



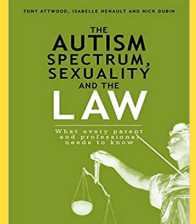
Donations
Page 6



Ride For Autism
Page 3



FALL CONFERENCE
Fall Conference
Page 4



ASM Library
Page 5



Maine Autism Connections

Back to School

We Can Do This!

By Susan J Vincent



Fall 2021

For most of us, our children will be returning to fully in-person instruction for the first time since the start of the pandemic. While many are celebrating the end of online learning, for some parents of children with special needs, the transition of returning to in-person school can be a challenge and a stressful time.

The pandemic changed school as we knew it, and possibly reshaped its future in different ways that includes the use of technology. School will undoubtedly look different this year from what it was last year, and our children will need time to transition with this new routine.

Some students have experienced the dreaded backslide, a loss of skills, a loss of friendships and ramped up anxiety. Parents need resources and tools that can help them promote resilience and reduce anxiety. We need to use the information we have learned this past year and reach out for help when needed. The good news is that we have learned how resilient children are, and how adapting to changes can be achieved.



Parents need to take care of themselves during stressful times so they can be better equipped to take care of themselves and cope with the stress that may be caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic, [See more here](#).

ASM has been, and always will be available for individuals, parents, educators, and the community as a support and guidance resource. We are here by phone or in person conversation (unless there are changes of in-person meetings.) In addition, we have access to toolkits and videos by experts in the field on just about any issue that can be helpful, see ASM's Back-to-School Page.

ASM online support group date: Friday, September 17th "Do you have questions about the start of this school year?" Get information to join this group: asm@asmonline.org

[Disability Rights Maine \(DRM\)](#) for legal questions that you may have. DRM represents children with disabilities who are seeking assistance with obtaining a free and appropriate public education.

[Maine Parent Federation \(MPF\)](#) for information about Special Education and IEP Questions.



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

Board of Directors

Tiffany Rooney, *President*
Christina Nason, *Vice President*
Joshua Nash, *Treasurer*
Bobbi-Jo Boisvert, *Secretary*

Brigid Rankowski Malarie Clark
Scott MacCallum Dick Farnsworth
J. Richardson Collins Kim Webber
Jon Youde

Staff

Cathy Dionne
Executive Director
Susan Vincent
Communications Director
Tara Perry
Office Assistant
Betsy Mahoney
Community Outreach Liaison

Maine Autism Connections is a quarterly publication of the Autism Society of Maine
72B Main Street
Winthrop, ME 04364
Phone: 1-800-273-5200

Graphic Designer: Tara Perry
Proofreader: Susan Vincent
Contributing writers: As bylined

Send article ideas and suggestions for our newsletter to:
info@asmonline.org

Statements made by various authors regarding treatment, products or services represent the views and opinions of solely those authors, and do not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by ASM.



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

Greetings!

Schools are back in session! What can we expect during the transition back to the classroom post-pandemic? Transitions are never easy for any child, for children on the Autism spectrum there are additional challenges. Leaving your child in a new setting, whether for the first time or just a new year, new school mates, or a new teacher can leave you feeling like they are vulnerable. Communication is key with your child's teacher, as well as with your child. It is important to know what guidelines your school district has put in place to defend against potential COVID-19 exposure and to prepare your child for what to expect. Depending on whether your school will return to full time face-to-face class or a combination of face-to-face with some virtual days, it is important to make the schedule as clear as possible to your child, a calendar as a visual clue can be helpful. Getting back to an established routine with a set bedtime will help them readjust to the school schedule. Children pay attention to what their parents say and how they express emotions. Parents can help their children through modeling tolerance of those with different beliefs around masking or vaccines. Giving them a safe place to express their views and feelings will help them work through their emotions and may help the parent identify early any situation that may be disrupting their learning. The past year and a half have been a highly stressful time for everyone and as we shift to a more normal year, there is hope for a smooth school year! Stay well and reach out to Autism Society of Maine for additional resources to help with transitions.



The more that you read, the more things you will know, the more that you learn, the more places you'll go.
~Dr. Seuss

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!



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



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

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.

Autism Information Specialist Program- Help Wanted!!



ASM is looking for compassionate people who love to help others. We have openings in our Autism Information Specialist Program for people just like you who like to spend time chatting with and assisting other people with a variety of issues. We have an urgent need for new AIS in the following areas: Androscoggin, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Lincoln, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington Counties.

Maybe you could spend some time talking with a mom and or dad who just received a new diagnosis for their child and is feeling overwhelmed, you can provide answers, resources, and support.

Maybe you can attend an IEP meeting with a family, to be another set of eyes and ears and help to be sure they understand the process.

Maybe you would like to provide presentations about multiple autism topics to agencies, teachers, churches, and your surrounding communities to help bring more awareness and understanding about autism.

Maybe you would like to spend a few hours at a fun event or fundraiser handing out brochures and letting everyone know what ASM can do for them or their loved ones. Imagine if you could get paid to do these things? You can.

Maybe this sounds great, but you are still a little apprehensive? Don't be. There are so many different opportunities to support families, you just have to be willing to commit to an hour here, a couple of hours there. It is a very flexible position and can be a great source of extra income for you. Reach out to ASM, fill out an application and become a friend for life to a family here in Maine. ASM provides paid training to all AIS as well as the opportunity to attend workshops to further your knowledge. Contact Cathy to inquire more about the position. asm@asmonline.org or call 800-273-5200.

ASM VIRTUAL Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet



ASM Board of Directors and Staff are pleased to invite members to our VIRTUAL Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet on September 24, 2021 at 6:00pm. Join us as we introduce our newest board members, present awards to those who have contributed to the Autism community and recap our last year. Learn about the challenges we faced, how we overcame many obstacles and were able to succeed with our fundraising efforts during the pandemic. The meeting will be held over ZOOM, click [HERE](#) to register or call ASM at 1-800-273-5200 for more information.

15th Annual Ride for Autism

We are back in person for the ride on October 23rd in Kennebunkport. 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 that 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](#).

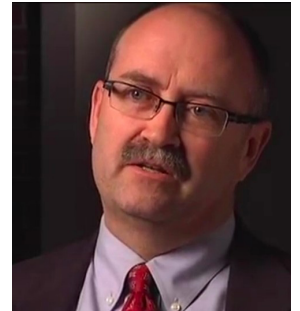


AUTISM SOCIETY
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
FALL CONFERENCE *Maine*

Saturday November 13, 2021
 8:00am-4:15pm
 Cross Insurance Center
 Bangor, Maine

Keynote Speaker - Matt Brown

Matt Brown is a recently retired state and federal law enforcement officer with 26 yrs. experience, and the parent of a young adult on the autism spectrum. Back in 2003, in partnership with the Autism Society of Maine, he developed a program to train police and other first responders, schools and other community groups how to increase safe outcomes when interacting with persons diagnosed with Autism and other developmental disabilities. Since that time, he has trained well over 7,000 first responders, educators and parents across Maine, US and Canada, and his training program has been adopted in police and fire departments in California, New Jersey and North Dakota, and the National Fire Academy. He has been a subject matter expert and instructor on the topic at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy since 2005, is an Information Specialist for the Autism Society of Maine, the CIT training coordinator for NAMI-Maine, and the co-founder with his wife Nancy of Autism Safety Education & Training, based in Portland, Maine.



Keynote Presentation: 9:15am-11:30am
“The Evolution of Autism Safety Training in Maine”
 Where it started, What we have done, Where we are now, and Where we go from here.

The keynote presenter will take us from where it started, what we have done, where we are now, and where we go from here. Matt will bring autism safety full circle from what is being address today and what works and what doesn't. What can you do to ensure your child's safety around elopement, internet safety, and pornography?

11:30am -1:00pm- Lunch (On your own)
1:00pm-2:30pm Breakout Session One

- A) Jen Poore- My Hardest Student-** In this breakout session, Jen will explore some of the ways she taught her son, Marston how to read, explain how she uses “education scaffolding” to teach Marston new concepts, and she will share lots of visuals she has created for her son over the years. Jen’s “Set No Limits” mindset is contagious, and you will absolutely leave this session with new ideas that can be immediately implemented to help those you know with autism.
- B) Police Interaction-** A law enforcement officer’s perspective vs. an individual with Autism perspective on the interactions between the two. The audience will hear from a law enforcement officer on this subject and an individual with autism.
- C) CITE- Assistive Technology and Sensory Needs-** . This presentation will discuss the need for assistive technology to address sensory challenges and demonstrate a variety of sensory solutions.

2:45pm-4:15pm Breakout Session Two

- A) MPF- TransitionPlanning- Beyond the High School Years.** The transition from high school into the world of adulthood is a milestone for ALL young people. There are so many possibilities as youth dream and plan for their future! For young people with disabilities, this can also mean challenges when continuing education, seeking employment, and living independently. This workshop explores the importance of planning early for life after high school with an emphasis on person-centered planning
- B) Apps as Assistive Technology-** This presentation will discuss and demonstrate iPad apps and built-in accessibility features that may benefit individuals with autism
- C) Adults with ASD Panel-** Join a panel of adults with ASD to discuss their obstacles to employment, social interactions, and friendship. What could be helpful and how you can help.



For more information and to register [click here](#).

Welcome to the ASM Library

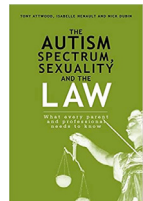
ASM's Lending Library is a valuable and free resource for parents, caregivers, educators, children and professionals working with children and adults on the autism spectrum. The Lending Library is a FREE resource for Maine residents. The collection can be viewed on the ASM website or you may request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



The Special Needs Planning Guide

Included are all of the tools families need to create an effective action plan for their finances, book includes planning checklists and forms, glossary of financial terms, planning pointers that help readers remember key points and extended case studies dramatizing other families' evolving challenges and solutions. CD included contains special needs planning timeline and a printable letter of intent that lets parents communicate key information to future caregivers.



Exploring Depression and Beating the Blues

Written by the leading experts in the field, the book explains and describes depression, the forms it can take, and how it looks and feels for a person on the autism spectrum. The authors draw on the latest thinking and research to suggest strategies for coping with the effects of depression and provide a complete step-by-step CBT self-help programme, designed specifically for individuals with ASDs. The programme helps increase self-awareness, including identifying personal triggers, and provides the tools to combat depression.



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.



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! They are all gearing up to start the new school year, but are happy to know they will still be in touch through our group. 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 Memory of:

Arthur "Russ" Farnham

By: Susan & Hugh Martin
Mr & Mrs Robert Rheault
Mr & Mrs Robert Butler
Ellen Spring
Steven Gray

Carroll Leavitt

By: John Leavitt

New Memberships

Amanda Dixon
The Lepages
Lisa Rogers
Andrea Macht
Lloyd Beckett
Shannon Landry
Tia Jamir
Isabel Douglas
Jenna Cyr
Claudia Millet
Martha Yandle

Membership Renewals

Nancy Pinette
Irene Kapothanasis
Chioma Ibeneme
Franklin Freeman
Sharon Hewett
Darlene Lepoff
Port Resources
Cheryl young
Raffe Hopping
Donna Anderson
Cheryl Stalilonis
Linda Grant
Elizabeth Symmt
Tamera Shrum
Judy Shields
Allison Hodder
Beth & Ryan Whitehouse
Sister Mary F. Etringer
Angela Friend
Michael Dalleo
LoriAnn Holmes
Bethany Jensen
Amanda Karpowitz
Joan Shelton

Donations/Sponsorships Employee Matches/Grants

Hannaford
Bull Run Striping
Kennebunk Savings Bank
Creative Options
Joan Wing
Spurwink Services
Adaptive Outdoor Education Center
United Way of Central & NE Connecticut
United Bikers of Maine
UNUM
Wal-Mart
Chris Harper
United Way of Kennebec Valley
Shaw's
Tyler Technologies
Dirigo Physical Therapy & Performance
United Way of Kennebec Valley
Port City Nissan



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

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 May thru August, **Facebook Birthday Fundraisers** raised **\$840** 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!

Lenny Weeks
Ryan Sheil
Francis Macleod
Carleton Dickey
Frankie Gagne
Elyse Moores
Alice French



Theresa Kay
Emmalee Elizabeth Hathorn
Jessica Garland
Malorie Jane
Gail Paul MacDonald
Chrystal O'Brien
Chelsea Hubbard

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.