

Spring 2021

Talbot County Public Schools Family Support Resource Center

The Family Support & Resource Center is designed to offer support to families of children that receive special services in Talbot County. We offer parent trainings, presentations, access to our Lending Library where we have multiple books appropriate for children, staff and parents, IEP support and don't forget about our family fun activities! Feel free to reach out with questions at any time.

SECAC members needed!

Quarterly Special Education Citizen's Advisory (SECAC) Meetings

Members, TCPS families & community partners are always encouraged to attend our quarterly SECAC meetings. This is an opportunity to become a part of a committee that shapes the activities and events available to children with special needs. We plan fun social events, excellent seminars, webinars, training events and help find funding for special needs activities in Talbot County. Currently there is one additional planned meeting to be held on Tuesday, February 9th from 5:00 - 5:45.

*There will be a Training afterwards, "Toilet Training for Children with Developmental Delays". This will be presented via live webinar on April 27th from 6:00 - 7:00pm by Dr. Elizabeth "Betsy" Cross, a Clinical Psychologist at Kennedy Krieger. Attached is the electronic flyer as well as a link to register. **Registration is required!***

Registration

link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9b8iEvp2Tneh2Xzg7xP8xQ.

Please RSVP to Stacey Behrens at sbehrens@talbotschools.org in order to join us for the upcoming SECAC meeting on April 27th from 5:00-5:45 and/or the presentation "Toilet Training for Children with Developmental Delays" from 6:00 - 7:00pm.

APRIL ~ AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

How you can promote Autism Awareness Month this April

The Autism Ribbon- The Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon is the most recognized symbol of the autism community in the world. Autism prevalence is now one in every 59 children in America. Show your support for people with autism by wearing the Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon - as a pin on your shirt, a magnet on your car, a badge on your blog, or even your Facebook profile picture - and educate folks on the potential of people with autism! To learn more about the Autism Awareness Ribbon

Raising awareness in your community - Connect with your neighborhood. Many Autism Society local affiliates hold special events in their communities throughout the month of April.

Join a community event - Many non-profit organizations will be hosting events for Autism Awareness Month such as walks, sensory friendly films, donation drives, or seminars held at universities. Not only can these events provide a sense of community, they can bring awareness to resources available locally. Becoming involved can be as easy as showing up the day of the event. Some families choose to help organize the events, volunteer as guest speakers, man booths, or donate supplies. Before you chose to donate, be sure the non-profit organization aligns with your goals for autism awareness and is fiscally transparent. Pathfinders for Autism is an excellent resource for scoping events and activities. You can contact them at 443-330-5341 or visit www.pathfindersforautism.com

Donate to the Autism Society -Help improve the lives of all impacted by autism with a financial gift to the Autism Society. Every dollar raised by the Autism Society allows us to improve the capabilities and services of our over 100 nationwide affiliates, provide the best national resource database and contact center specializing in autism, and increase public awareness about autism and the day-to-day issues faced by individuals with ASD and their families.

Watch a movie - Did you know something that seems as simple as going to the movies is not an option for many families affected by autism? The Autism Society is working with AMC Theatres to bring special- needs families Sensory Friendly Films every month.



PARENT TIPS: AUTISM AWARENESS (MY PERSONAL DEFINATION)

By: Shelly Allred, Pathfinders for Autism

You are aware of Autism when...

You find yourself asking co-workers if they need to take a “self-help break”.

You instinctively hold the ears of the person next to you when you hear a loud noise.

You realize your efforts to clean-up or put away the train tracks are futile.

A single spoken syllable makes you cry.

You don't even blink at the sight of your mortified neighbors and your naked child running through the sprinkler.

You could spell Acrocanthosaurus in your sleep.

You cancel your gym membership because now you have appointments with the speech therapist on Mondays, the occupational therapist on Tuesdays, the behavior psychologist on Wednesdays, the music therapist on Thursdays, and the social skills group on Fridays.

You talk about GFCF diets and biomedical treatments the way your friends talk about soccer schedules.

You send love notes to the creators of Google because you just can't answer one more question.

You shoot that GLARE to judgmental shoppers at the grocery store with your death ray eyes.

You believe if you stare hard enough at your child in public, he will receive your telepathic message to stop the inappropriate behavior.

You talk to your eight-year-old about college scholarship strategies because you've already emptied his education savings on private school tuition, education advocates, and education attorneys.

You feel dizzy from everything he spins.

You are perplexed that the puppy won't respond to a behavior chart.

You only frequent restaurants that serve the five foods your child will eat. Except for that one across the street because apparently, they use the wrong tomato sauce.

You buy eight boxes of your child's favorite cereal when it goes on Buy One Get One. The next day your child announces he no longer likes that cereal.

You wonder when you will learn that when you say, “In a minute,” prompts your child to start counting down from 60.

You stop breathing when your child runs over to a man with no hair and wants to know why he's bald, and if he can touch his head – which he's already started doing before the startled man has a chance to respond.

You pull your hoodie over your face because your child, who looks questionably old to be in a Halloween costume to begin with, is wearing it in your front yard in May.

Your eyebrow is raised that your child's refusal to eat crusts even extends to the outer edges of Uncrustable® sandwiches.

Attached file:
[Autism-Awareness—my-personal-definition.pdf](#)
2011 Pathfinders

¹ From the book, *Be Different: Adventures of a Free-Range Aspergian* by John Elder Robison



On **Saturday, December 12th** Talbot, Queen Anne's and Caroline Counties held our first Virtual Sibshop. This event was a big success and we would like to thank everyone that helped out and all of the families that participated. This is an event that we would definitely like to plan again next school year!

What are Sibshops?

Sibshops seek to provide siblings with opportunities for peer support. Because Sibshops are designed (primarily) for school-age children, peer support is provided within a lively, recreational context that emphasizes a kids'-eye-view. Sibshops are not therapy, group or otherwise, although their effect may be therapeutic for some children. Sibshops acknowledge that most brothers and sisters of people with special needs, like their parents, are doing well, despite the challenges of an illness or disability. Consequently, while Sibshop facilitators always keep an eye open for participants who may need additional services, the Sibshop model takes a wellness approach.

Resource Websites:

Most of these websites offer free resources, literature and/or virtual trainings on many different topics.

TCPS Family Support Page -
<https://www.tcps.k12.md.us/departments/special-education/family-support-and-resource-center>

Parent's Place -
<https://www.ppm.org/resources/>

Pathfinders for Autism –
<https://pathfindersforautism.org/>

The ARC – <https://www.thearccr.org/>

Talbot County Free Library - <http://www.tcfl.org/>

Kinera Foundation - <https://www.kinera.org/>

Special Education Parent Involvement Survey



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD! YOUR OPINION MATTERS!

Parents or guardians of children receiving special education and related services have been mailed the Maryland Special Education Parent Involvement Survey from the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services during the week of February 8, 2021. Parents are asked to complete the survey and return it in the postage paid envelope by May 21, 2021. The survey may also be completed online. Please look for details in your survey packet. Your feedback will help guide efforts to improve special education and related services in your local school system. Your voice can make a real difference for your child and many other children across the state of Maryland. To learn more, please visit <https://www.mdparentsurvey.com>.

Stacey Behrens, Parent Coordinator ~ sbehrens@talbotschools.org