



Answers For Autism

"Autism Advocates of Indianaworking for Indiana families touched by Autism"

2009 Answers for Autism Walk

On Saturday, September 19, 2009, the 9th Annual Answers for Autism Walk was held at Cox Hall Gardens in Carmel, Indiana. Through the generosity of the over 100 teams that participated, the Answers for Autism Walk raised over \$63,000 in participant donations.



The approximately 1500 people that attended enjoyed beautiful weather and plenty of activities for both children and adults. In the sensory tent, volunteers



interacted with the children through the various activities that had been planned including crafts, shaving cream, rice table and bird seed table.

Children also enjoyed playing in the giant blow up slide, the blow up maze and challenged themselves to see how far they

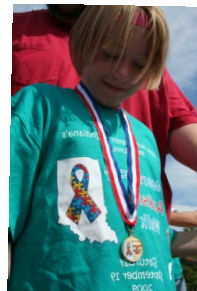


could climb up the rock climbing wall. The adults and children also visited the silent auction and participated in exciting bidding wars waiting

anxiously to see if they would be able to purchase their desired item.

Families also had available information related to autism and were able to purchase autism awareness merchandise in the "Autism Store". Throughout the day, families were entertained by music provided by Matt Roush and Ribs N Bone.

The walk activities were started by a welcome from Autism Advocates of Indiana president Patty Reed followed by



it to

the traditional balloon release. Overall was a fun-filled day celebrate individuals with autism and their families. Autism Advocates of Indiana is grateful for all those volunteers who gave their time to make the 9th Annual Answers for Autism Walk a success. Mark your calendars for the 10th Annual Answers for Autism Walk on September 18, 2010. Let's mark this very special anniversary by making the 2010 Answers for Autism Walk even better.



Autism Advocates of Indiana

Fall 2009



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2009 Autism Advocates of Indiana Grant Cycle



As we move into fall many new initiatives are ready to get off the ground. Just as donations are starting to arrive from the walk, AAI is starting to talk about where will we be able to provide

grant money in the 2009 Fall Grant cycle. Getting funding back into Indiana is one of our main goals!

AAI continues to look for creative and exciting programs across Indiana to support. If you work for or are a member of a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We would love for you to submit your ideas. If you or your children use the services provided by many of the organizations, let them know we exist. Bring them an application or refer them to our website. AAI wants to ensure all areas of the state are reached and benefit from our

efforts. Help us reach that goal!

*Unlike many **other** grant programs, you do not have to be a professional grant writer to be able to obtain funding!*

Grant applications can be obtained on the AAI website at:

<http://www.aaiwalk.org>

Next grant deadline:

October 15, 2009

Autism Advocates of Indiana needs your help!



Autism Advocates of Indiana is growing! We need your help to continue working for Indiana families touched by autism.

As the Answers for Autism Walk grows so does the need

for more individuals to help with the planning for the walk and other fundraising/awareness events. If you want to be part of this dedicated group of individuals here are some of the areas where that need additional help:

Newsletter

AAI is looking for several individuals who enjoy writing to prepare articles for the AAI newsletter. We are hoping to create a team of individuals, who working together, assist in getting useful information out into the Autism Community in Indiana.

The AAI newsletter currently goes out quarterly through electronic distribution. Along with any personal articles you choose to include, AAI will provide valuable information to include in each newsletter.

Graphic Design

AAI is also looking for an individual skilled in graphic design to assist in designing our newsletter. In addition to newsletter creation, AAI is looking for assistance in creating additional written communication pieces.

Public Relations

AAI is looking for individuals who would write press releases and contact the media to inform them of upcoming Answers for Autism events.

If you are interested please contact Patty Reed (phreed1@aol.com) or Donna Simerly



New Club at Indiana University in Bloomington: Students on the Spectrum (S.O.S)

The Indiana Resource Center for Autism at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community is pleased to announce its support of a new student group on the Bloomington campus of Indiana University: Students on the Spectrum (S.O.S.). All Indiana University students affected with autism spectrum disorder are welcome. Autism spectrum disorders include autism, Asperger Syndrome and P.D.D. N.O.S..

The S.O.S. Club provides students with the opportunity to engage with each other and with others within the university community around topics of interest and in a

supportive environment. The S.O.S. meets weekly, throughout the semester, on Sunday evenings in the Indiana Memorial Union from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Students can join at any time and there are no membership dues.

At the Call Out Meeting on September 20th participants generated a list of topics of interest. Each of these topics will be the focus for one meeting this semester. Next semester the members will continue to generate topics of interest for the focus of each meeting.



The topics for Fall 2009 are as follows: Services of the DSS Office, Study Skills, Exploring the IMU: Bowling and Billiards, Time Management, Disclosure Issues: Who, when, how to disclose diagnosis to others, Stress Management, Nutritional Choices and Cooking, Etiquette Skills: Dining, Dating, Conversational Skills, Reading Facial Expressions and Transition Issues: Holiday and semester breaks.

For more information, contact Maggie Maclean, Club President via e-mail at mmaclean@indiana.edu or Marci Wheeler, S.O.S. Club Advisor, Indiana Resource Center for Autism at (812) 855-6508 or e-mail mwheeler@indiana.edu.

New Report Finds Autism Prevalence Now 1 in 91

A national report released October 5, 2009 in the journal *Pediatrics* reveals that 1 percent of U.S. children ages 3-17 have an autism spectrum disorder, an estimated prevalence of one in every 91 children. This is a dramatic increase from the one in 150 prevalence rates currently reported.

The report, entitled "Prevalence of Parent-Reported Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder Among Children in the US," published in the October 5, 2009 issue of *Pediatrics*, was conducted by the Depart-

ment of Health and Human Services National Survey of Children's Health, using data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The report was conducted via a telephone survey of over 78,000 parents, and determined a point prevalence of 110 per 10,000 respondents, roughly 1 percent of the population of children in the United States. The new estimate would mean about 673,000 American children have autism.



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Previous estimates put the number at about 560,000. On a constituent call to discuss the report, the CDC reported that its initial analysis of the Autism and Developmental Delay Monitoring project data, due out later this fall, confirm the 1 percent figure. This report will also contain more data on age of diagnosis, groups affected, and access to interventions.

Avon High School Students Show Entrepreneurial Skills

Coming Soon: Answers for Autism Golf Outing



Autism Advocates of Indiana it's looking for volunteers to help plan the 1st Answers for Autism Golf Outing to be held in the spring. If you are interested in helping organize this

event please contact: Donna Simerly at aai@aaiwalk.org. More information coming soon. Visit our website www.aaiwalk.org for updates!

When we think of High School students we usually imagine teenagers doing their own thing and not having a care in the world. But the *Business Entrepreneurial class at Avon High School* proved that this is not true. Living up to their class name, this group of students really became entrepreneurs and decided to do a fundraiser for a charitable group. Autism Advocates of Indiana's *Answers for Autism Walk* was the lucky beneficiary chosen for their fundraiser. The 19 students in the class held a t-shirt sale for the Avon/Brownsburg foot-

ball game and were able to raise \$1195.00. Caleb Spencer, a child with autism and son of an Avon teacher, was presented with a check for that amount during the half time at the Avon/Brownsburg game. Caleb and his team donated the check to the Answers for Autism Walk the following day. This group of caring high school students made their teacher and their community

"Teenagers get such a bad rap, and this group stepped forward on their own to support this cause. I think they are awesome!!"

Susan Spencer
English Teacher
Avon High School

Dr. Cathy Pratt to Present Informative Talk on Autism

Please join the Ladies Philoptochos Society at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox church as they welcome Dr. Cathy Pratt for an informative talk on Autism. Dr. Cathy Pratt is the director of the Indiana Resource Center on Autism. She will be the guest speaker at the general meeting on the Ladies Philoptochos Society on Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. At the conclusion of Dr. Pratt's presentation there will be a question and answer session. A light supper will be provided as well as complimentary child-care. Please RSVP by October 30 by calling the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Parish Office 317-733-3033 or Nia Cortese at 317-849-1894 or

Sensory Friendly Films

AMC Entertainment (AMC) and the Autism Society have teamed up to bring families affected by autism and other disabilities a special opportunity to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment on a monthly basis with the "Sensory Friendly Films" program.

In order to provide a more accepting and comfortable setting for this unique audience, the movie auditoriums will have their



lights brought up and the sound turned down, families will be able to bring in their own gluten-free, casein-free snacks, and no previews or advertisements will be shown before the movie.

Additionally, audience members are welcome to

get up and dance, walk, shout or sing - in other words, AMC's "Silence is Golden®" policy will not be enforced unless the safety of the audience is questioned.

Don't miss the next Sensory Friendly Film!

[Where the Wild Things Are](#)

October 17, 2009

10 a.m. local time

Participating Theaters:

AMC Greenwood 14
461 S. Greenwood Park Dr.,
Greenwood, Ind. 46142

AMC Castleton Square 14
6020 E. 82nd St., Indianapolis, Ind.



The Perfect Day! By Rob and Karyn Willman

"The perfect day"...not a common phrase in our life. A 12 year old with non verbal, with severe Autism can be a challenge on most days. The focus is generally regarding IEP's, behavior plans, and social stories. But September 19th was "the perfect day." There was no "data" taken, no need for "reinforcements" and no need to "excuse" behavior or apologize for quirks. No... September 19th was the perfect day!

Excited to have over 20 folks come out to the Answers for Autism Walk in Carmel, IN to support our son Jake was a thrill. We arrived wearing our "Team Jake" shirts proudly as the fun began. The smiles were everywhere, the weather was perfection, and then...then up pulled an RV filled with the entire 6th grade football team! Out they poured sporting their team jersey's and shouting "go team Jake!" Immediately the boys began high-fiving Jake and other team members, and off they went pushing Jake in his wheel chair. I never pushed that wheel chair again until the end of the walk when those same 6th grade boys encouraged Jake to get up out of that wheel chair, and walk to the finish line! With arms around Jake's shoulders, the boys escorted him to the finish line where they created a hu-

man tunnel with arms raised. Jake proceeded to cross the finish line of the 9th annual Autism Advocates of Indiana Walk with pride!



Jake proudly displaying his gold medal!

Jake began "managing" the football team at the start of the season this year for the very first time. This has been a huge success for Jake, and an even bigger success for the football players. They have gained lessons that can't be taught on the field nor taught by any teacher. The boys have learned about the human spirit. They have learned to look deeper into the soul of a teammate. They have learned patience, kindness, and acceptance. These are the true les-

sons in life that my son has been able to teach!

The boys and Jake excused themselves after the walk where they loaded back up into that RV and

headed to the big game...victory of course! Not only a victory for the 6th grade Giants, but a victory for a Mom and Dad who stood with tears in their eyes as they witnessed the "perfect day."



Jake and his teammates

Thank You 2009 Answers for Autism Walk Sponsors

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Indiana**

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**Working for Indiana families
touched by Autism**



Our Mission is to increase and broaden public knowledge and awareness of the behaviors, social issues and emotional needs of individuals on the autism spectrum so that all individuals can participate in and contribute to our community without fear or bias or loss of individuality.

AAI accepts grant requests that are consistent with our mission. Grants will be considered in two categories: the Public Awareness Program, and the Individual and/or Family Support Program. The grant program would like to encourage new and innovative ideas to support our mission throughout the state of Indiana.

**Deadline for FALL Grant Cycle is
October 15, 2009!**

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