



Into the Light

2015 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION YOUR ADVOCACY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The 2015 General Assembly Session will convene on January 8, 2015 at noon. *The most powerful way to influence legislators is to tell your story* – what is your life like now and how could your life be different with access to appropriate services and supports such as Medicaid Waiver, employment supports, safe and inclusive schools, and/or intensive early intervention. Listed below are opportunities for you to make a difference.

January 7: State Budget Hearing

On December 17, 2014, Governor McAuliffe will make public his proposed amendments to the 2014-16 biennial state budget. The Arc of VA will host a free webinar on December 30 to help self-advocates, family members, providers and professionals understand how this budget will impact the ID/DD service system. This webinar will review what is being proposed by the Governor and ways that you can advocate in response. You can register for the webinar here:

<https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/registrations/new?cid=fds9zcd632m7>

How can you make a difference? Tell your story at the hearing. In Richmond, the hearing will be held January 7 at the General Assembly Building, House Room D, beginning at noon. You can register beginning one hour prior to the start of the hearing. Speakers will be taken in the order of registration. Speakers are asked to limit their comments to three minutes or less. Staff from the Autism Society Central VA will be at the hearings to support self-advocates and families giving comment. Please let us know if you plan to attend by e-mailing us at info@ascv.org.

January 26: Developmental Disabilities Advocacy Day

Hosted by the DD Coalition, a group of self-advocate and family organizations, including the ASCV, who are dedicated to advocating for inclusion and full community participation across the lifespan for the DD community, DD Advocacy Day begins with a rally at the Bell Tower at the Capitol. The rally will take place from 10 am to 11 am at the Bell Tower on Capitol Square (corner of Bank & 9th Streets, Richmond VA). Register for the free rally @ <http://www.thearcofva.org/event/developmental-disabilities-advocacy-day/> and receive a free advocacy tool kit by e-mail. *The ASCV will be providing 2 vans to transport ASCV members wishing to attend DD Advocacy Day and ASCV staff will accompany members wishing to visit their legislators to tell their stories after the rally. ASCV members will be sent a separate Eventbrite to register to ride on one of our vans.*

Throughout the legislative session, the ASCV will send action alerts concerning matters of critical importance to our community. We will also provide you with the names of your legislators and how to contact them to voice your opinion. Together we can make a difference!



Mission

To improve the lives of all affected by autism by maximizing the self-sufficiency, independence, and quality of life for all living with autism.

Vision

We are the local voice and resource of the autism community in education, advocacy, services, and support, committed to meaningful participation and self-determination in all aspects of life for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.

Any age. Any stage.

Donate

Your gift will help support autism education, awareness, advocacy and most importantly, enable us to assist families and individuals living with autism in our community. You can help by making a donation today!

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This newsletter is a publication of: Autism Society, Central Virginia.
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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 newsletter. The deadline for submission for the February newsletter is January 15. You may send your contributions to the above address or email contributions to info@ascv.org.

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 Society is a 501(c)3 organization providing information, support, and encouragement to individuals with autism, their families, and professionals in the Central Virginia area.

This edition was edited by ASCV staff.



From Our Executive Director

Exciting News for the New Year!

We have moved! The Autism Society Central VA has a new address and office! We are excited to be joining several other community non-profits in the New Market Complex in Richmond. Please make a note of our new address: ASCV, 200 South 3rd Street, Richmond, VA 23219. We will continue to meet at River Road United Methodist Church, and hope to be hosting additional programs at our new location as well! Stay tuned!

We hope you will join us in bidding a fond farewell to Deo Smith, our Childcare Supervisor for the past several years. Although we will truly miss him, we send all our best wishes with Deo as he begins work in Newport News pursuing his lifelong dream of being a firefighter.

Our newest program, Sibshops, will hold its inaugural meeting in January! What a wonderful response we have had so far, and it's not too late to register! Our Outreach Coordinator and certified Sibshops facilitator, Tammy Burns, is excited about leading this fun and recreational program for brothers and sisters (ages 7 to 12) of children with special needs. For more information and to download a registration form, please visit our website here: <http://ascv.org/meetings-events/sibshops/>

And finally, mark your calendars now for these upcoming dates of importance! On **Saturday, April 18th**, the ASCV will host our first Annual National Autism Awareness Month Conference!! We will be welcoming nationally known author and speaker, Jennifer O'Toole to Richmond as the conference keynote! More information on the full agenda for the day and registration will be available soon! And our biggest fundraiser of the year, the 13th Annual ASCV 5K Run/Walk for Autism will be held on **Saturday, May 23rd**! Registration for teams and participants will open February 1st, but it is never too early to start planning!

We look forward to seeing you at these special events, and at all of our regular monthly chapter meetings, programs, and outreach activities this year!

Wishing You All a Wonderful 2015!

Becky

Becky Boswell, MBA
Executive Director
director@ascv.org



January 9, 2015 ASCV Meeting Exploring Home and Community Based Medicaid Waivers

Medicaid Waivers can provide services and supports, such as respite, assistive technology, residential supports and more for children and adults with developmental disabilities to live in the community. **ELIGIBILITY IS NOT BASED ON PARENTAL INCOME.** During this free workshop, the following topics will be covered:

- What services are available
- How to decide which waiver you need
- Who does the screening
- How to get screened
- How to appeal

Bradford Hulcher, ASCV Program Director and Medicaid Waiver Mentor, will also provide tips on ways you can advocate to end the waiting lists for Medicaid Waivers in Virginia.

The workshop will be held from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm at River Road United Methodist Church, 8800 River Road, Richmond, VA 23229. The workshop is free and open to the public; pre-registration is required at <https://waiversinva.eventbrite.com>. ASCV members look for an emailed invite to sign up for free childcare for this meeting.

WINTER / SPRING CONFERENCES

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| February 7 | From Possibilities to Practical Applications sponsored by Down Syndrome Association Greater Richmond; learn more @ http://www.dsagr.com/ |
| March 4 | Practical Strategies to Address Executive Functioning Skills in the Student with Autism - Rebecca Moyes, Ed.D; sponsored by AEP; details and registration: http://aepconnections.com |
| March 5 | Strategies that Work! Teaching Social, Behavior and Executive Functioning Strategies for the Student/Child with Autism Spectrum Disorder – Brenda Smith Myles, Ph.D.; sponsored by AEP; details and registration: http://aepconnections.com |
| March 11/12 | 2015 Commonwealth Autism Service Conference details and registration: http://www.autismva.org/ |
| April 18 | National Autism Awareness Month Annual Conference with Jennifer O'Toole, keynote; 5 breakout sessions, and resource fair; sponsored by the Autism Society Central VA; registration coming soon @ www.ascv.org |

NEWS FROM THE AUTISM SOCIETY CENTRAL VIRGINIA BOARD

In December the Autism Society Central Virginia worked to fulfill our mission to "improve the lives of all affected by autism" in the following ways:

Services and Supports

- Sponsored a sensory friendly movie in collaboration with the Byrd Theater
- Sponsored an Inclusive Lego and Game Club
- Sponsored Preschool Music group
- Sponsored bowling leagues for children, teens, and adults
- Sponsored four 55 passenger buses for a Tacky Light Bus Tour

Advocacy

- Participated on the DBHDS Integrated Day Work Group
- Participated on the Health and Well-Being Work Group for the Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success

Education

- Sponsored workshop on Crisis Services
- Presented two sessions of ABCs of IEPs workshop at Capital One, Chester location

HOW TO VIDEO SERIES

The VCU-ACE *How To* Series demonstrates evidence-based practices for students with ASD. These short videos are approximately five minutes and are intended to provide a quick look at implementing a particular strategy. The *How To* videos provide a short description of the topic with real life video examples of how to implement the evidence-based practice in the classroom with students with ASD. Current videos cover the following topics:

- How to: Gestural Prompting
- How to: Physical Prompting
- How to: Visual Prompting
- How to: Verbal Prompting
- How to: Model Prompting
- How to: Providing Reinforcement
- How to: Teaching Requesting

To view the videos, visit:

http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/te/how_to/index.cfm



This January, the Autism Society Central VA will sponsor or participate in the following events. All events take place at River Road UMC, 8800 River Rd, Henrico, unless otherwise specified. For information: 257-0192 or info@ascv.org.

1/06	7 pm	Board Meeting
1/09	7 pm	Monthly Meeting: <i>Exploring Home and Community Based Medicaid Waivers</i> visit https://waiversinva.eventbrite.com for details and registration
1/09	7 pm	Asperger's Middle School Social Club
1/10	2 pm	Sensory Friendly Movie: <i>The Boxtrolls</i> @ the Byrd Theater
1/12	7 pm	Adults with Asperger's/HFA Interest Group (open only to adults with Asperger's/HFA)
1/12	7 pm	Parents of Adults with Asperger's Group
1/18		Bowling Leagues for children, youth and adults w/ ASD; free for ASCV members; check your e-mail for Eventbrite invitation
1/24		Sibshops see flyer in newsletter for details
1/25	2 pm	An Afternoon with John Elder Robinson: Aspergerian & Author ; details and registration: https://johnrobison.eventbrite.com
1/26	10 am	Developmental Disabilities Advocacy Day @ the General Assembly; details and registration here: thearcofva.org/events
1/31	10 am	Inclusive Lego & Game Club - Downtown details and registration: https://inclusivedowntownlego.eventbrite.com

**AUTISM
SOCIETY
CENTRAL
VIRGINIA**

**JANUARY
CALENDAR**

UPDATE ON INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SUPPORT (IFSP) FUNDING

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) reports that they have received over 3,000 applications for the Individual and Family Support Program (IFSP) with \$1.5 million in funds to disburse. They anticipate that 600 to 700 will be approved overall. Given the volume of interest, the application review process has taken some time, but DBHDS plans to have all approval letters sent out by the end of December. Remaining families will be notified once funds have been exhausted for this funding period. The next funding period is expected to start March 15, 2015.

JANUARY COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

- 1/05 **Sky Zone Special Needs Sensory Night** <http://www.skyzone.com/richmond>
- 1/05 **Hanover Special Education Advisory Committee** 7 pm @ the Hanover County School Board; open to the public
- 1/08 **Richmond Asperger's Meet-up** <http://www.meetup.com/aspergers-397/>
- 1/10, 1/11 **Jensen-Schmidt Tennis Academy** for children and adults with developmental disabilities; learn more here: <http://www.jensen-schmidt.com/>
- 1/13 **Special Needs Jump** <http://www.jumpology.us/Activities.aspx>
- 1/13 **Cool Tools for School Success** FREE webinar from VCU-ACE; Mona Pruett, OT/; for info and to register: <http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/te/webcasts/upcoming.cfm>
- 1/13 **Advocacy Issues for the 2015 General Assembly Session** free webcast from the Arc of VA; registration and details here: <https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/registrations/new?cid=j81epn6aothu>
- 1/13 **Richmond Special Education Advisory Committee** meets at noon @ the Richmond Career Education and Employment Academy located at George Wythe High School
- 1/14 **Chesterfield County Special Education Advisory Committee** topic: *Assessment Options for Student with Disabilities (SOLs, VAAP)*; meets 5 pm at the Career and Technical Center @ Hull, 13900 Hull Street Road; open to the public
- 1/15 **What's the Difference between an IEP and a 504 Plan?** free workshop sponsored by the Hanover County Parent Resource Center; for details and to register: 365-4596 or hanoverprc@hcps.us
- 1/20 **West End/ Northern Chesterfield Asperger's Meet-up** <http://www.meetup.com/aspergers-397/>
- 1/20 **Monkey Joe's Special Needs Night** from 5 pm to 7 pm; kids ages 2 - 12 w/ special needs free; closed to the public; siblings welcome \$5; info 897-5867
- 1/27 **Henrico Special Education Advisory Committee** topic: diploma options and transition; free and open to the public; 6:30 p.m. @ Brookland Middle School
- 1/29 **Resource Fair** hosted by the Chesterfield County Parent/Teacher Resource Center; 4 pm – 6 pm @ Career and Technical Center @ Hull (Room D136), 13900 Hull Street Road, Midlothian, 23112

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



Thank You To The Following Volunteers

*"The miracle is this – the more we share, the more we have."
~Leonard Nimoy*

Hayley Crittenden
Kayla Barber
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Linda Maillet
Christine Del Bueno
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Waleed Ilyas
Mahreen Azam
Cody Wilson

AN AFTERNOON WITH JOHN ELDER ROBINSON: ASPERGERIAN AND AUTHOR

Join us for an afternoon with John Elder Robison, author of the 2007 memoir Look Me in the Eye, detailing his life living with Asperger syndrome.

Mr. Robison will discuss transition from high school to college and work, the need for more hands on transition programs and services, the neurodiversity initiative and the need to raise awareness about different thinking. He'll share his experience of growing up undiagnosed, the relief he felt at finally being diagnosed in his 40's, and how he became so successful.

The primary audience is preteens, teens, and adults with Asperger's and HFA, their parents, and other interested community members.

Free and open to the public, however registration is requested.

Please register here: <https://johnrobison.eventbrite.com>

Thank You For the Following Donations

All donations stay in the Central Virginia area to support individuals and families affected by autism.

Gail Liebrich
Karl Koenig
Lipstock Lasik & Cataract Center
Lisa Keene
Kissy Gordon
Commonwealth Oral & Facial Surgery
Brendan Moran
John Edmondson
Highwoods Realty, LTD.
Sedona Taphouse
Medical Home Plus
Betty Anne Flynn

The following donation was made in honor of Master Michael Bugg:
Richard Gavis

The following donation was made in honor of Master Steve Dubuque:
Richard Gavis

The following donation was made in honor of Matthew Thompson:
Judith Kane

The following donations were made in memory of Mary Emma Enroughty:
Bill Thompson

The following donations were made in memory of Geri Allen:
Liz Pearce
Jenna Burnop

thank you!

A Very Special Thanks to Brandon Jackson at Brandon Jackson Insurance Agency and Kevin Smith at RVA Card, LLP for sponsoring the RVA Cards that we were able to hand out to each family who attended the Tacky Light Bus Tour Holiday Party! These cards provide discounts and savings at over 200 Richmond area locations for goods and services! <http://myrvacard.com/>





It gives the Autism Society Central Virginia great pleasure to announce **Sibshops**, an exciting program just for brothers and sisters of children with special needs.

Who are Sibshops for? Sibshops are for 7 to 12 year old brothers and sisters of children who have special needs.

What are Sibshops? Sibshops are a lively mixture of new games, discussion, and guest speakers. Participants should dress comfortably and be ready for action! Snacks will be served as well.

At a **Sibshop**, brothers and sisters will:

- Meet other brothers and sisters of children with special needs.
- Have fun
- Talk about their brothers and sisters with others who really know what it's like to have a sibling with a disability
- Make new friends
- Learn more about disabilities and the services that people with disabilities receive, and
- Have some more fun!

WHEN: 10 am to noon

- Saturday, January 24, 2015
- Saturday, March 21, 2015
- Saturday, May 9, 2015

WHERE: River Road United Methodist Church, 8800 River Road, Richmond

COST: There is a \$10.00 fee (\$5 for ASCV members) for each day to offset the cost of food and materials. (Scholarships are available if needed.)

HOW: Complete the registration form found here <http://ascv.org/meetings-events/sibshops/> and mail it along with the registration fee for each session (a check made out to ASCV), to ASCV, P.O. Box 29364, Richmond, VA 23242.

Register Soon, as Space is Limited!

For more details, email outreach@ascv.org or call 804-257-0192.



Join us at the Virginia General Assembly for

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADVOCACY DAY

- JANUARY 26, 2015 -

Rally & Advocate

Join us for a rally from 10am – 11am
at the Bell Tower on Capitol Square
(The corner of Bank & 9th Street, Richmond VA)

Meet with your legislators after
the rally to share your story!

Please register at thearcova.org/events

For more info, contact Rebecca King, The Arc of Virginia
rking@thearcova.org or (804) 649-8481 ext 105

- Community For All - Community For All - Community For All - Community For All - Community For All - Community For All -

Hosted by the DD Coalition: a group of self-advocate and family organizations dedicated to advocating for inclusion and full community participation across the lifespan for the DD community.





**Transition to Adulthood with ASD:
What Parents and Guardians Need to Know**

**Date: February 2, 9, & 16
Must attend all 3 sessions**

Time: 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

**Location:
River Road UMC
8800 River Road
Richmond, VA 23229**

Transition to Adulthood with ASD: What Parents and Guardians Need to Know is a **free** workshop designed to provide an overview of important factors and topics to consider as individuals with ASD enter the adult world.

Topics covered include:

- Age of majority
- Disability benefits and planning
- Post secondary readiness, education, and training
- Employment
- Housing and residential supports
- Life in the community

Must Pre-Register @ <http://transitiontoadulthoodasd.eventbrite.com>
Limited Seating
No Registration Fee / No Onsite Registration

Faison School for Autism

Providing empirically proven programs and services
since 1999



DAY SCHOOL (ages 4-16)

LIFE SKILLS & EMPLOYMENT CENTER (ages 16-22)

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (all ages)

NEW PROGRAMS

EARLY LEARNER CLASSROOM (ages 16 mos. – 4 yrs.)

Serving children with autism, developmental disorders and at-risk and neurotypical children with applied behavior analysis and early intervention services. AM and PM sessions, Mon-Fri.

ACCELERATED INDEPENDENT LEARNER (ages 6-22)

Serving students near or at grade level, working on enhancing social, self-management, and group learning skills.

CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL SERVICES (all ages)

Serving toddlers, children, and young adults with personalized consultation, evaluation and treatment of various skills and behavioral issues.

ADULT DAY (ages 22 and up)

Providing a support program that develops, arranges, and coordinates community-focused life-long learning opportunities such as daily life skills, health and recreation programs, volunteering, and work opportunities. Mon-Fri.



Faison School for Autism

1701 Byrd Avenue • Richmond, VA 23230

Phone: 804-612-1947 • Fax: 804-612-1955

www.thefaisonschool.org

The Faison School for Autism, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin or gender.

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SAVE THE DATES

April 18

**National Autism Awareness
Month Annual Conference with**

Keynote speaker Jennifer
O'Toole founder of *Asperkids*
www.asperkids.com.



May 2

**Annual Members' Picnic and
Fun Day**



May 23

**13th Annual 5K Run/Walk for
Autism**



PAID ADVERTISEMENT

We transform students. We transform families. We transform futures.



At **Northstar Academy**, we promote educational excellence for students K-12 with disabilities who have academic, physical or social challenges.

Northstar's Career Academy, serving students ages 16-22, offers courses for vocational/employment training and internships to prepare students for success outside of the classroom.

Learn more about how Northstar Academy transforms lives everyday.
Call **804-747-1003** or visit **www.northstaracademy.net**

Northstar Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, age, disability, religion, or national origin.



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Join with hundreds of individuals with autism, their families and other caring individuals; become a part of a larger community - the Autism Society, Central VA. We can't be heard alone, but with more voices joining daily, that small voice can become a roar. We invite you to become a part of a community of hope.

Membership in the Autism Society, Central VA provides the following benefits:

- ASCV's monthly newsletter, the local resource for information regarding local and state autism-related issues, workshops, and community events
- ASCV's weekly e-mail updates
- Access to ASCV lending library
- Free ASCV sponsored social/recreational activities; discounted workshops

Membership Levels:

___ \$5 ~ Self-Advocate (Adult w/ ASD) ___ \$25 ~ Household ___ \$1500 ~ Lifetime

Names(s): _____

Address: _____ Phone # _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

(By providing your e-mail, you will receive our weekly e-mail; your e-mail will be kept confidential)

Additional Donation:

___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 _____ please specify amt.

Payment information:

___ Check (made payable to **Autism Society**) ___ Visa ___ Mastercard

Name on card: _____ Expiration: _____

Card #: _____

CVV# (security code on back of card) _____ **or join online at www.ascv.org**

Signature: _____

How would you prefer to receive your newsletter: ☐ by mail ☐ electronically

Which free gift may we send you: ☐ car magnet ☐ autism pin ☐ refrigerator magnet

New Members, how did you hear about the ASCV? ☐ family ☐ friend ☐ internet ☐ other _____

Please mail or fax w/ payment to:

Autism Society, Central VA
P.O. Box 29364
Richmond, VA 23242
(804) 290-0286 (fax)

Autism Society Central Virginia

P.O. Box 29364
Richmond, VA 23242-0364

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Would you like to place an Ad in “*Into The Light*”?

Our newsletter reaches over 600 families, professionals and educators on a monthly basis and is archived on our website. If you would like to place an advertisement, please email it to info@ascv.org or mail it to us at P.O. Box 29364, Richmond, VA 23242. Deadline for entry is the 15th of each month.

Ad Rates:

\$50.00 1/4 page

\$75.00 1/2 page

\$100 full page

The Board reserves the right to refuse to place an advertisement.

Non-Profits / Long Term Ads may have negotiated discount rates with Board approval.