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Maine

# Autism Connections

## Awards Banquet



Summer 2021

Every year the Autism Society of Maine celebrates the past year's accomplishments with a banquet and present awards to community members. This September we will have our banquet in person on September 24 at the Augusta County Club. We will honor those who represented the autism community in various ways. Our guest speaker TBA at a later time.

Although the past year has been a tough one, we made it through and are planning on our first in person activity this fall from the banquet to our Ride for Autism and the Fall Conference. A lot of nonprofits have folded but our board of directors changed course and rearranged our budget to carry us through these difficult times. We had to give up our family retreat weekend for the last two years, our summer camps for that last two years, and had both the walk and ride virtual events only. We miss our families!

Our award nominations are open, and the process is simple to nominate someone. If you know someone who deserves to be honored for their efforts around autism, then please go online to our website home page under the news section and fill out a simple form and write something about that person and why they deserve the recognition. If that person is chosen for the award, they will be notified and invited to attend our banquet.

The categories for the awards are as follows:

- Professionals (not in the field of autism, but contributing to it)
- Family Members or Persons with Autism
- Professionals Providing Services (working in the field of autism)

Click here for [Nomination Form](#)



*The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.*

*~ Mahatma Ganhi*

*Maine* **Autism Connections**  
*A publication of the*  
Autism Society of Maine

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*Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism*

Visit us online at:  
<http://www.asmonline.org>

Stay up-to-date for  
Legislation issues, fund-  
raising events, volunteer  
opportunities, and  
upcoming happenings.



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Autism-Society-Of-Maine/107781499258293>



**President's Message**

Hello ASM Community,

As vaccinations increase and positive cases of Covid 19 decline, people are beginning to see each other in person again. Schools, businesses, and organizations are slowly moving toward opening up and the masks are coming off.

After a long year of living in the shadow of Covid 19 it can be difficult to return to feeling safe connecting with others face to face. Schools and family members can help by setting aside time for individuals to express feelings or fears. Listening with empathy, offering reassurance, and continuing to respect the choices an individual makes to feel safe are acts of kindness that foster connectedness.

The choice whether to mask, unmask, vaccinate, or not vaccinate is individual. Providing education, support, and kindness are crucial to the mental health and well-being of our community.

Warm regards,  
Tiffany Rooney  
ASM Board President



*Kind words can be short and easy to speak,  
but their echos are truly endless.*  
~ Mother Theresa

**Join our Board of Directors and be part of something BIG!**

The Autism Society of Maine is looking for individuals who have the time to help guide and support our mission. Have you ever wanted to be a part of something that impacts the greater good? Look no further as there are opening for our Board of Directors.

What is the commitment? Once a month the board meets via zoom for 1 ½ hours. They meet 10 months out of the year on the fourth Wednesday of the month. There are several committee's to be part of and you can choose which committee you want to be on. They meet when necessary. ASM host many events and fundraisers and look to the board for their hands on approach.

You would need to be a paid member of ASM to be part of the board and a paid member of national Autism Society of America.

If you're a autistic adult, parent, grandparent, professional in the field or a community member who wants to be part of something big then we need you! Fill out this [application](#) and submit it to [asm@asmonline.org](mailto:asm@asmonline.org) by August 1st.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**November 13, 2021**

Autism Society of Maine Fall Conference  
IN PERSON!!

We are excited to announce our annual fall conference will be in person at a new location this year. We are holding our conference at Cross Insurance Center, 515 Main Street, Bangor on Saturday November 13th.

We will be sending out vendor letters and announcing speakers within the next few weeks.

Can't wait to see everyone again!



Editorial Notes: Maine Autism Connections and Autism Society of Maine programs and services are made possible by donations from people like you and funding from the Maine Department of Health & Human Services. We hope you will also visit us online at <http://www.asmonline.org>, where we have a great deal of information available about autism, programs, resources, news, a calendar of events, legislation and more.

## The State Budget

The 130th legislative session will come to a close by mid-June, but not before a flurry of budget-related issues are resolved, some of which would impact the autism community.

Chief among them were the Governor's "change package" budget, introduced in early May. The budget included increases to raise wages for direct support professionals, but only enough to bring DSP pay up to the minimum wage. By contrast, the HHS Committee passed LD 1573, setting wages for MaineCare funded DSPs at 125% of the minimum wage.

ASM testified at the Budget hearing on May 20 in favor of the 125% of the minimum wage. The Appropriations Committee will make the final recommendation and send it the Governor's to sign or veto.

## Restraint and seclusion legislation

Maine has one of the highest rates of restraint and seclusion of school children of any state in the country. Rep. Rebecca Millett introduced a bill, Keeping All Students Safe, that would ban seclusion and limit restraints. The bill requires the Department of Education to collect data on these incidents and make that information available to the public.

The bill proved to be very controversial, with special purpose private preschools testifying against it, but the bill passed the Education Committee. As of this writing, it has not reached the floor of the House or Senate. ASM testified in favor of the bill and worked with a coalition to prepare written materials for legislators about the bill.

## The American Rescue Plan

The ARPA, passed by Congress this spring, provides states with a 10% FMAP (federal matching rate) increase for one year for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). These funds must be used to support Home and Community-Based Services, including home healthcare, case management, school-based services, HCBS waiver services (such as Section 21 residential and Sec. 29 community-based services). States must submit an initial spending plan and narrative to CMS by June 12. ASM is working with other disability rights advocates to provide input to the Office of Aging and Disability Services

## Early childhood education services reorganization

Board member and former State Rep. Richard Farnsworth has been involved in a multi-year effort to transform the administration of early childhood services. This year, the Education Committee considered a bill that directs the DOE to establish a process and a timeline for transitioning early childhood special ed services for children from 4 years of age to under 6 years of age from CDS to school administrative units. ASM testified in favor of the bill. The Education Committee is still being working on the bill.



## (Virtual) Capitol Hill visits

ASM board members and staff attended the Arc's virtual Disability Policy Seminar in April. As part of that activity, Mainers visited with Senators King, and with staff for Rep. Pingree and Rep. Golden. Among the topics discussed were Home and Community-Based Services under the American Rescue Plan the Congress passed this spring; issues related to direct support professionals; the ABLE Act; and education-related concerns.

In May, ASM Board and staff and Kim Musheno of the Autism Society of America met with Sen. Susan Collins. The group asked her to consider co-sponsoring the Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act, which prohibits companies from offering sub-minimum wages to people with disabilities and provides funding and support to help states create jobs within the regular labor market (as opposed to "sheltered workshops" that employ only people with disabilities).

*Perserverance is a great element of success.  
If you only knock long enough and loud enough at the gate,  
you are sure to wake up somebody.*  
-Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

## Family Retreat 2021

As most of you know we are not able to hold the retreat again this year. I have been in touch with St. Joseph's College about next year's Family Retreat Weekend. We have not secured the date yet but know it will be in June- either the weekend of the 17 -19 or 24 - 26. We will keep you posted on when the date is chosen. Because we are unable to hold the retreat and we miss seeing everyone we have decided to offer a one day event for families in August. The event will be at Funtown/ Splashtown USA, there is information in this newsletter regarding that activity.



# Autism Acceptance Month- Heart Campaign

April brought Acceptance Month, things looked much different than they have in the past. Because of the Pandemic we were unable to present our Kits for Kids program in our schools and we had no events to attend. We were able to continue our Heart Campaign and we are pleased to announce that because of some amazing business owners and their patrons, we were able to raise \$1,678.00! We are so grateful to the following businesses who participated this year:

Portland High School  
Buddie's Groceries  
Winthrop Roast Beef  
Pickles Potions  
New England Rehabilitation  
Outside of The Box

Howie's Pub  
G + M Family Market  
Everything Kids  
Freckles Salvage  
Hannaford- Bucksport

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Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism  
Maine



We would also like to give a shout out to **Corbin Farnhan** of Thomaston. Corbin is a senior at Oceanside High School, For the last eight years Corbin has supported ASM in some way during April, whether by sharing awareness packets or holding a fundraiser (usually it is both). This year Corbin went above and beyond! As different as things were this year, Corbin was able to raise over \$1,000 in honor of his younger brother! Corbin, ASM thanks you for all of your efforts and we wish to congratulate you on your graduation. The sky is the limit for you and we have no doubt that wherever the road takes you, you will be a huge success!



**Eric Boisvert** finished up his school sewing project and raised \$283 to donate to ASM! Eric came up with the project for his eighth-grade assignment to make 12 x 12 hot mats and then connected with teachers to sell them at the Jordan Small Middle School. He planned his project, and completed all the work himself, selling to teachers and family! A Special "Thank You!" goes out to Eric for doing such a great job!

## 15th Annual Ride for Autism

We are back in person for the ride on October 23rd in Kennebunkport. It feels so good just to say that! This year marks our 15th year of the Ride for Autism. We have a lot to celebrate this year.

Looking back over the last 14 years we have come a long way from having the ride in Saco during the Saco Bay Crit events with only 13 riders to moving the event to Kennebunkport Conservation Trust Building and over 120 riders. We have learned a lot over the years and one thing we know for sure is riders like to ride and enjoy the atmosphere that our event brings. There is an open pit fire and outside picnic tables with the best BBQ to finish our event.



You can ride as an individual, a family, or be part of a team we just want you to ride. There are three rides to choose from 10-mile, 25-mile, and 50-mile. If you register before October 8 you will receive a t-shirt anytime after that date it will be first come first serve and we can't guarantee you a shirt. We will also have onsite registration.

Registration is open and you can register [here](#)  
Join us to celebrate the 15th Annual Ride for Autism held on October 23 in Kennebunkport.



# Walk For Autism 2021

## PLATINUM SPONSORS



Once again, we approached another year of being unable to be together because of the pandemic. However, this did not deter us from having a virtual event that was embraced with enthusiasm and AMAZING fundraising efforts throughout the month of April!

Being that the Walk/Run for Autism is our largest fundraiser of the year, we are overjoyed by the support of our dedicated sponsors, and those of you who "stepped-up" and registered for this fundraiser. We raised over \$20,286 that will help provide programs and trainings for children, teens and adults living with an autism spectrum disorder and their families, caretakers and the professionals who support them.

Thank you everyone! Many of you shared your story with us and sent in photos to share. This meant so much to us and was truly an inspiration for others to join in or to feel supported by your efforts. What a wonderful way to celebrate April Autism Acceptance Month!



## GOLD SPONSORS



*Creative Options*  
"Where it's all about CHOICE!"



## SILVER SPONSORS



## BRONZE SPONSORS

Bangor Firefighters, IAFF Local 772  
Calzolaio Pasta Company  
Peoples Choice Credit Union

Front Street Shipyard  
Monaghan Leahy, LLP  
Profile Subaru, Inc.

Tuttles AutoSales  
Webster Lodge 164 AF & AM

# ASM's Family Fun Day!

at



**THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2021**

We know that the last year has been difficult to say the least. So many things have been cancelled and we have all missed seeing our family and friends. ASM has also had to cancel many of our events and gatherings. Now that restrictions are easing and it is safer to gather with others we would like to have you join us for a family day at Funtown/Splashtown! ASM will purchase combo tickets for families, good for both- rides and the waterpark. Families will be responsible for their own food, drinks and souvenirs. ***This event is open for paid members of ASM.***

We are asking that you only include immediate family, this way we can include as many families as possible. If you have to bring someone to assist with your child/children please let us know so we can plan accordingly.

Check in for this event will be from 10:30am-11:30am, if you arrive after the check in time, you may have to purchase your own tickets.

If you are interested in attending our Family Fun Day, please call **1-800-273-5200** to register or if you have any questions.

**You MUST REGISTER for this event**

**RAINDATE: THURSDAY, AUGUST 12**

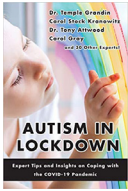


# Welcome to the ASM Library

ASM's Lending Library is a valuable and free resource for parents, caregivers, educators, children and professionals working with children and adults on the autism spectrum. The Lending Library is a FREE resource for Maine residents. The collection can be viewed on the ASM website or you may request a printed list to be mailed to you. Stop by the office, or have material sent to you (we will include return shipping label) by calling or emailing: 1-800-273-5200 email: [library@asmonline.org](mailto:library@asmonline.org)  
Visit our online library page [HERE](#)

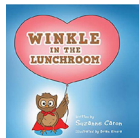
The library has its own room with a TV to watch DVD's. Children are always welcome to play with toys or read.

## NEW BOOKS!!



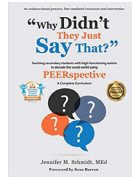
### **Autism In Lockdown**

The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, schedule changes, safety protocols, and school closings have added unique challenges to everyone's lives. Autism in Lockdown includes the most needed tips and insights from 34 of the world's leading autism experts, including: Dr. Temple Grandin



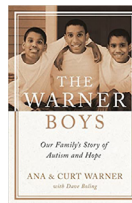
### **Winkle In The Lunchroom**

Winkle has a HUGE problem! Nobody sits with this little owl during lunch. With help from Screech and Echo, Winkle learns how important it is to tell someone when bullying takes place. Find out how Winkle becomes a super hero!



### **Why Didn't They Just Say That?**

The curriculum is popular among students with ASD as well as their NT peers, leading to friendships and relationships far beyond the classroom.



### **The Warner Boys**

Story of the life-changing truth that love for family and each other—no matter how challenged—is the path to healing and peace. The Warner Boys is the true story of a family who fought for their children and how they grew stronger against all odds.

## ASM Social Groups

### **Teen Group (Online)**

I am happy to say our online teen social group is going strong and we are having such a great time! We have decided to continue meeting throughout the summer! We have a really great group of teens who are enjoying our monthly meetings greatly! Being out of school and not having contact with their schoolmates and friends has been hard on all of them but this group has given them a chance to meet and make some new friends and they truly support each other. I am so lucky to be able to hang out with these teens each month! If you have a teen (11-18) and think that they might benefit and enjoy joining our group send an email to [tara@asmonline.org](mailto:tara@asmonline.org) or call ASM at 800-273-5200 for more information. This group meets the last Friday of the month.

### **Young Adult Social Group (Online)**

We are also excited to announce a second online social group for young adults (18-26) has begun and it has been a success so far! This group is facilitated by our very own Autism Information Specialist, Kendra Campbell. This group meets the 2nd Monday of the month. If you are interested in learning more about this group, please email Kendra at [bridgtonais@yahoo.com](mailto:bridgtonais@yahoo.com).

### **Adult Social Group (Online)**

Our Adult Social Function Group is also meeting each month and have been successful in adjusting to the ZOOM platform. This has been a great way for everyone to stay in contact during this time and they are definitely enjoying it! If you are an adult who would like more info on the Adult Social Function Group please email Tara at [tara@asmonline.org](mailto:tara@asmonline.org) or call ASM at 800-273-5200. This group meets the 2nd Thursday of the month.

### **Parent Support Group (Online)**

Just a reminder that our Executive Director, Cathy Dionne also facilitates an online parent group each month. If you have specific questions, concerns, or would just like to meet others who are going the same things then this group is just what you are looking for. For more information send an email to [asm@asmonline.org](mailto:asm@asmonline.org) or call ASM at 800-273-5200. This group meets the last Friday of the month.



# ASM Store



**Silicone Chew Necklaces**  
Animals & Shapes- **\$9.00**  
Raindrops & Circles- **\$8.00**



**Lanyard**  
**\$6.00**

**Autism Society of Maine**  
72 B Main St, Winthrop, ME 04364  
Call: 1-800-273-5200  
  
Items can be seen  
and ordered from ASM's online [store](#)



**Magnets**  
**Ribbon Magnet**  
**\$5.00**  
**Puzzle-Magnet**  
**\$6.00**  
**Window Cling**  
**\$3.00**



**Stretchy**  
**\$4.00**



**Wristband**  
**\$3.00**



**Glass Pendant**  
Sm. **\$10.00**  
Lg. **\$12.00**



**Puzzle Tree Earrings**  
**\$8.00**



**Lapel Pin**  
**\$5.00**



**Face masks-**  
**available in**  
**three sizes:**  
**Toddler:**  
**Child:**  
**Adult:**  
**\$5.50**



**Charm Bracelet**  
1 Charm  
**\$8.00**



**Owl Charm**  
**\$3.00**



**Autism Charm**  
**\$3.00**



**Colored Heart Charm**  
**\$3.00**



**Owl Keychain**  
**\$5.00**



**Spacers**  
**\$1.00**

## Email- Social Media- Online Groups



The Autism Society has a vibrant facebook community including parents, professionals, and anyone interested in autism. If you are not already a friend to our facebook page, we welcome you.



Searching for autism information on the web can be overwhelming. The ASM website has relevant autism information and resources for Maine Residents.



We have a great collection of videos and will be adding more throughout the year!



Follow us on Twitter as we 'tweet' about autism!



Sign up to get interesting news and updates delivered to your email inbox from ASM!



The Vitalxchange app is a health community that wants to connect you to everything you need when you need it.



My Autism Team: A reputable and friendly place to connect with other parents in Maine.



## Donations

### In Honor of:

Helena, Theodore & their very  
Strong Mother!

By: Susanne Max

### In Memory of:

#### Bree Danielle Messier

By: Dennis & Debra Dupuis

Janet Valcour

Kevin & Kathy Vancour

### New Memberships

Dawn Murray

Paetre Estes

Carissa Erickson

Charles Calligan

Sadie Lessard

Sarah Waring

### Membership Renewals

Ilona Feeny  
Jennifer Brooking  
Corey & Gig McAllister  
Susan Marston  
Kathy Wingard  
David Johnson  
Evelyn Lutz  
Sheila Crocker  
Larry & Carol Jewett  
Anthony Dostanko  
Tom Hansen  
Maureen Zemrak  
Alice Haines  
Susan Morton  
Helen Murray  
Peter & Cheri Wilkins  
Joella Michaud  
Carol Sullivan  
Lise Tancrede



### Donations/Sponsorships Employee Matches/Grants

Greater Twin Cities United Way  
Profile Subaru  
Spurwink Services  
Bridgton Dental Hygiene Care  
The Beauty Bar Salon and Spa  
Maggie Hoffman  
Living Innovations  
Corbin Farnham- Oceanside High School  
The Lake Store  
Living Innovations  
Holy Trinity Philoptochos Society  
Julie Dayone  
Katahdin Middle/High School  
Marston's Marina  
Shaw's Warehouse Wells, ME

*Service to others is the rent you pay  
for your room here on earth.*

*~ Muhammad Ali*

## Facebook Fundraisers

During months of March thru May, fundraisers were created on Facebook to help ASM and in the autism community and \$1,175 was raised!!

It is heartwarming to see those of you reach out to your family and friends to support a cause that means a lot to you. Thank you for making a difference!

We appreciate everyone's efforts, even if your fundraiser did not receive the donations you were hoping for. A special thank you to all who made a donation!

Do you want to create a Facebook fundraiser for ASM? It's easy and a safe place for donations. Just go to the [ASM fundraiser link](#) or to the fundraiser tab on your own Facebook page to get started! Call ASM if you need help: 1-800-273-5200.

Rita Jeanne Martel Dionne  
Terri Mateo  
Heather Grace  
Willow Jade  
Amanda Hall-Barlow  
Cris Day  
Carrissa Erickson  
Hanna Rae Smith  
James Dempsey  
Just-Jenn



Nicole Shores  
Shilo Biggs  
Kayla Lavigne  
Penny Buchanan  
Corinne Shaw  
Michael McDonald  
Toby Hartford  
Bridget Maloney  
Shannon Jean Begin