org) to learn more about:

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

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

*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: |

**Springfield Jewish Community Center  
Special Needs Fall 2009 Programs**

**Pre K – Early Elementary**

*Music and Movement for Pre-K to 3rd Grade*  
*Adaptive Karate, Pre-school – 3rd grade*  
*Magical Reading and Painting, Kindergarten – 3rd Grade*

**Elementary Age**

*Basketball Skills, Elementary Age*  
*Social Skills Group, Elementary Age*  
*Music with Rusty! Elementary Age*  
*Adaptive Karate, 4th grade and up*  
*I Can Cook!, Ages 10 - 15*

**Tweens and Young Teens**

*Social Skills Group, Tweens and Young Teens*  
*Basketball Skills, Middle and High School*

**Teens through Young Adults**

*Social Skills for Teens and Young Adults*  
*Creating Music with Rusty! Teens and Young Adults*  
*Cooking for Teens and Young Adults*

For more information, class schedule, and to register for classes, contact:

**Linda LaPointe, Special Needs Coordinator**  
Springfield Jewish Community Center  
1160 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108  
(413) 739-4715, ext 315; [llapointe@springfieldjcc.org](mailto:llapointe@springfieldjcc.org)

***Sullivan & Associates, Inc.  
Training Center Presents***

Sullivan & Associates, Inc. is offering training on the new MA guardianship laws that were promulgated July 1, 2009.

Matthew Engel, an Attorney from the Disabilities Law Center will conduct the training.

LOCATION: Sullivan & Associates, Inc.  
551 E. Columbus Ave.; Springfield, MA 01105

DATE & TIME: October 22, 2009; 10:00am – 12:00pm

FEE: \$35.00 per person

For more information or to register (by October 15),  
please contact Anne Magill at 413-733-6100 x108 or email [amagill@sullivanandassoc.com](mailto:amagill@sullivanandassoc.com)

## Research Study

### Discovering New Genes and Improved Diagnostics

The Autism Consortium recently launched a new study for families who have a member diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The study involves providing blood samples as well as a series of evaluations including IQ tests, questionnaires and observations. We invite the parents and siblings, along with the family member diagnosed with an ASD, to participate in this study.

#### The Goals of this Study Are:

- To discover new genes involved in ASDs
- To establish a comprehensive and efficient assessment battery for improved evaluation of individuals with ASDs
- To better understand characteristics of the whole family, such as medical history, to determine if there is a correlation between these family characteristics and any genetic differences so that we may better understand the gene(s) involved in ASDs.

The study is being conducted at all of our clinical sites in Massachusetts, including UMass Medical School, or can be performed at the family's home. At the conclusion of the study, a detailed report of the assessment results for the family member with an ASD will be provided (please see enclosure). The report will be reviewed with the family in-person or by phone if preferred. This valuable report and consultation is provided at no cost to families participating in this study.

For more information, contact:

Carol A. Hoffman, Ph.D., M.S., LGC  
 Genetic Counselor/Research Psychologist  
 Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
 University of Massachusetts Medical School  
 365 Plantation Street, Suite 100; Worcester, MA 01605  
 Tel: 508-856-5055 email: carol.hoffman@umassmed.edu

### **Parent Support Group**

A new parent support group has started with the generous help of several parent volunteers. Starting this fall, groups will meet once per month in Amherst 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.

The following dates have been set:

Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 10:00am – 12:00pm  
 Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 10:00am – 12:00pm  
 Saturday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 at 10:00am – 12:00pm  
 Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 10:00am – 12:00pm

For more information or to RSVP, please contact:

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

**THE SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT SYSTEM** is facilitated by Stephanie and Charles McCormick, parents of a special needs child. We hope to provide support and activities for families living in western MA 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](mailto:specialchildren@yahoo.com)  
 or (413)693-5188.