



Angels Bridging Gaps
 Palm Bay Autism Support Group
www.angelsbridginggaps.org

Contact Info: Jackie Yearby Jbyearby@angelsbridginggaps.org



Welcome

About Angels Bridging Gaps

As a parent of a child with Autism I understand the struggles and unique challenges that become a part of everyday life. And it is only through a strong support system based on *Love, Faith, Hope and Joy* that my family has been able to weather the storms. When we relocated to Palm Bay Florida in 2006 I was fortunate to have met some wonderful *Angels* that assisted my family with settling in, during which time I found that there were a number of great resources for families living with Autism within the local and surrounding areas. The only thing that seemed to be missing was a local support group – where families and individuals could come together to share information and to socialize in a place where everyone understands. It was on this basis that *Angels Bridging Gaps* was founded.

As we know Angels do exist and walk amongst us everyday. As I noted our family has been very fortunate to have had a very special Angel be a part of helping us formulate this vision, my father, **Michael A. Rentrope**. In loving memory we would love to thank our devoted father, husband, friend and Papa for being such a wonderful inspiration and support. You will forever be missed. We love you.



Omari, my son and his Angel Papa.

Bowling was... Awesome!

Our first bowling meet was a blast. The kids and their parents had a great time. Shore Lanes of Palm Bay provided us a great opportunity to encourage social interaction and physical fitness amongst our members. We look forward to our next meet on March 30. Game on!

Shore Lanes Palm Bay

4851 Dairy Road Palm Bay
 Hours of Operation (321) 723-7400
 Sunday - Thursday 9am - Midnight
 Friday & Saturday 9am - 1am



Newsletter

March 17, 2009

Events

March - Sign Language Class age 6 & up Melbourne Public Library, Melbourne 3:30pm. Call to register 952-4514

3/18 - Whales (Film) BCC Planetarium & Observatory, Cocoa 3:00pm. Breathtaking film of whales, orcas and dolphins. Other movie titles also showing like **The Living Sea** 3/27 at 8:00pm. Call 433-7373

3/18 - FIT Workshop Early Indicators of Autism FIT, Melbourne. 6:30-8:30pm 674-8104

3/19 - Family Night, Puppies and Pizza Martin Luther King Jr. Public Library, Melbourne 6:30pm. Watch the movie Space Buddies. 952-4511

3/21 - Spring Fling Craft Food and Fun Fair (Rolling Readers) Moose Lodge, Melbourne Village 11am-3pm Craft sales, story telling, auctions, face painting, cake walk, food and more. Call 254-9976 www.rollingreadersspacecoast.com

3/26 - CARD Workshop Behavior Basics 2 Space Coast Early Intervention Center, Melbourne. 6:00-8:00pm. Call 407-737-2566

3/27 - Brevard County Fair Wickham Park, Melbourne 11:00 am - 11:00pm. Activities include a horse expo, livestock exhibit, rides, music & more Call 633-1702

April 3 - F.I.T. Scott Center - An Evening of Hope (Autism) Benefit Pumpkin Center, Cocoa Beach 7:00pm-10:00pm. Fundraiser to benefit the university's new Scott Center for Autism Treatment. Cocktail reception and live auction. Sponsors sought at various donation levels. Call 674-6076 <http://research.fit.edu/scottcenter/>

Our upcoming Events

3/30 - Bowling - Shore Lanes, Palm Bay 4:00-5:00pm Come out and join us. \$2.99 including shoes.

3/31 - Parent Support Meeting - Malabar Baptist Church, Malabar 6:00pm-7:00pm. Call 723-1602

Treatments & Therapies

Overview of Biomedical Treatments of Autism

By James B. Adams, Ph.D.

As taken from : (ARI Publication 40 / April 2007)

Here is a listing of various treatments in approximate order of what is typically recommended. Note that every child is different, and initial assessment by a physician may suggest a different order. Also, some physicians have their own preferences as to order of treatment. The key point to remember is to observe the effect of each treatment on your child, both behaviorally and through testing where possible.

- Improve Diet
- Food Allergies
- Gluten Free Casein Free Diet
- Vitamin/Mineral Supplements
- High-Dose Vitamin B6 and Magnesium
- Essential Fatty Acids
- Gut Treatments
 - o Antifungals
 - o Probiotics
 - o Digestive Enzymes
- Amino Acids
- Melatonin
- Thyroid Supplements
- Sulfation
- Glutathione
- Chelation
- Immune System Regulation



For more information on this article visit: http://www.autism.com/treatable/adams_biomed_summary.pdf (ARI Publication 40 / April 2007)

Social Stories

By Jennifer Rentrope, MSED

One very common characteristic of individuals with autism is either their lack of social interaction or their lack of appropriate social interaction. One technique used to help individuals with autism in this arena has been the use of Social Stories.

Social stories are stories that provide an individual with information about different social scenarios. They detail what the individual may experience in the situation as well as what is expected of them and why.

Through the reading of a social story, the aim is to make a person feel more comfortable and equipped in a social environment they might be unfamiliar with or have trouble navigating.

Here is an example of one social story taken from Polyxo.com

Lining Up

At school, we sometimes line up.

We line up to go to the gym, to go to the library, and to go out to recess.

Sometimes my friends and I get excited when we line up, because we're going someplace fun, like out to recess.

It is okay to get excited, but it is important to try to walk to the line. Running can cause accidents, and my friends or I could get hurt.

I will try to walk to the line.

Many social stories include great visuals to help the reader/ listener better understand the story.

There are many great companies that publish this kind of literature like SocialStories.com. This company has titles like Going to the Dentist, Going to the Doctor and Going to the Grocery Store. However, one great thing about using this technique is that you do not need any special degree or complicated training to practice it. In fact, you can write social stories yourself and make them more applicable to your daily situations and environment. Polyxo.com shows you how to do just that and gives you the few easy guidelines for writing one. Visit them at this link <http://www.polyxo.com/socialstories/introduction.html> and let them help you help your child conquer the social jungle.

Now if they just had a social story for that discourteous cashier at the local drive thru!



Spiritual Corner

HEAVEN'S VERY SPECIAL CHILD
Author: Edna Massionilla

HEAVEN'S VERY SPECIAL CHILD
A meeting was held quite far from Earth!
It's time again for another birth.
Said the Angels to the LORD above,
This Special Child will need much love.

His progress may be very slow,
Accomplishments he may not show.
And he'll require extra care
From the folks he meets down there.

He may not run or laugh or play,
His thoughts may seem quite far away,
In many ways he won't adapt,
And he'll be known as handicapped.

So let's be careful where he's sent,
We want his life to be content.
Please LORD, find the parents who
Will do a special job for you.

They will not realize right away
The leading role they're asked to play,
But with this child sent from above
Comes stronger faith and richer love.

And soon they'll know the privilege given
In caring for their gift from Heaven.
Their precious charge, so meek and mild,
Is HEAVEN'S VERY SPECIAL CHILD.

Nutrition

Recipe

Delicious Gluten Free Pancakes

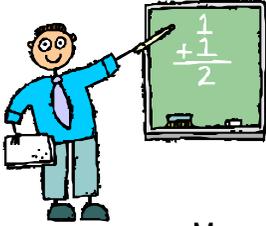
Allrecipes.com

INGREDIENTS	
1 cup rice flour	1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
3 tablespoons tapioca flour	1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/3 cup potato starch	1/2 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons dry buttermilk powder	1/2 teaspoon xanthan gum
1 packet sugar substitute	2 eggs
	3 tablespoons canola oil
	2 cups water

1. In a bowl, mix or sift together the rice flour, tapioca flour, potato starch, dry buttermilk powder, sugar substitute, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and xanthan gum. Stir in eggs, water, and oil until well blended and few lumps remain.

2. Heat a large, well-oiled skillet or griddle over medium high heat. Spoon batter onto skillet and cook until bubbles begin to form. Flip, and continue cooking until golden brown on bottom. Serve immediately with condiments of your choice

Education is Key



Dear Parents, I would like to utilize this section to give you academic techniques you might want to try with your child(ren) at home or school.

Many children with autism have both receptive and expressive language deficits as well as delayed reading skills. This technique, which you can implement in the home environment can help build these skill areas.

LABEL, LABEL, LABEL. Yes, LABEL. Label items in the home that your child uses daily, such as the microwave, the television, his computer, his toothbrush even. Label belongings by simply printing the name of the object on a piece of paper and affixing it securely to the item. You might also wish to add a small pictorial representation of that item on the label for extra visual support.

When your child encounters or uses these things, verbally identify them and then point to the printed word and visual picture. Ask and assist your child to verbally repeat the item's name. Next, guide them to point to the printed word/label as they recite the word a second time.

Following this routine, with daily exposure and consistent practice your child will not only learn the names and sight words of his daily belongings, but also gain confidence verbally expressing them and later hopefully requesting them himself!



Cool Stuff



AblePlay.org is the handiest website. They describe

themselves as "a toy rating system and website that provides comprehensive information on toys for children with special needs so parents, special educators, therapists and others can make the best choices for children in their lives with disabilities". The website rates toys for children of all ages and is very easy to use. A must visit!



Another great company is Discovery Toys. And thankfully

we have a local rep in our support group Laura who works with the company. What's so awesome about Discovery is that they have educational toys of various ages and have broken down which toys are best for kids with Autism. Awesome indeed! For more info contact Laura McCormack at 327-3436 lnibbler79@aol.com or visit www.discoverytoysinc.com/autism.htm

For Siblings

Children with autism require a lot of dedication and attention which we freely give. However, many times siblings may feel left out or neglected due to this. The Brevard County library has great books available to coach you through these situations. Here are two: *Siblings of children with autism: a guide for families* by Sandra L. Harris and *The ride together: a brother and sister's memoir of autism in the family* by Judy Karasik.

Make sure your other children take the trip with you to the library because there are some great books written just for them like: *My brother's keeper: a kindergartner's view of autism* by Jace Richards, *Talking to angels* by Esther Watson, *Ian's walk: a story about autism* by Laurie Lears and *Waiting for Benjamin: a story about autism* by Alexandra Jessup Altman. Brevard Library has a LARGE selection of books on autism. Kudos and praise to them!

They don't stay young



Our children are growing more and more everyday. And some are already grown! So, what options exist for our grown children with autism in this section of Brevard?

I have been scratching the surface and in my preliminary search I have come across two programs: CIP and Easter Seals.

CIP stands for the College Internship Program. They are a Massachusetts based organization, running four nationwide campus programs, with one located in Melbourne. CIP gears their programming towards students with High Functioning Autism, Aspergers and other learning disabilities. They provide year round "individualized, post-secondary, academic, internship and independent living experiences" for their students. A requirement for participation in the program includes the ability to attend college or a vocational program independently.

For those that may not be suitable for this program, another local agency, Easter Seals may be an option. Easter Seals has an office on Babcock Street in Palm Bay that houses one of their Vocational Services programs. This program, which also has an office in Titusville, teaches adults vocational skills in a supervised training environment with the aim of providing members the opportunity to find meaningful employment. Individualized programs also incorporate community training and socialization.

For more info on either of these programs, call 1-877-Know-CIP or 723-4474 for Easter Seals.

Fun Stuff

Word Scramble Unscramble each of the clue words. Copy the letters in the numbered cells to the below cells with the same number.

POEH

SIUTAA

NUOMTAWIONICCA

YJO

LAPM BYA

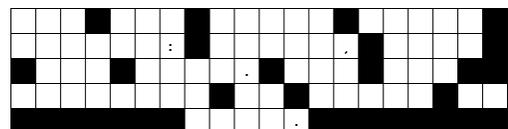
TIFAH

PUPSTRO

LAIFODR

Fallen Phrase

The letters have fallen off the grid! Place each letter, column by column in its correct slot on the grid. Each letter appears in the same column it has fallen underneath, but make sure you put it in the correct spot on the column to build back the phrase about LOVE.



R N N E H E E H E
R N D A N O W T F A E B H T H E E
G A E A I E S V T O I T U H E H R E I
A E M D T L O L O V F S T T T S O P E S

MY CHILD HAS AUTISM
Autism is a lifelong neurological disability that affects development of a person's ability to communicate, understand and interact with others.

This card may be found on <http://card.ufl.edu/handouts/Autism-Card-w-border.pdf>

OUR CHILD HAS AUTISM

We'd like to thank you for your concern. We are making every attempt to allow our child, who is affected by Autism, to experience every day activities that others may take for granted.

For more information about Autism, please contact the Autism Society of America at 1-800-328-5475 or visit www.autism-society.org

This card may be found on bridges4kids.org

For those who look at you funny Don't HATE, JUST EDUCATE!!!

The following websites have printable cards that you can hand out in social situations to explain your child's behavior, if you desire. This not only helps promote autism awareness, but may save you time from having to explain your child's behavior to those who may not understand. Take a gander and print out as many as you would like.

www.angelfire.com/pa5/as/awarenesscards.html <http://card.ufl.edu/handouts/Autism-Card-w-border.pdf> and www.bridges4kids.org/AutismCards.pdf