

# Autism Monthly NJ

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The leaves have changed color, the air has that crisp fall chill, and everyone's getting excited for Halloween. So while you're gathering bite-sized candies for your visitors and putting the final touches on your costumes, take some time to reflect on how fantastic summer was and find out what's in store for the rest of fall and winter with Autism Family Services of NJ.



## Quick Links

- [Autism Family Services of New Jersey](#)
- [The Family Support Center of New Jersey](#)
- [The Family Resource Network](#)

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## State Office on Autism Announced by Governor

Governor Corzine announced that he will be creating an Office on Autism during this term, a recommendation of the Adults with Autism Task Force, released last Friday. This was the highest priority of the 44 recommendations made by the Task Force and it was recommended that the Governor locate this Office within the Division of Disability Services, NJ Department of Human Services. The Governor did not give much more detail than that, however. Please visit our site regularly for updated information.



## Announcements and Upcoming Events

## Support Group for Adults with Asperger's Syndrome

Group is forming in Northern NJ by the National Institute for People with Disabilities in New Jersey. Participants must be 21 years or older and live in New Jersey, and will meet in 5 hour increments twice per week. Individual support will be provided for each participant. Please contact Nancy O'Reilly, Program Supervisor, 845-358-5700, ext. 147.

### Promoting Independence:

Considerations for Financial Planning, Housing and Decision-Making presented by the firm of Hinkle, Fingles, and Prior,

Date/Time: October 20 (6-8:30)

Location: Family Support Center, 2516 Route 35, Manasquan

RSVP: (732-528-8080)

### Clinical Research Trial

Clinical Research Trial for children with autism (ages 6-12). Your child may be eligible for Connect Me, a clinical research trial for autism. The project provides investigational medication, comprehensive study-related evaluations, diagnosis and follow-up with experienced physicians. Contact Clinical Research Center of New Jersey by visiting [www.connectmestudy.com](http://www.connectmestudy.com) or 1-866-79-STUDY

## The Benefits of Equine Therapy and Autism

The purpose of this informative workshop is to increase awareness of equine therapy and its benefits, find out why equine therapy is so successful and get a history and brief overview of equine therapy.



### Location:

Raise Your Dreams Farm  
328 E Lake Road  
Pilesgrove, NJ 08098

### Time:

3:30PM - 4:30PM

### Presenter:

Jill Mansor

Please call the SCCA at 856.678.9400 to register for this free workshop.

Professional Respite Care will be provided for those in need at the Sharptown Church. Please register your child[ren] by the Friday prior to the meeting date by contacting Helen at 856.678.9400 or email [info@salemcountycenterforautism.org](mailto:info@salemcountycenterforautism.org).

## Register Now for the National Caregivers Conference



Please join us on Thursday, October 29, 2009 at the Woodbridge Hotel and Conference Center to meet new people from around the country, spend time catching up with old friends, and return home with a refreshed outlook on caregiving.

The first 40 paid registrants will receive a free copy of Luncheon Speaker Carol D. O'Dell's Book, *Mothering Mother: A Daughter's Humorous and Heartbreaking Memoir*.

For more information about how you can be a part of this fantastic event please call the Family Support Center of NJ (732) 528-8080 and a staff member will be ready to assist you.

Visit [www.nationalcaregiversconference.org](http://www.nationalcaregiversconference.org) regularly for event updates!

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Also, there will be a meeting of the New Jersey Lifespan Respite Coalition the day before the Conference, also held at the Renaissance Woodbridge Hotel. Registration is free and all are welcome to attend, however, advanced registration is required, so please [click here](#) for a registration form if you are interested in attending. Call 732-262-8020 for more information.

## Autism Diagnosis Still on the Rise



Two separate government studies were released during the past week, each indicating a rise in the number of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders. In the publication, *Pediatrics* (<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org>), the Health Resources and Services Administration ([www.hrsa.gov](http://www.hrsa.gov)) revealed a ratio of 1 child in 91 as diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. That study involved an extensive telephone survey that included 78,000 parents of children aged 3-17. Because this was a random telephone survey, this data can be considered a snapshot of current rates of ASD prevalence. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control released a portion of its upcoming report indicating a 1 in 100 ratio of 8 year

old children being diagnosed on the autism spectrum, a dramatic rise above the 1 in 150 reported in 2007. The CDC study collects and analyzes data based on an extensive study of school and health records across sites, sub-groups, and changes over time. The two methods, though very different, are complementary and help to form a more complete picture of numbers on the autism spectrum across the United States.

Such reports serve many purposes, including the provision of data for planning purposes and highlight the need for more urgency in the research and treatment areas. It is important to note that the New Jersey figures have pointed to 1 in 94 having the diagnosis of autism for a few years now and other parts of the nation are becoming better equipped to identify and analyze ASD cases. This in no way lessens or dismisses the urgency of the situation, but serves to point out the difficulty in identifying a developmental disorder without a clear biological marker.

The full report of the Centers for Disease Control will be released later this year. (For more information, be sure to visit the Interagency Autism Coordinating Council (IACC) at <http://iacc.hhs.gov>).

## More Federal Funding for Autism Research



President Obama has announced the dedication of \$92 million in federal stimulus funds for autism research. As President Obama reported to the National Institutes of Health, this will be "...the largest-ever infusion of funding into autism research." Genetic and environmental factors will be addressed, as will attention to treatment and therapies. After years of lobbying for more dedicated research dollars by the federal government, we are beginning to see significant action in this arena. Until a few years ago, private dollars, particularly those raised by parents through Cure Autism Now (CAN) and the National Alliance on Autism Research (NAAR), surpassed government investment in autism research. Now

encompassed by Autism Speaks, parents continue to lead the charge in demanding change and attention to this vital issue.

## Summer Soiree and Beach Bash: A Memorable Weekend

For all who attended the September 11th Summer Soiree and the September 13-14 Beach Bash, it was a weekend filled with excitement, good family fun, and memorable moments. Despite poor weather conditions, the Summer Soiree drew an enthusiastic crowd, as our activities were brought indoors for the first time. A clam bake (featuring lobster for everyone), a most successful silent auction, friends and family, and the music of Billy Lawlor all made for a terrific time in raising money for, among other activities, our Beach Bash. Our special thanks to all who attended and in particular to Dr. Jim Ball and Greg Kroeger for making our sports ticket auction so memorable (and profitable!). Thanks, everyone.



According to the Asbury Park Press, 5,000 people participated in our Beach Bash on Sunday, September 12. Surfer's Healing of California participated for the 5th consecutive year, enabling more than 150 children and adults and another 60 on Monday) to experience a surfing event with world class professional and amateur surfers. Surfer's Healing was founded by the legendary surfers, the Paskowitz family. We were honored by the presence of Dr. Dorian Paskowitz (Doc), the 88 year old patriarch of the family, who addressed those present with a message of hope for people affected by autism.

Whole Foods, Napoli Brothers Italian Ices, Surf Taco and a host of other companies lent their products and support to the day. A great deal of thanks also must go to Belmar and their First Aid Squad, Fishing Club, and other civic organizations for supplying volunteers and products. Special thanks to Fran Hines from bringing the resources of the Belmar community to us for two fun-filled days.

Please visit our Web site for photos of the event: [www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org](http://www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org)

## Newark to be the Site for National Town Hall Meeting on Adults with Autism

On November 13, the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in Newark will serve as a host for the national event conducted by Advancing Futures of Adults with Autism (AFAA). The focus of the meeting will be to develop a plan and national policy on the lives of adults with autism. The meeting will be conducted at 16 sites throughout the country with Chicago serving as hub for a live webcast. Each site will have pre-registered participants gathering in groups to address employment, housing, recreation, transportation, and social needs and opportunities.

AFAA is a national consortium of individuals on the spectrum, and organizations that have united to address the important issue of the futures of people with autism. The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation is a member, and DJF President Linda Walder Fiddle serves on the Advisory Board of Autism Family Services of New Jersey. To register for the Newark site, visit [www.afa-us.org/newark](http://www.afa-us.org/newark) or call the Alpine Learning Group at 973-972-9422 for more information. Registration fee is \$100.

## New Brochure: Autism, Epilepsy and Seizures

Through a collaboration with The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation, Autism Family Services of New Jersey and the Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey will soon release a new informational brochure, Autism, Epilepsy and Seizures: How to Recognize the Signs and Basic First Aid When You Do. The brochure highlights a topic of concern for many families and updates material published by the Epilepsy Foundation of America several years ago.

DJF President Linda Walder Fiddle recognized the need to disseminate this valuable information to the general public while attending a conference at UMDNJ-NJ Medical School last year and contacted Family Resource Network Executive Director Eric Joice with her recommendation.

Together a brochure was developed and is now ready for publication. A prototype of the brochure was used at the Autism New Jersey annual conference and a final copy will be ready for distributionn shortly. Please click [here](#) to view an online version of the brochure.

## Dinner and a Therapist Coming to Woodbridge

Several months ago, AFSNJ was awarded a training grant from The Horizon Foundation of New Jersey to conduct a series of workshops for parents dealing with autism. We will be hosting that 3 part series in January in conjunction with PACE, the Parents Association of the Matthew Jago School in the Sewaren section of town, home of Jago School. The workshops will take place on Friday evenings (January 8, 22, and 29) and will include dinner and child care, beginning @ 6PM and ending shortly after 8PM.

Workshop #1 will be on sibling issues and will be moderated by Annette Becklund, LCSW. Workshops #2 and #3 will be on family stress and ways to deal with it and presented by Dr. Russell Kormann. Space is very limited and attendees must commit to attending all 3 workshops and submit a pre- and post-test on the effectiveness of the series. As part of the partnership with PACE, most workshop slots have been reserved for those parents. We will begin registration on November 1 and all who register may not be able to get in.



Please visit our site ([www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org](http://www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org)) on November 1 for registration information.

Thank you for reading Autism Monthly NJ! If you have any information you would like included in our e-zine, or know of anyone that would like to be added to our listserv, please email me at [dgoldberg@familyresourcenetwork.org](mailto:dgoldberg@familyresourcenetwork.org) or click the "Join Our Mailing List" button on the top right side of the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Dana Goldberg  
Autism Family Services of NJ  
and The Family Resource Network

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