

# Autism Monthly NJ

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Welcome to the Autism Monthly. We're dedicated to providing our readers with informative, exciting and interesting news regarding NJ, autism and events, so if you know of something you'd like posted, or if you're hosting an event that you'd like included, please respond to this email and let us know!



**Autism Family Services of New Jersey**

## Quick Links

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

[Join our Mailing List!](#)

## The Family Support Center of NJ presents....Sibshops!

Sibshops are for kids between the ages of 8-12 years old who have a sibling with special needs. FSCNJ will host Sibshop meetings once a month on Saturday from 10am-2pm. Each session costs \$25 per child.

2010 Meeting Schedule  
December 18, 2010

2011 Meeting Schedule  
January 15, 2011  
February 19, 2011  
March 19, 2011  
April 16, 2011  
May 21, 2011  
June 18, 2011  
July 16, 2011  
August 20, 2011  
September 17, 2011  
October 15, 2011  
November 19, 2011  
December 17, 2011

Sibshops will take place at:  
The Family Resource Network-Shore Office  
Lions Head Office Park  
35 Beaverson Blvd. Bldg. 11  
Brick, NJ 08723

Please call the Family Support Center of NJ to register: 1-800-372-6510.  
\*\*\*Space is limited. Please register as soon as possible\*\*\*

## DHS Creates Office of Autism in Response to Autism Task Force Recommendations

The Department of Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez has established an Office of Autism in response to recommendations contained in a report issued last year by the Adults with Autism Task Force. The office is located within DDD, and Commissioner Velez has appointed Deborah Cohen, PH.D., to serve as Director and Jonathan Sabin, MSW, to serve as Associate Director.

The Office of Autism was created partly in response to 44 recommendations presented in the report prepared by the Adults with Autism Task Force, which was submitted to the Governor and Legislature last October. The first recommendations focused on the need for a centralized place within State government to help build a lifespan service system for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). More information on the office and report can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/boards/AAT-Frpt.pdf>

Many families have expressed to DDD their difficulty in obtaining services for a family member with ASD. As the incidence of ASD continues to grow both in New Jersey and across the country, Autism NJ recently documented similar concerns in a report of its own (<http://www.autismnj.org/Doc/Blueprint.pdf>).

The new office also will become involved in an Interdepartmental ASD Work Group, which is being formed to improve and enhance the communication, collaboration and coordination among all state agencies that are providing services to individuals with ASD. In addition, the department anticipates that the office will assist in applying for federal grants that relate to ASD.

To reach the Office of Autism, send an email to Deborah Cohen, Director, at [deborah.cohen@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:deborah.cohen@dhs.state.nj.us) or Jonathan at [jonathan.sabin@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:jonathan.sabin@dhs.state.nj.us)

## Devils Fundraiser for FRN and AFSNJ-Great Holiday Gift

When the NJ Devils take on the Philadelphia Flyers at the Prudential Center in Newark on January 6th, it will be for more than a shot at the playoffs. It will be The Family Resource Network's annual Night at the Devils.

Tickets are \$45 each (well below face value). Go to [www.newjerseydevils.com/frn](http://www.newjerseydevils.com/frn) to access offer put in special code FRN

We look forward to seeing you in January.

## NJ Leads the Way in Special Needs Hockey

The New Jersey Daredevils Hockey Team would love to have a few more kids with special needs on their team this year-but they're filled up. Forty-six boys and girls registered this year and so they are not accepting new registrants.

However, NJ has four more teams that may be able to accommodate kids wishing to participate. These include the NJ Avalanche (Hackensack), Brick Special Hockey (Brick), Woodbridge Wolfpack (Woodbridge) and Mercer Special Hockey Bulldogs ( West Windsor). In fact, New Jersey apparently has more teams than any other state. In all, there are 80 teams that belong to the American Special Hockey Association ([www.americanspecialhockey.org](http://www.americanspecialhockey.org))

Teams accept youngsters with autism, down syndrome, cerebral palsy and a variety of neurological issue.

According to John Murphy of Jackson Twp., who helps the Daredevils in West Orange, special hockey is the fastest growing aspect of US Hockey.

Check the website for local programs/contacts.

## In NJ Autism Education, Some Say Standards are Lacking

-From the Asbury Park Press

In New Jersey, one in every 94 children has an autism spectrum disorder, the highest incidence rate among the 16 states surveyed by the federal government.

Among New Jersey boys, the rate is one in 70, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

The phenomenon is one of the greatest challenges facing New Jersey's special-education system today. Not only because of the sheer number of autistic students-which has more than doubled in the past decade, to nearly 12,000-but also because of the very nature of autism.

Autism is a complex biological condition that, to varying degrees, affects a child's ability to communicate and develop social relationships-skills that are at the very core of the educational process.

That means that autistic students often must be taught in a completely different way than other children. Yet as many parents soon discover, the way that happens in New Jersey-which has no uniform curriculum standards for autism programs or any special training requirements for teachers who work with autistic students-can be as confounding as autism itself. [continue reading](#)

## The Uncommon Thread-Parent Support Group

Parent Support Group begins December 15, 2010

This group aims at providing support, guidance and education of parents of young children with disabilities. First meeting will be December 15th from 7pm-8pm at 1071 Valley Road, Stirling, NJ 07980

Call or email to reserve your spot. 908-604-4500 or [info@theuncommonthread.org](mailto:info@theuncommonthread.org)

## Anything is Possible

## A.I.P-Anything is Possible

is proud to present  
Our after school program for children with Autism

Location: Midland School, North

Program: through December 21st

Hours: 4:30-6:30pm

Activities: piano lessons, reading programs, music workout, social skills & various academics

AIP believes that the more activities our children are involved with will help speed their progress or reveal any hidden talents!

To register you must have an IEP and any pertinent reports

For information contact Venita Martin 908-240-8766

[venita\\_08807@yahoo.com](mailto:venita_08807@yahoo.com)

## The Training Calendar Offers a Clearinghouse of Community Events

In an effort to spread awareness about workshops, conferences and other training opportunities the Family Support Center of New Jersey has launched The Training Calendar. We invite professionals to post information on activities, lectures, trainings, or other events for caregivers and the people they are caring for on [www.thetrainingcalendar.org](http://www.thetrainingcalendar.org). We also invite families and caregivers to view the trainings available in their area.

Previously The Training Calendar had been administered by the Progressive Center for Independent Living. We applaud their foresight in developing this clearinghouse program.

## Autism and Epilepsy Brochures

The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation, Autism Family Services of NJ and the Epilepsy Foundation of NJ have completed a brochure to assist families and professionals in identifying and responding to the potential for seizure disorders in children and adults with autism and epilepsy. The brochure has received wide distribution in its first weeks of release and has been featured in a workshop at the recent Autism NJ Annual Conference and on the Web sites of Autism Speaks and POAC. Downloadable copies are available on our website ([www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org](http://www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org)) or by contacting us at 800-376-2345. The Foundation's Director, Linda Walder Fiddle, serves on the Advisory Board of AFSNJ.



**Autism Family  
Services of  
New Jersey**



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS  
**EPILEPSY  
FOUNDATION®**  
NEW JERSEY  
*Not another moment lost to seizures™*

**DJF®** The Daniel Jordan Fiddle  
Foundation  
*A National Autism Organization: Granting A Future To Adolescents And Adults®*



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[Become a fan of Autism Family Services of NJ and The Family Resource Network of NJ on facebook!](#)



[And follow The Family Resource Network on Twitter!](#)

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 list, please email me at [msmith@familyresourcenetwork.org](mailto:msmith@familyresourcenetwork.org) or click the "Join Our Mailing List" button on the top right side of the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Michelle Smith  
Autism Family Services of NJ  
and The Family Resource Network

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