

Spectrum

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Autism and Anxiety

Transition to Adulthood
Conference

Teens Bond at
Camp Royall



Autism Society
of NORTH CAROLINA

Mission Statement

The Autism Society of North Carolina is committed to providing support and promoting opportunities which enhance the lives of individuals within the autism spectrum and their families.

Vision Statement

The Autism Society of North Carolina strives to create a community where people within the autism spectrum and their families receive respect, services, and support based on individual differences, needs, and preferences.

Privacy Policy

The Autism Society of North Carolina respects the privacy of its members and those who receive our publications. We do not sell or otherwise share our mailing list, email notification list, or any other personal information with other businesses or organizations.

The Spectrum

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Careers

Would you like to work for the Autism Society of North Carolina? ASNC is a direct-care provider throughout the state with offices in Asheville, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, and Raleigh. We are always looking for qualified candidates who are passionate about helping individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.

A variety of part- and full-time positions are available! Please visit www.autismsociety-nc.org/careers to learn more about current ASNC career opportunities. We appreciate referrals; please help us recruit the best talent by sharing the above link.



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Message from the CEO

As you have undoubtedly heard on the radio, seen on TV, and read in the paper, health-care reform is one of the largest topics of discussion across our country. What is almost always missing from those stories is the specific impact that health-care reform in its current version would have on individuals with disabilities by way of cuts to Medicaid.

I have worked in the disability field for over two decades and have witnessed reform after reform at the federal and state levels; however, all of the prior reforms pale in comparison to what our community faces today. At the risk of sounding like Chicken Little, the sky truly seems to be falling.

As you are likely aware, most Americans have a very different perception of Medicaid than what it actually provides to our community. Medicaid provides access to physical and mental health-care services for individuals with autism, including diagnostic assessments, treatment, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, outpatient and inpatient mental health/psychiatric services, preventative and physical health care, and medications.

For individuals with more significant disabilities, Medicaid waivers, such as North Carolina's Innovations and CAP programs, allow people with serious disabilities to live in their own homes, hold jobs, and participate in communities.

Proposed changes to Medicaid, including block grants and significant cuts to funding, would likely end access to therapeutic and health services for people with autism. As they are currently written, the congressional bills will cut at least \$750 billion from Medicaid in the next decades.

Our community already faces many issues with the existing Medicaid program, but if these bills become law, individuals with autism and their families will struggle even more.

- Already lengthy waiting lists for disability waiver services will grow to record levels, and services may be severely limited. General Assembly legislators are moving to reduce NC waiting lists; these changes at the federal level could stop this from happening.
- If funds become scarcer, states may decide to stop providing personal care, mental health, prescription drugs, and rehabilitative services.
- People with disabilities who require Medicaid services to live in their own homes, hold jobs, and participate in communities may be without those supports. Costs could shift to individuals or family members.
- Coverage for intensive behavior services (including ABA) for children under Medicaid's EPSDT could end.
- Schools may no longer be reimbursed for services. This would only increase their burden.

What seems to be forgotten is how treatments funded by Medicaid are making a real difference in families' lives every day. I recently became aware of a family who needed help with their nonverbal teen son who had never used the toilet. The parents and ASNC's Clinical team mapped out a treatment plan, set aside a weekend, and succeeded together. This huge step for this child and his family would not have been possible without Medicaid's support.

Health-care changes could be passed by the time you read this. Your help will still be needed. If block grants come to fruition, state leaders will have to decide how to spend their new capitated dollars, so reaching out to policymakers as well as educating the community will truly be more important than ever.

If the bill is still in limbo, see our website and our Advocacy 101 toolkit at www.autismsociety-nc.org/toolkits to learn how to advocate with your legislators. Please be on the lookout for our action alerts so that you know when the autism community needs you to advocate. And if you have not done so already, please sign up for public policy emails on our website.

Best,

Tracy Sheriff, Chief Executive Officer

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Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA): What It Is, and What It Is Not

By Louise Southern, *M.Ed., BCBA, Associate Clinical Director*

In the realm of autism intervention, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is used to promote the acquisition of socially appropriate behaviors and reduction of behaviors that interfere with learning and community integration. At its heart, the science of behavior analysis is applied to enhance quality of life for affected individuals and their families.

ABA is not just for autism intervention, and its origins are not in autism intervention

In fact, strategies and principles of ABA have been demonstrated to be effective to address an array of socially significant issues including addiction, gambling, exercise, animal behavior, organizational behavior management, environmental sustainability, memory impairment, and so on. Behavior analytic techniques and strategies have been applied to promote skill acquisition and to reduce problem behavior in individuals with behavioral disorders, intellectual disability, and many other conditions that affect learning and behavior. Have you ever heard of PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) in your K-12 public schools? PBIS has been implemented in virtually every school system in North Carolina, and many of its components stem directly from the science of Applied Behavior Analysis. PBIS is a proactive approach designed to enhance the overall school climate and culture, to improve academic achievement outcomes and graduation rates, and to reduce office discipline referrals and suspension rates.

ABA is not table time and flash card drills

Behavior analytic techniques can be applied in a wide range of contexts, including homes, schools, preschools and day cares, day programs, employment settings, clinics, and so on. These techniques are not confined to one setting (the table in the corner) or to one two-hour block. Quality, comprehensive ABA programs emphasize the most important skills for that person, in the contexts that matter, using materials and activities that are most functional and relevant for that person. Each intervention program (including the scope and sequence of goals targeted) should be individually determined. In addition, parents and caregivers should be treated as equal partners in the intervention process and should be coached to understand and use effective strategies in their natural routines and interactions with their child. Quality ABA programs aim for strong coordination and communication with all team members: school staff, occupational and speech-language therapists, medical providers, etc.

It's also very important to note that the most effective classroom teachers for students with autism employ behavior analytic strategies in conjunction with other evidence-based practices. Behavior analytic instruction involves focusing on a clear, measurable skill area, breaking skills down into teachable segments, carefully arranging multiple opportunities to target these skills, keeping the learner successful by using prompting



and guidance that is systematically faded, and applying effective reinforcement and generalization strategies. Highly effective teachers also use meaningful data to help drive decision-making.

ABA is not just for young children with autism

An extensive body of research has demonstrated that behavior analytic techniques can be highly effective in teaching new skills and reducing challenging behavior in young children with autism. More research is finally centering on older learners with autism, too. In our clinical experience, we know that behavior analytic strategies continue to be relevant and effective no matter the age of the individual.

For example, let's say that we are working with an 18-year-old who is preparing to transition to a post-secondary setting. Areas of intervention might include explicit instruction to teach time-management and organizational strategies such as preparing for tests, self-monitoring during homework and project activities, and getting ready for class each morning. In addition, we might work to prepare him for the social demands and "hidden" social rules that govern appropriate behavior in the campus dorm and classroom contexts. In another case, the strategies and principles of behavior analysis might be applied to teach an adult daily living and self-care routines, functional communication via an augmentative tool (so he finally has a "voice" to self-advocate and express choice), and basic community navigation skills.

We believe that the "window" never closes. Learning never stops for any of us, right? And behavior analysis has a role to play in the acquisition of critical skills, for any learner of any age. ASNC's

own ABA program is called LifeLong Interventions for exactly this reason: ABA works across the lifespan and across the spectrum.

Who can provide comprehensive ABA therapy for individuals with autism?

In North Carolina, comprehensive ABA therapy for individuals with autism currently can be delivered only directly by or under the supervision of a state-licensed professional, most typically in psychology. These individuals may be licensed at the doctoral level (LP) or as a master's-level psychological associate (LPA). Practitioners delivering direct services must have extensive training in the field of behavior analysis and may hold a behavior analysis certification (BCBA) in addition to their license. Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) who are not licensed must be directly supervised by a licensed professional, and those BCBAs operate as an extension of the licensed professional. Paraprofessionals are typically Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) who are certified in ABA principles and strategies and may deliver direct services under the supervision of a licensed provider who has developed a comprehensive ABA program tailored to the individual receiving services.

How is ABA funded?

ABA providers in North Carolina (such as ASNC) are in-network providers for a number of private health insurance companies. If you are unsure whether your current insurance policy covers ABA and autism treatment, members of your human resources department or the customer service line listed on the back of your insurance card should be able to help you determine benefits. When you call, you should have the date of birth of the member, insurance group number, and insurance number in hand, as they will ask for this information.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the federal agency that oversees state Medicaid programs, now requires states to cover behavioral services for autism for children under 21, as well as other autism interventions. Children under 21 in North Carolina who rely on Medicaid for support (Medicaid health insurance and Innovations waiver) are eligible to receive Applied Behavior Analysis and other evidence-based practices under the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment program (EPSDT). Contact your LME/MCO for more information on how to access this service.

ASNC's Clinical Department staff is composed of PhD and master's-level licensed psychologists, Board Certified Behavior Analysts, and former special-education teachers. We provide individualized intensive consultation using evidence-based practices to support children and adults across the spectrum in home, school, employment, residential, and other community-based contexts. We also deliver workshops to professionals and families on a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, strategies to prevent and respond to challenging behaviors, best practices in early intervention, functional communication training, and enhancing social understanding in individuals with autism.

To find out more, contact us at 919-390-7242 or training@autismsociety-nc.org ■



Struggling with your child's challenging behavior?

LifeLong Interventions can help

LifeLong Interventions recently expanded into Wilmington and Asheville and is also offered in the Triangle and greater Charlotte areas.

- Comprehensive treatment for children and adults
- Rooted in the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)
- Intensive teaching and training using evidence-based practices to promote appropriate skills and behaviors in the home, school, and community
- For any age and any skill level

Treatment plans are created by psychologists in collaboration with Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs), who first assess each client's needs. All psychologists and BCBAs operate under the guidance of ASNC's Clinical Director, Dr. Alexander (Aleck) Myers. Certified Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) or Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBAs) are paraprofessionals who work directly with clients and families in their homes, under the supervision of our LPs, LPAs, BCBAs, and Dr. Myers.

ASNC is an in-network provider for many insurers, such as BCBSNC, Aetna, and United Healthcare. (Go online to www.autismsociety-nc.org/clinical for a list of employers that cover treatment.) Children under 21 who rely on Medicaid for support are also eligible, and we also provide treatment through private-pay arrangements.

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Autism and Anxiety: Providing a Safe Environment and a Trusted Teacher

By Kathleen Dolbee, *Autism Resource Specialist*

Years ago, at an ASNC conference, Dr. Jed Baker shared various strategies for teaching social skills to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. He made a statement that changed everything for me. I quote him at every workshop I give and every IEP meeting I attend. Discussing challenging behaviors, he said:

“Better outcomes are achieved when we view behavior as anxiety-based, and keep our ego out of it.”

That statement is profound. It reminds us how important it is to try to see a situation through the eyes of the person with autism. Doing that has helped me gain insight and avoid taking things personally. It was like a revelation. In my role as a parent and an educator, the simple truth is that it isn't about me.

We know the rule: “BEHAVIOR = COMMUNICATION.” However, I have learned that humans are too complex to fit into simple formulas. Taking my ego out, and factoring anxiety into the equation, I can better understand what the behavior is truly communicating. If anxiety is triggering the behavior, then that is the logical place to start when brainstorming hypotheses and creating behavior plans.

Autism is a pervasive, neurological disorder. It is an intrinsic part of who that person is, affecting the way he or she experiences life. Differences in the way sensory input is processed often lead to sensory overload. Our world is fast-paced and noisy. Many individuals with autism struggle with sensory bombardment and report high levels of stress. Stress is natural, activating a response as the body prepares to deal with an emergency. Our body tells us to FIGHT, FREEZE, or FLEE.

But constant stress is debilitating and can lead to chronic anxiety, leaving a person physically ill and psychologically at risk. It is also exhausting. Danny Raede, CEO of Asperger Experts, an educational company, uses the term “defense mode” to describe the body's reaction to a perceived threat. Stress-management skills need to be taught, but like a soldier on a battlefield, a person in “defense mode” is expending so much energy in an effort to survive the moment, that he or she is simply not available for learning anything. Two things are needed: (1) a safe environment and (2) a trusted, optimistic teacher.

(1) **A Safe Environment – Structure.** People who design houses know that building codes vary depending on where the home will be built. Structural codes are in place so that people can feel safe and thrive, whether their home is constructed in California, south Florida, or “Tornado Alley.”

In a similar way, structured strategies provide a stable framework for individuals with autism, a safe place where they can ride out whatever storms they may perceive. With

“Better outcomes are achieved when we view behavior as anxiety-based, and keep our ego out of it.”

a physical/visual structure in place, their world makes better sense. Healthy, predictable routines are taught and reinforced by schedules and checklists. Inside this “structure,” a wide variety of therapeutic approaches can be implemented with success. Because the

individual with autism feels safe, he or she can relax and be open to learning new things.

(2) **A Trusted Teacher – Relationships matter.** In my experience, a person with autism will try harder and stretch outside their comfort zone for someone they trust, who cares about them. A trusted teacher sees each student as an individual with unique strengths, challenges, and triggers. A trusted teacher invests time in the relationship, fosters meaningful communication, and really listens, giving encouragement and teaching self-advocacy skills.

A teacher like that has learned that a student will not care what you know, until they know that you care. A teacher like that is a bridge-builder, helping students get from where they are to where they want to be, taking the steps together, one at a time.

ASNC Autism Resource Specialists are available to help families in every county of North Carolina on topics such as accessing services, community resources, IEPs, and residential options. They are all parents of children or adults with autism themselves, so they have firsthand knowledge and a unique understanding of what you are going through. They also are trained professionals with many years of experience. Find one near you: www.autismsociety-nc.org/resourcespecialists ■



Gain Knowledge with ASNC

The Autism Society of North Carolina strives to provide families and individuals with the tools they need to lead fulfilling lives.

Toolkits

Free toolkits that can be read online or downloaded and printed

www.autismsociety-nc.org/toolkits

- NEW! Autism and Health
- Accessing Services
- The IEP
- Behavior & the IEP
- Bullying
- Residential Options
- Advocacy 101

Workshops

Workshops and conferences with our Autism Resource Specialists or Clinical staff will help you learn more about topics that concern you, such as early intervention, IEPs, transitioning, and residential options.

www.autismsociety-nc.org/workshops

Webinars

We now offer our most popular webinars on our website so you can watch at your convenience! We will continue to build this library of resources, so check back occasionally.

www.autismsociety-nc.org/online-webinars

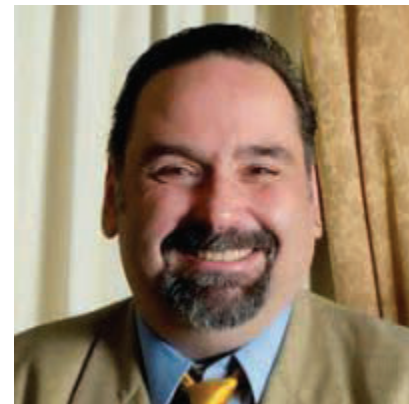
- Staying Two Steps Ahead: Safety Considerations for Caregivers
- The Next Step: Residential Options for Adults with Autism
- Preparing for College Starts at Home
- Guardianship for Adults: The Basics
- Taking Autism on the Road

Fall Conference on Skills for the Transition to Adulthood

We are pleased to announce that on November 3, Dr. Peter Gerhardt, internationally recognized speaker and teacher, will be the presenter for the Autism Society of North Carolina's second annual fall conference at the Hilton North Raleigh/Midtown.

Dr. Gerhardt brings more than 30 years of experience in working with individuals on the autism spectrum to the conference. His topic, "Transition to Adulthood: Identifying and Teaching Skills That Make a Difference," is an important one for families and caregivers of individuals with autism of all ages. The transition to adulthood is an unavoidable part of life. Preparing and planning are crucial to the success of your loved one or student with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

While there is much discussion about the importance of effective transition planning, "young adults with autism have a difficult time following high school for almost any outcome you choose – working, continuing school, living independently, socializing, community participation, and staying healthy and safe." (Roux, et al, 2015, p. 8)." In his presentation, Dr. Gerhardt will show that while there are many reasons for continued poor outcomes, many of them are well within our ability to change, either in whole or in part.



Register now and save: <https://petergerhardtraleigh.eventbrite.com>

Join us to learn:

- How to plan effectively for the transition to adulthood, in the areas of work, safety, social competence, leisure, sexuality, behavior, and quality of life
- How evidence-based practices such as Applied Behavior Analysis can help to achieve increasingly significant and positive outcomes
- Strategies for student/client assessment and how to provide effective intervention outside of the classroom, managing risk, and developing individualized programs

Dr. Gerhardt is the Executive Director of the Educational Partnership for Instructing Children (EPIC), a school dedicated to providing educational services for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. EPIC uses Applied Behavior Analysis to teach new skills and increase independence. Dr. Gerhardt has supported individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder in educational, employment, residential, and community settings. He is also the author or coauthor of many articles and book chapters on the needs of adolescents and adults with ASDs and has presented nationally and internationally on this topic. He is the founding chair of the Scientific Council for the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) and a member of numerous professional advisory boards.

ASNC is offering an early-bird rate of \$125 – a savings of \$25 – through October 6. Autism self-advocates can register for \$100. Fees include morning coffee, lunch, afternoon beverages, and handouts. The ASNC Bookstore will be available for shopping and will feature books by Dr. Gerhardt.

The Hilton is offering discounted rooms the nights of November 2 and 3. Rates are \$135 per night and must be booked by October 3. Visit the registration site above or call the Hilton directly at 919-872-2323 (group code "ASNC") to book your room.

If you have questions about the conference or wish to pay via a purchase order or with Medicaid Natural Supports Education waiver funds, please contact David Laxton, Director of Communications, at dlaxton@autismsociety-nc.org or 919-865-5063. ■

Upcoming workshop from our Clinical staff

Autism Basics: Core Features and Evidence-Based Strategies

Sept. 9 in Wilmington

See all workshops at

www.autismsociety-nc.org/workshops

Annual Conference Brings Autism Community Together

In March, our 2017 annual conference, Building a Better Future, brought hundreds of parents, self-advocates, and professionals together in Charlotte to learn and gain support. Thank you to everyone who attended or supported the conference in any way, from vendors, to sponsors, to scholarship donors. For those who were not able to attend the conference, we are sharing highlights from one of the presentations here. We hope you will be able to join us next year!

Sensory Processing Issues and Practical Strategies

Linda King-Thomas, a co-founder of Developmental Therapy Associates (DTA) in Durham, presented on “Sensory Processing Issues and Practical Strategies” on the second day of the conference. Sensory integration is the neurological process that organizes sensation from one’s own body and from the environment and makes it possible to use the body effectively within the environment.

In addition to the sensory systems with which we are all familiar (touch, hearing, sight, smell, and taste), we also have vestibular, which relates to movement and gravity, and proprioceptive, which is about “heavy work,” or input to our muscles and joints.

About 5-10 percent of people have sensory processing issues, and it is much more common among boys. A lot of children with autism have a narrow band of sensory input that they can handle, Ms. King-Thomas said; receiving too much input or too little can be a challenge.

These issues can affect an individual’s play skills, self-care and feeding, school-related activities, and social participation. If we can understand how behavior is affected, we can help children by modifying their environment, she said. For example, a child who is averse to unexpected touch could be allowed always to line up at the end of the line in school so that no one bumps into him unexpectedly.

Individuals with sensory processing issues can be treated with therapy using a sensory integrative approach. But Ms. King-Thomas said families also can work on these issues at home, focusing on the sensory diet, the daily intake of sensory and motor experiences needed to adaptively interact with the environment. Sensory and motor experiences help maintain optimal arousal and attention for learning. Once an individual is assessed by professionals to determine how much input they need, a plan is made to provide it throughout the day. Intensity, frequency, duration, and rhythm of input are all figured into the formula.

The goal is to keep the individual in the band of optimal arousal, so that will determine whether an alerting or calming input is used. For example, light touch is alerting, and deep pressure is calming; more sensation is not always better. The individual should be closely monitored to see how they respond.

Save the date!

Autism and Health: What You Need To Know
March 23-24, 2018

Hilton University Place, Charlotte

Online registration opens Sept. 15

Ms. King-Thomas mentioned some activities and items that could be used or done at home.

- **Movement:** unstable surfaces such as a therapy ball, calisthenics, jumping, swinging, bouncing, dancing
- **Heavy work:** carrying heavy objects such as a weighted backpack, digging in a garden, working out with weights, pushing a grocery cart
- **Deep pressure touch:** weighted vest or blanket (make your own with rice), massage, tight exercise clothing worn under clothes
- **Oral motor:** sucking through a long straw or using a thicker liquid, blowing bubbles or on a whistle, chewing gum
- **Womb spaces:** small, dark, quiet spaces such as a cupboard; closet with pillows; tent; claw bathtub with pillows
- **Tactile:** cheap toys such as squishy balls, silly putty, and bendable figures; phone cord; kneading bread; sand play. (These all help to take the place of moving the entire body)

Ms. King-Thomas also had some strategies to share, depending on the input your child may need:

- Note preferences in clothing, temperature, and bed linens
- Use music, white-noise machines, and sound-canceling headphones
- Adapt walls with either bright or muted colors
- Use natural light and avoid fluorescent light

For more resources, see the sensory category in the ASNC Bookstore at www.autismbookstore.com. Find more information about this year’s conference presentations on ASNC’s blog at www.autismsociety-nc.org/blog (search “conference”). ■

Advocacy 101: What You Need to Know

By Jennifer Mahan, *Director of Public Policy*

At the core of our advocacy mission is educating the public about policy related to autism and encouraging people to speak up using effective strategies to convey their message. ASNC has been encouraging advocacy with state-level elected officials for many years. Until recently, most of the urgent public policy issues have been ones that we needed the North Carolina General Assembly to fix or address: waiting lists for services, state insurance laws, funding for local education agencies, and effective crisis intervention, among other issues.

ASNC gathers feedback on critical public policy issues, and every other year, issues a list of public policy priorities (see them at www.autismsociety-nc.org/PolicyPapers), while also defending the access to services, education, and rights that have been hard fought over the years.

Most policy change is **incremental**, happening in pieces, bit by bit, sometimes over decades. When we see positive changes for people being threatened or removed, we are called to act to move the needle toward greater fairness and ensure that cuts to services, limits on rights, and other threats to people on the autism spectrum are brought to light.

ASNC has long supported congressional action to fund autism research, provide better health-care coverage of autism services, and enact changes to the law, such as the ABLE Act, that allow people to save for their future. Proposed changes in health care – especially Medicaid – would have an enormous impact on people with autism. Because of that threat, ASNC has begun directing more resources to federal advocacy and to increase the public's awareness and involvement.

Civics 101

Most of us are far removed from the civics lessons of our school years, about how a bill is passed and the three branches of government. In practical terms, those lessons don't always help in understanding where to direct advocacy about autism.

While there are three branches of government (administrative, legislative, and judicial), ASNC focuses primarily on the legislative branches for two main reasons: money and lawmaking. The US Congress, at the federal level, and the NC General Assembly, for the state of North Carolina, decide what tax dollars will be appropriated for government services and pass laws that set the framework for the rights of individuals.

Federal Lawmaking and Advocacy

The US Congress is made up of 535 members elected from each state. It is divided into two lawmaking chambers: the House with 435 members and the Senate with 100 members. Each state has two elected US senators. The number of US representatives from each state depends on that state's population; more populated states have more representatives. Congress meets in Washington, DC, throughout the year, with breaks when they might be back in North Carolina for meetings in their districts.

North Carolina has two US senators and, currently, 13 US House members representing the state in Washington, DC. You can learn more about them at www.govtrack.us/congress/members/NC#representatives.

Bills can be introduced in one chamber (US House or US Senate) or both chambers. A bill must get agreement (i.e. pass) in both chambers and then be passed on to the president for a signature to become law. This includes bills for government appropriations, the spending of tax dollars for government functions.

Congress might introduce thousands of bills in a year, but fewer than 10% typically become laws. The House and Senate each have committees that look at specific types of legislation; typically, those committees discuss and make changes to bills before they are recommended for a vote by the full Senate or House. But with so many members, it can be difficult to get agreement on exactly what a new law should do or whether it's even a good idea.

The federal government creates laws and appropriates funds that affect issues across all of the states. This includes things such as:



- Insurance coverage for members of the military, employees of companies that operate across multiple states, federal employees, and people using other government-sponsored health care
- Federal grant funding for autism research, safety and tracking programs, and autism professional development
- Direct funding to states for disability services, including Social Security payments, employment programs, housing, and the federal portion of Medicaid
- The federal portion of special-education funding in schools

Congress was responsible for introducing and passing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and recently, the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act.

State of North Carolina Lawmaking and Advocacy

The North Carolina General Assembly is made up of 170 members elected from districts across the state. They meet in Raleigh for either a few months (“long session”) or a few weeks (“short session”) during the year. The General Assembly is divided into two chambers: the NC House and the NC Senate. There are 120 NC House representatives and 50 NC senators. You can learn more about the NCGA at www.ncleg.net.

Bills are introduced in one chamber (NC House or NC Senate) or occasionally both chambers. A bill must get agreement (i.e. pass) in both chambers and then be signed by the governor to become law. This includes bills for state government appropriations, the spending of state tax dollars for government functions. Like the US Congress, the NC General Assembly has topic-specific legislative committees that review and recommend bills, including the bills that decide state government spending.

The General Assembly might introduce hundreds of bills affecting statewide or local issues, but fewer than 10% will

become law. The NC General Assembly creates laws and appropriates funds for things such as:

- Insurance coverage for plans that must follow state law and for state employees
- Funding for state disability services for people without health care and for the state portion of Medicaid services
- Grants for local nonprofits that help families and individuals on the spectrum
- Local education spending, including teacher’s pay and the state portion of special-education funds
- Laws that determine what North Carolina’s Medicaid program might look like and who it will serve (as long as it also follows federal laws)

Congress and the General Assembly don’t interact much. While they all might know each other, and some in Congress were previously elected to seats in the General Assembly, **they don’t work on the same laws**. Congress typically works on things that affect all states, and the General Assembly can only pass laws for the state of North Carolina.

The problem, of course, is that it’s not always clear whether the federal government or the state government is responsible for an issue! This is especially so when advocating for state and federal partnership programs like Medicaid or insurance coverage in a complicated health-care system.

You can ask public policy questions, including how or where to advocate with elected officials, by contacting Jennifer Mahan, Director of Public Policy, at 919-865-5068 or jmahan@autismsociety-nc.org. You can also learn more about how to advocate with your legislators on our website, at www.autismsociety-nc.org/make-voice-heard. Over the next year, ASNC will be posting more educational articles on its blog at www.autismsociety-nc.org/blog on how government works and connecting that to autism public policy advocacy. ■

Safe in the Community

We want to help you keep your loved one with Autism Spectrum Disorder safe

- social narratives to teach individuals how to be safe
- tips sheet on wandering prevention
- printable “personal information record” for you to fill out and share with first responders
- ID card you can print or order
- links to other resources and products such as ID labels
- “Person with Autism” decals or clings you can order for your home or vehicle

www.autismsociety-nc.org/staying-safe



Improving Lives through Skill-Building

The Autism Society of North Carolina provides exemplary services that improve the lives of individuals with autism and their families. Our professionals respect individuals' unique strengths, preferences, and dignity as we use research-based best practices to help them achieve their goals and dreams.

We are an accredited provider of Medicaid services throughout the lifespan, including the Innovations waiver, state-funded, and Vocational Rehabilitation funded services. We also offer affordable private-pay options.

Each individual on the autism spectrum is unique, with challenges to be addressed and strengths to be nurtured. We offer individual or group instruction designed to increase self-sufficiency and meaningful connections with others by:

- Developing and improving communication skills
- Cultivating and maintaining social skills including self-awareness, self-control, responsiveness, interpersonal skills, and the ability to maintain personal relationships
- Fostering community relationships and integration through recreation, volunteer experiences, employment, and leisure activities

We also provide:

- Support to complete personal care skills including eating, bathing, dressing, daily hygiene, and mobility
- Respite for families who need a break from the demands of caring for an individual with autism and peace of mind that their loved one is being cared for well by experienced staff

The Autism Society of North Carolina has received the highest level of accreditation by the Council on Quality Leadership for exemplary service provision. ■

Contact our area offices:

Asheville area:

306 Summit Street
Asheville, NC 28803
828-236-1547

Fayetteville area:

351 Wagoner Drive
Suite 402
Fayetteville, NC 28303
910-864-2769

Greensboro area:

9 Oak Branch Drive
Greensboro, NC 27407
336-333-0197

Raleigh area:

6300 Chapel Hill Road
Suite 140
Raleigh, NC 27607
919-865-0681

Greenville area:

2045-C Eastgate Drive
Greenville, NC 27858
252-756-1316



We're Hiring

Do you know someone who is passionate about helping individuals on the autism spectrum and their families? Let them know that the Autism Society of North Carolina is always looking for qualified candidates to join us as we improve lives.

www.autismsociety-nc.org/careers

Celebrating Our Friends' Successes

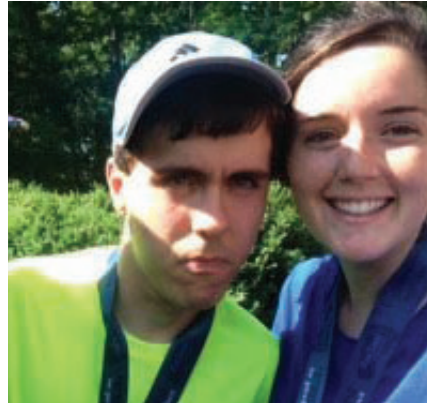


Skylar rocks the world!

Skylar began working with ASNC in fall 2016 when his family moved to Greenville and has made huge strides in his communication with others. He also has greatly expanded his hobbies by joining a swimming group and starting horse-back riding and musical therapy drum lessons.

Skylar's favorite band, Queen, has always been his inspiration for wanting to play the drums. He recently wrote a song and learned to play it with his teacher, Mr. Clay. We are so proud of Skylar and his growing talent and love of the drums!

Watch Skylar on YouTube:
<http://bit.ly/2pDByZg>



Eric takes on Tar Heel 10-miler

Eric, a young man who attends our Creative Living day program in Raleigh, likes to run. He runs regularly with his mom and his ASNC staff, and he has a collection of medals from 5Ks and 1-milers. He also collects mini replicas of construction cones to represent each race.

This spring, Eric ran farther than he ever had before in the Tar Heel 10-miler in Chapel Hill! Congratulations, Eric!



Madison loves Zumba

Madison, who lives in the Triangle, had been working on living a healthier lifestyle, including daily exercise, but she grew bored with her elliptical machine. Her ASNC Autism Support Professional knew that Madison loved to dance, so she suggested Zumba for exercise. Check out the video at <http://bit.ly/2sPXWkY> to see how Madison picked up the routine and now loves Zumba!

How can we help you or your loved one to reach goals? Learn more about our services at www.autismsociety-nc.org/skill-building or call us at 800-442-2762.

Why work for ASNC? We offer:

- Extensive training and education
- Full- and part-time positions across the state
- Flexible hours and customized schedules
- Competitive pay
- Benefits starting at 20 hours
- Extensive client matching to ensure good fit
- Rewarding and relevant job experience
- Peer-to-peer collaboration and support
- Professional development opportunities

We are always looking for candidates or referrals for the following positions:

- Autism Support Professionals
- Employment Support Professionals
- Autism Services Coordinators
- Social Recreation Counselors
- Behavior Technicians
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs)

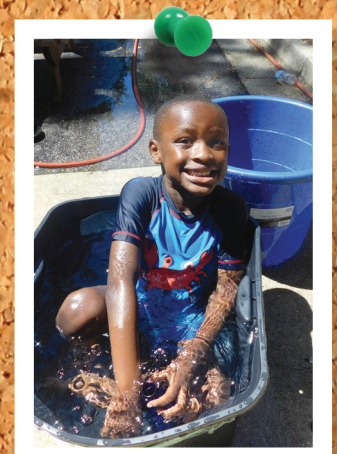
A Year of Growth in Eastern NC

What a year it has been! We have been so pleased to see the growth and development of our Social Recreation programs across Eastern NC.

Since July 2016, we have opened three year-round Social Recreation centers in Winterville, Newport, and Wilmington that are providing Afterschool Programs, Summer Day Camps, and Adult Programs with support from Trillium Health Resources. We held two pop-up camps in Brunswick and Onslow counties that each offered Summer Day Camps. Through all of these sites, we have reached 231 campers and their families and are proud to be serving their communities.

During our busy summer season, exciting things happen! Our campers take part in traditional summer camp activities (arts and crafts, swimming, outdoor play, music, etc.) in a setting that really understands our campers' needs. ASNC is proud to provide caring, accepting atmospheres that celebrate each individual. After spending time in our Social Recreation programs, individuals with autism show increases in confidence, independence, and a willingness to try new things. The programs also provide needed respite for families and peace of mind that their child is in a safe and loving environment.

Summer Day Camp for individuals on the autism spectrum, ages 4-22, started June 19 in Winterville, Newport, and Wilmington, and June 26 in Brunswick. Our fifth and newest summer camp started in Onslow County on July 5. The camps ran from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays with a counselor-to-camper ratio of 1:1 or 1:2 based on self-help and behavioral needs.



Staff Spotlight: Trea Barham

Trea Barham has been an integral part of the Winterville Social Recreation program since its beginning. He came to ASNC as a highly professional and well-spoken candidate as we were hiring for the Afterschool Program. Trea, who is 24 years old, told us he wanted to work with children with autism and would dedicate all of his energy to being the best employee he could be.

“Trea brought something extra special to the table,” said Amanda Rissmeyer, Social Recreation Program Director for Winterville. “He understood the experience many of our campers were going through growing up on the autism spectrum.”

The first few weeks of the Afterschool Program were fast-paced and challenging, but Trea always welcomed feedback and made it his mission to grow, Amanda said. “He is always on time, he has an exemplary attitude, and his kindness is unending,” she said. “He is always asking if there is anything he can do to help. His clients look up to him for many reasons, but the one that tops them all, is that he makes them feel valued and loved for who they are.”

Trea said he felt fortunate to have the opportunity to work at the center. “This program is a great place that means so much to so many families and children in our community. This place gives the gift of friendships, acceptance, and support to all who come here,” Trea said. “It does more than just focusing on social skills, but also teaches children good self-control, self-help, and coping skills.”

Trea was such a valuable member of the team during the school



year that he was hired as an assistant activity director for the Summer Day Camp.

“Trea’s courage is something that blows me away constantly. He stands up for what he believes in, he asks supervisors for specific feedback, and he never backs down from a challenge,” Amanda said. “He exemplifies the mission and vision of ASNC by living it and breathing it.”

Trea also attends Adult Programs at the center, and we expect he will be a part of the Winterville Social Recreation program for many years to come, helping us improve the lives of children in our program.

“To me this program is so much more than a great job. It is also a space where I can give back, and serve others,” Trea said. “This work is exciting, and always active. I feel fulfilled doing this work.”

Additional Upcoming Programs

Afterschool Programs will coincide with the beginning of the school year in Winterville, Newport, and Wilmington. (Unfortunately there is no Afterschool in Onslow and Brunswick counties.) The programs will be open to school-age children on the autism spectrum, five days per week when school is in session, about 3-6:30 p.m. We will provide a 2:1 or 3:1 participant-to-staff ratio, similar to a classroom setting. One-to-one care will be provided as needed for self-care and behavior management. We will have space for 30-40 children to attend daily, and placement will be based on a priority system. First priority will be given to children with no current services funded through Trillium (i.e. Innovations waiver, IPRS, or Medicaid 1:1 services, not school-related services), who can come five days per week. This program will also be free for those who were accepted to our camp. The application period for the 2017-18 Afterschool Programs opened in late July for Wilmington, Winterville, and Newport.

Adult Programs began in spring 2017 and will continue with more options in late August. Programs will include groups and structured and unstructured activities that focus on the core needs of young adults and adults on the spectrum. Examples include pre-employment training, social skills, health and wellness activities, and community nights. We will also offer some groups that are only for those with high-functioning autism and Asperger’s Syndrome. To show interest in our adult programming, please complete an interest application online.

Group respite opportunities will begin in fall 2017 as well. These will serve as an opportunity for children on the spectrum to receive care in our centers and be actively engaged in positive activities while parents receive a break to attend to other needs at home and in the community.

For more information or to sign up for a program, please go online to www.autismsociety-nc.org/social-recreation/eastern-nc or contact the director for your area:

Brunswick County: SRP_Brunswick@autismsociety-nc.org

Newport: SRP_Newport@autismsociety-nc.org

Onslow County: SRP_Onslow@autismsociety-nc.org

Wilmington: SRP_Wilmington@autismsociety-nc.org

Winterville: SRP_Winterville@autismsociety-nc.org

Teens Bond in New Camp Royall Program

By Lesley Fraser, *Camp Royall Director*



Each summer, an amazing crew of strong, capable, creative, and hilarious teenagers show up for our week of camp for teens with high-functioning autism. One of the best parts about this week is that it brings together teens who have similar challenges, strengths, and interests. It helps our campers – and their families – to see that others are going through the same challenges, at an already challenging time of life: the teenage years.

The atmosphere that Camp Royall provides for these teens is one of acceptance and celebration. Our Counselors are their greatest supporters, role models, and cheerleaders. It is a week of growth for our campers in confidence, self-esteem, and willingness to try new things. The teens make friends easily and look forward to seeing each other year-to-year.

In the spring of 2016, we had a strong desire to offer a program to continue this growth and friendship year-round, so Teen Tuesday began!

Teen Tuesday is a monthly group that brings these incredible teens together on a Tuesday evening in a familiar and comfortable setting to work on life skills. Each session focuses on a different skill area. So far, we have enjoyed lessons in cooking, nutrition, money management, social skills, and more. By popular demand, we held a dance during our last meeting before summer break.

For the teens, the life skills are just one benefit of Teen Tuesday.

“What I love about Teen Tuesday so much is that I get to hang out with my new friends,” said McKenna, who is 17. “Back in Georgia, I barely had any friends and that made me feel lonely. But when my family moved to North Carolina and my mom found Camp Royall, and I started going to Teen Tuesday, I made new friends and I love it!”

McKenna’s mother, Shawna Curtis, said it is hard to describe how much the program has meant to her family. “For the first time ever, I have been able to witness my daughter interact, laugh, learn, and be accepted by her peers, all due to Teen Tuesday. This is the one place where she no longer feels left out or alone. She counts the days until the next meeting.”

Teen Tuesday participants are supported by our trained staff to try new things, see the benefits of new challenges, and celebrate accomplishments, large or small.

A favorite highlight from the group was our first cooking lesson. Some of the participants were trying activities for the first time, such as chopping vegetables, mixing ingredients, or setting the table. Everyone worked together to prepare a delicious

“For the first time ever, I have been able to witness my daughter interact, laugh, learn, and be accepted by her peers.”

meal, supporting and encouraging one another every step of the way. It was clear that it tasted a little better because they had each had a hand in bringing it all together! Another favorite moment came during a nutrition lesson. Our staff members were teaching participants about the different types of foods and how to work toward a balanced diet. Some of our participants knew more than the staff and were happy to share their knowledge with the group!

And of course, the dance at the end of the season was a highlight as well. Everyone came dressed and ready for a fun night of socializing, dinner, and dancing! The theme was “Under the Sea,” and we had DJ Noah here commanding the dance floor. For some of our participants, it was their first dance experience, somewhere they felt comfortable to be themselves. It was an awesome way to end a great year of Teen Tuesdays!

As we continue to develop Teen Tuesday, we are excited to see how we can build on skills from session to session and encourage continued learning at home. We love encouraging independence in our teens and seeing the benefits of that, from learning new skills to take into adulthood, to growing in self-esteem and confidence. And of course, the whole time participants are having a lot of fun and making new friends, which is what Camp Royall is all about!

Fun at Camp Year-Round

We have just wrapped up another awesome summer at Camp Royall, but don’t worry, the fun never stops! Our year-round programs enable hundreds more children and adults to experience the joy of Camp Royall. We hope you will save these dates and come visit us!

Our **Afterschool Program** will start again September 11 and run until December 20. The hours are 2:30-6:30 p.m. each day, with transportation options available. Participants take part in outdoor activities, group games, and gym play under the supervision of trained staff members.



Family Fun Days offer a daytime opportunity for families to experience all the joys of camp together. Fun Days will take place September 2 and December 16, which will be our holiday party with sensory-friendly visits with Santa. During these Saturdays, everyone can participate in many activities, including boating, face-painting, a cookout, hayrides, gym games, arts and crafts, and more. **Family Camping** adds dinner in our dining hall, campfire time complete with s’mores, and overnight lodging in one of our cabins. We will also provide a continental breakfast Sunday morning and more time to play at camp.

Mini Camps are set for three dates this fall: September 15-17, October 6-8, and November 17-19. Mini Camp provides campers the chance to spend the whole weekend at camp, from 5 p.m. Friday to 12 noon Sunday. Campers enjoy a miniature version of our summer camp program while families benefit from some respite; preference is given to campers living at home. Supervision at a ratio of 1:1 or 1:2 is provided for all campers during these weekends.

Adult Retreats give independent adults, 18 years and older with high-functioning autism, a chance to enjoy time with friends at Camp Royall. This fall, we will have one week-long retreat, September 24-29, and two weekend retreats, November 3-5 and December 1-3. Participants enjoy recreational activities at camp as well as outings in the community.



Teen Tuesday offers teens (ages 13-20) the opportunity to learn life skills in a welcoming group setting. The group meets once a month, typically on the second Tuesday of the month, from 5 until 7:30 p.m. Our first meeting after summer break will be on September 19.



Week-Long Camps will be offered in the fall, October 15-20, for school-age campers (4-22 years), as well as during the winter break, December 27 to January 1, for campers ages 4 and up. The overnight program includes a 1:1 or 1:2 counselor-to-camper ratio, based on each camper’s level of need.

Please contact our camp office for questions about any of the events at 919-542-1033 or camproyall@autismsociety-nc.org.

For more information or to register for any event, please visit www.camproyall.org. Also check back later in this year for spring dates for all of the above programs! ■

The Uniqueness of ASNC Chapters – What’s Your Flavor?

Most would agree that ice cream and summertime go hand-in-hand, and there are as many different varieties of ice cream as there are people to eat it! ASNC Chapters – and how they support families – are a bit like ice cream. While all provide a welcoming place for families and are dedicated to spreading awareness, education, and acceptance of autism, the way they provide that support can look very different and can come in a variety of “flavors.” From hosting informational meetings to arranging fun family events, our Chapters continually demonstrate their own unique and community-driven focus in all that they do.

Here’s a quick taste of what the Chapters have been up to this past spring and summer – and plans are already in the works for fall and the new school year. If you’re not already involved with one of our Chapters, the timing is perfect to join with other families who are passionate about supporting one another and committed to making life better for each other and for their loved ones with autism. To learn more, please visit: www.autismsociety-nc.org/chapters.



Orange/Chatham Chapter Puts Safety First

Autism awareness around community safety was the theme of “Autism Family and Friends Awareness Day” at Fairview Park in Hillsborough on April 29. The event was co-hosted by several community organizations, and the Orange/Chatham County Chapter provided an information booth for families and provided food and beverages. Joe, 15-year-old son of Chapter parent and volunteer Laura Branan, read a speech they wrote together about who he is and why awareness and safety in the community is important. The Hillsborough Police and Sheriff’s departments provided a finger-printing activity, and Orange County Parks and Recreation emergency personnel provided emergency vehicles for families to touch and explore. Hillsborough Mayor Tom Stevens welcomed everyone to the event.

Sticky Fun for the Surry County Chapter

Dobson Elementary School in Surry County raised awareness and money for the Chapter’s Walk for Autism during the month of April. Their fun and unique fundraiser, in which students paid to tape the principal and assistant principal to a wall with duct tape, raised more than \$500!



Craven County Chapter Chefs in the Making

During May, a group of children from the Craven Chapter had the opportunity to be “Panera Bakers in Training.” During the event at the Panera in New Bern, the children tried different foods, such as broccoli cheddar soup and salad. They also decorated sugar cookies and made their own bread loaves to take home. They also got to keep their hats and aprons. Kim Hoffman, Chapter Leader, said “It was a great learning event for our kids and offered some new sensory experiences. It was definitely one of the best events we’ve done, and we will be offering it again for sure!”

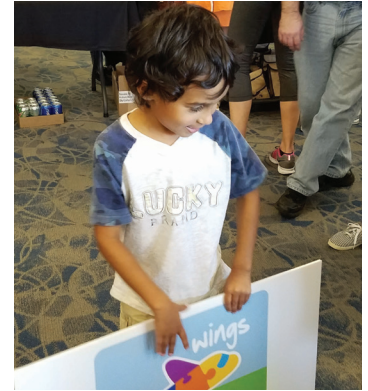


Iredell County Chapter Bowls a Strike

The Iredell County Chapter met at Pla Mor Lanes in Statesville to celebrate World Autism Awareness & Acceptance Day in their own unique way. “Our group loves to bowl!” said Chapter Leader Danielle Abbott.

Mecklenburg County Chapter Loves to Fly

On April 1, the Mecklenburg County Chapter, with The ARC of Mecklenburg and Union Counties, Delta Airlines, and the Transportation Security Administration, kicked off Autism Awareness Month with “Wings for Autism” at Charlotte Douglas International Airport. The months of teamwork by these organizations paid off. Families had a chance to practice maneuvering through the airport, checking in, going through security, traveling through the concourse to find their gate, waiting for deplaning of their arriving plane, boarding their flight, enjoying a taxi around the airport, and leaving the plane. All watched in awe as airport firefighters performed a “water salute” for the flight upon their return to the gate.



“Families were truly thankful for this event,” said Nancy Nestor, Regional Chapter Coordinator and Autism Resource Specialist for the Charlotte area. “For those with family in other parts of the country, travel by plane is the only reasonable way to go home. Now the possibility of going home has become a reality. For others, the chance to expand their child’s horizons is a dream come true!”

Wayne County Chapter Re-Energized

The recently re-energized Wayne County Chapter received a \$750 donation from the Eastern Wayne High School ladies soccer team in May.



Guilford County Chapter Games Galore

The Guilford County Chapter enjoyed a bingo party for the holidays. “My boys had such a great time, full of laughter, conversation, and food,” said one parent after the event. “We appreciate all that the chapter does for our family.” Judy Smithmyer, ASNC Autism Resource Specialist and Regional Chapter Coordinator for the Triad, said, “I’ve found that by offering social events for our families, we’re providing a different and much-needed level of support. Families are able to participate in activities in a safe and comfortable environment while getting the opportunity to meet other parents who are dealing with many of the same issues. It also provides a great social opportunity for our kids and adults on the spectrum!”



Crystal Coast Chapter Has Fun with ‘Buds’

The Crystal Coast Chapter’s monthly Friends & Fun event was extra heavy on the fun in May. In addition to games, refreshments, and gifts for children who had birthdays that month, the kids enjoyed a fun planting activity.

Davidson County Chapter Joins Car Show

More than 200 people turned out for an Antique Car Show & Fundraiser held at Stoner-Thomas School in Lexington on April 29, and there was something for everyone. The Davidson Chapter hosted an informational booth and offered free games with prizes for children. ■



Eventos y Recursos para Familias Hispanas

La Sociedad de Autismo de Carolina del Norte ofrece muchos recursos en español para ayudar a familias hispanas afectadas por autismo y profesionales bilingües que trabajan con niños y adultos con autismo.

Próximos talleres

Los talleres están dirigidos a temas que incluyen comprensión del autismo, Programas de Educación Individualizada (IEPs) y acceso a los servicios.

Manténgase informado sobre estos próximos talleres:

- **Qué es el Autismo y Cómo Ayudar a mi Hijo:** Condado de Chatham y Greenville
- **Cómo Acceder Servicios y Encontrar Recursos Locales:** Condado de Johnston
- **Qué es un IEP y Cómo Ayudar a mi Hijo:** Durham, Greenville, y Hickory

Para ver el programa completo y registrarse online, favor de dirigirse a www.autismsociety-nc.org/workshops.

Grupos de Apoyo Hispansos

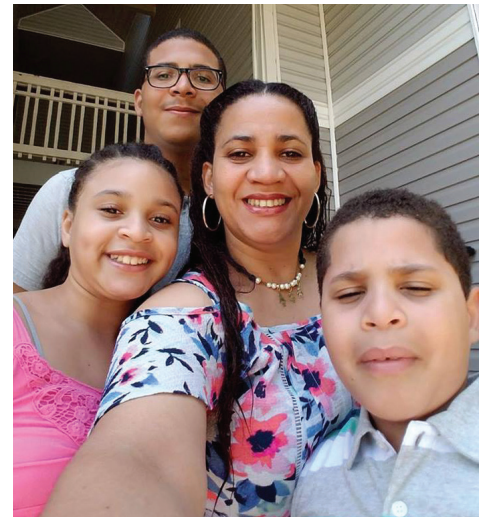
Los Grupos de Apoyo Hispansos de ASNC reúnen a familias hispanas afectadas por el autismo para compartir sus experiencias personales, consejos, inquietudes y esperanzas en un ambiente confortable. Los grupos también ofrecen presentaciones educativas sobre tópicos relacionados al comportamiento, escuelas, servicios y recursos.

Los beneficios de participar en grupos de apoyo pueden incluir:

- Los miembros del grupo se comunican en español.
- Las familias se vuelven parte de una comunidad, evitando el aislamiento.
- Los padres incrementan su conocimiento del autismo y desarrollan habilidades parentales.
- Las familias aprenden qué esperar en el futuro, dándoles tiempo para prepararse.
- Se provee de cuidado de niños para que los padres puedan disfrutar cada encuentro.
- Las familias comparten recursos para comparar servicios.
- Todos desarrollan habilidades de liderazgo y promueven conciencia sobre el autismo en la comunidad hispana.

ASNC ofrece grupos en las siguientes áreas:

Cumberland/Robeson: Reunión el último viernes de cada mes, 9:30-11:30 a.m., en la oficina regional de ASNC, 351 Wagoner Drive, Fayetteville. Coordinadora Voluntaria: Alma Morales, 910-785-5473



- **Qué es el Autismo de Alto Funcionamiento y el Síndrome de Asperger:** Fayetteville, Asheville, y Henderson
- **Cuáles son Mis Derechos como Padre de un Niño con Autismo:** Condados de Wake y Mecklenburg, Durham, y Greensboro



Durham: Reunión el segundo miércoles de cada mes, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., en El Centro Hispano, 2000 Chapel Hill Road #26A, Durham. Coordinadora Voluntaria: Mayra Tapia, 919-450-6543, y Juana García, 919-687-7692

Johnston: Reunión el primer viernes de cada mes, 9-11 a.m., en Partnership for Children of Johnston County, 1406 S. Pollock St., Selma. Coordinadora Voluntaria: Diana Wilkinson, 919-763-6203

Mecklenburg: Reunión el segundo jueves de cada mes, 9-11 a.m., en La Iglesia Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, 6212 Tuckaseegee Road, Charlotte. Coordinadora Voluntaria: Maria Laura Torres, 704-430-0281

Pitt: Reunión el tercer viernes de cada mes, 5-7 p.m., en Saint Gabriel Catholic Church, 3250 Dickinson Ave., Greenville. Coordinadora Voluntaria: Mary Cordova, 252-288-1668, and Amelia Velazquez, 252-217-0111

Vance: Reunión el último viernes de cada mes, 6-8 p.m., en La Iglesia de los Santos Inocentes, 210 S. Chestnut St., Henderson. Coordinadora Voluntaria: Beatriz Solano 252-378-4491

Wake: Reunión el primer viernes de cada mes, 6-8 p.m., en ASNC-Creative Living, 6300 Chapel Hill Road #230, Raleigh. Coordinadora Voluntaria: Betsy Velazquez, 919-802-0621, y Guadalupe Ortega, 919-247-5760

Involúrese

Qué es el Autismo de Alto Funcionamiento y el Síndrome de Asperger: Nosotros hemos ofrecido talleres sobre este tema en Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, y Charlotte, y continuaremos ofreciéndolos en todo el estado. El objetivo es educar a los padres para que puedan ayudar a sus hijos a desarrollar habilidades organizacionales, comprender ideas abstractas e incrementar la independencia para reducir estrés en el hogar, en la escuela y en la comunidad. Nuestro agradecimiento a nuestras presentadoras: Ann Palmer, profesora del Instituto de Discapacidades del Desarrollo en Carolina y autora; Linda Griffin, Coordinadora del Departamento Regional; Kim Tizzard, ASNC Directora de Soporte Familiar; Judy Clute, Especialista en Recursos para Autismo (ARS por sus siglas en inglés) en el Triángulo; Nancy Nestor, ARS en el área de Charlotte; Judy Smithmyer, Coordinadora de Especialistas en Recursos; y Wanda Curley, ARS en el Triad.



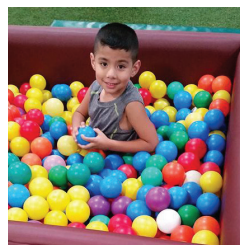
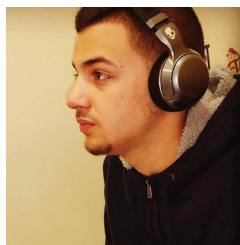
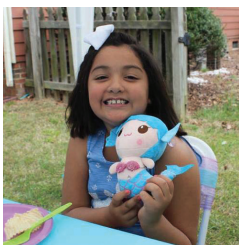
Región Occidental: Como nuestra misión es servir a familias en todo el estado, hemos ofrecido talleres en español en coordinación con las Iglesias Católicas en Asheville, Henderson, y Sylva para educar a los padres sobre la estructura visual, consejos sobre comportamiento y recursos en la comunidad. Una clínica abierta en la oficina regional de Asheville prestó ayuda individual a padres, y planeamos continuar facilitando más de estas en otras regiones.

Carrera/Caminata por el Autismo: Cientos de familias hispanas, profesionales bilingües, negocios hispanos y empresas de medios de comunicación de todo Carolina del Norte organizan equipos para participar

en los eventos de Carrera/Caminata por el Autismo en todo el estado para promover la conciencia sobre autismo y mejorar la vida de los individuos locales y familias afectadas por el autismo. Nuestro agradecimiento a la estación de televisión hispana Univision-40, que ayuda a promover estos eventos cada año. Únase al próximo evento de Carrera/Caminata por el Autismo en Asheville el 9 de septiembre, en Greensboro el 30 de septiembre, y en Raleigh el 14 de octubre.



Conferencia Anual: Padres hispanos y profesionales bilingües participan en este importante evento cada año en Charlotte; por favor, reserve la fecha para el 23-24 de marzo del 2018. Se prestará servicio de traducción al español durante ambos días de la conferencia. Las donaciones para otorgar becas son recogidas por los Grupos de Apoyo Hispano en eventos de toma de conciencia sobre el autismo. Por favor, contáctenos si usted está interesado en organizar un evento en su localidad.



Librería de ASNC: La librería de ASNC tiene libros específicamente sobre autismo más grande del país, ofreciendo muchos títulos en español. Visítela en www.autismbookstore.com.

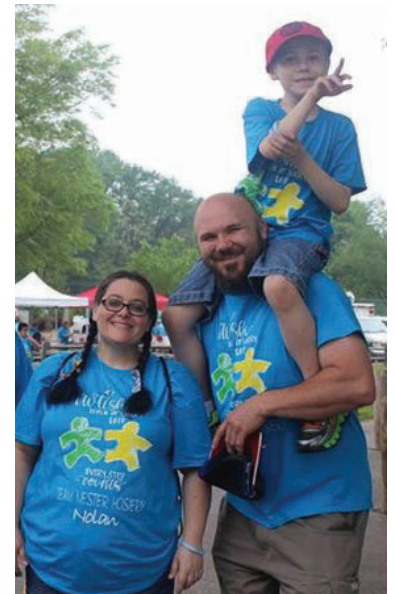
Necesitamos Apoyo: La División de Asuntos Hispánicos recibe donaciones para proveer educación y promover oportunidades para las familias hispanas en todo el estado. Contáctese con

Mariela Maldonado, ASNC Enlace de Asuntos Hispánicos, para obtener más información.



Si desea obtener más información o asistencia en español, por favor, contactarse con Mariela Maldonado, Enlace de Asuntos Hispánicos, a 919-865-5066 ó mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org.

Fundraisers & Events



Spring Run/Walks for Autism Raise About \$180,000

Almost 2,400 people stepped out to improve lives this spring in our Run/Walks for Autism in Concord, Wilmington, Mount Airy, Beaufort, and Greenville. They raised more than \$179,000 – a record total – that will go to ASNC services that improve lives and support families in their own communities. In addition to raising much-needed funds, the Run/Walks provide significant awareness about autism throughout North Carolina. We are so appreciative of all of the individuals, families, and businesses that participated, donated, volunteered, or sponsored this spring.

Register Now for a Fall Run/Walk for Autism

WNC Run/Walk for Autism

Carrier Park-Asheville | September 9
(Please note, this is back to Saturday this year)
wncrunwalkforautism.com



Greensboro Run/Walk for Autism

Jaycee Park-Greensboro | September 30
greensbororunwalkforautism.com

Triangle Run/Walk for Autism

Halifax Mall-Raleigh | October 14
trianglerunwalkforautism.com

Volunteer to Improve Lives

Would you like to help us plan one of the fall Run/Walks for Autism? Many roles are available for volunteers leading up to and during the events. Contact Shelley Jarman at 919-865-5051 or sjarman@autismsociety-nc.org.

Zippering for Autism Raises More than \$25,000

The sixth annual Zippering for Autism was hosted by Sheena and Jeff Greiner at the Adventure Center of Asheville on June 4. This year, 11 teams and 55 participants raised more than \$25,000 to support ASNC services in Western North Carolina. Teams were challenged to raise \$800 to zip line with views of the Asheville skyline, and teams that raised more than \$1,100 were also able to participate in the Treetops Adventure Park.



Stand Up for Autism Raises \$25,000 for IGNITE

More than 160 spectators and paddleboard enthusiasts from across North Carolina attended the third annual Stand Up for Autism on Lake Norman on May 6 to benefit IGNITE, the Autism Society of North Carolina's community center for young adults with high-functioning autism and Asperger's Syndrome. The event included professional and recreational paddleboard races, silent and live auctions, and a luau. We thank hosts Ray Evernham, racing icon, and Rob Bennett of My Aloha Paddle & Surf, as well as the Port City Club for the delicious food.

Event Sponsors

We thank the following sponsors of our events this spring; these events would not be possible without them. Please support these businesses and thank them for helping to improve the lives of individuals with autism and their loved ones. (*Supporters of Camp Royall events are listed on page 26.*)

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Hardison & Cochran Attorneys at Law
Premiere Communications & Consulting, Inc.
Vaya Health

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Alpha Media - BOB 93.3
Marsh & McLennan Agency
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Partner (\$1,000-\$2,499)

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UNCC Extended Academics
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AES
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Disabled American Veterans Chapter 26
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Friend (\$250-\$499)

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Volunteer Spotlight: Jeff Vittert

About a year ago, Jeff Vittert read an article about the prevalence rate of Autism Spectrum Disorder and the challenges faced by an increasing population of individuals with autism as they leave high school and transition to adulthood. Jeff's interest wasn't just academic. His son, Kevin, has autism and was finishing up at N.C. State. The Raleigh family had experienced firsthand that colleges were not as prepared as K-12 schools to support individuals with autism.

"I don't feel that the colleges and companies are really prepared for the wave of individuals on the spectrum that are moving into society," Jeff said. "A number of these kids need more guidance and understanding to help them through the process."

Kevin did well in school, earning a degree in biological engineering, securing a job, and living independently. "We're proud of Kevin. He's accomplished a lot," Jeff said. "He's extremely kind, very responsible, and cooperative, which has really helped him."

The Vitterts had a lot of support throughout Kevin's life, and his mother, Leigh, was especially good at working with him, Jeff said.

But the article presented a "stark reality" for many young adults with autism, Jeff said, so when he found himself with some free time as a retired real estate developer, he decided to give back and help other families.

The Vitterts were already familiar with the Autism Society of North Carolina's Triangle Run/Walk for Autism, because they had participated in the event for about 10 years. Last year, Jeff threw himself into promoting the race to increase participation. He updated ASNC's information on Wake County schools and spent about four days personally delivering materials about the Triangle Run/Walk to the ones with elementary AU classrooms.

"Jeff has become an important member of our team," said Kristy White, Chief Development Officer. "He brought in new ideas and connections, and he oversaw projects that were instrumental for a successful event."

This year, Jeff hopes to expand his efforts to more elementary schools and maybe add other counties. Another way he contributed his time was in assembling and mailing out Team Captain packets each week.

Jeff's business background and experience enabled him to secure a sponsorship for the Triangle Run/Walk for Autism with Park West Village in Morrisville. The shopping center displayed about a dozen ads for the event for about two months leading up to the race and fielded a team.



ASNC also was invited to set up information tables at several of Park West's events; Jeff said he really enjoyed talking with families about ASNC's resources. "People don't realize that the Autism Society is a great first stop that provides a lot of peace of mind. It's a great answer to 'Where do I go from here?' We can identify with that."

In addition to giving his time, Jeff generously donated items for ASNC to sell: blankets, sweatshirts, coffee tumblers, and hats with the ASNC logo. Look for them this year at the Triangle Run/Walk for Autism on Oct. 14! "I'm excited about the race this year and hoping that we can continue to build on the awareness," Jeff said.

"We truly admire Jeff," Kristy said. "He is an amazing father whose love for his son has motivated him to help others succeed."

Beyond the Run/Walk for Autism, Jeff is excited about working on the challenges facing individuals who are transitioning to adulthood. He hopes to utilize his

professional experience to encourage companies to partner with the Autism Society of North Carolina and employ adults with autism. "I believe there is a great need, and I'm passionate about that."

"I don't feel that the colleges and companies are really prepared for the wave of individuals on the spectrum that are moving into society."



Show Your Support!

You can show your support everywhere you drive by purchasing an Autism Society of North Carolina license plate. A portion of the plate fee is donated to public awareness and autism education programs throughout the state.

<http://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/vehicle/plates/>

More than \$150,000 Raised to Send Campers to Camp Royall



Catwalk to Camp

Hundreds of our friends and supporters joined us this spring for fun and fashion during Catwalk to Camp events in Raleigh and Charlotte. The sixth annual Raleigh event, an elegant dinner April 6 at the Angus Barn, raised more than \$100,000 for camp scholarships through donations and an exciting live auction. The fourth annual Charlotte event, in the evening May 18, raised \$20,000 at The Olde Mecklenburg Brewery with barbecue from Midwood Smokehouse and desserts from Amélie's French Bakery. Event attendees enjoyed shows featuring the latest spring fashions and jewelry from Vineyard Vines and Kendra Scott in Raleigh and Macy's in Charlotte.



Camp Royall Classic Golf Tournament

Golfers gathered May 1 for the sixth annual Camp Royall Classic Golf Tournament at The Preserve at Jordan Lake. Twenty-five teams of golfers helped contribute \$30,000 toward camp scholarships and enjoyed a fun day. Thank you to local McDonald's franchise owners Paul, Pat, Rex, and Kelli Willoughby for their support and hard work to help us provide a life-changing week at camp to individuals from across North Carolina!

We are so grateful to all who participated in our events to send individuals with autism to Camp Royall. Be on the lookout for these events next spring!

Corporate Partnerships

Is your company looking for a way to give back and make a difference in your community? Connect them with the Autism Society of North Carolina! We are excited to work with companies, organizations, and their employees to improve the lives of individuals with autism and support their families. We value corporate involvement and partner with companies on programs, initiatives, and cause marketing.



Become a Corporate Partner

Each year, we host eight Run/Walk for Autism events across North Carolina, plus many other special events, that offer financial and in-kind sponsorships as well as volunteer opportunities.

Create positive brand association: For close to 50 years, the Autism Society of North Carolina has been the leading statewide resource for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Reach a large audience that is engaged and diverse: More than 65,000 North Carolina individuals are affected by autism, and their families partner with us to give their loved ones the best lives possible. Autism knows no racial, ethnic, or social boundaries.

Let us customize your package: With a team of experienced and creative marketing and sponsorship professionals, we are able to customize your package to help you achieve your mission and ours.

Together, we will be here for the families who need us today and the families who will find out they need us tomorrow.

Contact us:

Kristy White, *Chief Development Officer*
919-865-5086
kwhite@autismsociety-nc.org

Camp Royall Sponsors

The Autism Society of North Carolina has been offering recreational, therapeutic, and educational summer camp experiences for the past 46 years to individuals with autism of all ages. Camp Royall is the largest and oldest camp exclusively for individuals with autism in the United States. Because of the generosity of the following donors, we were able to provide almost \$200,000 in camp scholarships for summer 2017. We hope you will consider joining these donors in helping to provide a life-changing experience for a camper with autism. Please contact Kristy White, Chief Development Officer, at 919-856-5086 or kwhite@autismsociety-nc.org if you are interested in donating to camp, learning about named scholarships, or helping with fundraising.

\$10,000 and Above

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ASNC Wake County Chapter
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The Autism Society of North Carolina would like to extend a heartfelt thank-you to all of our donors. While we appreciate every gift, we have limited the donation list to Honorarium/Memorial gifts in the interest of space and printing costs. Thank you for your tremendous support.

This list reflects donations received on or between December 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017. Please contact Beverly Gill if you have any questions or corrections at 800-442-2762, ext. 1105, or bgill@autismsociety-nc.org.

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Autism Awareness Night at NC Courage

SATURDAY
SEPT
30

WakeMed Soccer Park, Cary
NC Courage vs.
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www.autismsociety-nc.org/special-events

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Celebrate Autism Awareness in Burlington



SATURDAY,
AUGUST
26

9am: OT Sports 5K

7pm: Burlington Royals
vs. Pulaski Yankees

For information or tickets: dlaxton@autismsociety-nc.org

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Mary and Harry Emmel

*Terri Meyers
John Morrison*

Edward Bryan English

*Carol and Anthony Aweekey
Debra, Melissa and Elizabeth Brown
Michele Cantrell
Laura Dooley
Carol and Patrick Jacobs
Carolyn Lee
Donna Michaux
Bruce Reinecke
Denise and David Reinecke
The Schweppe Family
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Barbara and Chuck Vanslyke*

Barry Friedman

Rachel Friedman

Andrew Stephen Hendrix

*Douglas Clark
Renee and Len Clark
Laura and Peter Fanning
Gerald Hansen
Patty Williams*

Marie C. Horne

Alice Eades

Charles "Chuck" Hydeman

Jane Hydeman

Fern Jones

Kenneth Shires

John Wesley Jones

*Betty and James Hadden
Louis Ricci*

Bernard Harry "Bernie" Kellogg

John Morrison

Roy H. Ledbetter

Tina McCall

Dustin Everett Lewis

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Karen and Roger Frye
Nancy Lewis
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Save the Date!

**November 25
Davidson**

**5th annual
car show
to benefit IGNITE**



Jasmine McCleary

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John J. McGovern

*Jean and Mark Calkin
Dolores McGovern*

Debbie Meredith

Gayle and Wayne Meredith

Brenda Kay Miller

Eleanor Husky

Gene "Tres" Darrell Tony Muniz

John Mangiante

Nancy Merritt Neighbors

*Tyler Whitfield Beliveau
Nick and Tina Howell
Leslie and James Kellenberger
Gail Marshall
Mary Louise Ward
George Whitfield
Gef Whitfield*

Mark Russell Newcomb

*Cheryl and Michael Davis
Jacqueline and Ronald May
Diane and John McQuade
Sherry and Michael Moman
Ginger and Stephen Newcomb
Margaret and Ronald Preston
Mary and Anthony Salem
Teresa and Calvin Warren
Eve and Craig Zavelo*

Thomas E. "Nick" Nichols, Jr.

*Jean and Horace Denny
Nancy Gonzalez
Patti and R. Lee Hewitt
Cheryl Bard and David Lenaburg
Nell Lynch
Elaine Morgan
Deana and Clayton Patteson
Joyce Pinnix
Janice and Edward Shore*

Jeanne Peck

Carol Griffin

Elizabeth Pegram

Karen Dyer

Selma Pion

Richard Goldstein

Shawn Michael Radley

*Susan and M. R. Jenkins
Marcus Radley
Jessica and Nicholas Radley*

Casiano D. Roldan

Fidelia and Dave Fernandez

Bill Scott

Maureen Scott

Billy Scott

Maureen Scott

Curt A. Sullinger

*Tracy Henry
Margaret and Michael Northrup
Lisa Williams
Sue and Embry Wyatt
Walter Wyatt*

Marcella Swanson

*Sandra Adams
Chyrl Hartshorn*

Etta Thompson

Fran Scarlett

Sherryl Birkhead Toledo

Betsey and David Geller

Jack and Olga Trembath

Dimitri Trembath

Diane Nixon Walker

*Pat and Mike Campbell
Pam and Rick Rudisill
Judy and Thomas Smith*

George Thomas "Bud" Weiser

*Betty Kestner
Margaret Peck and Gary Krainak
Elizabeth Peyton
Pam Stone
Joyce Weiser*

Curtis Eugene "Buddy" Williams II

*Teresa Calton
Sharon Ennis
Jackie and Larry Gore
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Israel Melissa Wilson

*Michelle Keenan
Mark Ledyard*

Alan M. Wood

Angela and Carey Carr

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Call on us!

The Autism Society of North Carolina improves the lives of individuals with autism, supports families affected by autism, and educates communities.

Autism Resource Specialists connect families to resources and provide training to help you become your child's best advocate. As parents of children with autism themselves, they understand your concerns. Find yours: www.autismsociety-nc.org/resourcespecialists

Workshops and conferences with our Autism Resource Specialists or Clinical staff will help you learn more about topics that concern you, such as early intervention, IEPs, transitioning, and residential options. See the complete schedule: www.autismsociety-nc.org/workshops

Online resources, including IEP toolkits and a Staying Safe section, provide opportunities to learn on your own time from your home. www.autismsociety-nc.org

Chapters and Support Groups around NC provide a place for families who face similar challenges to feel welcomed and understood as they offer each other encouragement. Find one near you: www.autismsociety-nc.org/chapters

Skill-building and support services provide children and adults with autism the skills to increase self-sufficiency and participate in the community in a meaningful way. ASNC's services across the state include skill-building in areas such as communication, socialization, community integration, and personal care; family consultation; respite; and an adult day program. Services are provided through the NC Innovations waiver, state funding, B3, and private pay. Contact us to learn which services are available in your region. www.autismsociety-nc.org/skill-building

LifeLong Interventions provides comprehensive treatment across skill domains and the lifespan. This service is rooted in the principles of ABA and involves intensive teaching, using evidence-based practices to promote appropriate skills and behaviors. LifeLong Interventions is directed by a licensed psychologist who supervises PhD and master's level licensed psychologists and Board Certified Behavior Analysts. Training is provided by registered behavior technicians under the direct supervision of these clinical professionals. ASNC is an in-network provider for many insurers, including BCBSNC, Aetna, and United Healthcare. Children under 21 who rely on Medicaid are also eligible to receive treatment under EPSDT. We also provide treatment through private-pay arrangements. www.autismsociety-nc.org/clinical

Behavior consultations provided by our licensed psychologists and BCBA's can help explain why behaviors are occurring, develop comprehensive behavior plans, and coach caregivers on effective strategies. www.autismsociety-nc.org/clinical

Employment Supports helps individuals with autism explore their skills and interests, then assists them in finding, keeping, and thriving in a job. Services are funded through the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. www.autismsociety-nc.org/employmentsupports

Camp Royall is the nation's oldest and largest camp for individuals with autism. Located near Pittsboro, Camp Royall serves all ages and offers year-round programming, including an afterschool program. www.camproyall.org

Social Recreation programs provide opportunities for participants to bond over common interests, practice social skills, and try new activities. In Newport, Wilmington, Winterville, and Brunswick and Onslow counties, social recreation programs include summer day camp, afterschool programs, and adult programs, with support from Trillium Health Resources. In other areas, afterschool programs and social-skills groups for a range of ages and abilities are available. Contact us to learn which services are available in your region. www.autismsociety-nc.org/socialrecreation

The ASNC Bookstore is your one-stop shop for quality autism books and materials selected by our experienced staff. The bookstore employs adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and all proceeds benefit ASNC. www.autismbookstore.com

ASNC's public policy efforts aim to advocate for the needs of individuals with autism and their families by maintaining a wide range of ties with the executive and legislative branches of state government. You can get involved and make your voice heard. www.autismsociety-nc.org/make-voice-heard

Connect with us: Sign up to receive our monthly email newsletters and twice-yearly magazine or follow us on our social media channels. www.autismsociety-nc.org/contact-us

autismsociety-nc.org

We have regional offices in Asheville, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, and Raleigh. Contact our state office to be connected to resources.

ASNC State Office
800-442-2762
505 Oberlin Road, Suite 230
Raleigh, NC 27605-1345



Autism Society
of NORTH CAROLINA

505 Oberlin Road, Suite 230
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WNC Run/Walk for Autism
September 9 | Asheville

Greensboro Run/Walk for Autism
September 30 | Greensboro

Triangle Run/Walk for Autism
October 14 | Raleigh

**RUN/WALK
FOR AUTISM**



www.runwalkforautism.com



AUTISM
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One day, two events!

October 14

9:30 a.m. | **Triangle Run/Walk for Autism** | Raleigh, NC
www.trianglerunwalkforautism.com

Time TBD | **Autism Awareness Game** | Chapel Hill, NC
Purchase tickets for just \$20: <https://tinyurl.com/ybe9bk5>

Learn more at www.teamautismnc.com