

CARD Quarterly

Center for Autism and Related Disabilities, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, Department of Child & Family Studies

Volume 7, Issue 1 • January - March 2004

CARD Staff

Glen Dunlap, Executive Director
Karen Berkman, Director
Don Kincaid, Outgoing Director
Rose Iovannone, Assistant Director
Lise Fox, Faculty Associate
Bobbie Vaughn, Faculty Associate

Nila Benito, Special Projects Coordinator
Mary-Kay Bunton-Pierce, Info. Coordinator
Jean Caldicott, Resource Librarian
Donna Casella, Training Coordinator
Tanisha Clarke-Dobney, Intake Specialist
Sylvia Engh, Partnership Assistant
Dave Guido, Adult Services Coordinator

Kathy Christiansen, Support Specialist
Amanda Keating, Support Specialist
Beth Keeton, Support Specialist
Maria Patten, Support Specialist
Mary Reed, Support Specialist
Serena Samar, Support Specialist
Diane Wilson, Support Specialist

Carris Aikens, Clerical Assistant
Aja Meyer, Graduate Assistant
Frank Sansosti, Graduate Associate
Jenine Ziemann, Graduate Associate

Ft. Myers Staff

Connie Philbrook, Senior Secretary
Anne Allen, Support Specialist
Michelle White, Support Specialist

Family Community Partners

Phyllis Guthman, Hillsborough County
Susan Magers, Sarasota County
Madeline Kuderick, Pinellas County
James Cracciolo, USF Campus

Constituency Board

Sarina Adeni, Chair
Barry Cohen, Vice-Chair
Dennis Debbaut
Dayna Nichols, Secretary
Ann Reynolds
Robert Swain



Director's Note

As my involvement in a number of other projects has grown, the amount of time that I have been able to contribute to administering the activities of CARD-USF has decreased. Because the Division of Applied Research and Educational Support is committed to seeing CARD continue to grow to meet the unique challenges that the field of autism presents, it is imperative that CARD have a full-time Director. For the past several months, CARD-USF has conducted a national search and has identified Dr. Karen Berkman as the new CARD Director.

Dr. Berkman has a Doctoral degree in Special Education from Syracuse University and Masters degrees in Social Work and Counseling Psychology. She has over 23 years of experience in the fields of mental health and/or developmental disabilities. For the past six years, Dr. Berkman has been the director of the Center for Autism at Pressley Ridge in Pittsburgh. Her experiences at Pressley Ridge include fiscal management of a 2 million dollar budget, clinical and administrative supervision of 75 staff, program development, and research activities. Dr. Berkman will begin working with CARD-USF full-time in January. The CARD conference may be your first opportunity to meet and welcome her.



Karen Berkman, Ph.D.

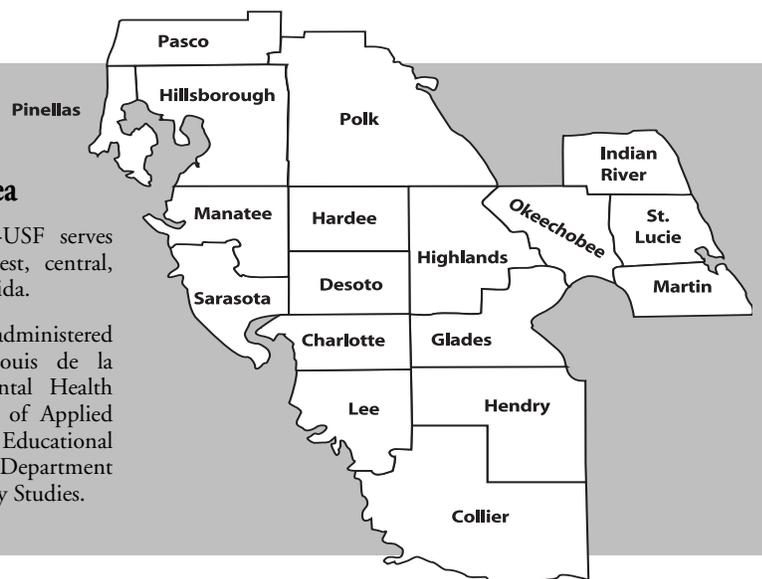
I will continue to be involved with CARD-USF and the statewide CARD system and look forward to collaborating with parents and professionals who are committed to implementing effective practices for children and adults with autism and related disabilities. I am certain that Dr. Berkman will be as enriched, as I have been, by her experience with the CARD system, staff, and constituents.

—Don Kincaid, Ed.D.

CARD-USF Catchment Area

Currently, CARD-USF serves 18 counties in west, central, and southwest Florida.

CARD-USF is administered through USF's Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, Division of Applied Research and Educational Support within the Department of Child and Family Studies.





Center for Autism and Related Disabilities

University of South Florida
Louis de la Parte
Florida Mental Health Institute
Department of Child & Family Studies
Division of Applied Research
& Educational Support
13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33612-3899

Phone: 813-974-2532
Florida only: 1-800-333-4530
FAX: 813-974-6115
E-mail: card-usf@fmhi.usf.edu

<http://card-usf.fmhi.usf.edu>

Our Mission

The mission of the Center for Autism & Related Disabilities (CARD) at the University of South Florida is to provide support and assistance that optimizes the potential of people with autism and related disabilities. Our effort to achieve this mission is exemplified in the four "components for caring" that are the focus of our work:

- Direct Assistance – Providing individualized support for people with autism and related disabilities, and their families, in natural community settings.
- Technical Assistance & Consultation – Undertaking activities on behalf of programs (e.g., classroom, supported living residence, supported employment site, etc.) that serve people with autism and related disabilities.
- Professional Training – Providing instruction on autism and related disabilities through our workshops, conferences, in-service training, and college courses.
- Public Education and Awareness – Developing and disseminating information about people with autism and related disabilities.

As one of six regional, university-based CARD sites, CARD-USF provides its services to individuals with autism and related disabilities, their families, related professionals, and the general public throughout an eighteen county catchment area in west, central, and southwest Florida.

Endorsement Policy

As a policy, CARD will not lend its name to the endorsement of any specific program, practice, or model that is offered for service to people with autism and related disabilities. However, the sharing of information and training opportunities are key functions of the CARD program.

Events, activities, programs, and facilities of the University of South Florida are available to all without regard to race, color, marital status, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, Vietnam or disabled veteran status as provided by law and in accordance with the University's respect for personal dignity.

New Study Identifies Most Frequently Encountered Service Gaps Among Families of Children with Special Needs

Did you know that an estimated one in five households with children in Hillsborough County has a child with a disability or other special needs? A new study entitled "An Analysis of Community-Based Services and Supports for Children and Young Adults with Special Needs in Hillsborough County" integrates key prevalence figures with reports from over 650 families, young adults, and service providers to provide a comprehensive assessment of the needs of approximately 45,000 children and young adults with special needs who live in Hillsborough County. The publication of the findings marks the completion of the first phase of an ambitious community initiative to improve the provision and delivery of services for these young people and their families.

The project is the result of a grassroots effort by a group of parents who realized that empirical evidence documenting limitations of the current service system was needed in order to leverage funding and support for change. A coalition of families, service providers, educators, child advocates, and community leaders – which became known as the Hillsborough Coalition for Children and Youth with Special Needs – worked together with a principal investigator from the University of South Florida's College of Education to guide the analysis in a participatory action research approach.

A unique aspect of the analysis is the examination of services and supports for the broad spectrum of ages and disabilities that defines the special needs population. The study encompassed individuals from birth to 24 years in Hillsborough County who were identified as having or as being at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition, and who also required health and related services beyond that required by the general population of children and young adults.

Researchers explored a wide array of services and supports for these children and their families, including health care services, insurance coverage, education services, childcare, care coordination, recreation, social support, inclusion, transportation, transition, independent living, and employment. Particular attention was given to quantifying the type and level of services utilized, assessing satisfaction with current services and supports, and identifying critical service gaps. In addition, in-depth interviews with 14 parents provide a rich description of the challenges that



families face in raising a child with a disability or other special needs. This section of the study is likely to be particularly interesting to individuals who are not familiar with the experiences of the special needs community.

An important result of the study was the identification of the most frequently encountered service gaps among families in Hillsborough County. These ten broad areas include: 1) developmental screening and assessment, 2) access to information, 3) deficiencies in public school education, 4) care coordination, 5) childcare, out-of-school care, and respite, 6) recreational and social opportunities, 7) mental and behavioral health, 8) opportunities for employment, 9) health care transition, and 10) transportation.

The second phase of the project will focus on the development of community action plans to address these specific areas of need. All community members are invited to contribute their ideas on ways to improve services and supports. If you would like to participate in planning activities, please contact Janet Hess (813-653-3279 or hess@tampabay.rr.com). If you are unable to attend planning meetings but would like to submit your ideas, please email them to cwsn@tampabay.rr.com.

Copies of the full report, executive summary, data collection instruments, and other project documents can be downloaded from the project Web site at <http://web.tampabay.rr.com/cwsn>. Bound copies of the full report and summary of findings are also available at the Children's Board, (813) 229-2884, or visit <http://www.childrensboard.org/analysisreports.html>. For questions regarding the study, please contact Dr. Linda Raffaele Mendez (813-974-1255 or raffaele@tempest.coedu.usf.edu) or Janet Hess.

Jean Caldicott, CARD-USF Resource Librarian, served on the coalition.

A Smile is Worth a Thousand Words



Ben leaps from playground equipment.

From a mother's perspective, the idea of inclusion can often present a great paradox. On the one hand, it offers children with special needs an opportunity for daily classroom involvement with "typical" peers. Likewise, it provides them with the chance to develop in the same academic and social learning environment that would be afforded any other child. However, it also promises a foreboding student-to-teacher ratio and the challenge of incorporating classroom modifications or securing additional staff resources despite limited funding. However, as the mother of a 6-year-old boy who has Asperger's Syndrome, those facts were not at the forefront of my mind when my son entered a regular education classroom for the first time this fall. Naively, I was just keeping my fingers crossed that the recommendations on our spring IEP (Individualized Education Plan) would prove adequate, and hoping that my son would make new friends.

Through the combined efforts of the dedicated staff at Highland Lakes Elementary and in particular Ben's teacher, Cissy Goodman, as well as a host of agencies including The Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD), The Florida Inclusion Network (FIN), and Florida Diagnostic Learning and Resource Services (FDLRS), we are on our way to making this a successful year for my son, Ben. But it is only through the coordinated work of these groups, that we have turned an emotional roller coaster into a smoother ride in under three months.

It began with the struggle of how to teach Ben in a mainstream classroom setting where students need to attend to the teacher instructing the entire class, and individualized / direct instruction is limited. After a bumpy first month at school, Diane Wilson (CARD) came to observe Ben's class in action and developed some recommendations. Later, Cindy Tremaine (FIN) also observed Ben in his classroom and provided recommendations. Not surprisingly, their conclusions were strikingly similar, and we have incorporated a number of their mutual strategies with a good deal of success including: "Priming" the night before to give Ben advance familiarity with the following day's worksheets; using Visual Supports such as a "First / Then" schedule; and providing incentive through a Choice Board with a series of reinforcers. These straightforward strategies have encouraged Ben to complete his daily worksheets

relatively independently and with at least 80% accuracy. But, more importantly, they have allowed Ben's self-esteem to blossom as he achieves greater and greater academic success.

The second hurdle came in the social arena. Some of Ben's self-stimulating behaviors (i.e. rocking, nervously tugging on his ear; etc.), which had seemed so subtle in a special education classroom, glared like beacons in a regular education setting. Even at their young age, his first grade peers very quickly recognized that there was something different about Ben. Through the involvement of Marty Massimo (FDLRS), Ben's classmates were able to better understand the tricky concept of an "invisible disability". She shared her presentation, *More Alike than Different*, with the class and helped to facilitate an open discussion where the students could freely air their questions.

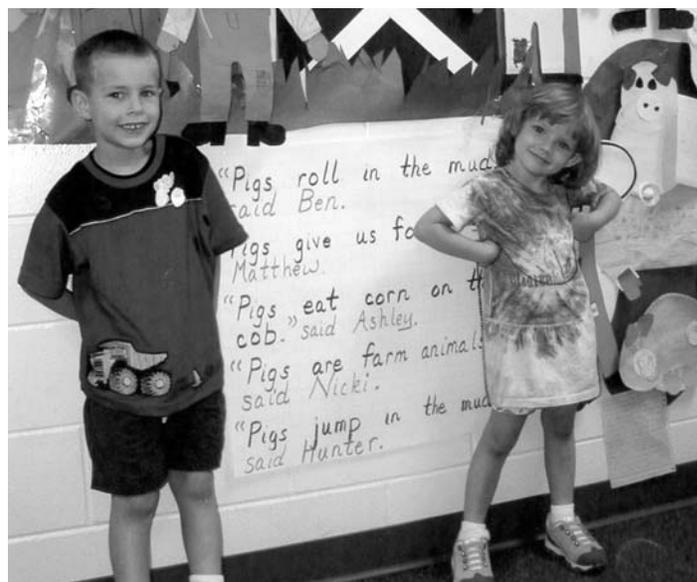
After the presentation, many of Ben's classmates appeared more empathetic toward him. They made overt efforts to include him in their activities. Tapping into further social recommendations made by CARD and FIN, Ben's desk was re-located closer to classroom peers to foster a greater sense of inclusion. Also, every effort was made to ensure that Ben participated fully in "free choice", "outside play" and other social opportunities that presented themselves naturally during the school day. Not surprisingly, Ben started to come home from school with a more positive self-image and a better attitude about school in general.

As a mother, I realize that Ben's school situation may always be a "work in process". We will have to improvise and create new strategies as the academic demands change or my son's disability presents new challenges. This year, we are still considering the need for additional classroom resources to optimize the learning environment, and we may have to be flexible with our strategies as the year progresses.

However, there is one irrefutable measure that helps me to know that our efforts have been a success thus far, and that is what I see every week day at 2:45 p.m. when the dismissal bell rings and students come pouring out into the breezeway.

I see my son's face . . . and he is smiling.

—Madeline Kuderick



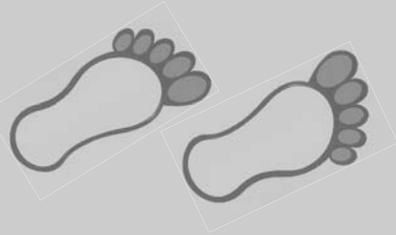
Ben and his sister Jacquie.

The 1st SW Florida Walk F.A.R. for NAAR raised over \$70,000 for autism research. CARD-USF's CARDancers Team raised about \$900.

The next walk will be Saturday, October 2, 2004 at Edison Community College in Punta Gorda.

The walk encompasses all of SW Florida from Tampa to Naples. Volunteers are needed who are interested in being on the planning committee or can give a business sponsorship. The committee's goal is to have sub-committees in Sarasota and Ft. Myers to build family teams and corporate sponsorships.

To contact SW FL Walk F.A.R. for NAAR or be added to their mailing list call the SW FL Headquarters at (941) 697-9772 or e-mail them at NAAR@mail2help.com



Committee Members

- Sharon Boyd
- Elizabeth Boyd
- Marc Boyd
- Aubry Boyd
- Tammie Baker
- Marc Baker
- Karen McBride
- Donna Peatman
- Maureen Morris
- Ed Townsley
- Dorothy Mills
- Lisa Mason
- Keith Mason
- Cheryl Schlanger
- Dawn Nelson
- Cyndie DiMaria
- Nora Branscome
- Mary Kittredge
- Ashley Varga
- Nicole Ready
- Stephaine Rossip
- Lesley Versluis





Trainings and Workshops for Families and Professionals

Things You Need to Know About CARD Workshops

All CARD workshops listed in this newsletter are free. However, we ask that you register prior to attending the workshop. We need to know how many individuals are going to attend in order to prepare enough handouts for each participant. If three or more individuals have not registered for a workshop, the workshop may be cancelled and we would need a way to reach you to let you know. In order to keep you from wasting a trip, please register so we can get in touch with you. If you register and then cannot make it for some reason, please let us know, either by phone or by email.

A family member can register others in their family, but we ask that professionals attending only register themselves and have each person in their organization register individually. This will prevent individuals from being registered by someone else and not knowing that they were expected to be at a workshop.

Email is the fastest way to register and we can confirm by reply email if your registration is received three days ahead of the workshop.

If you register by phone, you will get the voice mail system. Please leave a voice message with the name of the person attending, the training number and date of the workshop, a phone number and/or email address where you can be reached. If we need to cancel or change a workshop we will notify you.

If you need accommodations, please notify us two weeks prior to the workshop that you plan to attend. CARD is not able to provide childcare at this time.

How to Register for CARD Workshops

If you live in Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry or Lee Counties you can register by:

Email: cphilbro@fgcu.edu
Phone: (239) 590-7771

If you live in DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Manatee, Martin, Okeechobee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, St. Lucie, or Sarasota Counties you can register by:

Email: card-usf@fmhi.usf.edu
Phone: 813-974-2532 (in Hillsborough County)
1-800-333-4530 (outside Hillsborough County)

Workshop Descriptions

Trainings are geared toward targeted audiences who are families of or professionals working with the age that is listed within the descriptions; however, workshops are open to anyone who would like to attend. Workshops rotate between CARD-USF regions in a county near you. Most are repeated each quarter to make them available to new CARD registrants as the number of families we serve continues to grow. Not all workshops are offered each quarter, but we try to offer at a minimum of once a year.

Adult Training Series

CARD-USF is proud to present a six-part series of 3-hour information sessions that will cover various topics that are important to caregivers and educators of adult individuals with autism spectrum disorders. The series begins with an Introduction to the Adult Service System and will provide participants with information about The Developmental Disabilities Program, Vocational Rehabilitation, Third Party Benefits, ADA, and the Advocacy Center. Additional sessions in this series include: Transition—School to Adult Life, Supported Employment, Guardianship and Estate Planning with guest attorneys, Community Living, and Self-Determination. (While the target audience of these workshops is families and providers of older teens and adults with an autism spectrum disorder, it is never too soon to start preparing for the future. Families of younger children are encouraged to attend so you can be thinking about your child's future and be well informed. Information presented in these workshops will be useful for other developmental disabilities as well as the autism spectrum).

Asperger Disorder Introduction

This workshop will provide information about the major characteristics of Asperger Disorder. Participants will also learn some practical strategies for assisting with challenges, such as social skills deficits and behavior problems, which are commonly faced by individuals with Asperger Disorder. (Any age).

Creating Environmental Supports to Promote Structure and Consistency in the Home

This workshop will provide families and professionals with ideas and strategies that target visual supports that may be used in the home, community, and school setting. Participants will leave with an action plan developed to assist them in the creation of individualized environmental supports for their focus individual. (School age children).



Effective Teaming Activities

This training will assist families in planning for their family member's future. We will discuss a step-by-step process that parents can use as a tool to achieve set-goals for their son or daughter. We will also be discussing the importance of teaming and tips on how to collaborate with others to assist in meeting these goals. Bring your ideas, visions and dreams and we can show you a way to put them in motion! (School age children).

Enhancing Communication Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Families will learn practical strategies and techniques that will facilitate the development of an individual's communication skills in everyday environments. (School age children).

Getting What You Need for Your Child

In this workshop, families will be provided information on the services, supports, strategies and programs they can access to support their young child with autism spectrum disorders. (Children 18 months to 7 years old).

Helping Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Learn to Communicate

Families will learn techniques and strategies to facilitate their child's communication and to help the child better understand other people's communication to them. (Children 18 months to 7 years old).

How Families Can Become More Involved with Schools in the Behavior Support Process

The presentation offers strategies for families for active involvement with the schools about their child's behaviors. In addition, families will receive materials for communication with schools and for gathering information on their child's behavior at home. (School age children).

How to Teach New Skills

Families are important teachers! This presentation gives families information about how to identify skills to teach in home and community settings, how to identify the optimal time to teach, and how to teach using research-based instructional strategies. (Children 18 months to 7 years old).

Promoting the Social Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

This workshop will provide families with ideas and strategies that can be used to promote their child's social skills. (School age children).

Support Strategies for Your Child's Transition to a New Classroom

Change is very difficult! In this workshop, families will learn about ways to support their child as he or she begins school or moves to a new classroom. (Children 18 months to 7 years old).

Teaching Independence in Daily Living Skills

Families will learn specific information and basic practical strategies for teaching their child how to function more independently. The focus will be on daily living skills such as eating, getting dressed, taking a bath, combing hair, brushing teeth, and washing hands. This will be an interactive, experiential workshop in which participants will have the opportunity both to learn the information and practice using it through role-play. (School age children).

Toilet Training

This workshop provides the basics of toilet training with an emphasis on how to help children who seem to be reluctant to participate in the toilet training process. (Children 18 months to 7 years old).

Understanding and Intervening with Challenging Behavior of Young Children

In this workshop, families will be taught the process of positive behavior support. This research-based method of behavior management is highly effective in reducing problem behavior and providing children with alternative skills to get their needs met. (Children 18 months to 7 years old).

Understanding and Intervening with Problem Behavior

Families will learn specific information and strategies for reducing their child's problem behavior and increasing their appropriate behavior. This will be an experiential, hands-on workshop in which families will be able to take home materials to use with their child. (School age children).

What is Autism? Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorders

This workshop is the first in the Early Childhood Series and it provides an overview of the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and the behavioral and developmental issues associated with ASD. This is a very useful workshop for families whose child has recently received an ASD diagnosis. (Children between the ages of 18 months to 7 years old).

Calendar of Trainings and Workshops

See page 6 for registration information. Register with CARD for all workshops unless noted differently in the training information below.

Title and Training No.	Date	Time	Location
Charlotte			
Collaboration and Person-Centered Planning. (School age) #1607	1/8/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Understanding and Intervening with Challenging Behavior Part I (School age) #1608	1/15/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Understanding and Intervening with Challenging Behavior Part 2 (School age) #1609	1/28/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Enhancing Communication Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Part 1 (School age) #1610	2/12/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Enhancing Communication Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Part 2 (School age) #1611	2/19/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Promoting the Social Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Part 1 (School age) #1612	3/4/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Introduction to the Adult Service System. (High school and adults) #1600	3/8/2004	6:00 pm – 8:30 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Promoting the Social Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Part 2 (School age) #1613	3/11/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Teaching Independence in Daily Living Skills (School age) #1614	3/25/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Time Out Respite 24246 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte
Collier			
Community Living (High school and adults) #1519	1/29/2004	5:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Professional Development Center-Auditorium, 615 3rd Ave. S., Naples
Self-Determination (High school and adults) #1520	2/11/2004	5:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Professional Development Center-Auditorium, 615 3rd Ave. S., Naples
Hillsborough			
Using Visual and Behavioral Cues in the Home (Early childhood) #1558	1/6/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Shriners Hospital Boardroom, USF Campus, 12502 North Pine Drive, Tampa
Session 3: Taking the “SHOCK” Out of Transition (School age) #1542	1/29/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Shriners Hospital Boardroom, USF Campus, 12502 North Pine Drive, Tampa - Verify room with receptionist - Register with FDLRS for this workshop. Call 813-837-7729.
Concurrent SibShop Session 3. #1573 (SibShops are for siblings of children with disabilities not for the child with a disability.)	1/29/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Shriners Hospital Chairman’s Office, USF Campus, 12502 North Pine Drive, Tampa - Verify room with receptionist - Register with FDLRS for this workshop. Call 813-837-7729.
Session 4: Plugging in to Positive Support. #1543	2/19/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Shriners Hospital Auditorium, USF Campus, 12502 North Pine Drive, Tampa - Verify room with receptionist - Register with FDLRS for this workshop. Call 813-837-7729.
Concurrent SibShop Session 4. #1574 (SibShops are for siblings of children with disabilities not for the child with a disability.)	2/19/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Shriners Hospital Auditorium, USF Campus, 12502 North Pine Drive, Tampa - Verify room with receptionist - Register with FDLRS for this workshop. Call 813-837-7729.
Lee			
Helping Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Learn to Communicate (Early childhood). #1457	1/7/2004	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	FGCU-Library Room 148, 10501 FGCU Blvd S., Ft. Myers
Understanding and Intervening with Challenging Behavior of Young Children (Early childhood) #1458	2/4/2004	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	FGCU-Library Room 148, 10501 FGCU Blvd S., Ft. Myers
Support Strategies for Your Child’s Transition to a New Classroom (Early childhood) #1459	3/3/2004	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	FGCU-Library Room 148, 10501 FGCU Blvd S., Ft. Myers

Workshops for Families and Professionals

Manatee			
Understanding and Intervening with Problem Behavior (School age) #1632	1/27/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	My Learning Center 2121 26th Avenue East, Bradenton
Enhancing Communication Skills of Children with Autism Part 1 (School age) #1630	2/17/2004	10:30 am – 12:30 pm	My Learning Center 2121 26th Avenue East, Bradenton
Promoting the Social Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (School age) #1631	2/24/2004	10:30 am – 12:30 pm	My Learning Center 2121 26th Avenue East, Bradenton
Independent Functioning (School age) #1629	3/9/2004	10:00 am – noon	My Learning Center 2121 26th Avenue East, Bradenton
Creating Environmental Supports to Promote Structure and Consistency in the Home (School age) #1633	3/15/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	My Learning Center 2121 26th Avenue East, Bradenton
Pasco			
Asperger Disorder Introduction (All ages) #1640	2/2/2004	6:30pm – 8:30 pm	School Board of Pasco County Staff Development Training Room B, Bldg. 4 7227 Land O'Lakes Blvd., Land O'Lakes
Pinellas			
Enhancing Communication Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (School Age) #1636	2/23/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Panera Bread Meeting Room 2285 Ulmerton Road, Clearwater
Promoting the Social Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Part 1 (School age) #1637	3/2/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Panera Bread Meeting Room 2285 Ulmerton Road, Clearwater
Teaching Independence in Daily Living Skills (School age) #1638	3/9/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Panera Bread Meeting Room 2285 Ulmerton Road, Clearwater
Creating Environmental Supports to Promote Structure and Consistency in the Home (School age) #1639	3/25/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Panera Bread Meeting Room 2285 Ulmerton Road, Clearwater
Sarasota			
Creating Environmental Supports to Promote Structure and Consistency in the Home (School age) #1569	1/9/2004	10:00am – noon pm	Sarasota School Board Bldg., 1960 Landings Blvd. Blue Awning Bldg., Room 101, Sarasota
Asperger Disorder Introduction (All ages) #1627	3/1/2004	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Sarasota School Board Bldg., 1960 Landings Blvd. Blue Awning Bldg., Room 101, Sarasota
St. Lucie			
Creating Environmental Supports to Promote Structure and Consistency in the Home (School age) #1554	1/7/2004	10:00 am – noon	Florida Atlantic University , St. Lucie West, 500 NW California Blvd., Rm C0135, Port St. Lucie - Workshops are co-sponsored with Galaxy FDLRS.
Promoting Social Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder Part 1 (School age) #1653	2/24/2004	10:00 am – noon	FDLRS Center, Orange Blossom Business Center, Conference Room, 4204 Okeechobee Road, Ft. Pierce - Workshops are co-sponsored with Galaxy FDLRS.
Understanding and Intervening with Challenging Behavior of Young Children (Early Childhood) #1650	2/24/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	FDLRS Center, Orange Blossom Business Center, Employee Lounge, 4204 Okeechobee Road, Ft. Pierce - Workshops are co-sponsored with Galaxy FDLRS.
New Workshop! Utilizing Family Members: Siblings as Supports (School age) #1651	2/25/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	FDLRS Center, Orange Blossom Business Center, Employee Lounge, 4204 Okeechobee Road, Ft. Pierce - Workshops are co-sponsored with Galaxy FDLRS.
Enhancing Communication Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Part 1 (School age) #1652	2/26/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	FDLRS Center, Orange Blossom Business Center, Employee Lounge, 4204 Okeechobee Road, Ft. Pierce - Workshops are co-sponsored with Galaxy FDLRS.
Teaching Independence in Daily Living Skills (School age) #1654	3/23/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	FDLRS Center, Orange Blossom Business Center, Employee Lounge, 4204 Okeechobee Road, Ft. Pierce - Workshops are co-sponsored with Galaxy FDLRS.
Creating Environmental Supports to Promote Structure and Consistency at Home (School age) #1655	3/24/2004	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	FDLRS Center, Orange Blossom Business Center, Employee Lounge, 4204 Okeechobee Road, Ft. Pierce - Workshops are co-sponsored with Galaxy FDLRS.

Southwest Florida: Early Autism Study Group

There is growing recognition that early intensive intervention can significantly alter the developmental course of autism. The National Research Council urges the systems that support individuals with autism to advocate for earlier identification, early entry into treatment, and educational and behavioral services across home, school and community environments. Closer to home, the Florida Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program announced that, beginning July 1, 2004, all newly referred infants and toddlers and their families will receive services predominantly within family routines, activities and places in the community. This directive will bring Florida into compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, Part C) which mandates that early intervention services are provided in natural environments.

Defining best practices in early intervention and supporting compliance with IDEA are priorities for autism service providers in Florida. Recognizing needs at the local level, CARD-USF accepted an invitation to participate in an Early Autism Study Group in Southwest Florida. The recommendations of the Florida Autism System of Care Project (2003) are helping to guide the agenda of the local study group.

Representatives from the Health Planning Council of Southwest Florida, Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program; The John Maxwell Biasco Foundation for Children with Autism of Southwest Florida; Building Blocks Inc.;

CARD-USF and a parent from Lee county are collaborating to help build the capacity of early intervention providers, families and related services in the following areas: early identification of autism, evaluating evidence-based treatments, disseminating information on best practices in autism, and providing service delivery in natural environments.

CARD-USF presented "The Early Identification of Autism and Overview of Best Practices, Birth to Three," Tuesday, December 9, to early intervention primary service coordinators, primary service providers, related services and family members from Collier, Lee, Hendry and Glades counties. The 4-hour interactive workshop was funded in part by the Maxie's Partners in Education project. For information about the collaborative study group, call CARD-USF in Fort Myers at (239) 590-7771.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Tanisha Clarke-Dobney hit several life milestones in 2003. Tanisha got married in August, and then she graduated from USF in December with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. Tanisha is starting her third year with CARD and she is the voice on the other end of the line when she calls you to do the intake for CARD-USF. During the intake, Tanisha has an intake form that she fills out as she talks on the phone with families who have children or family members with autism or related disabilities. The intake form is used

to gather a brief history and also to let CARD know the concerns that the family has. Tanisha provides the family with the initial information packet, collects the documentation and proof of diagnosis and monitors the family's progress through the intake cycle. Tanisha also helps the support specialists by preparing the charting format for Person Centered Plans (PCPs), and then after the PCP is finished, she converts the wall chart to a smaller format that families can use and carry with them to meetings.

Autism Support

Support Group listings are provided as a service and are not an endorsement by CARD-USF

Hillsborough County

KIDDs (Keys for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities)
formerly the Hillsborough Autism Support Group
When: 2nd Thursday of November, February, and April.
Time and Location will be provided when you RSVP.
To RSVP contact one of the following individuals.
Kris Zak via email at krizak@earthling.net
Jean Reese via email at jeanreese@myrapidsys.com
Phyllis Guthman via email at pguthman@fmhi.usf.edu
To leave a voice message, please call 813-837-7735.

Lee County

Southwest Florida ASA Chapter #555
Time: Last Friday of the month, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Place: Gateway Trinity Church,
11381 Gateway Blvd., Ft. Myers
Contact: Fran Swanson, 239-768-0723
Respite provided while parents attend meeting.

Florida Autistic Society

Time: This group meets informally.
Please call for meeting times.
Place: Ft. Myers area.
Contact: Kate Cullen, 239-433-4929

Adonis Autism Center of Southwest Florida

Time: 3rd Thursday (monthly), 7:00 p.m.
Place: Bashaw home, 1456 Lynwood Avenue, Ft. Myers
Contact: Maureen Bashaw, 239-332-5395

Autism Done a New Way

Time: 3rd Sunday (monthly), 6:00 p.m.
Place: Royal Palm Corporate Center,
Royal Palm Square Blvd.
Summerlin and Colonial past Publix
(Three story glass corporate building)
Contact: Stacy Alvarez, 239-549-2633
The focus of the group is education and support
concentrating on diet and biomedical treatments.

Families First of SWFL Support Group

Time: Tuesday, January 13 - 10:30 AM - Noon
Wednesday, January 14 - 6:30-8:00 PM

Tuesday, February 10 - 10:30 AM -Noon
Wednesday, February 11 - 6:30-8:00 PM

Tuesday, March 9 - 10:30 AM -Noon
Wednesday, March 10 - 6:30-8:00 PM

Place: Family Resource Center at 1955 Maravilla Av., Ft. Myers.
Contact: Sheryl Soukup, 239-839-0915

Note: If it is helpful to some of the parents to bring their children to the Center during the meetings, please be sure to let Sheryl know at least one week in advance if you'd like to bring your children so that they can make sure there will be enough volunteers to watch the children while they meet.

Pinellas County

Gulf Coast ASA Chapter #134
Time: 2nd Wednesday (monthly), 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Place: Abilities in Clearwater, 2735 Whitney Rd., Clearwater
Contact: Filomena MacDonald, 727-789-0082

Polk County

Heart of Florida Autism Society
Time: Call contact for meeting time.
Place: Polk County area.
Contact: Angie Dawson, 863-294-6315

RACE (Reaching Autistic Children Early)

Time: 2nd Tuesday (monthly), 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
(Please note new date.)
Place: Central Florida Speech & Hearing Center,
710 E. Bella Vista, Lakeland
Contact: Families call Karla Dickson at 863-859-1477 x328
during the day or email karlajoy@aol.com
Teachers call Danielle Hailey at 863-816-0410 or email
dhailey16@aol.com

St. Lucie County

Treasure Coast Autism Support Group
Time: Meets 2nd Monday of the month, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Place: Florida Atlantic University/Treasure Coast Campus at Port St. Lucie,
500 NW California Blvd. (Book Store Bldg.)
Contact: Kim at 772-878-7036.

Sarasota County

Manasota ASA Chapter #535
Time: 1st Thursday (monthly Sept-May), 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Place: Oak Park School, 7285 Proctor Road, Sarasota, FL 34241.
Chapter email: manasotaautism@msn.com
Web: <http://www.manasotaautism.com>
Chapter Contacts: Day time - Julie 941-426-9059.
Evenings or Spanish speakers contact Alicia 941-377-0959.
Child care is available but you must pre-register your children by phone or email.

Biological Interventions for Autistic Spectrum Disorders (BIASD)

When: Second Wednesday of each month from 7:00-9:00 p.m.
First hour will be structured, social hour follows.
Location: Waldemere Medical Plaza, Magnolia Room (2nd floor)
(Next to Sarasota Memorial Hospital.)
The focus is on educational and social opportunities for
people interested in nutritional and biological treatment.
For more information contact Dianna at 941-341-9922 or
Michelle at 941-266-7326.
By email at biasdsarasota@earthlink.net
Website: <http://home.earthlink.net/~biasdsarasota/>

Asperger's Support Groups

Highlands County Asperger's/High Functioning Autism Support Group

Time: 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Place: S. Florida Community College, Dental Education Center
(US 27 to College Dr.; 6th entrance on the right off of College Dr.)
Facilitator: Diane Wilson
Phone: 813-974-6119 Email: dwilson@fmhi.usf.edu

Hillsborough County Asperger's Syndrome Support Group

Time: 1st Thursday of each month at 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Place: Shriner's Hospital Auditorium on the Tampa
Campus of the University of South Florida.
Facilitator: Diane Wilson
Phone: 813-974-6119 Email: dwilson@fmhi.usf.edu

Pinellas County Asperger's Syndrome Support Group

Time: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Place: Morton Plant Mease Wellness Center, 32672
US Hwy. 19 N, Palm Harbor, FL.
Facilitator: Diane Wilson
Phone: 813-974-6119 Email: dwilson@fmhi.usf.edu

Sarasota County Asperger's Syndrome Support Group

Time: Last Wednesday of each month at 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Place: 1960 Landings Blvd., Sarasota, FL. (Landings Complex,
Maroon Awning Building, 2nd Floor, French Door Room).
Contact: Susan Magers
Email: Smmagers@aol

11th Annual



Conference

January 23-25, 2004

*Moving Ahead:
From Promise to Practice*

Pre-Conference Day
Focusing on
Adult Services

January 23, 2004

For more information: visit our web
site: <http://card-usf.fmhi.usf.edu>

 **Center for Autism
and Related Disabilities**

Department of Child & Family Studies
Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute
University of South Florida
13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MHC 2113A
Tampa, FL 33612-3899

Non-Profit. Org.
US POSTAGE
PAID
Tampa, FL
Permit No. 257