

◆ *Into the Light* ◆

Volume 20 Issue 1 Autism Society, Central Virginia January 2012



AS-CV Mission & Philosophy

The Autism Society, the nation's leading grassroots autism organization, exists to improve the lives of all affected by autism. We do this by increasing public awareness about the day-to-day issues faced by people on the spectrum, advocating for appropriate services for individuals across the lifespan, and providing the latest information regarding treatment, education, research and advocacy.

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Executive Director: Bradford Hulcher
Asperger's Interest Group Facilitator: Brie King

New Online Course Available for Parents of newly Identified Children with ASD

"My Child Was Just Identified with an Autism Spectrum Disorder: Now What Do I Do?" a self-paced online course, is a collaboration between the Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Excellence (ACE) and the Virginia Autism Council (VAC). Autism Society Executive Director Bradford Hulcher served on the VAC Training Committee that developed this training and is featured in 2 of the modules.

The course is designed for parents who have young children with an autism spectrum disorder to introduce families to the characteristics, needs and recommended services for young children with autism spectrum disorders. A brief description of the defining characteristics of an autism spectrum disorder is provided. The focus of the course, however, is on effective services, supports and strategies. Modules include:

- Introduction
- Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Essential Tips for Families
- Virginia Medicaid Waivers for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- A Comprehensive Approach to Address Needs
- Strategies for the Home: Using Structure and Visual Supports
- Strategies for the Home: Increasing Communication
- Strategies for the Home: Addressing Behavioral Challenges
- Strategies for the Home: Addressing Social Challenges
- Strategies for the Home: Addressing Sensory Differences

To view the course, visit
<http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/training/parents/index.cfm>

January 13 Chapter Meeting Home and Community Based Medicaid Waivers

Did you know?

- Medicaid Waivers provide supports and services in the community for individuals with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities.
- **Parents' income is not considered when determining eligibility!**
- One might receive services through one waiver while on the waiting list for another.
- The application process is different for each waiver.

Please join Medicaid Waiver Mentor Bradford Hulcher as she shares information on supports and services available through each waiver and the application process.

This workshop is free and open to the public; to insure enough handouts, please RSVP to:
<http://medicaidwaivers.eventbrite.com/>

Autism Society meetings take place at River Road United Methodist Church, 8800 River Road in Richmond. Our meetings are free and open to the public. The library opens at 6:30 p.m. and meetings begin promptly at 7 p.m. Free supervision for children and youth is available although space is limited; reservations are taken through January 6 by e-mailing the chapter at asacv@aol.com with the names and ages/grades of your child(ren).

This newsletter is a publication of: Autism Society, Central VA □ P.O. Box 29364 □ Richmond, Virginia 23242-0364 (804) 257-0192

We accept for consideration any comments, personal vignettes, book reviews, information, announcements or advertisements for publication in our chapter newsletter. The deadline for submission for the February newsletter is January 15. You may send your contributions to the Chapter at the above address or email contributions to SELKO1@aol.com.

The Autism Society, Central Virginia does not endorse nor promote any program or service provider. The information contained in this newsletter is provided for informational purposes only. The Chapter is a volunteer organization providing information, support and encouragement to parents, family members and professionals in the Central VA area.

This edition was edited by Elizabeth Selko and Bradford Hulcher.

Directions to ASCV meetings River Road United Methodist Church

From the East:

-64 West to Exit 181 Parham Road South

*Drive 2 miles till you reach a traffic light for River Road. Be in the left hand land and turn left onto the on ramp. At the stop sign turn right on to River Road

**Go approximately .2 miles and the church will be on your right.

Turn right onto Doverland Road. Turn right into the church parking lot. To the back left of the church is a door that says "office". Go into this door and meetings are held inside at the first dorr on yur right.

From the West:

I-64 east to Exit 181 Parham Road South.

Follow all directions that are written above for coming from the east.
*

From the North:

I-95 South to I64 west then follow the same directions as written above under the East.*

From the South:

I-95 North to 1150 Chippenham Parkway North. Go over the Willey Bridge crossing the James River. At the first light turn right on to the on ramp for River Road. At the stop sign turn right on to River Road. Follow directions above at the **

Local School Celebrates National Inclusive Schools Month

The week of December 5 was National Inclusive Schools Week. My son James (JP) attends Jacobs Road Elementary School's Autism Program. His teacher Mrs. Zylstra (Mrs. Z) spearheaded this initiative and as she put it "your children helped me lead the way".

JP came home that week with a sticker that read, "My Principal is Proud of Me". Asked why Ms. Burgess was proud of him, JP said, "Ms. Burgess smiles, pledge of allegiance, roar, proud and so happy." I shook my head in agreement and smiled even though I did not understand; the bottom line, JP knew Ms. Burgess was proud and he did something good.

Later that day, JP's teacher called, explaining that each child in her class got a turn to do morning or the afternoon announcements that week. JP did that morning's announcements over the PA system, including the Pledge of Allegiance and the Jacobs ROAR Pledge, to the entire school. (I had no idea he knew these by heart so I asked him to recite them to me and he did without missing a word!) Now his statement about why he had the sticker made sense!

Another highlight of Inclusion Week was that JP's class was invited by the students in Mrs. Urban's 5th grade class to have cocoa and cookies. The 5th graders gave Mrs. Z a list of things they wanted to know about inclusion/exceptionalities. She answered their questions before the class visited and said the 5th graders were amazing with our children. JP's class has a standing date to do activities with that class again!

I'm proud to be the parent of a Jaguar. We are Jacobs-hear our ROAR!!!!

submitted by *Pam, Perry and Michelle Mines*
Proud Parents and Big Sister of James Mines (JP)

NEWS FROM THE AUTISM SOCIETY, CENTRAL VA BOARD

- The ASCV hosted a December training for almost 50 local childcare providers in collaboration with Commonwealth Autism Service.
- The ASCV hosted a December workshop on Autism Insurance in collaboration with the Virginia Autism Project with close to 50 people in attendance (including a reporter from the Richmond Times Dis-

patch!)

- The ASCV hosted the annual Holiday Party at the Science Museum for chapter members and their families; close to 200 people attended.
- The ASCV collaborated with several local professionals who volunteered to provide a Saturday morning of respite for families during the holiday season.
- The ASCV hosted an autism bookstore at the Region 1 Autism Consortium's Scott Bellini workshop in early December.
- Executive Director Bradford Hulcher gave a brief overview of Medicaid waivers during a workshop for Spiritos School.
- ASCV committees - Outreach, 5K Run, Board Development, Governance, and Finance - met during the month of December.
- Board member Donna Sabels and ED Bradford Hulcher were featured in a WRIC story on the chapter airing Dec. 31.
- ED Bradford Hulcher attended the December meeting of The Advisory Consortium for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (TACIDD).
- The board signed on to public comment prepared by the Medicaid Waiver Network on proposed changes to VA ID Medicaid Waiver regulations.
- The ASCV sponsored a Tacky Light Bus Tour for our Adults with Asperger's Interest Group.
- ED Bradford Hulcher participated in the Central VA Family-to-Family Network Advisory Committee meeting at the Partnership for People with Disabilities

FRIENDSHIP GROUP FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

The Autism Society, Central VA sponsors a monthly "friendship group" for chapter member middle school students with Asperger's Syndrome. The group is limited to a maximum of 12 students and is led by Brie King, MA CTRS. The 2 hour meeting includes a mix of structured and semi-structured activities, including social skill exploration with games and conversation time, all with a focus on friendship development. Chapter members have been sent a link for further information.

ASCV Inclusive Lego® Club for Children in Kindergarten to 8th Grade!!

The Autism Society, Central VA will sponsor our second Inclusive Lego® Club meeting on Saturday, January 21 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Central Public Library, 9501 Lori Road, Chesterfield, 23832. Children of all abilities in grades K thru 8 are invited to attend. With loads of Lego® bricks of all sizes and colors, we will encourage imaginative and collaborative play and seek to foster fun and non-instructive socialization.

Parents must remain on the premises but are encouraged to visit or browse in the library while their child is participating in the Lego® Club. The Lego® Club will be facilitated by Recreational Therapist Brie King with the support of teen volunteers. Parents must pick up their children promptly at 3 p.m.

AUTISM SOCIETY JANUARY CALENDAR

The Autism Society, Central VA will sponsor the following meetings in January. All meetings are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Meetings take place at River Road United Methodist Church, 8800 River Road unless otherwise noted. For information: 257-0192 or asacv@aol.com

Jan. 9	7:00 p.m.	Parents of <u>Children</u> with Asperger's Syndrome/HFA Interest Group
Jan. 10	7:00 p.m.	Board Meeting
Jan. 11	10.00 a.m.	Parents of <u>Children</u> with Asperger's Syndrome/HFA Interest Group
Jan. 13	7:00 p.m.	Chapter Meeting: Home and Community Based Medicaid Waivers RSVP to http://medicaidwaivers.eventbrite.com/
Jan. 14	all day	Fundraiser for ASCV @ Panda Express, Short Pump Town Center; 20% of purchase goes to ASCV w/ coupon
Jan. 15		Middle/High School Bowling Party free for ASCV members; preregistration required
Jan. 22	5:00 p.m.	Dads of Kids with ASD Interest Group (Shrader Lanes) free for any dad w/ a child on the spectrum; RSVP to http://dadsbowljan.eventbrite.com/
Jan. 19	10:00 a.m.	Biomedical Interest Group
Jan. 21	1:00 p.m.	Inclusive Lego Club @ Central Library; open to any child grades K- 8
Jan. 23	7:00 p.m.	Adults w/ Asperger's/High Functioning Autism Interest Group (<i>open only to adults w/ AS/HFA</i>)
Jan. 23	7:00 p.m.	Parents of Adults with Autism Interest Group

Community Events/ Meetings of Interest

Jan. 2 **Hanover County Special Education Advisory Committee** meets at 7 p.m. at Hanover County School Board Office; topic: "What Are Meaningful Transition Goals and How to Write Them"; open to the public; for info: <http://hcps.us/instruction/parentresource/SEAC.htm>

Jan. 11 **Chesterfield County Special Education Advisory Committee** 4:30 - 6 p.m. at the Fulghum Center; 4003 Cogbill Road. Open to the public; for details, call (804) 594-1732.

Jan. 12 **Richmond Asperger's Meetup** the second Thursday from 7-9 pm @ River City Diner on Parham Rd.; a place where older children (age 11-17) can meet other Aspergers children and siblings/adults with Asperger's can meet together and/or share information with parents of kids with AS; RSVP at <http://aspergers.meetup.com/397/>

Dec. 9 **Buddy Break** a free respite care program for children with special needs ages 3-21 and their siblings ages 3-11; 6:30 - 9: 30 p.m.; sponsored by Trinity Lutheran Church, North Parham Rd; for info: Carolyn Hassan 804-270-4626 BuddyBreak@TrinityRichmond.net

Jan. 16 **Aspie Bible Study** meet on the first and third Monday of each month @ Good Shepherd UMC, 9155 Hungary Rd, Richmond; 7:15 pm. - 9 p.m.; call Shawn at 804-339-4393 for info; open to mature teens 17 or older and adults with HFA/Asperger's

Jan. 17 **Richmond/Northern Chesterfield Asperger's Meetup** third Tuesdays @ Positive Vibe Cafe, 6:30- 8:30; RSVP at <http://aspergers.meetup.com/397/>

Jan. 19 **A Journey of Rest and Restoration**; a monthly Christian-based support group designed for couples/caregivers of children with any special needs; meets the third Thursday of each month from 7 to 8:30 p.m.; Mechanicsville Christian Center; free childcare and sign language interpreter; pre-registration required; contact Joanna Frank @ 7 4 6 - 4 3 0 3 e x t 3 6 0 o r bfrank.ResourceConnectioninc@gmail.com

Jan. 21 **Buddy Break** a free respite care program for children with special needs ages 3-21 and their siblings ages 3-11; 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.; must preregister; sponsored by Southside Church of The Nazarene, Courthouse Rd; contact Amy Morgan @ 804-778-7800 ext. 247 or Buddy-Break@SouthsideChurchVA.org

Jan. 24 **Henrico County Special Education Advisory**

Committee meets 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Wilder Middle School library; topic" Moving through the School System"; open to the public; for info: seac@henrico.k12.va.us

Virginia Public Budget Hearing

The House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees of the Virginia General Assembly will hold Regional Public Budget Hearings on the Governor's 2012-2014 proposed budget. The purpose of the hearings is to receive comments on the Governor's proposed 2012-14 biennial state budget.

The Richmond Area Hearing is Friday, January 6, 2012 at 12 noon at the Larrick Student Center at 900 Turpin Street in Richmond. Registration sign up for speaking commences at 11 a.m. at Larrick Student Center. Speakers will be taken in the order of registration. Each person may register only one speaker at a time. Speakers are asked to limit their comments to three minutes or less.

Thanks to the Following Folks who Helped with the Holiday Party at the Science Museum:

- VCU Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity who played with our kids!
- Lee District Women's Club who provided goody bags for each child, provided refreshments, and welcomed our families!
- Alex Perkinson and Alyx Treaster for providing music!
- Our awesome Membership Outreach Committee headed by board member Tiffany Robertson

Thanks to the Following Volunteers who Provided a Morning of Holiday Respite to Our Families

Staci Carr
Dawn Hendricks
Samantha and Neil Hollins
Meredith and Micah Eads
Micah Eads
Mandy Spear

Sue Palko
Kristin Thompson
Kevin
Kaitlyn
Suzanne Sparrow
Victoria Lang

Conferences, Workshops, and Webcasts

Jan. 10 **Function Matters! How to Determine Why a Student Demonstrates Problem Behavior**; free 30 minute webcast with Carol Schall, Ph.D. from the Autism Center for Excellence at VCU; to register: <http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/training/webcasts/upcomin.g.cfm>

Jan 12 **IEP Toolkit** free; sponsored by Hanover County Parent Resource Center; please RSVP to Kelly at 365-4596 or hanoverprc@hcps.us

Jan 24 **Autism Workshop** free; sponsored by Hanover County Parent Resource Center; please RSVP to Kelly at 365-4596 or hanoverprc@hcps.us

Jan 30 - Feb. 1 **Shaping the Future** intensive three-day workshop designed to provide parents and professionals with training in the theory & application of ABA principles. Sponsored by the Virginia Institute for Autism, Charlottesville; FEE; VIA accepts payment by the DD Waiver Provider for Family and Caregiver Training; for info: http://www.viaschool.org/index.php/outreach/training_and_workshops

Feb. 14 **In My Own Words: My Life with Asperger's Syndrome** free 30 minute webcast with Roseanne T.; from the Autism Center for Excellence at VCU; to register: <http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/training/webcasts/upcomin.g.cfm>

Feb. 23 **Practical Solutions for Increasing Independent Functioning Using Visual Support Strategies** w/ Susan Stokes, SLP-CCC; FEE; Richmond; for details and to register: www.aepconnections.com

Feb. 24 **Evidenced-based Strategies to Address Social Skills, Academic Deficits, and Challenging Behavior for Students with Autism/Asperger's Syndrome K-12** w / Rebecca Moyes, M.Ed.; FEE; Richmond; for details and to register: www.aepconnections.com

Mar. 7 - 8 **Autism: Imagine the Possibilities** annual conference of Commonwealth Autism Service; FEE; Richmond; for details: www.autismva.org

For additional information on autism conferences and workshops in VA, visit www.autismtrainingva.org

Thank You For The Following Donations:

Ferrell Gas
Ken Klynsta
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Regency Woman's Club
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Joan Lipstock
Emily & Erin Wright and Maddi Schleicher
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Melynn Glusman in honor of Holly and Eric Jenkins, Sarah and Todd Ratner and Waverly and Sean Bamman

The following donations were made in memory of Jennifer Skelton
John & Catherine Zawacki
Agnes Blair
Patricia Skelton
Nancy Niswander
Kevin & Elizabeth Saunders
Cecil & Mary Black

Would You Like To Place An Ad in "Into The Light" ?

Our newsletter reaches over 500 families, professionals and educators on a monthly basis. If you would like to place an advertisement, please email it to asacv.org or mail it to the Chapter at P.O. Box 29364, Richmond, VA 23242-0364. Call the Chapter if you have any questions. Deadline for entry is the 15th of each month.

Ad Rates:

- \$25.00 1/8 Page
- \$50.00 1/4 Page
- \$75.00 1/2 Page
- \$100.00 Full Page

Discounts/Non Profits/Long Term Ads (3 months or longer) may have negotiated rates with board approval.

The board reserves the right to refuse to place an advertisement

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