

Connecting Wisconsin

A Publication from the
Autism Society of Wisconsin

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Message from the President

A 1788 Scottish poem by Robert Burns was set to the tune of a traditional folk song. Although Mr. Burns never intended for his work to act as a sort of farewell, the song has taken root in our culture as a call to remember our dearest friends and offer a moment of reflection on the year gone by. And while we couldn't join you in singing "Auld Lang Syne" at midnight, you remain in our thoughts and prayers for a Happy New Year. From everyone here at the Autism Society of Wisconsin, we hope that you enjoyed a great holiday and we look forward to sharing all that is to come in 2018. Here's a preview of some activities we are planning...

Initially, the Autism Societies in Wisconsin are hosting the 13th annual Autism Essay Contest, a program to assist students in gaining a deeper understanding of autism, and how their peers with autism experience the world. You'll find more information on page 8-9 of the newsletter.

Leading us into the summer of 2018 will be our 29th annual conference at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Our keynote speakers will feature Brenda Smith Myles on Friday, April 20th, and Jonathan and Jodi Murphy on Saturday, April 21st. Registration is available on our website.

August 2nd marks the date for Tee-Time for Autism, our SentryWorld golf outing. Think you can drive the long ball? Test yourself against one of the longest in the world...Bill Schroeder, former wide receiver for the Green Bay Packers and Tour Swing Golf Long-Drive Team World Finalist. Player registration and sponsorship opportunities will be posted on the ASW website in the coming months. It's Tee-Time for Autism...let's play a round!

Complementing our activities will be additional conference(s) and activities to share and make memories for days gone by. We look forward to seeing you again soon. And hope you know that, in the meantime, we would welcome your call with any questions or requests.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob".

Robert S. Johnston, President
Autism Society of Wisconsin

MEET JONATHON MURPHY!

We're excited to introduce you to Jonathon Murphy, a SAG-AFTRA voiceover actor who has appeared in video games, apps, audio books, and throughout a major theme park. Jonathan is a young adult who resides in California and has received a Temple Grandin Award and People's Choice Award for his storytelling. Jonathan shares his autistic life experiences through public speaking and will be joining us in Wisconsin Dells this spring as our keynote speaker on Saturday morning. Please read on to learn a little bit more about Jonathon through this question and answer.

Q: You describe in your introduction that as a child you felt voiceless. What was your childhood like?

A: I had a great family life and lived in a wonderful imaginary world. I loved to learn, and my mom took me to museums, libraries, and plays. She indulged my self-interests, including my love for Tyrannosaurus Rex! But when it came time to go to school, I isolated myself since I was more comfortable being in my own head than with other people. My family was very accepting but anytime I tried to put myself out there in the world, I always felt like I was shot down—either teased, ignored or dismissed—so it was just easier to stay in a world of my own making.



Q: Did you have any teachers or mentors who helped along the way?

A: Yes, lots! The teachers who made the greatest impact on my life were those at my second school, the Stanbridge Academy. Before going to Stanbridge I was at a private elementary where the teachers practiced "old school" teaching methods. By the 5th grade, more written output was required, and my brain just isn't wired for lengthy writing assignments. Plus, I have dysgraphia so even the physical act of writing is painful. Those teachers were so rigid in their thinking that they saw me as "lazy" or "stupid" rather than seeing that I had a different way of learning. My parents found Stanbridge Academy, a unique school for out-of-the-box learners. From day one, my teachers nurtured and believed in me. They proved to me that I am smart and talented. I'll share how they did it in my keynote! [Teaser Alert: They called it Project Hug ;)]] Thanks to them my confidence grew, and I became student of the year, began to perform in musical theater and Shakespeare, and went on to graduate from college with honors.

Q: When and how did you get interested in voiceover acting?

A: I was always interested in doing character voices. I loved watching cartoons and I grew up on Disney movies and Disney Afternoon—can I get a shout out for Ducktales, Tailspin and Darkwing Duck? I love to imitate characters in my favorite animated films, cartoons and video games. I thought maybe I could do it as a job or professionally one day. I started taking classes at Voice One in San Francisco. The studio owner, Elaine Clark, is a working voice actor and director. She brings in professionals who are actually working in the industry – casting directors, agents, other voice over actors—and working with them is what got me started on this path.

Q. What steps did you take to becoming the success you are today?

A: Wait...I'm a success?? ((blushing)) I consider myself on a journey (or adventure) and I'm still taking steps towards being successful—you never stop learning and growing! Some of the key steps I took early on were:

- Finding something I was really good at and interested in and used it as my path towards independence.
- Building a great support team who believes in me even when I don't believe in myself.
- Going about it at my own pace so I don't get overwhelmed.
- Taking "little" risks and not being afraid to fail.
- Sticking with it and never giving up on myself.

Q: What challenges did/do you face within the work world and how did/do you overcome them?

A: One of my challenges starting out in the work world was that I expected to be perfect right away. I was afraid to ask for help thinking that it made me look bad or I was a bad employee. It made me very anxious and nervous. I learned from experience that everyone has a learning curve when they start a new job, not just someone on the autism spectrum. This makes me feel more relaxed and less worried. Now I'm confident that I can learn new skills quickly and always do a good job.

Q: What advice do you have for individuals on the spectrum who are trying to reach their goals?

A:

- Be patient with yourself and don't give up.
- Don't hide away, take a chance and put yourself out into the world.
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes...you're only human!
- Listen to your support team when they are trying to help you but don't be afraid to speak up for yourself when you need to [they're not ALWAYS right ;)]
- Take action! You can't achieve your dreams if you don't do anything. Take the first step. And then another.

Q: What advice would you give to parents/caregivers or professionals who work with individuals on the spectrum to better support young people who are just starting out?

A: Don't limit what's possible and ALWAYS presume competence. My parents and support team didn't try to change me. Instead, they helped (and continue to help) me become the best ME that I can be.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 28
1:00 pm–4:00 pm **Meet & Greet at the Altoona Police Department | Autism Society of Chippewa Valley**
Altoona Police Department, 1904 Spooner Ave., Altoona.
Meet police officers and take a tour of the police department. Get your questions answered. RSVP to: cvautismsociety@gmail.com

February 10
10:30 am–12:00 pm **Reel Movies for Real Needs, Movie–Peter Rabbit | Autism Society of Northeast WI**
Marcus Bay Park Cinema, Bay Park Square, 755 Willard Dr, Ashwaubenon.
Enjoy a lower sensory movie experience. 4 free tickets per family for members.
Contact administrator@asnew.org for more information.

February 11
9:30 am–11:30 am **Sky Zone Sensory Jump Family Outing | Autism Society of the Fox Valley**
Sky Zone Trampoline Park, W 3169 Van Roy Road, Appleton.
Free family event! RSVP to asfvevents@autismfoxvalley.org

February 18
1:00 pm–3:00 pm **Family Bowling & Pizza | Autism Society of the Lakeshore**
Rudy's Lanes, 1916 Washington St., Two Rivers.
Free bowling and pizza. No need to RSVP.

February 25
11:00 am–3:00 pm **Make a Splash! | Autism Society of Central WI**
Grand Lodge Waterpark, 805 Creske Ave., Rothschild.
Everyone is invited to the water park for a day of fun! Free for members.

February 28
6:30 pm **Look Me In The Eye: My Life With Autism | Autism Society of Central WI**
UW Marathon County, 625 Stewart Ave., Wausau
Presented by John Elder Robinson, Author. Free presentation.

Autism Society of Wisconsin Annual Conference

Kalahari Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells
April 19–21, 2018



The Autism Society of Wisconsin's Annual Conference is a three day event where professionals, parents, individuals on the spectrum, family members and advocates gather to learn, share and discuss various topics in the field of autism. Attendees will leave the conference with an understanding of strategies, resources and services that serve to improve the lives of individuals on the autism spectrum. With over 30 breakout sessions, 4 pre-conference sessions, 2 keynote addresses, and plenty of networking opportunities, this is a conference you don't want to miss!

BREAKOUT SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Breakout sessions will take place on Friday and Saturday after the keynote addresses. Below are a few highlights from our program. Please visit our website to view the program in its entirety.

Circles of Comfort: A Model to Support Anxiety in Learners with ASD

Jessica Nichols and Connie Persike

Strategies to Help Paraprofessionals Increase Student Independence

Danielle Ozimek

Speaking about Autism: Our Road to Independence – College Years

Julie Harris, Matthew & Mitchell LaBerge

Talking so Your Child Can Listen, Listening so Your Child can Talk

Colleen & Betty McCluskey

Preparing for the Performance that Lasts a Lifetime: Teaching Social Skills Through Drama

Kim Phillips & Jennifer Henselin

Internet of Things (IoT) and Wearables: Assistive Tech for Executive Functioning

Rachel E. Wright

Autism and LGBTQIA

Heidi Weisensel & Eric Weier



THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018 | PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

PRE-CONFERENCE A: 9:30 AM–12:30 PM

A Girl's Eye View: Understanding and Working with Girls on the Autism Spectrum

Presented by Shana Nichols, Ph.D.

PRE-CONFERENCE B: 9:30 AM–12:30 PM

Mental Health Treatment Techniques and Modifications for People with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Presented by Rob Peyton, Ph.D.

PRE-CONFERENCE C: 1:45 PM–4:45 PM

Making the World a Bit Easier to Navigate: Using Executive Function Skills

Presented by Brenda Smith Myles, Ph.D.

PRE-CONFERENCE D: 1:45 PM–4:45 PM

Sensory Overload vs. Behavioral Tantrums: Understanding the Difference and How to Respond

Presented by Jen Bluske, OTR, and Danna Hamlett, MS, LMFT

FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 2018 | KEYNOTE

Critical Mass, Purposeful Practice and Autism: Creating Independent Learners
by Brenda Smith Myles, Ph.D.

This presentation focuses on describing the factors that lead to critical mass for those on the spectrum when providing instruction and supports. Critical mass, in this regard, is the point where an individual has gained enough information to apply it to situations, activities or skills in which instruction has not been provided. Learn easy-to-use strategies that can help individuals with ASD to move about their world as independently as possible, making informed decisions about their wants and needs. Teaching to critical mass will help learners to be successful with tasks they have been taught to do, but will also help them to be successful with activities on which they have no received instruction.



SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2018 | KEYNOTE

Finding My Voice(s): My Personal Autism Journey Towards Independence
By Jonathan and Jodi Murphy



As an autistic child, Jonathan Murphy felt voiceless. As an autistic adult, he became the voice of a major theme park. In his keynote address, Jonathan shares how self-acceptance, a strong support team, a willingness to change, and stepping into his fears and anxieties put him on his path towards independence and a fulfilling life. Jodi Murphy acts as Jonathan's "wingman" to offer the successful strategies she used to help Jonathan thrive at every stage of his journey.

FAMILY RECEPTION | FRIDAY APRIL 20, 2018

Conference attendees and their families are welcome to join us for a reception on Friday evening of the conference. The reception will include a complimentary pizza buffet, essay contest awards ceremony, talent show, and dance.



EXHIBIT HALL

Conference attendees have unlimited access to the conference exhibit hall, filled with over 50 community agencies, providers, and other wonderful resources to help you connect locally.



REGISTER

http://www.asw4autism.org/conferences_workshops.html

Early registration is highly encouraged!

General registration rates are available to those who register by April 2nd, 2018.

Onsite registration is available for an additional cost and conference materials are not guaranteed.

Don't forget to book your room at the Kalahari at the discounted room rate by March 18th.

Want to get your business involved? There are NEW opportunities to support the annual conference. Visit our conference webpage to view opportunities for sponsorship, exhibition and advertisement at the conference.

Questions? Contact Jessica at jfischer@asw4autism.org or 920-558-4600.



Change for Autism is a campaign through the Autism Society of Wisconsin designed to encourage stakeholders to create meaningful change for people with autism in our schools and communities. Whether you're part of a group, business and/or school or a passionate individual hoping to ignite change, there is a place for you within the Change for Autism campaign!

Together we can help our communities understand autism and create inclusive opportunities to make everyone feel welcome. Please join our Change for Autism campaign this April to create change in your local community.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

SCHOOLS

Schools are a great place to raise awareness and help students gain a better understanding of what autism is and how it affects those who have it. Schools can join our Change for Autism coin drive and participate in our 2018 Autism Essay contest (more information on pages 8 & 9). Schools that participate in the Change for Autism coin drive will receive free awareness building and educational materials from the Autism Society of Wisconsin. All schools that participate will be entered to win 2 conference registrations and the school that raises the most money will win a party for the top 3 classrooms!

BUSINESSES/ORGANIZATIONS

Contact the Autism Society of Wisconsin to learn about how you can create sensory friendly environments or make your business more welcoming to individuals and families affected by autism. Businesses can also support the Autism Society of Wisconsin this April by collecting spare change or hosting a jean day to raise money to support our programs and services.

SIGN UP YOUR SCHOOL OR BUSINESS FOR THE COIN DRIVE AT: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/change4autism>

INDIVIDUALS

Share your experiences to raise awareness and support others:

- What do you wish others knew about autism? Share your thoughts in our survey to be included in our social media awareness campaign. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IwishOthersKnew>
- Become a support parent through Parent to Parent of Wisconsin to support another parent of a child with autism.
- Make a donation to the Autism Society of Wisconsin to support our ongoing programs and services

FIND MORE INFORMATION AT: www.asw4autism.org/change-for-autism.html

2018 AUTISM ESSAY CONTEST



Wisconsin
Autism Society
Affiliates

Everyone Belongs: Celebrating Differences

In collaboration with schools across Wisconsin, the Autism Society Affiliates in Wisconsin are hosting the 13th Annual Autism Essay Contest, a program designed to assist all students in gaining a deeper understanding of autism and how their peers with autism experience the world.

This essay contest is a wonderful opportunity to create an open dialogue about autism, how it affects students in your school and why celebrating differences is important. We hope that you will welcome this opportunity to promote understanding and acceptance of differences in your school.

Please encourage participation in this project by sharing this information with classroom teachers or students who may be interested in participating.

Divisions:

Division 1: K–2nd grade

Division 2: 3rd–5th grade

Division 3: 6th–8th grade

Division 4: 9th–12th grade

Prizes:

1st Place Winners in each division will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card

2nd Place Winners in each division will receive a \$75 Amazon gift card

3rd Place Winners in each division will receive a \$50 Amazon gift card



All 1st place winners will be honored at & invited to the Family Reception at the Autism Society of Wisconsin's 29th Annual Conference in Wisconsin Dells on Friday, April 20, 2018.

Essay Submission: Complete the entry form at http://www.asw4autism.org/essay_contest.html

All essays should be mailed, and postmarked by March 9, 2018, to:

Autism Society of Wisconsin

RE: Annual Essay Contest

1477 Kenwood Dr.

Menasha, WI 54952

Students and/or classrooms K-5:

We highly encourage teachers to go to <http://researchautism.org/education/students-corner/kit-for-kids/> and watch the Kits for Kids Program video from the Organization for Autism Research as a class and consider doing all or parts of the Kit for Kids Activity sheets as part of a lesson.

Essay Entries should include:

- 1 – 2 things you learned about autism and how autism might affect your classmate(s)
- To be successful, students need different support at different times. Think about a time you needed extra help in an assignment or activity to be successful. Who helped you and how did it make you feel? How can you help your peers with autism be successful when they need help?
- Written or illustrated examples, using captions for all illustrations

OR

- As a student with autism, what do you wish other students would know about you?
- Describe a friendship you have with another student and what you enjoy doing together

Students grades 6 – 12

Read more about autism here: <http://researchautism.org/education/students-corner/hs-get-informed/>

Essay Entries should include:

- Write about 3 things you learned about autism and describe how autism might affect your classmate(s), using examples
- To be successful, students need different support at different times. Write an essay about what steps you could take to make your classroom or school a more supportive environment for students with autism. Use examples. Consider how you can extend support to community settings.

OR

- Interview a person with autism and find out what makes them unique. What are their strengths and what do they need extra help with? How could others best support them to be successful? What do they wish others knew about them? Write a summary of what you learned.
- Include your own reflections about the interview and how you can take steps to make sure your school is a supportive environment for students with autism.

OR

- As a student with autism, what do you wish other students would know about you?
- Describe what friendship means to you. What does a positive friendship look, sound, and feel like?

Safe and Sound™

Autism Awareness for First Responders



Wednesday, March 28, 2018,
8:00 am–1:00 pm
COST: FREE
(Pre-registration required)
Lunch is included

Fox Valley Technical College
Public Safety Training Center
W6400 Hwy BB, Room 101 A/B
Appleton

The Autism Society of the Fox Valley is pleased to offer a FREE training for First Responders. The session will focus on tools for agencies to address autism-related field contacts, communication and behavior, sensory issues, de-escalation techniques and arrest, restraint and custody issues. The session will also provide information on how first responders can recognize an individual with autism, and discuss how actual incidents were handled. Special tactics, response techniques, rescue techniques, patient care, search and rescue, and actual incidents will be discussed. Incidents discussed will highlight police responses, fire rescue, rescue from heights, motor vehicle crashes, and emergency medical responses.

Autism is becoming increasingly prevalent. With 1 in 68 children diagnosed, autism is no longer only a disability issue; it is a reality in the community. Throughout the country, children and adults with autism are living average lives, going to school, working and enjoying recreational activities in their communities. Created in 2005, the Safe and Sound™ initiative includes providing information and training to law enforcement and first response professionals – from Police, Fire & Rescue Officers to Emergency Medical Services Officers.

Sgt. Jimmy Donohoe of the Pensacola, Florida Police Department and retired Captain Bill Cannata of the Westwood, Massachusetts Fire Department have been training first responders on how to better handle a call involving autism and related disabilities for 12 years. Both Jimmy and Bill have sons on the autism spectrum and are career long professionals in their perspective fields.

To register visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W33DNXH>

You will receive an email confirmation.

Pre-registration is required. Seating is limited to 200. A waiting list will be generated.

Law enforcement hours will be entered into Acadis.

QUESTIONS? Contact Jessica Fischer at 920-558-4600 or email jfischer@asw4autism.org

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

The Autism Society of Wisconsin will be changing the membership dues process slightly. Instead of your membership expiring the first of each month, it will expire at the end of the month. So if your membership expired January 1, 2018 it will now expire on January 31, 2018. You will still receive a member renewal notice in the mail about 1 month prior to your expiration date. This change allows us to manage the membership more effectively and gives members a few more weeks to pay their dues. If you have any questions regarding your membership dues, please contact Kelly at 888-428-8476 or email asw@asw4autism.org.

FALL CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT


**Not Your Mother's
Social Stories**
By Carol Gray
Autism Society of Wisconsin | 2018 Fall Conference

Bridgewood Resort Hotel
& Conference Center
Neenah, WI
October 11, 2018

Save the Date

Autism Society of Wisconsin
1-888-4-AUTISM (WI only)
1477 Kenwood Drive
Menasha, WI 54952

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Help us fulfill our mission!

Support the Autism Society of Wisconsin by making a tax deductible gift! All donations are appreciated.

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ \$100 _____ \$200 _____ \$ Other

Donations may be sent to:
Autism Society of Wisconsin
1477 Kenwood Drive
Menasha, WI 54952

We also accept donations online . Click the Donate Now button on our
homepage: www.asw4autism.org

Thank you for your support!

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ASW Board Meeting
April 19, 2018