

# **AUTISM SOCIETY**

*Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism*



*Nebraska*

DECEMBER 15, 2010

NEWSGRAM

**JOIN US FOR A HOLIDAY CELEBRATION!**

**LINCOLN**

Sunday, December 19th 1:00 pm - 5:00pm

Come join us on December 19 at Sheridan Lutheran Church in Lincoln for a holiday party. ASN will be joining our comrades at the Autism Family Network as we celebrate the holiday season together!



Bring your cameras and come ready to play! This is a great time to visit with other parents and relax before the holidays. Santa is scheduled to stop by as well so have your list ready!

- We will have Subway sandwiches, chips, cookies, orange drink from McDonald's and a cotton candy machine.
- Kids can decorate Christmas cookies donated by HyVee and make crafts to take home.
- We'll be showing the movie Elf after Santa arrives at 2pm.
- Each child will receive a stocking and can pick a special gift to give their parent for Christmas. Gifts were donated by restaurants and merchants in Lincoln.

Download a flyer [HERE](#). Please RSVP at [afnlincoln@aol.com](mailto:afnlincoln@aol.com)




[WWW.WEISENHEIMERS.COM](http://WWW.WEISENHEIMERS.COM)



[WWW.SARAHBENCK.COM](http://WWW.SARAHBENCK.COM)

**Save the Date!**  
**SATURDAY, JANUARY 8TH**  
For an Autism Society—OMAHA  
fundraiser with the  
**Weisenheimers**  
and  
**Sarah Benck**



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**Thank you to Autism Mom  
Cassandra Herfindahl  
for sharing her baking talents  
with us!**

**Be sure and check out her  
delicious cookies at the  
Omaha Support Group events**

**and**

**give her a call to order her  
homemade treats  
for your family!**

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## **OMAHA: Biomedical Discussion Group**

The Biomedical Discussion group meets **Thursday December 16** at 7pm at Whole Foods in the Lifestyle Center room. Whole Foods is located just south of the Westroads mall at Regency and Dodge. This is a discussion forum for those families currently involved in biomedical treatments. Contact Chrissy Cameron [chrissecameron@cox.net](mailto:chrissecameron@cox.net) or Karen Falconer Al-Hindi [karen.alhindi@gmail.com](mailto:karen.alhindi@gmail.com) for more information.

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## **Nebraska Autism Insurance Mandate Workshop**

**Wednesday, January 12, 2011**

Christ the King Church  
654 S 86th Street, Omaha, NE  
11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Lorri Unumb from Autism Speaks and the Autism Action Partnership will be hosting this event.

The mandate comes from a grass roots movement started by parents of children on the autism spectrum. In order to get something of this magnitude passed we will need help from the entire community! Please try to find the time to attend this meeting!

Please contact Colleen Jankovich at [colleenandjt@yahoo.com](mailto:colleenandjt@yahoo.com) if you are interested or if you know anyone else who may be interested in attending the workshop.

# OMAHA: Autism and the Workplace

## Transition...

a word that can send shivers down your spine. For many of our community the biggest transition is moving beyond school. At last year's state autism conference, speaker James Emmet created quite a buzz in his breakout sessions. Therefore the ASD Network is bringing him back for a daylong session AND they are working with the Autism Society to create an evening session particularly for parents! All parents will benefit from this talk not just those with older kids! It is never too early to be thinking about life after school!

***Our loved ones may receive services during their first 21 years of life BUT...they will be adults for the remaining 50+ years of their lives and what happens during those years will largely be due to their preparation, family support and advocacy!***

James Emmett, M.S., is a national leader in development of employment services for persons with autism spectrum disorders as well as in assisting corporations in creation of outreach efforts to the disability and autism communities. He is an individual with a disability and a parent of three daughters with disabilities. James currently serves as the Chief Operating Officer of Integrated Behavioral Systems and is a Partner in the consulting firm Two Steps Forward. He graduated with a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Illinois Institute of Technology. James recently completed 1.5 years working as the Disability Program Manager for Walgreens helping set up the company's national disability initiative. He also assisted Easter Seals National in laying the foundation for their national autism services network.

**PLEASE TAKE NOTE that the evening session is for parents and professionals and the information will be relevant no matter the age of your child. It is never too early to start planning and preparing to help make their dreams come true.**

**January 25, 2011**                      6:00 pm - 8:00 pm    (no cost)    ESU3 is located at 6949 S 110th St

Download the Parent Night Flyer [HERE](#).

January 26th 8:30am - 3:30pm \$15 fee

Download the Flyer for the Day Session [HERE](#).

**It's a strange thing, but when you are dreading something, and would give anything to slow down time, it has a disobliging habit of speeding up.**  
 ~J.K. Rowling, "The Hungarian Horntail," *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 2000

## OMAHA: Acting Classes at The Rose

THIS JUST IN!!!! The Rose will be offering an abbreviated production of CHARLIE and the CHOCOLATE FACTORY performed by the students in their autism class! Students in grades 7-12 will meet from January until May each Saturday morning to rehearse a 10-15 minute version of the piece. Costumes, scripts, and more will be involved as we embark on this fun journey that will end on the Rose mainstage!

During this first session in 2011, (1/8 - 2/26) the Rose will also be offering a class for students in grades 1 - 3 revolving around the theme of Animals and Pets.

Grades 1 - 3 10:30am - 11:30am  
Grades 7 - 12 11:45am - 12:45pm

For a registration form contact class coordinator Josh Kiepke at [joshk@rosetheater.org](mailto:joshk@rosetheater.org)

\*\*Are you a teen interested in helping with these classes? Teen volunteers are needed. Please contact Michael Harrelson at 502-4634 or [michaelh@rosetheater.org](mailto:michaelh@rosetheater.org) to inquire.

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## ADVOCACY ALERT! Nebraska Budget Cuts

The Governor has asked various state departments to propose a 10% cut to their budgets. As a result the Health and Human Services department has proposed several significant cuts that will be devastating to Nebraskans with disabilities. If these cuts are adopted this will really affect individuals on Medicaid.

Senators and policy makers deal in numbers on a daily basis—but they sometimes do not fully realize how the numbers affect “People” and families. The only way they would really have good insight into the full effect it will have on people is if the people themselves speak up with their story.

Please take a few moments and consider the following talking points about what a 10% budget would do to the Medicaid program. Families need to speak up and say no—you can’t cut a program that is critical to the well being of such a vulnerable population. Legislators have indicated to us advocates, that they are tired of hearing from advocates only –they want to hear directly from the families themselves. They want examples of how it will affect individual families so they can discuss the implications.

**Please take a few moments and let your local legislators know how these proposed cuts will impact YOUR loved one and YOUR family!**

[Click here to download the list of talking points that were provided by our friends at Nebraska Advocacy Services.](#)

## ASD Network Southeast Region Newsletter

The Nebraska ASD Network is overseen by the Nebraska Department of Education and works in an advisory capacity providing training to Nebraska schools. They offer exceptional training to professionals as well as parents. Be sure and check out the Southeast Region's Newsletter [HERE](#) for some great information!

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### ASD Network Workshops

The Nebraska ASD Network is overseen by the Nebraska Department of Education and works in an advisory capacity providing training to Nebraska schools. They offer exceptional training to professionals as well as parents. Be sure and keep an eye out on their website for the current list of workshops!

These are a GREAT way to bring training to your teachers as well as into your home!

<http://events.unl.edu/asdnetwork/upcoming/>

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## OMAHA: Close Encounter at the Henry Doorly Zoo

P2P Close Encounter at the Henry Doorly Zoo

Sponsored by the Ollie Webb Center

For families of children with disabilities—reservations needed!

Saturday January 8, 2010

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Henry Doorly Zoo Omaha

(Please arrive at the Guest Services Building at the zoo between 12:45 pm. and 1:00 pm. so the group can enter the zoo together and use a special pass to get in. The cost is \$4 per family. Please arrive on time as someone will be waiting for you at Guest Services who can check you in with the group—otherwise you risk having to pay normal zoo prices to get in.

An Animal Ambassador will bring an approachable animal for us to meet face to face—and we will have a presentation on Animal Environments.

To make a reservation please call Annie at 346-5220 Ext. 23 or e-mail her at [aander-son@olliewebbinc.org](mailto:aander-son@olliewebbinc.org). Please send in or drop off the family registration fee to the Ollie Webb Center before January 5, 2010.



## Converting recipes to GF/CF

Holidays = Yummy Treats!

But what if you are on a gluten free or dairy free diet?

Well, there might just be hope!



Be sure and check out [this article](#) at the Alternative Cook, LLC for some expert advice for converting that special recipe to one that fits your special diet!

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## Have your United Way donations impact YOUR community!

UNITED WAY CAMPAIGNS ARE UNDERWAY!

Most companies across the state participate in the United Way Campaign, which gets into full swing each fall. **Did you know that you, and anyone else you know, can donate to the Autism Society of Nebraska through the United Way?** It's true! The United Way allows donors to write in specific organizations for donations. If you would like to have your United Way donations go to ASN, you can write it in as:



Autism Society of America—Nebraska Chapter  
PO Box 83559  
Lincoln, NE 68501-3559

If your United Way campaign contact person needs any information about the Autism Society of Nebraska, he/she can contact ASN Treasurer, Dan Kosmicki at 1-800-580-9279.

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## LINCOLN: Sibshop

Sibshops are fun, informative workshops held for children ages 8 – 13 who have a brother or sister with a developmental disability. Siblings have a chance to meet other brothers and sisters and join them in recreational activities. While having fun in a safe environment, they can discuss their feelings about being a sib and talk about common concerns, interests, and joys.

For more information contact the Arc of Lincoln / Lancaster County at 421-8866 or visit their web site at [www.arclincoln.org](http://www.arclincoln.org)

# OMAHA Support Group—Gym Swim Family Event



Check out photos from our previous Gym and Swim Events at Montclair Community Center on our photo gallery [HERE](#).



Our next one is conveniently scheduled during the Holiday Break from school!

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Join the Autism Society Omaha Support Group for another open gym and swim time at the Montclair Community Center located at 2304 S 135th Ave in Omaha.

WHO: Autism Families

WHAT: Open Gym and Open Swim time for our families

WHEN: **Wednesday, December 29th**

6:00—7:00 Explore the gymnasium and game room

7:00—9:00 Family Swimming Time



Game Room: Ping Pong, Pool Table, Foosball, Air Hockey, and a Craft Table (There is no cost for the games. However, \$1 is needed to cover usage of the items like paddles/balls. You will receive the \$1 back when the items are brought back to the counter. )

Open Gym: Run, shoot hoops, play! This is free. Bring your own equipment.

Swimming: Costs \$1 per person. Sorry no floatation devices allowed (You can bring in a life jacket, diving rings, water toys) The pool varies from 3ft to 12 ft so you will need to be in the water with your children.

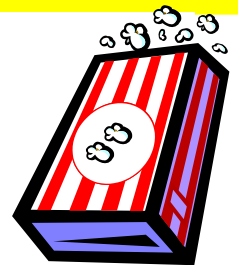
**Children attending these events must have an active parent with them at all times. This is not a structured group activity but rather a venue for our families to come together. Parents MUST BE responsible for their OWN children in the swimming pool.**

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All information on this Newsgram is also available by visiting our web site at [www.autismnebraska.org](http://www.autismnebraska.org)

# SENSORY FRIENDLY FILMS

The Autism Society is very thankful to AMC Entertainment for their leadership in bringing families affected by autism and other disabilities a special opportunity to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. We have now had almost two full years of Sensory Friendly Movies here in Omaha and for many of our families this has been an amazing way to overcome some of the isolation we as a community tend to experience.



A movie is something that so many in society take for granted but for those with sensory issues it can be very difficult. For some, walking into a dark theater is terrifying. For others the heart pounding sound system is too much to handle. 2 hours is an awful long time to sit still and for many of our community it is just not possible for them to be totally silent for the entire showing.

So what is a *sensory friendly* movie? This is a movie venue that is accommodating to YOUR needs! The auditorium will have their lights brought up, the sound turned down, and a silence policy will not be enforced. AMC showings do not have previews so plan to arrive on time!

We are thrilled to announce additional sensory friendly opportunities in the area! First of all, AMC has expanded their theaters there are now sensory friendly showings at the AMC –Star 17 theater in Council Bluffs! Also Marcus Theatre has recently developed their own program called **Reel Movies for Real Needs** and there are two Nebraska theatres participating. You can learn more about the Marcus Theatre program [here](#) as some of their accommodations vary.

**\*Please note that the January showing was changed from Gulliver's Travels to Yogi Bear.**

## Yogi Bear

Saturday, January 8

**OMAHA:: 10:00 am**  
**Oakview 24 Theater (AMC Theatre)**  
 3555 S 140th Plaza

**COUNCIL BLUFFS: 10:00 am**  
**Council Bluffs Star 17 Cinema (AMC Theater)**  
 3220 23rd Avenue

## Gnomeo & Juliet

Saturday, February 12

**OMAHA: 10:00 am**  
**Oakview 24 Theater (AMC Theatre)**  
 3555 S 140th Plaza

**COUNCIL BLUFFS: 10:00 am**  
**Council Bluffs Star 17 Cinema (AMC Theater)**  
 3220 23rd Avenue

The Autism Society of Nebraska has developed a toolkit to help you approach your local theater about creating sensory friendly showings in your community! Contact us at [autismsociety@autismnebraska.org](mailto:autismsociety@autismnebraska.org) to find out more information about how to create sensory friendly showings in your community!

## **OMAHA: Movin' and Groovin'**

TheraPlayce is offering an exercise and fitness program for children with special needs. They will focus on getting your child up and moving in activities to help increase bone and muscle growth/strength, motor control, and function, and cardiovascular endurance. As your child's strength and endurance increases you will also see an increase in self esteem, socialization skills and attention. The classes will be run by an Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist Assistant and a Certified Speech Language Pathologist.

Movin N' Groovin is a 4 week program. Each week will have a different theme for incorporating fun, aerobic activities, both indoor and outdoor activities (weather permitting). Classes start December 9th and run through January 13th.

Cost for each week is \$15.00 or register for all 4 classes for \$50.00! Payment is due at the beginning of session.

Visit their website [HERE](#) for more information or to download a registration form.

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## **OMAHA: Social Skating for Special Needs**

Theraplayce is offering a new fun way to assist with developing your child's socialization skills along with increasing their strength and balance. Ice skating is also a fun way to spend family time over the winter season and a great way to get exercise at the same time!

Social Skating for Special Needs will take place on Wednesdays from 12:00pm - 2:00pm at Moylan Tranquility Iceplex located on 127th and West Maple Road and will be taught by our Speech Language Pathologist and Physical Therapist Assistant. Our SLP has taught USFSA basic skills and both have backgrounds in skating and enjoy teaching it to others.

Your child will be learning the basic skills for skating as described by the USFSA. These skills include: balance, weight bearing, sitting and standing, marching in place, dipping in place, dipping while moving, and forward two foot swizzles (according to each child's needs and abilities). The skills that will be taught are a progressive set of skills and build on each other so it is very important that you attend each week so your child can get the maximum benefit from our program.

After skating they will enjoy snack together while working on their social language skills like staying on topic; initiating and responding; taking turns; and figurative asking and answering question.

All activities your child participates in during Social Skating for Special Needs are therapeutic and provide input to help your child enhance their lives.

Visit their website [HERE](#) for more information or to download a registration form.

## OMAHA: Sensational Saturdays

Drop your kids off for a fun time of sensory activities; speech and language development; auditory, visual and tactile input; and gross motor activities and socialization. Multi-Sensory Saturday is \$25 per class or you can register for 4 classes for only \$90. You must register by the Thursday before the day you wish to attend. Payment is due at the time of drop off.

Theraplayce provides a variety of services and progress is due to the variety of treatment modalities and equipment they use. Sensory integration myofascial release, therapeutic listening aquatic activities and traditional land based interventions are all incorporated to each child's individualized plan of care.

### Schedule

8:45am - 9:00am Drop-off

12:00pm - 12:15pm Pick up

Activities during the day will include but are not limited to:

- Tactile/Sensory Exploration
- Story Time
- Speech/Language Movie
- Social/Language Skills
- Crafts
- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor

Visit their website [HERE](#) for more information or to download a registration form.

## SURVEY: Autism Genetics Study with Interactive

This is an autism genetics study thru IAN Research. To participate, you will first need to enroll in IAN Research - the nation's largest autism research project. Once you have completed your initial registration and filled out your "Family Profile" — which is a list of family members — you will be eligible to participate in the autism genetics study.

Participation in the study involves a free blood draw for your child with ASD and his or her sibling (if any) at a local [LabCorp](#). Later, DNA is extracted and becomes part of a new collection of genetic information for autism research.

IAN Research completely understands it is not easy for parents of children with ASD to make time in their busy lives to visit LabCorp, and that taking children for blood draws is rarely a fun activity. That is why they are providing a token of thanks. IAN will send you a \$25 Amazon.com gift card for each child in your family who:

- Has submitted a blood sample, and
- Has a completed Social Communication Questionnaire (SCQ) in his or her section of the IAN Family Profile.

Learn more at the Interactive Autism Network website [HERE](#).

## **SURVEY: Research Group looking for adult siblings of individuals with special needs**

If you are an adult with a special needs sibling you might take a look at the following survey. [HERE](#) is a link to an article in Special Needs Parenting Magazine highlighting a previous study by this group.

Their previous study focused on children (ages 5-17) who had a sibling with special needs. Thanks to the support of Don Meyer from the Sibling Support Project ([www.siblingsupport.org](http://www.siblingsupport.org)) and other Sibshop organizers around the USA, they were able to send out over 1,300 surveys to siblings nationwide. Parenting Special Needs magazine published many of their findings hoping they might make a difference with many families.

This group of high school students then were asked to present their findings at the 1st International Sibling Conference (Greenwich, CT, Summer 2010 (<http://siblingconference.org/>)). They were encouraged to continue with their research by so many adult siblings they met at the conference.

So they are now excitedly contacting us about our new study. They are working in consultation with Dr. Ann Kaiser from Vanderbilt University (<http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/x4862.xml>) and with support from Don Meyer, the co-founder and president of the National Sibling Support Project ([www.siblingsupport.org](http://www.siblingsupport.org)), the Sibling Leadership Network ([www.siblingleadership.org](http://www.siblingleadership.org)) and many others from the International Sibling Conference.

All responses will be kept confidential but they will be glad to share their findings with you if you send them a separate email to [mblueglass@aol.com](mailto:mblueglass@aol.com). Please type "Sibling Survey Participant" in the subject line of the email, to maintain confidentiality. They also hope to share our overall findings with as many people as possible through sibling support groups, sibling conferences, and publications focused on helping the families of people with special needs.

Here is a link to the survey:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Adult-Sibling-Survey>

## **ELKHORN: CREATE hosts a special needs Art Class**

Every child is an artist! This class will give your child the opportunity to learn and explore using art. There will be a variety of activities, easily adapted to meet the needs of your child. This class is a place to play and explore using our imagination.

Special Needs class meets every Tuesday from 4:30-5:30pm

Cost - \$10 a day or \$30 for the month (4 Classes) Cost covers all materials and instruction for the class. This is for school age individuals. Just call ahead at (402) 933-4446 to reserve your space! You can join anytime!

Learn more at [www.inspireandcreate.com](http://www.inspireandcreate.com)

## **12 Tips for Helping People with Autism and Their Families Have a Happy Holiday**

While many happily anticipate the coming holiday season, families of people on the autism spectrum also understand the special challenges that may occur when schedules are disrupted and routines broken. Our hope is that by following these few helpful tips, families may lessen the stress of the holiday season and make it a more enjoyable experience for everyone involved. The following tips were developed with input from the Autism Society, the Indiana Resource Center for Autism, Easter Seals Crossroads, the Sonya Ansari Center for Autism at Logan and the Indiana Autism Leadership Network..

**1. Preparation is crucial for many individuals.** At the same time, it is important to determine how much preparation a specific person may need. For example, if your son or daughter has a tendency to become anxious when anticipating an event that is to occur in the future, you may want to adjust how many days in advance you prepare him or her. Preparation can occur in various ways by using a calendar and marking the dates of various holiday events, or by creating a social story that highlights what will happen at a given event.

**2. Decorations around the house may be disruptive for some.** It may be helpful to revisit pictures from previous holidays that show decorations in the house. If such a photo book does not exist, use this holiday season to create one. For some it may also be helpful to take them shopping with you for holiday decorations so that they are engaged in the process. Or involve them in the process of decorating the house. And once holiday decorations have been put up, you may need to create rules about those that can and cannot be touched. Be direct, specific and consistent.

**3. If a person with autism has difficulty with change, you may want to gradually decorate the house.** For example, on the first day, put up the Christmas tree, then on the next day, decorate the tree and so on. And again, engage them as much as possible in this process. It may be helpful to develop a visual schedule or calendar that shows what will be done on each day.

**4. If a person with autism begins to obsess about a particular gift or item they want, it may be helpful to be specific and direct about the number of times they can mention the gift.** One suggestion is to give them five chips. They are allowed to exchange one chip for five minutes of talking about the desired gift. Also, if you have no intention of purchasing a specific item, it serves no purpose to tell them that maybe they will get the gift. This will only lead to problems in the future. Always choose to be direct and specific about your intentions.

**5. Teach them how to leave a situation and/or how to access support when an event becomes overwhelming.** For example, if you are having visitors, have a space set aside for the child as his/her safe/calm space. The individual should be taught ahead of time that they should go to their space when feeling overwhelmed. This self-management tool will serve the individual into adulthood. For those who are not at that level of self-management, develop a signal or cue for them to show when they are getting anxious, and prompt them to use the space. For individuals with more significant challenges, practice using this space in a calm manner at various times prior to your guests' arrival. Take them into the room and engage them in calming activities (e.g., play soft music, rub his/her back, turn down the lights, etc.). Then when you notice the individual becoming anxious, calmly remove him/her from the anxiety-provoking setting immediately and take him/her into the calming environment.

## **12 Tips for Helping People with Autism and Their Families Have a Happy Holiday (Continued)**

**6. If you are traveling for the holidays, make sure you have their favorite foods or items available.** Having familiar items readily available can help to calm stressful situations. Also, prepare them via social stories or other communication systems for any unexpected delays in travel. If you are flying for the first time, it may be helpful to bring the individual to the airport in advance and help him/her to become accustomed to airports and planes. Use social stories and pictures to rehearse what will happen when boarding and flying.

**7. Know your loved one with autism and how much noise and activity they can tolerate.** If you detect that a situation may be becoming overwhelming, help them find a quiet area in which to regroup. And there may be some situations that you simply avoid (e.g., crowded shopping malls the day after Thanksgiving).

**8. Prepare a photo album in advance of the relatives and other guests who will be visiting during the holidays.** Allow the person with autism access to these photos at all times and also go through the photo album with him/her while talking briefly about each family member.

**9. Practice opening gifts, taking turns and waiting for others, and giving gifts.** Role play scenarios with your child in preparation for him/her getting a gift they do not want. Talk through this process to avoid embarrassing moments with family members. You might also choose to practice certain religious rituals. Work with a speech language pathologist to construct pages of vocabulary or topic boards that relate to the holidays and family traditions.

**10. Prepare family members for strategies to use to minimize anxiety or behavioral incidents, and to enhance participation.** Help them to understand if the person with autism prefers to be hugged or not, needs calm discussions or provide other suggestions that will facilitate a smoother holiday season.

**11. If the person with autism is on special diet, make sure there is food available that he/she can eat.** And even if they are not on a special diet, be cautious of the amount of sugar consumed. And try to maintain a sleep and meal routine.

**12. Above all, know your loved one with autism.** Know how much noise and other sensory input they can take. Know their level of anxiety and the amount of preparation it may take. Know their fears and those things that will make the season more enjoyable for them.

Don't stress. Plan in advance. And most of all have a wonderful holiday season!

## Parent 2 Parent Advice: Tips on Surviving the

We recently asked our community on the ASN Listserv for some pointers on how they survive the holidays. Here were some of their responses.

- Try not to get carried away with the presents and let your family know that your child may not respond like they expect to their gifts. Our son doesn't really know what to do with the new toy until we help him explore and learn how to play with it. We've had family disappointed because he didn't respond how they thought he should to their gifts. Don't let that get you down!
- If surprises (or the unexpected) are a problem for your child tell him what is in the present before he opens it. You'd be surprise how much more exciting it is for them to open the present when they already know what is in it!
- Send out a short note or email to everyone you will be with during the holidays explaining your family's unique needs. Let them know that you are excited to see them but that this time of year is challenging and you may need to set aside some one on one time with them rather than catching up during a large gathering.
- Set a schedule and STICK TO IT! Family meals always fall behind schedule. If the family expects to eat at 2pm than make a schedule out for your child so he knows what to expect. Explain to him that today's Thanksgiving meal is at 2pm. What if the turkey isn't done at 2pm? You let your child eat at 2pm. You make them a plate with the food that is ready and get them started. Do not make them wait!
- If traveling...take as many comforts from home as you can. A blanket, a pillow, a favorite movie. Now is not the time to worry about too much time on the Nintendo DS. If they find it calming...bring it!
- Keep gatherings small. It may be a pain because it means more gatherings if you want to see everyone but. . .in the long run its better for your child. We only go to familiar homes or have everyone here.

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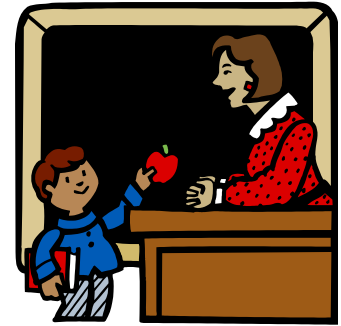
## Help us make this Newsgram relevant to you!

We rely on our community to help us find useful information to share with you through this Newsgram. If you have an event that you would like added to the Autism Society of Nebraska Newsgram please email us at [autismsocietynewsgram@autismnebraska.org](mailto:autismsocietynewsgram@autismnebraska.org).

You are our eyes and ears across the state. Please help us help you AND your neighbors by sharing your resources and contacts with us!



# Friend of Autism Nominations Sought by the Nebraska ASD Network



Do you know an educator who demonstrates remarkable dedication to individuals with autism spectrum disorders? Nominate them for the ASD Network Friend of Autism Award. Submissions should include details of how the nominee exhibits the following qualities.

**Commitment:** Has the education of families and children and youth with ASD as a primary focus and provides opportunities that enable students with ASD to reach their potential.

**Vision:** Sees potential in all individuals, readily adapts to change and accepts all individuals with ASD and their strengths and needs.

**Innovation:** Is aware of empirically supported practices in the field of Autism Spectrum Disorders and shows a willingness to adapt and use resources creatively.

**Inspiration:** Displays positive interactions with students and parents and actively influences peers with their energy and enthusiasm.

Please include contact information for the nominee and the person(s) submitting the nomination. Nominations can be submitted via email: to Annette Wragge at [awragge2@unl.edu](mailto:awragge2@unl.edu), or by mail to the following address: Annette Wragge, UNL, 253F Barkley Center, Lincoln, NE 68583-0738

\*Nomination Deadline: March 1st, 2011

\*The award will be presented during the evening event at the 2011 ASD State Conference on April 7th and 8th. (Embassy Suites, La Vista)

Please contact Annette with any questions!

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**It takes a village to raise a child and we truly have to rely on all of the villagers when it comes to our special needs children!**



**Thank you to all of the professionals out there helping serve our families!**

## Autism Society of America Membership

The Autism Society, the nation's leading grassroots autism organization, exists to improve the lives of all affected by autism. We do this by increasing public awareness about the day-to-day issues faced by people on the spectrum, advocating for appropriate services for individuals across the lifespan, and providing the latest information regarding treatment, education, research and advocacy.

Founded in 1965 by Dr. Bernard Rimland, Dr. Ruth Sullivan and many other parents of children with autism, the Autism Society is the leading source of trusted and reliable information about autism. Through its strong chapter network, the Autism Society has spearheaded numerous pieces of state and local legislation, including the 2006 Combating Autism Act, the first federal autism-specific law. The Autism Society's website is one of the most visited websites on autism in the world and its quarterly journal, [Autism Advocate](#), has a broad national readership. The Autism Society also hosts the most comprehensive [national conference](#) on autism, attended by 2000 people each year. Our [information and referral](#) team, our program staff, and our strong chapter presence serve thousands of families each year who are searching for help in their journey with autism.

When you join the national Autism Society of America you become a member of your local Autism Society chapter here in Nebraska as well. In fact, the Autism Society of Nebraska receives 60% of those dues paid to the Autism Society of America. ASA forwards those fees on to the local chapter so that we can carry out our local mission here in your neighborhood! The Autism Society of America is committed to helping the grassroots grow in strength and they recognize that those in the local community have the best understanding of the local needs.

The Autism Society of Nebraska has the benefit of being part of a well respected national organization yet we are still able to keep 100% of all of our local fundraising efforts here in Nebraska.

So are you a member yet? It's not too late...you can join online [HERE](#) or download a form [HERE](#). A household membership is only \$25.

**Join the Autism Society of Nebraska and help us make a difference here in Nebraska!**

With ASA membership you will receive ASA's quarterly magazine, The Autism Advocate and 60% of your membership dues come back directly to our Nebraska chapter!

It is a win-win for everyone!

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

Join the Autism Society of Nebraska on Facebook!  
Become a Fan...click [HERE!](#)

Please help us complete our list of resources by forwarding any ASD friendly events to [AutismSocietyNewsgram@autismnebraska.org](mailto:AutismSocietyNewsgram@autismnebraska.org)

To have your event added to the Autism Society Newsgram and calendar please email [AutismSocietyNewsgram@autismnebraska.org](mailto:AutismSocietyNewsgram@autismnebraska.org) or you can post it directly to our calendar at [www.autismnebraska.org](http://www.autismnebraska.org). Please be aware that it may take 24 hours for your event to appear on the site.

**Autism Society of Nebraska**

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We appreciate your help including our statewide community events! Please help us help you AND your neighbors!



All information on this Newsgram is also available by visiting our web site at [www.autismnebraska.org](http://www.autismnebraska.org)