911 Call Center Invites Families to “Flag” Addresses

First responders will have first-hand knowledge of individual with autism before arriving at residence

Howard County families who have loved ones with autism may soon breathe a little easier knowing that county 911 operators and first responders are already “in the know” when called to an emergency. By giving residents the option to voluntarily “flag” their address in the system, the 911 Call Center will have first-hand knowledge that an individual with autism resides at a given address and that he or she may be nonverbal, oversensitive to sirens, unaware of danger, prone to elope, or exhibit other noteworthy behaviors. This information will be forwarded to first responders prior to their arrival on the scene.

“This is just another common-sense step toward greater protection of—and service to—individuals in our community with special needs,” says Beth Benevides Hill, former HCAS president. “No one ever wants to be in an emergency situation. But the reality is we sometimes are. Anything we can do to better prepare first responders for what they might encounter is worth our effort. In the end, this seemingly simple address notation has the potential to save lives.”

How to Enroll

Individuals, parents, or guardians of individuals with autism or other special needs may send a request to the attention of Sgt. Bill Cheuvront, Howard County Police Department, 11226 Scaggsville Rd., Laurel, MD, 20723. The request must include the following information: address to be flagged; name of individual; gender; date of birth; diagnosis; key facts for first responders. An email address or phone number is also required. The Police Department will contact families annually to make sure the information is still current.

In the midst of an emergency call, information is dispersed quickly. Keep that in mind when writing your request. The idea is to include one or two helpful notations for first responders—examples: child is nonverbal; most likely to hide in bedroom when scared; avoid loud sirens if possible; unaware of danger—may elope and run into the street if feeling scared or threatened.
April is Autism Awareness Month

Sensitive Easter Bunny
Sunday, April 1
10:30 a.m.-12 p.m., The Mall in Columbia
Children have the opportunity to visit the Easter Bunny in a calmer, sensory-friendly environment before the mall is open to the public.

Double Feature Movie Screening
Saturday, April 14
1 p.m., HCAS Resource Center
1 p.m. showing of "Asperger's, Autism and Girls DVD: Understanding & Appreciating the Female Perspective." Dr. Tony Attwood describes the unique challenges of women and girls with autism and Asperger's Syndrome. 3 p.m. showing of "Wretches & Jabberers," a documentary featuring Larry Bissonnette and Tracy Thresher advocating for autism on the road.

Sibling Appreciation Celebration
Thursday, April 19
7-8:30 p.m., Dasher Green Room, Owen Brown Community Center
Family life can be challenging, but more so at times with a sibling with autism. This event was created to give special attention to these brothers and sisters of children on the spectrum.

The Seventh Annual Pieces Of The Puzzle Gala
Saturday, April 21
6-11 p.m., Hotel at Turf Valley
This year’s Hawaiian theme says “Aloha” to autism: a “goodbye” to old stereotypes and barriers, and a “warm welcome” to a more integrated community that embraces the opportunity and abilities of each and every resident in Howard County.

Our keynote speaker is Ari Ne’eman, an autistic adult committed to increasing the representation of autistic people across society. He is the co-founder of the Autistic Self-Advocacy Network and has been appointed to the National Council of Disabilities by President Obama.

Join HCAS for dinner, open bar, dancing, and both live and silent auction items. Tickets: $100 per person, $175 per couple, and $875 per table. Visit HCAS.kintera.org/piecesofthepuzzle or call 410-290-3466 for more information.

Save the Dates
The winter season seems to have eluded Maryland this year. A small hint of winter with an October snow misguided our seasonal expectations, leaving us unprepared for the lack of those typical cold and snowy winter days we’ve come to expect here in the mid-Atlantic. While many have missed the flakes, cuddling in front of a warm fire, the school closures, and the skiing or sledding that make winter so enjoyable, others have embraced the warmer than normal temperatures. Some have modified their expectations and are enjoying the spring-like season where winter typically belongs. We now look to the budding trees and premature blossoming of the crocus and daffodils. More people are biking or running in these warmer temperatures. Shorts and flip flops have replaced snow boots and overstuffed parkas. I liken this much to a lifespan journey with a loved one with autism. Yes, it may not be what was expected in this season of one’s life, but by celebrating what is with pride and joy, a life with autism can be so much more than simply supporting a disability. Much like the winter this year wasn’t, our families dealing with autism can look to the abilities blossoming in their lives. Each individual with autism, child or adult, is a budding treasure with much to offer to our families and our communities. May each of us live each day with the pride of what is today, and what is yet to be discovered tomorrow.

On every page in this issue of Perspectives you’ll see this pride in the hearts and minds of so many in the Howard County autism community. We’ll recap our November Run/Walk event, an annual family favorite event where we demonstrate that each step does count in continuing our charge to improve the lives of families dealing with autism. We’ll take a look at how the iPad is enhancing the lives of children and adults with autism. We’ll outline the many events we have planned this year for Autism Awareness Month. This year we look to further promote acceptance of autism in our communities, in our parks, in our theaters, in our music classes, and ultimately in the workplace. We strive to let equality bring more opportunity to our children, our siblings, and our neighbors with autism so that raising awareness is no longer necessary. Many are familiar with the terms autism or Asperger’s, but do they understand what it is, and what it isn’t? That is the role we wish to take on today: to raise acceptance for those with autism through understanding, through equality, and through opportunity.

Check out the many activities we have planned for the month of April. Come to watch a movie with us at HCAS or at the AMC Theatre, enjoy an open house at Columbia Gymnastics or Olenka School of Music. Make a donation or plan to attend our 7th Annual Pieces of the Puzzle Gala. Wear an autism ribbon pin or give an autism awareness magnet to a friend. Find a way, great or small, to join HCAS this April as we continue to promote autism acceptance and equality here in Howard County.

~ Mary Beth Collins
mbcollins@howard-autism.org

HCAS Gratefully Acknowledges Recent Donors
Heidi Abdelhady
Richard and Mary Anderson
Amy Aquilino
Bowie Baysox Baseball Club, LLC
Katherine Demarco
Kristen Detwiler
David and Janice Feaga
Jenny Fetters
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Martin and Barbara Wasserman
Thomas and Eileen Zerhusen
One Step Closer Autism Walk/5K Run Supporters
MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

If you are not a member of the Howard County Autism Society, what are you waiting for?!

Membership has its privileges: exclusive member-only social events; receiving the quarterly newsletter; support group meetings with a phenomenal speaker lineup; and the knowledge that your support helps us continue to provide advocacy, training, and support to the families of Howard County with someone on the autism spectrum and to the greater community.

To join:

Go to www.howard-autism.org and click on membership.

Your membership support is vital to helping us fulfill our mission. Don’t delay, join today!

If you are uncertain as to the status of your membership, send an email inquiry to info@howard-autism.org.

GO GREEN

Read Perspectives online. Reduce paper by signing up to receive Perspectives electronically. Once you are enrolled, we will send an email notice when a new full-color issue is online. Email info@howard-autism.org to sign up.

As I begin my second term as HCAS president, I want to thank my outgoing co-president, Marianne Ross, for her dedication and support to the organization while serving in that capacity. I am happy to report that Marianne will continue serving on the board of directors as a member-at-large, and we look forward to the many contributions she will make in that role.

In the coming year, HCAS will remain focused on our three major objectives: providing support, promoting awareness, and advocating for change. Our activities and agenda, borne from our strategic plan, will focus on meeting the needs of our membership. These strategic areas include the following:

• transitioning youth and adult issues
• after-school programs and autism training
• autism awareness within the community
• social opportunities for those on the spectrum
• parent wellness activities
• informational materials and new member packets.

There are many other objectives to be developed on the strategic plan; in order to accomplish them HCAS depends on support and participation from the membership. Please consider joining a committee: Advocacy (Education or Legislative), Asperger’s, Biomedical, Program (Events), Public Relations, or Transition and Adult Issues. Please call 410-290-3466 or email info@howard-autism.org to join a committee.

I am excited to begin this second term as president with our new Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and staff. With your active participation, attendance at events, and support of our committee activities, HCAS will continue to maintain a solid presence and be a strong voice within the community for our friends, family members, and loved ones.

Dr. Sherri Braxton-Lieber is married to Sam Lieber and is the mother of two children, ages 9 and 5. Her eldest child is on the spectrum and attends Pointers Run Elementary School. She is the director of a defense contractor and serves as a computer science and information technology adjunct faculty member at several universities, including Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland University College.

HCAS Resource Center Hours

9:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. 410-290-3466
Monday–Friday info@howard-autism.org
The annual membership vote for the 2012 Board of Directors took place on November 17 at the general membership meeting. Congratulations to new board members Theresa Ballinger, Kirk Couser, Kristen Detwiler, and Marianne Doremus.

Theresa Ballinger, CPA, M.B.A., is a longtime member of HCAS, a supervisory accountant at NASA/GSFC, and the parent of two sons. Her son Trey, 15, has autism and currently attends Wilde Lake High School. Theresa brings accounting and auditing expertise to assist the board’s finance committee and will also help the public relations committee with autism awareness activities.

Kirk Couser, chief information officer at COLA, brings his expertise in information systems, business management, and strategic planning to HCAS. Kirk and his wife, Hope, and young son, David, relocated to Howard County from Tennessee. Kirk and Hope are active members of HCAS and familiar volunteers at social events and programs.

Kristen Detwiler is district sales manager of Colonial Life Insurance and the mother of two sons, one of whom has autism and is in sixth grade. Kristen has been a strong advocate for improving safety measures and elopement protocols at camps and daycare sites. After her son, Colin, wandered away from summer camp in 2009 (and, thankfully, was found safe and sound!), Kristen offered to work alongside HCAS and the county’s Department of Recreation and Parks to create a camp manual for locating lost children. Of additional service to HCAS, Kristen has been a member of the gala committee for several years.

Marianne Doremus will be familiar to anyone attending the sensory friendly movies—Marianne is the HCAS host warmly greeting families each month. Marianne was a member of HCAS long before she and her family moved here from Salisbury in 2009. Since then, she has been actively involved in the program committee and regularly volunteers at events. Her son Toby, 17, attends Atholton High School. Marianne is an interpreter at Gallaudet University.

A special note of thanks to outgoing board members Lori Krausz and Jennifer Palmer for their support and dedicated service to the autism community. During her tenure, Lori served as secretary of the board and, for many years, the gala auction chair. She has given countless hours of her time to HCAS and the organization is stronger because of it. Jennifer Palmer, chair of the Biomedical Committee and 2011 gala auction chair, resigned from the board to devote time to her new business, Nourishing Journey. She will continue to lead the Biomedical Support Group.

Thank you as well to the Board Development Committee: Beth Benevides Hill (chair), Debbie Clutts, Jennifer Goldszmidt, and Jane Plapinger. Anyone interested in serving on a committee or the Board of Directors, please contact Beth Benevides Hill at beth.benevides-hill@howard-autism.org.
A bright November morning ushered in the fifth annual “One Step Closer . . . Autism Walk/5K” at Centennial Park as 432 teams, 150 runners, walkers, 110 volunteers, and 20 vendors and exhibitors all came together to raise nearly $60,000 in funds for the HCAS Resource Center and the organization’s autism awareness/promotional activities.

While enjoying the beautiful fall sunshine, attendees were treated to a delicious breakfast, coffee, hot cocoa, moon bounces, t-shirts, race awards, popcorn, face painting, prizes, and giveaways. This year, guests were entertained by Star Wars character actors and treated to a saber show, courtesy of the Old Line Garrison—501st Legion and Rebel Legion.

Special thanks to our many sponsors, vendors, volunteers, donors, and—most importantly—participants!

**Mark your calendars for the 2012 Walk/5k Run:**
Saturday, November 3, 2012 ~ Centennial Park
A crowd of 600 gathered for a fun-filled morning to support friends and loved ones on the autism spectrum.
Lisa Brodjieski, M.S., CCC-SLP, is an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist with experience servicing the pediatric population in separate public day schools, non-profit, and private sectors. She is executive director of AT:LAST, Maryland’s assistive technology cooperative. She provides numerous lectures and trainings on the use of apps for communication and special education for parents, educators, and practitioners.

Since the iPad’s unveiling, parents and professionals have brought them into countless homes, classrooms, and therapy sessions around the world. The iPad is an exciting resource and tool for parents and professionals that can provide benefits when implemented appropriately and customized for an individual’s interests, abilities, and needs.

Here are some tips to consider when using an iPad to further your child’s educational goals:

- Focus on interaction and communication. People are the most important component in developing communication skills.
- Acquiring the equipment is just one small step; it is easy to get lost in the equipment.
- Technology and augmentative communication systems are useless in enabling children to realize their potential without appropriate training and a supportive environment.
- Focus on the process and outcome of learning and interaction—not the box.

While the iPad and apps have much to offer individuals with ASD as well as parents and professionals who work with them, it can be difficult to determine if the apps are indeed reliable, appropriate, and suitable for the skill you are targeting.

It can be a challenge to discern between apps that are best implemented by a professional or therapist; which apps are best for communication, language and learning, social interaction and engagement; and which are designed just for fun.

Consider first an individual’s sensory, visual, motor, and specific access needs to ensure optimal use of the apps and devices. Don’t lose the value of this tool simply because it cannot be accessed. There are many cases, mounts, and key guards that the AT:LAST, Inc., Maryland Assistive Technology Cooperative, has available at its iResource Center for demonstration and discount purchasing. Numerous apps, adapted accessories, and informational resources are available for demonstration and loan at AT:LAST’s convenient Columbia location. An assistive technology specialist can provide private evaluations and consultations so that your experience with this technology is rewarding, enriching, and beneficial.

AT:LAST, Inc., Maryland Assistive Technology Cooperative, iResource Center 7050 Oakland Mills Rd., Ste. 160 Columbia, MD 21046 www.matcoop.org 410-381-2667 communications@matcoop.org
APPS FOR AUTISM
An Essential Guide to Over 200 Effective Apps for Improving Communication, Behavior, Social Skills, and More!
By Lois Jean Brady, M.A., CC-SLP

With more than 425,000 apps available from iTunes, parents and educators are enthusiastic and, understandably, overwhelmed by the endless possibilities iDevices offer children on the autism spectrum. Lois Jean Brady, a speech-language-pathologist, seeks to guide her readers through the myriad of apps that can be used on Apple devices such as the iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

APPS for Autism features 200 apps to help meet students’ educational goals. Brady categorizes apps into several sections, ranging from apps to get the words out and apps to enhance vocabulary, to apps that teach social skills and organization. For each app featured, Brady includes the cost, a note from the developer, and a customer review. Student success stories sprinkled throughout the book exemplify the remarkable achievements students are making with iDevices.

For users who are new to iDevices or who are considering the purchase of one, Brady offers best practices and educational guidelines to get started.

This book is available at the HCAS Resource Center Lending Library.

Published by Future Horizons c 2011.
ISBN: 978-1-935274-49-0
Paperback $29.95

DSE Pilots iPad Use in Schools

The iPad pilot program is off the ground in Howard County Public Schools. Throughout the academic year, speech-language-pathologists and special educators are testing the usefulness of iPads and various apps with students receiving special education services. Testing is currently taking place across environments and with various students.

The school system purchased 300 iPads and educators are downloading and testing a broad array of free and purchasable apps. By April, each school “iPad team” (one SLP and one special educator) will have attended four meetings to discuss the devices, apps, e-learning sites, and the students who are benefitting most.

Some students receiving special education services currently use iPads during the school day. As with any other assistive technology device, IEP teams interested in testing iPads for particular students can contact the instructional access representative assigned to their school.
Kim McKay is a parent advocate and codirector of the nonprofit organization Parents for Parents. Under the Family Advocacy and Parent Education grant awarded to HCAS, she offers free advice on education-related issues.

I am often asked the question “I know HCPSS is focusing on grade-level curriculum, but how do I get functional skills on my child’s IEP?” My response is usually “What do you mean by functional skills?” Everyone has a different idea of what a functional skill is.

The old definition of functional skills includes self-care activities such as dressing and grooming or specific vocational activities such as folding and sorting objects. The new definition of functional skills is much broader and includes learning (at any level) what we think of as traditional academics (English, math, science, social studies). It also includes vocational skills, but not in the same way. It includes soft employment skills such as communication, responsibility, and likeability.

How can you choose appropriate functional goals for your child’s IEP? The Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE) has a checklist of criteria on their website, www.mcie.org. Criteria for goals include:

1. Age appropriate?
2. Required now?
3. Required as an adult?
4. Useful?
5. Valued by student and family?
6. Enhancing student’s status?
7. Important for community participation?
8. Likely to be acquired?

For example, I see shoe-tying goals on middle school IEPs. Is it age appropriate? Most middle school students can tie their own shoes. Except most don’t, since the invention of Velcro. Someone has to do it for them, but there are alternatives to laces that do not require an adult. Shoe-tying is a useful skill and one that you may want your child to learn, but is it worth the effort you and the team will expend on it? It certainly doesn’t help well-being, and as for social acceptance—look around at typical kids. Very few teenagers wear shoes that need tying anymore. And it certainly doesn’t give you more access to community participation. So all in all, this is probably not the best focus of energy in middle school.

By using these criteria, you can focus your goals on things that are most important to the student’s future.

Gaining functional skills and access to academics do not have to be mutually exclusive. Many functional skills can be taught in the general education classroom. You can work on asking for help, staying on task, and being more independent, along with computer skills, reading, and math in the general education classroom.

Long ago, a high school resource teacher said something very startling to me. She said what makes kids employable is not job skills. It is three things:

1. Do people like you?
2. Can you follow simple directions?
3. Can you ask for help?

People don’t get and stay employed because they can do a specific task. Rather the soft skills of employment make the difference. People learn the requirements and skills on the job. By focusing on those three questions with the criteria in mind, you are on your way to creating beneficial functional skills. And once you can answer those three questions with yes, your student will be on his or her way to being employed.
Columbia Gymnastics:
Special Needs Open Houses
April 1, 15, and 22 from 3-4:30 p.m.
9200 Rumsey Rd., #2, Columbia

Bring your child or adult with special needs to a free Sunday afternoon session—or all three—at Columbia Gymnastics. Explore the facility, meet the staff, and discover the fun gymnastics has to offer all abilities. Siblings and peers are welcome. Space is limited. Registration is required. For more information or to register, call 410-964-2053.

Arundel Mills Mall Lego Store:
LEGO Free Build Sessions

Join LEGO lovers of all ages for one or all four fun free build sessions. Bring your siblings and friends to the evening LEGO-Abilities Free Build sessions or arrive early before the mall opens, when music and lights are turned down, for the Sensory-Friendly Free Build sessions.

LEGO Abilities Free Build
April 5 and May 3 from 7-8 p.m.

LEGO Sensory-Friendly Free Build
April 19 and May 17 from 9-10 a.m.

Sessions are free. Registration is required. For more information or to register, call 410-379-5245.

Olenka School of Music:
Music Together Session
April 28 at 2 p.m.
Olenka School of Music, 9520 Berger Rd, Ste. 104-108, Columbia

Bring your child on the spectrum to experience musical fun and gain exposure to concepts and instruments in a comfortable environment. The session is free. Registration is required. For more information or to register, email info@howard-autism.org or call 410-290-3466.

Navigating the road ahead requires the right legal team

Finding the right legal team makes all the difference when you’re trying to navigate the complexities of the law. DARS Law Group offers a broad spectrum of legal services and solutions for individuals and businesses.

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Pamela J. Compart, M.D., is a developmental pediatrician and director and owner of HeartLight Healing Arts, a holistic integrative health care practice in Columbia, MD. She is co-author of The Kid-Friendly ADHD and Autism Cookbook: The Ultimate Guide to the Gluten-free Casein-free Diet.

It used to be that going on “the diet” for children with autism simply meant doing the gluten-free casein-free (GFCF) diet. There are now numerous diets that may be helpful for different symptoms of autism including the Specific Carbohydrate Diet, GAPS diet, Body Ecology Diet, and diets free of phenols, yeast, sugar, soy and corn, to name a few. It is beyond the scope of this article to describe each diet in detail. Rather my focus will be on general principles to help you decide which diets may be helpful and how to do them safely.

The first step in considering diet change is to determine if it is safe to do in your child. Your child must remain nourished. If your child’s only source of protein is dairy, you cannot safely go on a casein-free diet. Milk is not a necessary component of a diet; however, the protein and calcium it provides are necessary. So it is important to not only focus on what you are removing from your child’s diet, but also what you are putting back in. For children who can’t safely remove foods, there may be other options such as digestive enzymes to digest casein, gluten, soy, or corn or to assist in the clearance of phenols. None of these are as “pure” an intervention as removal of offending foods, but may be the most realistic and safest places to start.

The next step is to determine what you are hoping to achieve from implementing dietary change. Are you removing the food(s) to try and improve overall brain function? Decrease gastrointestinal symptoms such as abdominal pain, reflux, or gas? Get rid of hard-to-treat excessive intestinal yeast? Decrease hyperactivity? The choice of diet may be very dependent on the goals of your treatment.

It is also important to remember that eliminating foods or food chemicals is but one part of an overall treatment plan. Children with autism, as a group, have a multitude of differences in their biochemistry. This can include difficulties with digestion of foods, absorption of nutrients, clearance of toxins, imbalances in intestinal bacteria and yeast, and inflammation of the intestine or brain. The best outcomes may be obtained by identifying which subset of these biochemical differences are relevant to your child and then addressing, in a safe and thoughtful manner, as many of these differences as possible. The goal is to give the body and brain what they need and eliminate those things which may be interfering, in the hopes of optimizing both overall health and brain functioning. A functional medicine practitioner (physician, nutritionist, etc.) can help you individualize treatment for your child and support you by working together toward the common goal of a happier, healthier life for your child and your family.

Please contact a DAN! [Defeat Autism Now!] doctor to implement biomedical treatments.
Sensitive Santa

During the holiday season, families enjoyed visiting with Santa in a sensory-friendly atmosphere at the Mall in Columbia. Sensitive Santa shared smiles and hugs with children of all ages before stores were open to the public. The water fountains and music were turned off, and families took numbers rather than waiting in line. HCAS had plenty of activities to entertain families while children waited for their visit with Old St. Nick.

After-School Program opening in Howard County!!

Trellis Services has partnered with the Phillips School in Laurel to bring an after-school program designed for children with autism to Laurel.

Through the combination of motivationally-based, engaging, and fun activities, our learners develop social skills, expand on their play/leisure skills, and build the foundation for meaningful social interaction.

Children enrolled will have opportunities to form friendships with peers, participate in sports and leisure activities, art, social skills, and MUCH MORE!

SPACE IN THE PROGRAM IS LIMITED!

For more information contact Erin Bell
(410) 785-3845 x1215 or ebell@trellisservices.com

Autism Waiver funding and LISS funding accepted!

Trellis Services is a proud supporter of the Howard County Autism Society

www.trellisservices.com
Thursday, March 29 ~
ASD Brown Bag Seminar: What Special Education Can (and Can't) Do for Your Child
1-2:30 p.m., HCAS Resource Center. Guest speakers are Julie Foley and Kim McKay, Parents for Parents. Participants will gain knowledge of special education laws, and how they play out in local school systems. Emphasis will be on working with your child's team to develop effective partnerships and successful strategies in an inclusive academic environment. Cosponsored with Pathfinders for Autism. Seminars are free, but registration is required. To register, call 443-330-5370 or visit www.pathfindersforautism.org.

Sunday, April 1 ~
Sensitive Easter Bunny
10:30 a.m.-12 p.m., The Mall in Columbia. Children have the opportunity to visit the Easter Bunny in a calmer, sensory-friendly environment before the mall is open to the public.

Sundays, April 1, 15, and 22 ~
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Thursday, April 5 ~
LEGO-Abilities Free Build
7-8 p.m., LEGO, Arundel Mills Mall. This is a fun building session designed for LEGO-lovers of all ages and abilities. Free. Registration is required. Call 410-379-5245 to register.

Friday, April 6 ~
Red Riding Hood: A New Fable
10:15 a.m., Olney Theatre Center, 2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Rd., Olney.

Enjoy this production’s spin on a children’s favorite with this exclusive offer for HCAS. Tickets cost $7, purchase online, www.olenytheatre.org, or by calling the box office, 301-924-3400. Refer to code RRF007.

Saturday, April 7 ~
Sensory Friendly Movie: “Mirror Mirror”
10 a.m., AMC Theatre, The Mall in Columbia. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. No trailers. Tickets $6 each.

Wednesday, April 11 ~
Transition/Adult Issues Meeting
7-9 p.m., HCAS Resource Center. Call 410-290-3466 or email Pamela Beck at pammyb582@hotmail.com for more information.

Thursday, April 12 ~
Asperger’s Support Group Meeting
7:30-9 p.m., HCAS Resource Center. Contact Elaine McAuliffe at elainemcauliffe@yahoo.com for more information.

Saturday, April 14 ~
Double Feature Movie Screening
1 p.m. HCAS Resource Center.
1 p.m., showing of "Asperger's, Autism and Girls DVD: Understanding & Appreciating the Female Perspective." Dr. Tony Attwood describes the unique challenges of women and girls with autism and Asperger’s Syndrome.
3 p.m. showing of "Wretches & Jabberers," a documentary featuring Larry Bissonette and Tracy Thresher advocating for autism on the road.

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Music Together Session
2 p.m., Olenka School of Music, 9520 Berger Rd., Ste. 104-108, Columbia. Bring your child on the spectrum to experience musical fun and gain exposure to concepts and instruments in a comfortable environment. Registration is required. For more information or to register, email info@howard-autism.org or call 410-290-3466.

(Continued on page 15)
Thursday, May 3 ~ LEGO-Abilities Free Build 7-8 p.m., LEGO, Arundel Mills Mall. This is a fun building session designed for LEGO-lovers of all ages and abilities. Free. Registration is required. Call 410-379-5245 to register.

Wednesday, May 9 ~ Transition/Adult Issues Meeting 7-9 p.m., HCAS Resource Center. Call 410-290-3466 or email Pamela Beck at pammyb582@hotmail.com for more information.

Wednesday, May 9 ~ Maryland Biomedical Support Group Meeting 7-9 p.m., Nourishing Journey, 10440 Shaker Drive, Ste. 105, Columbia. Contact jenn_palmer@comcast.net for more information, or find them on Facebook.

Thursday, May 10 ~ Asperger’s Support Group Meeting 7:30-9 p.m., HCAS Resource Center. Contact Elaine McAuliffe at elainemcauliffe@yahoo.com for more information.

Thursday, May 17 ~ LEGO Sensory-Friendly Free Build 9-10 a.m., LEGO, Arundel Mills Mall. Designed for sensory-sensitive LEGO-lovers. Offered before mall is open to the public and before music is turned on by neighboring stores. Lights will be turned down. Free. Registration is required. Call 410-379-5245 to register.

Thursday, May 17 ~ HCAS Support Group Meeting 7 p.m., HCAS Resource Center. Sandee Moskoff from Penn-Mar Human Services will discuss Low Intensity Support Services (LISS) and how to successfully apply for funding. LISS is designed to assist families with developmentally disabled children and adults by providing funding for services up to $3,000 annually. This is not an entitlement program. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information or to apply, visit www.penn-mar.org/liss.

Monday, May 21 ~ HCAS Night at The Pottery Stop 6:30-8:30 p.m., The Pottery Stop, 9050 Baltimore National Pike, Ellicott City. Join HCAS for a crafty evening with your kids. Paint your own bowl and release that inner-artist. Cost is $12. Spots are limited. To register, email info@howard-autism.org or call 410-290-3466.

Thursday, May 31 ~ ASD Brown Bag Seminar: Sexuality and Social Boundaries 1-2:30 p.m., HCAS Resource Center. Janet Palmer, M.A., M.Ed., Advocates for Success, will discuss ways to protect and promote appropriate social behavior in ‘tweens,’ teenagers, and adults with regard to sexuality and the emotional, physical, and legal concerns facing both individuals on the spectrum and their families. Cosponsored with Pathfinders for Autism. Seminars are free, but registration is required. To register, visit www.pathfindersforautism.org or call 443-330-5370.
About the Howard County Autism Society (HCAS)

The Howard County Autism Society (HCAS) is a chapter of the Autism Society of America, which was founded in 1965 to help parents, family members, professionals, and caregivers learn about autism, PDD, and related disorders, and how to effectively deal with these disabilities. We are one of about 200 chapters across the country.

HCAS is dedicated to increasing public awareness about autism and the day-to-day issues faced by individuals with autism, their families and the professionals with whom they interact. The national society and HCAS share the common goals of providing information and education, supporting research and advocating for programs and services for people with autism spectrum disorders.

HCAS works in Howard County to advance awareness of persons with autism, PDD, and related disorders.

HCAS provides:
- support for parents
- information and referrals
- advocacy on behalf of persons with autism/PDD and their families
- presentations by experts on autism/PDD, disability rights, etc.
- monthly meetings
- social activities

Join the e-Group
The HCAS e-group connects you with other parents online where you can post questions or share information about doctors, dentists, schools, family support services, etc.

www.howardcountyautismsociety.org

Receive the Weekly e-bulletin
Members receive a weekly e-news bulletin every Monday with upcoming events. Others may sign up by emailing info@howard-autism.org.

Autism Resource Center
410-290-3466

Newsletter Submissions
Perspectives welcomes articles and contributions from parents, siblings, professionals, and people with autism spectrum disorders. Submit your article, book review, meeting notice, or photo by emailing to: info@howard-autism.org.

Advertising rates are available on the HCAS website at www.howard-autism.org.