



Kalamazoo/Battle Creek Chapter Autism Society of America



December 2004 Newsletter

www.asa-kal.org

"Connecting individuals within the autism spectrum, as well as their community, with life-long access to resources and opportunities through advocacy, education, research, and public awareness."

2004-05 Meeting Schedule

*Social Time begins at 6:30 p.m.
Meeting begins at 7:00 p.m.*

September 14, 2004-

Introductions and Social Meeting

October 12, 2004-

Topic: Social Thinking

December 14, 2004-

Topic: Safety Issues

February 8, 2005-

Annual Meeting: Board of Director Elections

Topic: Estate Planning

April 12, 2005-

Topic: Behavior Issues

May 11, 2005-

Social Meeting and Networking

Board of Directors

PRESIDENT: Beverly Bishop 381-2456
bbishop@asa-kal.org Contact for: Press or Media
information and General Information

VICE PRESIDENT: Beverly Taylor 341-4588
btaylor@asa-kal.org Contact for: General Information

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD: Jayne Weaver 629-9798
jweaver@asa-kal.org Contact for: Meeting Information

TREASURER: Karrie Kemery 324-1264
kkemery@asa-kal.org Contact for: Membership or
Financial Information

CO-SECRETARY & CHILDCARE COORDINATOR:
Melanie Giddings 674-8776 mgiddings@asa-kal.org
Contact for: Childcare Reservations

CO-SECRETARY: Alberta Walker-King 321-0924
awalkerking@asa-kal.org

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Kelly Davis 731-4663
kdavis@asa-kal.org Contact for: Newsletter info

DIAGNOSIS SUPPORT LIASON: Candi Bush 629-4920
cbush@asa-kal.org Contact for: Diagnosis Support
Pack

FUNDRAISING CHAIRPERSON: Katrina Wood 372-1509
kwood@asa-kal.org Contact for: Fund Raising

BATTLE CREEK LIASON: Carey Whitfield 969-8686
cwhitfield@asa-kal.org Contact for: Battle Creek

DIRECTOR: Betty Schimmel 327-5624

HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR: Jackie Vander Kooi
353-8976 jvanderkooi@asa-kal.org Contact for:
Refreshments at meetings, play and support groups

KRESA LIASON: Brenda Gagie 488-7250
bgagie@asa-kal.org

PARENT-TO-PARENT LIASON: Jean Steele 329-2501
jsteele@asa-kal.org

December Meeting to Highlight Safety Issues in the Autism Community

Our Chapter President, Bev Bishop, will give an important presentation on safety issues for people with Autism Spectrum Disorders on Tuesday, December 14. Bev will cover many strategies to help cope with the unique risks our population faces, including communication difficulties in an emergency, public "meltdowns", fire safety, and the dangers posed by "runners".

Our chapter has worked hard with the law enforcement agencies in Kalamazoo County to set up a system for parents to register their special needs children in the 911 system. Come to the meeting to get more information on how to register your child with your local police department.

Bev has also been very busy conducting roll call training with our local police departments. Since a person with an autism spectrum disorder will have 7 times more contact with law enforcement than a typical person, Bev feels that this training is extremely important for the safety our community.

We also look forward to sharing more information regarding Project Lifesaver in our community!

We will have T-shirts, magnetic car ribbons, safety stickers, and more available at this meeting. **Please join us at 6:30 for time to get to know other people who are interested in autism and at 7:00 for our meeting.**

*"People with Autism Spectrum Disorders
will have Seven Times more contact with
law enforcement than people without ASD."*

Changes in Free Childcare at Meetings

We are happy to provide **free childcare for children with autism and their siblings** from 6:45 to 8:45 during our Chapter Meetings. Melanie Giddings, an AI Teacher Consultant, is now childcare coordinator. There are some exciting additions to the program, including structured activities and visual schedules. Please note that there are also new routines and rules to provide a safe and non-disruptive environment for our children. Even children without special needs are expected to follow the guidelines and directions of the supervising staff. **Pre-registration is very important** in order to insure adequate staffing for the safety of every child. Please contact Melanie Giddings at 269-373-4714 or mgiddings@asa-kal.org.

Fundraising Efforts

Thank you to everyone who participated in our October "Stop and Shop" event! We truly appreciate your efforts to support our organization.

Our annual Walk is coming up in April, and **we need more people** to serve on the committee to organize this big event. Contact Trina Wood, kwood@asa-kal.org or 372-1509, if you are interested in serving on this committee.

Upcoming Events

Asperger Parent Support Group

Mon, Dec. 13; Wed, Jan. 26

Croyden Avenue School 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Contact Michele Gulbis, 553-9311, for more info.

Communication: How to Work with your Child's School

Tues, Nov. 30, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Speaker: Peggy Link from Amberly Elementary

Parent to Parent of SW MI - All Kids Can! Inclusion Support Network; 814 S. Westnedge; Kalamazoo

Childcare is available.

RSVP at 269-345-8950 or p2pswmi@sbcglobal.net

The Abilities Center, Walled Lake, MI

Dec. 2, 2004: Sensory Integration & Speech

Pre-register at www.abilitiescenter.com

Research Opportunity

"Teaching Compliance Using a Three-Step Prompting Method"; WMU Dr. Linda LeBlanc and Christine Bennett are

conducting a study for children ages 2-9 who have been diagnosed with a developmental disability (MR, autism, etc.) and have problems with non-compliance. Participation consists of both parent and child attending 5-10 sessions held on the WMU campus for 2-4 weeks and at no financial cost to participants. To learn more, please contact Linda or Christine at WMU Autism and Developmental Disabilities Lab (269) 387-4363.

Upcoming Annual Elections

Please notice that our annual elections for the Board of Directors will be held at our **February meeting**. We have several board members who will be rotating off the board and encourage anyone interested to consider serving. We will have information forms available at our December meeting. We will also have these forms available on our website soon. Please return these forms no later than January 14 in order to be included as a candidate in our next newsletter. Contact Jayne Weaver at jweaver@asa-kal.org or 629-9798 for more information.

Battle Creek News

For those of you coming from the Battle Creek area, our goal is to get enough of you coming that we will be able to support having additional meetings in Calhoun County soon. We hope to eliminate your driving to Kalamazoo and help create a better support system for you in your community. If you are interested in helping, but just can't attend our meetings, please contact Carey Whitfield at cwhitfield@asa-kal.org or 969-8686.

AutismSource

AutismSource is ASA's new, one-of-a-kind, nationwide online directory of ASA Chapters, professionals, government resources, and service providers serving families affected by autism. Please encourage all professionals you have contact with to register themselves at www.autismsource.org.

Join Our Local Chapter!

We can use your help as a member of the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek Chapter-Autism Society of America! By becoming a member of our local chapter you are helping to support printing and postage for the newsletter as well as receiving voting rights. If you are already a member of the national organization, only \$10 should be sent for local chapter dues. If you are not a member of the national organization, please send the following for membership in both the national organization and the local chapter:

Student – \$25.00

Individual – \$40.00

Family – \$50.00

Please make checks payable to: **Kalamazoo/BC Autism Society** and mail to: Kalamazoo/BC Autism Society of America; Croyden Avenue School; 4606 Croyden Avenue; Kalamazoo, MI 49006. Questions?? Contact Karrie Kemery at 324-1264.