



## Children's National: CASD CHAT

### CASD in the Community

#### CASD Welcomes Stakeholder Advisory Board

On Thursday, March 22nd, the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (CASD) hosted its first Stakeholder Advisory Board Meeting (SAB). The main purpose of the CASD SAB is to provide recommendations to CASD faculty and staff that will assist in the planning, development, implementation, and improvement of CASD's mission of care, advocacy, research, and education. To effectively fulfill this mission CASD aims to involve families in the community as much as possible. The goal of the CASD SAB is to identify how CASD can best interface with community members and reach families.



CASD SAB Parent Members: Karen Gorman, Michelle Hawkins, Michelle Cox, Barbara Pitkin, and Darlene Bush (top row); Stephen Jones, CASD's Yetta Myrick, and Charisse Carney-Nunes (bottom row); not pictured, Lisa Greenman, Sarah Gannon and Nuha Shible

The CASD SAB consists of ten parent members, (Darlene Bush, Charisse Carney-Nunes, Michelle Cox, Sarah Gannon, Karen Gorman, Lisa Greenman, Michelle Hawkins, Stephen Jones, Barbara Pitkin, Nuha Shible), who have children or young adults who have received services through CASD's clinical program or participated in CASD research projects. Four of the current SAB members served on CASD's Patient Advisory Committee along with CASD's Community Outreach Coordinator, Yetta Myrick from 2009-2010. Ms. Myrick, who serves as the liaison between CASD faculty and staff and the SAB parent members, states, "I am really excited to engage these parents, as they all bring unique perspectives to the table."

During the first meeting, SAB members received an overview of the program, and there was ample time for CASD faculty and staff and the SAB parent members to share their stories. "The first meeting was really about everyone getting to know each other. I had already met with everyone one on one, so I knew I had the right people to serve! I look forward to us all working together to fulfill CASD's mission," Myrick says.

## Learn the Signs. Act Early. DC

Yetta Myrick, CASD's Community Outreach Coordinator and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Act Early Ambassador to the District of Columbia joined her fellow Ambassadors representing 50 states and 4 territories on the CDC campus for the Annual Act Early Ambassador Training on March 14th and 15th hosted by the Learn the Signs. Act Early. Team at the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD)/CDC along with project partners from the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) and the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP).



Yetta Myrick gets ready for her close-up at the Act Early Ambassador Training

Over the course of two days, Ambassadors heard from several of their colleagues and national partners on best practices and innovative activities and products to increase developmental monitoring and screening in the field.

Act Early Ambassadors serve as liaisons to the "[Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#)" Program and work as community champions with programs that serve young children and their parents. "Learn the Signs. Act Early." provides families with children ages zero to five with FREE tools to celebrate their child's development, and to act when there are concerns. "These materials were not available when my son was a baby. This is the reason why I love and support the program," Myrick says.

If you have family and friends with children up to the age of five, please share this FREE resource with them. To learn more about "Learn the Signs. Act Early. DC," please visit our [website](#), like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#)!

### CASD Cares

#### April is Autism Month

Nearly 50 years have passed since the Autism Society held the first National Autism Awareness month in April of 1970. Since then, the diagnosis rate of children with autism has increased from 1 in every 2000 children in the 1970's and 1980's to 1 in every 68 children today. In 2008, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously declared April 2nd as World Autism Awareness Day ([A/RES/62/139](#)) to highlight the need to help improve the quality of life of those with autism so they can lead full and meaningful lives as an integral part of society. In 2011, the first Autism Acceptance Month celebrations were organized in response to the traditional "Autism Awareness" campaigns, as Autistic Self-Advocates felt that awareness was not enough and that acceptance holds the key to integration into the world.

CASD would like to provide a few resources for you to learn more about Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month:

1. The 2018 World Autism Awareness Day observance at United Nations Headquarters New York will focus on the importance of empowering women and

- girls with autism and involving them and their representative organizations in policy and decision making to address these challenges. Click [here](#) to learn more.
2. [The Autistic Self Advocacy Network](#) created a dedicated website for [Autism Acceptance Month](#).
  3. Check out the [Autism Society of America's Autism Awareness Month](#) webpage.

## CASD in the Media

Dr. John Strang, CASD Neuropsychologist and Director of the Gender and Autism Program was featured in a Slate article entitled, "[A Disproportionate Number of Autistic Youth Are Transgender. Why?](#)"

## Calendar of Events

### April 2018

#### AJE Special Education Thursdays

What is the Value of Inclusion and Why Does the Law Favor It?

Guest: Jennifer Halper , Special Education Policy Professional

Thursday , April 5th at 12:30pm

These 30 minute sessions are available online one Thursday a month to give parents and professionals: information, education and a better understanding of DC special education issues in a "bite-size" format. For more information, please visit,

<http://www.aje-dc.org/programs-3/special-education-thursdays/>

#### AMC Sensory Friendly Films: Ready Player One

AMC Theatres Nationwide

Tuesday, April 10th

The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. The auditoriums dedicated to the program have their lights up, the sound turned down and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout, or sing! Please check your local theatre listings for specific show times. For more information, please visit, [www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films](http://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films)

#### Kid in Action: Only Make Believe

The HSC Pediatric Center

Washington, DC

Friday, April 13th at 7pm

Join Kids in Action as they host Only Make Believe, a non-profit organization that creates and performs interactive theatre for children in hospitals and care facilities. Performances at The HSC Pediatric Center are designed for children with varying abilities. Only Make Believe allows participants to take a break from their everyday obstacles, express themselves in their own way, and "let loose" in a safe environment. Advance registration required. Email Jenn Preyers, CTRS at [jpreyers@hschealth.org](mailto:jpreyers@hschealth.org). For more information, please visit, <http://www.hschealth.org/medical-programs-therapy/services-programs/adaptive-sports>

Music for Autism: Kari Paludan, soprano, and Wes McCune, piano present "George, Ira and Friends!"

The Ivymount School

Rockville, MD

Saturday, April 14th at 10:30am

Music for Autism provides autism-friendly, interactive concerts developed specifically for individuals with autism and their families. To learn more about Music for Autism, please visit, [www.musicforautism.org](http://www.musicforautism.org). RSVPs are gladly accepted from parties with a family member or friend on the autism spectrum only. Register [HERE](#).

AMC Sensory Friendly Films: Sherlock Gnomes

AMC Theatres Nationwide

Saturday, April 14th

The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. The auditoriums dedicated to the program have their lights up, the sound turned down and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout, or sing! Please check your local theatre listings for specific show times. For more information, please visit, [www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films](http://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films)

9th Annual Voices of Change Conference

Walter E. Washington Convention Center

Washington, DC

Friday, April 20th 9:30am

DC high schools - DCPS, Charter, and Non-public - are invited to bring their students with IEPs, 504 plans, and disabilities to learn about how to successfully transition into employment, education, and independence. There will be a youth-led opening session, youth-led workshops, exhibits, and a youth-led performance!

To register your school, click [HERE](#).

(\*DCPS educators: Please contact your school's WDC.)

To register for the Parent/Caregiver Session, click [HERE](#).

To register to exhibit, click [HERE](#).

To register to volunteer, click [HERE](#).

If you have questions or need assistance?

Contact SchoolTalk's Sarah Grime at [sarah.grime@schooltalkdc.org](mailto:sarah.grime@schooltalkdc.org) or (202) 487-1976.

My Way Matinee: Duck Duck Goose

Regal Theatres Nationwide

Saturday, April 21st at 10:30am

The program is sensory friendly, with the sound lowered and lights brighter. For more information, please visit, <http://www.regmovies.com/MyWayMatinee>

AMC Sensory Friendly Films: Rampage

AMC Theatres Nationwide

Tuesday, April 24th

The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. The auditoriums dedicated to the program have their lights up, the sound turned down and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout, or sing! Please check your local theatre listings for specific show times. For more information, please visit, [www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films](http://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films)

The Kennedy Center Sensory Friendly Performances: NSO Family Concert: Young People's Concert with Ben Folds

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Washington, DC

Sunday, April 29th at 2pm

Sensory friendly performances are designed to create a performing arts experience that is welcoming to all families with children with autism or with other disabilities that create sensory sensitivities. Accommodations for these performances include: lower sound level, especially for startling or loud sounds; lights remain on at a low level in the theater during the performance; a reduction of strobe lighting or lighting focused on the audience; patrons are free to talk and leave their seats during the performance; designated quiet areas within the theater; space throughout the theater for standing and movement; limited crowds and visitors at the Kennedy Center during the day and timing of the performance; and Kennedy Center staff trained to be inviting and accommodating to families' needs. To purchase tickets for a sensory friendly performance, please call the Instant-Charge Service Desk at 202-476-8528 (voice) or visit, <https://www.kennedy-center.org/pages/accessibility/sensory>

## CASD Community Workshop Series Life after an ASD Diagnosis: Next Steps after receiving an initial diagnosis

Thursday, April 19th 6-7:30pm

The purpose of this workshop is to provide an overview of autism, as well as common resources and evidence-based treatments that are effective for children with autism spectrum disorders. We will review what autism is, common myths about autism, community resources and funding options, and evidence-based treatments.



### Presenters:

CASD's Social Worker, Allysa Ware, MSW, LGSW and Community Outreach Coordinator, Yetta Myrick, both mothers of autistic teenagers, work to link families with resources and services. They work together to provide the best possible care for autistic youth, and facilitate research participation among interested families.

### Location:

Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders



Children's National Health System  
15245 Shady Grove Road, North Building  
Suite 355 Conference Room  
Rockville, MD 20850

This workshop is FREE and open to parents, family members and professionals, but registration is required.

To register, please contact Yetta Myrick at [ymyrick@childrensnational.org](mailto:ymyrick@childrensnational.org) or 301-765-5488.

## Space Available!!! CASD's Young Child Social and Flexibility Group

A group therapy for children in preschool and kindergarten with autism spectrum disorder to develop social communication, interactive play, and behavioral flexibility skills.


When:  
Tuesdays, 3:15-4:15 pm (April-August 2018)


Where:  
Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders  
15245 Shady Grove Road, Suite 350  
Rockville, MD 20850



Interested? Contact Dr. Allison Ratto at [aratto@childrensnational.org](mailto:aratto@childrensnational.org) or 301-765-5596, for more information, including insurance benefits.

**Sensory-Friendly Performance: May 5, 2018, at 2:00 p.m.**



**FORD'S**  
  
**THEATRE**  
 WHERE LINCOLN'S LEGACY LIVES

book by William F. Brown; music and lyrics by Charlie Smalls; from the story *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum; choreographed by Dell Howlett; directed by Kent Gash

This performance is designed to welcome anyone who might benefit from an adjusted theatre environment—including those on the autism spectrum or others with sensory sensitivities. This performance will feature adjustments to lighting and sound effects, a relaxed theatre environment that allows for movement, designated break spaces, and pre-visit materials. We can't wait to welcome you to Ford's! Tickets are \$25-\$30.

**Tickets and Info: (202) 347-4833, option 7**

Photos of Christopher Jackson, Ian McKellen, Brad Pitt, and Tom Hanks by Carol Kasegg



**This 9-session program is for parents of children  
(ages preschool through early adolescence) with challenging behaviors.**


The interactive format is designed to help parents identify the source of their child's behavior and learn what they can do about it.

At each session, Dr. Shapiro will provide proactive strategies for raising children with difficult temperaments and developmental differences. Parents will learn to customize their approach to fit their child's unique profile. Different strokes for different kids!

**SESSION TOPICS**

- Know Your Child
- Time-in
- Engagement and Understanding
- Motivation through Positive Attention
- Motivation through Experience
- Motivation through Rewards
- Problem Solving
- Time-out and Ignoring
- Pausing for Empathy and Self-Reflection
- Accommodations/Interventions

**For more information and other courses, go to [parentchildjourney.com](http://parentchildjourney.com)**

<p><b>WITH:</b></p>  <p>Dan Shapiro, M.D. Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrician <a href="http://parentchildjourney.com">parentchildjourney.com</a></p>	<p><b>LOCATION:</b></p> <p>St. Andrew's Episcopal School 8804 Post oak Road Potomac, MD 20854</p> <p><i>Ample free parking.</i></p>	<p><b>WHEN:</b></p> <p>Spring 2018 9 Tuesday nights 7:30 – 9:00 PM</p> <p>April 10– June 5</p>	<p><b>REGISTER:</b></p> <p><a href="#">CLICK HERE TO REGISTER</a> or go to: <a href="http://ParentChildJourney.com">ParentChildJourney.com</a></p> <p><i>Suggested range: \$150-\$300 for all 9 sessions.</i></p> <p><i>Those who can pay more, thanks very much for supporting those who can't.</i></p>
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15245 Shady Grove Road, Suite 350, Rockville, MD 20850

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