



Home Improvement

April is Autism Awareness Month

*By Sherri Bevan Walsh
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April is Autism Awareness Month and I always like to take this opportunity to bring a little more awareness to our own community. As both the Chairman of the Autism Society Greater Akron Chapter and as the mother of a child who has autism, I am encouraged by the dramatic improvement in people's awareness of autism since my son's diagnosis seven years ago. There is still a long way to go as we work together as a society to solve the mystery of autism and to support the individuals and families who are dealing with

this devastating disorder.

The Autism Society Greater Akron Chapter is planning a number of activities in April to focus on awareness in our community. First, we are once again teaming up with ClearChannel Outdoor and local sponsoring corporations to feature billboards around our community with messages on them about autism. We are also working with the Akron-Summit County Public Library to have books and videos on autism displayed at the downtown and branch libraries.

In addition, the Greater Akron Chapter is asking area schools to participate in Autism Awareness

Month by adopting an activity, such as reading from the book "A is for Autism, F is for Friend," which we donated to area elementary and middle schools, during morning announcements.

We are also once again hosting a fundraiser with Bricco Restaurant (1 W. Exchange Street, Akron) on April 28, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., when 20% of the proceeds from food sales will go to support the Autism Society Greater Akron Chapter! This event is lots of fun and helps to support the Autism Society's initiatives and advocacy efforts.

Take a minute to become a member of the Autism Society by joining for

only \$25.00. Dues include a subscription to the Autism Society's magazine Autism Advocate, which is filled with helpful information on autism. Of note is that 60% of the cost of membership stays right here to support local families affected by autism. Join by going to www.autism-society.org and click on Join.

To learn more about autism, please read a book or look online. Here are some suggested resources:

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

My Friend with Autism, by Beverly Bishop

The Autism Acceptance Book: Being a Friend to Someone With Autism, by Sarah Peralta

BOOKS FOR ADULTS

Thinking in Pictures, Temple Grandin

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, by Mark Haddon

Daniel Isn't Talking, by Marti Leimbach

Making Peace with Autism: One Family's Story of Struggle, Discovery and Unexpected Gifts, by Susan Senator

Could it be Autism? A Parent's Guide to the First Signs and Next Steps

WEBSITES

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html>

www.Autism-Society.org

www.AutismSocietyGreaterAkron.org

www.ocali.org

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April/May 2010