



C.A.R.E. Coping with Autism through Research and Education

Southwest Chapter Autism Society of America

May 2003

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY

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Toulet
Richard Razo
Diane Tatem
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Lisa Mitchell

MONTHLY MEETINGS

General Membership Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at the El Paso Center for the Deaf, 511 Executive Center Blvd. beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Board Meetings are held on the Monday, one week prior to the Membership meeting at 6:30 p.m.. All members are welcome to attend, and your input is always welcome.

MONTHLY MEETING

Please join us in our Monthly Meeting on Tuesday May 6, 2003 at 6:30 p.m. at the Deaf Center, located at 511 Executive Center Blvd. President Karl Zeff will have some announcements and then we will be having a Support Group Discussion conducted by Diane Tatem . Refreshments and Childcare will be available.

LET'S TALK

This months meeting will be an open discussion between all the members to voice your opinion, have questions answered or just talk about any issues that you and your family want to share on whatever topic you choose. Diane Tatem who is a family counselor will be there to facilitate with communication. JOIN US!

CREATIVE KIDS ARE BACK!!

Creative Kids will be coming back to our monthly meetings starting in May. They are there to help our kids develop and create any art project that they have in mind. Bring the kids and have them enjoy an evening of art making.

C.A.M.P.

The Children's Association for Maximum Potential is an organization that helps children with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses and their families achieve their maximum potential through a variety of programs that provide recreation, respite and education opportunities. They are offering a weeklong over-night residential sessions throughout the summer. Their goal is to provide a camping experience to children who cannot attend other camps due to the severity of their disability. For more information call 532-6014 or (210) 292-3566 or visit their website at www.campcamp.org.

Structured Teaching based on the TEACCH Model 6 Day Institute June 2003 at Region 19 ESC for information and registration call 780-5350.

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EL PASO REHABILITATION CENTER is having the following events:

Play Therapy on May 16 by Mayu Quevedo from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Behavior Modification and Family Therapy by Diane Tatem on June 13 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Speech Therapy by Cheryl Metz on July 31 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

All of these events will be translated in Spanish. For more information please call Lydia Hernandez or Ceci Martinez at 544-8484.

“A SPECIAL DAY FOR SPECIAL FAMILIES” 14th ANNUAL CHILDREN’S DISABILITIES SYMPOSIUM

May 17, 2003 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Bowie High School. Keynote Speaker is Dr. Barbara Coloroso for more information call Lydia Hernandez at 544-8484

BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE

Autism Society of America National Conference on Autism is on July 16-20, 2003 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

DISCOVERING NEW PIECES

Biological, Behavioral and Educational Treatments for Autism, PDD and Hyperactivity Conference on June 21 & 22, 2003 in Anaheim, California.

Information about these conferences is available at SWASA, call us at 532-6014.

NEW CALIFORNIA DATA CONFIRMS AUTISM EPIDEMIC

ASA Calls for Stronger Effort on Research and Services

New statistics from California reveal that the number of individuals diagnosed with severe autism and who are receiving services in that state jumped another 21 percent in 2002. The new figures from the California Department of Developmental Services come on the heels of another department report two years earlier that stated autism had increased 273 percent in the preceding decade. According to the new data, an alarming 20,377 individuals with a diagnosis of autism were receiving services from the department as of the fourth quarter of 2002, compared with 16,802 individuals as of the fourth quarter of 2001. The 21 percent one-year increase represents an all time record number of new cases in the system’s 33 year history. The majority-84 percent of the new cases were children under the age of 18. The figures reported by the California Department only include those with severe autism and do not include persons with PDD-NOS, Asperger’s or other on the autism spectrum disorders. “One only needs to examine the age distribution of the persons in the system to recognize the genesis of this epidemic. Over 81.5 percent (8 out of 10) of the autism population in the system were born after 1980 with two out of three persons in the system currently between the ages of 3 and 13 years old, compared to 18.5 percent (less than 2 out of 10) who were born before 1980,” The figures out of California continue to confirm what the ASA and many in the autism community have been saying for a long time that we are in the midst of an autism epidemic,” ASA president Lee Grossman said. “It is imperative that our nation look seriously at this enormous health issue and commit the resources necessary to reverse this trend.”

ADVOCATE First Edition 2003

LIFE MANAGEMENT MH/MR IN HOME FAMILY AND SUPPORT SERVICES IS IN FEAR OF CLOSING DOWN

Many of our members receive help from numerous agencies in town. We recently got a call from Sandy Abshire telling us that the state of Texas wants to include this program in their recent budget cut-backs, if you or anyone that you know receives help from this program you need to call Senator Elliot Shapleigh at (512) 463-0129 and voice your opinion and concerns if this program does close down. We need to stand together and support this program as it helps us all tremendously. We cannot afford to have more services taken away from us and our children. Please call!!

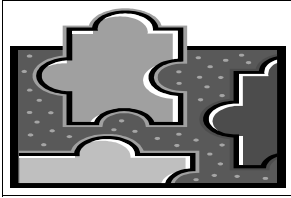
OUGHT-ISMS

The President's Column

SWASA is a roll. We had a fantastic conference. The feedback was really positive. Dr. Diane Twachtman-Cullen was a fascinating, motivating and informative speaker. The conference brought in some badly needed revenue for this organization. I am speaking about money. We needed it, and now we have some. This will go to continuing our valuable monthly programs, meetings, newsletter, website, and all the activities in the community to promote Autism Awareness. (April is Autism Awareness Month, by the way).

Thanks to all the individuals who really helped out with the conference. I got a lot of “thank you” letters to write. We worked pretty hard, but the rewards made the effort worthwhile. The conference has gone a long way towards improving Autism understanding in the schools, among many different kinds of helping professionals, and in families with individuals with Aspergers, Autism, and other disabilities.

Now is not the time to “rest on our laurels”. SWASA continues to have many activities, including our next meeting on May 6th. Our biggest challenge right now is to expand this organization to include new members on our executive board, and to elect a new slate of officers. We need people who have ideas, and want to contribute to the best little autism society in Texas (and maybe the United States). There are **tangible** benefits to becoming a member of the board or an officer. Call Gilda or me to find out more: 532-6014. Don't forget to bring your kids—we got child care activities and Creative Kids, Inc. is BACK. Mickey will be there too, so come join the fun and learn a little. “See ya later!”



SWASA
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In This Issue...

LET'S TALK

Submit Stories about your Children to the News Letter

We want to know more about your children and your entire family. Please share your family's activities, events, and endeavors with all of us through the SWASA News Letter. We would like each family to contribute a story about your children's accomplishments, hobbies, likes and dislikes.

You may mail your stories to SWASA office at 511 Executive Center Blvd., El Paso, Texas, 79902, e-mail us at autism@swasa.com, fax us at 532-6015 or contact our office at 532-6014. Also please submit a photo of your child or family along with your story.

