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Maine

Autism



Connections

Winter 2021



The Connection is You™

Have you noticed our new look? Autism Society of America along with all the affiliates have been working on new branding and new language around Autism.

The Autism Society has updated its brand to fully reflect the experiences, needs, and diversity of the Autism community, including Autistic individuals, their families, friends, caregivers, and professionals in Autism-related fields. Those living on the Autism spectrum have for far too long been categorized, labeled and placed in diagnostic boxes. Life experiences are far more complex. The Autism Society embraces and celebrates the infinite ways in which people live their lives.

The brand amplifies neurodivergent voices in advocating for inclusive policies. Individuals must be empowered to live fully and engage equally in society. Autism Society continues to be dedicated to all members of the Autism community, exemplified in the brand. From high-needs individuals and their support systems to Autistic self-advocates living fully independent lives, the experiences across the Autism spectrum are myriad. This brand is an expression of the Autism community.



The Autism Society's new look and feel was built with the Autism community so that it may best serve the community in the future. As the nation's oldest and largest grassroots Autism organization, the new brand is a reflection of our foundation through grassroots input and ongoing engagement. 150 individuals participated in the brand process, including through interviews, focus groups, and participation on advisory councils - whose members include people on the Autism spectrum.

Maine Autism Connections

A publication of the
Autism Society of Maine

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<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,
Happy Holidays! The festivities that come with this time of year always bring new challenges to routines, and with it the opportunity to put coping strategies to use! You want to get the most out of the season with out undue stress. The best way for my family to get through the holidays is to anticipate the expectations- I bring special foods or toys that can help comfort and distract. Pace activities as much as you can and set clear boundaries on what you can and cannot do to maintain balance. And most important, allow yourself or your loved ones quiet time away from the hustle, bustle, and noise when you need it. Enjoy the festivities but stay mindful of your needs, and the needs of those you love.

Warm regards,
Tiffany Rooney, ASM Board President



"The Joy of brightening other lives, bearing each others' burdens, easing each other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of the holidays." - W. C. Jones

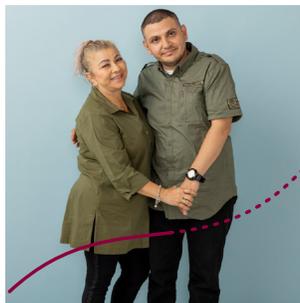
The Connection is You™ (Cont'd)

Our manifesto. Because the experience of Autism is not one thing. Because it is many things. And because the connection between those experiences is you. Because we see you. The way you think. The dreams you hold. The talents you bring. Because you can't be categorized into neat little diagnostic boxes. Because you break the mold. Because sometimes you're quiet.

Because sometimes you need help reaching for where you belong. Because sometimes what happens is not always right or fair or just. Because there are keys to every door that looks locked. Because no matter how you were born, the person you are is infinite—and you are the only you there is. Because Autism is not going away, neither are we.

The Autism Society.

The connection is you™



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.

ASM's Fall Conference

On November 13th, ASM held its annual Fall Conference at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor. The new, bigger location was a success! 147 people registered for this year's conference and enjoyed both the venue and the speakers. The keynote speaker, Matt Brown did an amazing job, as always, giving the participants so much great information on Autism Safety Training in Maine. Participants also learned about Project Lifesaver, an amazing and much needed safety program presented by Officer Joseph Westrick, of the Brunswick Police Department. Other topics covered at the conference were Apps for Assisted Technology, Sensory needs and assistive technology, teaching literacy to those with special needs, and a session on Police interaction. The day was full of wonderful speakers and great information. ASM would like to thank our two Platinum sponsors- Spurwink and Maine Developmental Disabilities Council as well as our other sponsors and vendors who make this event possible. We are already looking forward to next year's conference and seeing you all!



15th Annual Ride for Autism

ASM held its 15th annual Ride for Autism on October 23rd at the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust. What a great day for a ride! The weather was a bit chilly to start but by the time the riders returned, the sun was out and warmed things up nicely. Thanks to the efforts of our amazing riders, we have some incredible news! Together we have exceeded our goal and raised \$31,103.00! Amazing! We are over the moon! We are so grateful for the fundraising efforts of participants, those that made donations and our Sponsors.

A Special THANK YOU to our 84 riders, both adults and kids! They really got out there and peddled in support of ASM. We are thankful for our dedicated volunteers who helped by donating and preparing food, making sure all participants had a nice meal, and the million other tasks needed to be done. We would also like to thank Ian McLellan who volunteered his time as our DJ, Thank you all!

Top Teams: Team Abby, Miss Maya, Team keegan
Top Individual Fundraisers: Conrad Sastre, Lily Lin, Mike Mcdade



Happy Holidays from ASM

Wishing you and your family, Happy Holidays, and a wonderful New Year!

From all of us at ASM

Visit the ASM online holiday page for tips and strategies that can help to ease the stress of the holidays, traveling tips, gift ideas, crafts (including the ones below) and fun activities too!

Snowman Pretzel Rods

- Line a baking sheet with wax paper
- Melt your chocolate according to package directions.
- Dip pretzel in melted chocolate or drizzle with a spoon while on baking sheet.
- Add candy embellishments while the chocolate is still warm to make your snowman.
- Place on wax paper to harden.

Yummy!



Save those toilet paper rolls!

This is one of those crafts that is sure to spark creativity to make favorite characters! There is no end of ideas for this one! All your child will need is glue, construction paper, paint and of course, toilet paper rolls! Embellishments such as small pom poms, buttons, stickers, pipe cleaners or sequins can be fun too!



“Never worry about the size of your Christmas tree. In the eyes of children, they are all 30 feet tall.” –Larry Wilde

Upcoming Events

Walk for Autism - SAVE THE DATE!

We are happy to announce two NEW locations for our Annual Walk for Autism!

Our Walk events have major changes and enhancements that will help to make it a spectacular experience for everyone.

Registration will be open mid-January

Please note that these two events will be held on different dates.

Walk for Autism – **Westbrook**

April 24, 2022

Westbrook Riverbank Park

11am to 2pm

Walk for Autism - **Bangor**

May 1, 2022

Bangor Waterfront Park

1pm to 2pm



Family Retreat- June 24-26, 2022

The Family Retreat is back!! It has been two years but we are so happy to announce that the planning for our 2022 Family Retreat has begun!

We will be back at St. Joseph's College and we are so excited to see everyone. Please note that the weekend for this event has changed so please plan accordingly. We will be posting registration and sending out letters as we get closer to June! Stay tuned to ASM for updates!



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.



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



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



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



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



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



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

Welcome to the ASM Library

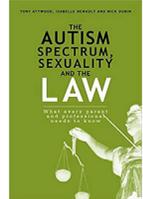
ASM's Lending Library is a valuable and free resource for parents, caregivers, educators, children and professionals working with children and adults on the autism spectrum. The Lending Library is a FREE resource for Maine residents. The collection can be viewed on the ASM website or you may request 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
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!!

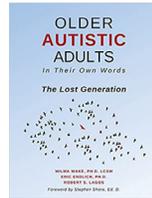
The Autism Spectrum, Sexuality & the Law

This book examines how the ASD profile typically affects sexuality and how sexual development differs between the general population and those with ASD. It explains the legalities of sexual behavior, With advice on how to help people with autism spectrum disorder gain a better understanding of sexuality and a comprehensive list of resources, the book highlights the need for a more informed societal approach to the psychosexual development of people with ASD.



Older Autistic Adults, In Their Own Words

The first of its kind, it is the result of the authors' original research- which examines the data retrieved from a survey given to 150 older autistic adults worldwide. The insight into the lives and experiences of these individuals from a time before support groups, school-based interventions, and even the autism diagnosis is important and fascinating.



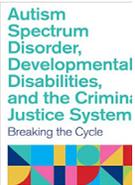
Boyfriends & Girlfriends

Everyone knows that dipping your toe in the dating pond can be a little intimidating without first seeking some expert advice. And that's exactly what Terri Couwenhoven delivers in her new book written expressly for teens and adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. *Boyfriends & Girlfriends* explains the do's and don'ts of dating and validates their normal, age-appropriate desire for companionship and romance. The book covers the biggest questions and smallest concerns of every would-be dater.



ASD, Developmental Disabilities and the Criminal Justice System, Breaking the Cycle

For autistic people who find themselves facing a criminal charge, understanding how the features of autism may have contributed to their behavior can be vital context for their defence. In this insightful book, Nick Dubin explores how and why autistic people get caught up in the criminal justice system.



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 a really great group of teens who are enjoying our monthly meetings! We have adjusted to the new school year routines and have been able to celebrate Halloween. 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 or call ASM at 800-273-5200 for more information. This group meets the last Friday of the month.

Young Adult Social Group

We are also excited to announce a second social group for young adults (17-26) has begun and it has been a success so far! This group is facilitated by our very own Autism Information Specialist, Kendra Campbell. They meet the 2nd Monday of the month. If you are interested in learning more about this group, please email Kendra at 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 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 or call ASM at 800-273-5200. This group meets the last Friday of the month.

Donations

In Honor of: "Benny"

Patrick & Catherine Young

In Memory of:

Charles F. "Chuck" Pendleton

William Egan
Leslie Bastarache
Chris Wentworth
Kelly Kelly
Chris Vlachos
Michael Downs
Christine Loney
Doreen Keyes
Nancy & Leo Delaney
Patti & Meaghan Shanley
Robert & Bonnie Teetsell
Jeanne Sullivan
Sahlee Macauley

Katheleen Geary

Carl Harris
Waterboro Eagles
Jeanne Malia

Membership Renewals

Rita Alfonso Labarbera
Janet Zahtila
Cathy Simonson
Margaret Shaver
Sheila Srey
Tiffany Rooney
Jeannie Demaree
Karen MacDonald
Diane Walp
Rosemary McGlaufflin
Jeanne Ott
Bobbi-Jo Doucette
Owen Melville
Lisa Vaillancourt

New Memberships

Mary Dunn
Emily Legere
Kristy Ouellette
Amy Lewis
Devin Campbell

Donations/Sponsorships Employee Matches/Grants

Cheese Louise
Chris Crobbe
Walmart
Camden National Bank- Brittany Meeks
United Way of Kennebec Valley
Carol & Gino Nalli
James Roy
Susan Marston
Maine Developmental Disabilities Counsel
Bangor Savings Bank
Greater Twin Cities United Way



Facebook Fundraisers

With the help of Facebook, it is easier than ever to fundraise for the Autism Society of Maine! 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.

During months of August through October, **Facebook Birthday Fundraisers** raised **\$185** to help support ASM!

THANK YOU!! We appreciate everyone's efforts! Even if your fundraiser did not receive the donations you were hoping for, you helped to bring awareness to ASM. A special thank you to all who donated!

Victoria Elizabeth
Brenda Thomas
Jessica Lynn



Crystal Seneca
Karmen Owens
Sarah Chezmar

FUNraising Tips!

How about a \$5 Friday! This is a fun way for everyone to make a small donation!

Add a photo of your honoree, this will add a face to the fundraiser!

Acknowledge milestones by increments of \$50 (any amount) and share with your facebook friends!

"Match Donations" is available! Example: You can pledge to match the first \$50. This can be set up when you create your fundraiser with the "more" button.