



Council Brainstorms Activities for "April is Autism Awareness Month"

At the recent Council meeting, members participated in an exercise to identify autism awareness activities being planned and brainstorm ideas for activities to spread autism awareness on World Autism Day - April 2, and throughout the month. Here are some of the ideas and activities identified that you can do too:

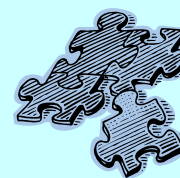
- In Yakima, [Children's Village](#) is planning a community event highlighting a day in the life of someone with autism.
- In Spokane, the [NW Autism Center](#) is partnering with Barnes and Noble bookstore to hold a book fair and panel discussion on autism; the Mayor will do a proclamation declaring April 2 as Autism Awareness day; and workshops will be held coinciding with autism awareness month.
- The [Washington Autism Advocacy Coalition](#) will hold a celebration at the Capitol on April 2 (see below for more).
- [Autism Speaks](#) links to public awareness messages in different languages.
- [CEC Conference](#) from April 2-5 in Seattle has audience of educators, and would be a great place to distribute information (see back for more).
- Some brainstorming ideas:
 - Elicit public libraries to engage in activities on autism awareness; target radio and TV for public service announcements; e-mail blasts; mass media announcements; press releases; messages on bulletin boards and electronic reader boards; advertisements on public transit; taglines on CAAC member e-mails; and workplace lobby displays.



Date Change for April Council Meeting

Due to a scheduling conflict, the date for the April Combating Autism Advisory Council meeting has been changed from Friday, April 17 to **Friday, April 24**.

The meeting will be held from 9 am to 3:30 pm at the University of [Washington Autism Center](#) in Seattle. **Watch for meeting registration coming soon!**



In the News...

On February 26, 2009, President Obama unveiled a [Fiscal Year 2010 budget proposal](#) that includes \$211 million for the Combating Autism Act (CAA).

This is the first year since the passage of the CAA that direct funding for autism has been included in the President's budget proposal.

World Autism Awareness Day Celebration

To thank legislators for their involvement in "Shayan's Law" (see legislative update on back), the [Washington Autism Advocacy Coalition](#) will be holding a celebration on April 2 at the State Capitol. Representative Brendan Williams (D-22), Prime Sponsor of Shayan's Law, is running **House Resolution 4627**, honoring individuals with autism on April 1 and will be reading it at our event.

Speakers will include legislators who feel strongly about Autism Insurance Reform; Washington employers that have elected in their wisdom to provide an autism benefit for years (they will share the immense positive impact the coverage has had on families as well as employee loyalty and retention); as well as youth who have benefited from early and intensive medical interventions for autism.

"Insurance companies have millions of dollars to spend lobbying against our legislation, we don't," said lead advocate Arzu Forough. "But we are **voters** and passionate about getting the medical treatments our children need and deserve to grow up to their full potential and live among us as productive citizens. Thank you for your support! "



World Autism Awareness Day

Share What's Going On!

Let us know if you have news about what your organization is working on in regard to trainings, resources, special projects, etc. that relate to autism or other developmental disabilities. They will be highlighted in this update and at future CAAC Meetings.

Please e-mail Cathie Tedrick, Autism Grant Assistant, at: cathie.tedrick@doh.wa.gov or give her a call at (360) 236-3543, if you would like to contribute to this newsletter or have any questions, ideas or concerns.

Education Opportunities...

"But They Don't Come" - Strategies to Increase Latino/a Participation in Outreach Programs

Edmonds Community College on March 25, 2009, 9 am to 4 pm

http://capps.wsu.edu/parenting/pre_workshop.asp

ASW's "Best in the Northwest" Autism Conference Shoreline Conference Center on May 29, 2009, 8 am to 4 pm

www.spectrumtrainingsystemsinc.com

Good Info . . .

Meet with Ann Turnbull at International Council for Exceptional Children Conference

April 1-4 Seattle is hosting the International Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Convention. During the conference Ann Turnbull, co-Executive Director of the Beach Center through the University of Kansas, would like to hold a forum with families.

The Beach Center has a long and prestigious history of developing information and materials that have increased the skills and knowledge of both families and professionals. Her goal in meeting with families during this convention is to insure family voice is heard in the planning and future of Beach Center programs and services.

CEC has set up a one day registration for families who would like to not only meet with Ann Turnbull, but attend some of the workshops and plenary sessions that day.

www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ConventionExpo/RegistrationHousing/2009RegForm.pdf

Medical Homes for Children with Autism Survey

In this *Pediatrics* article, physicians reported significantly lower overall self-perceived competency, a greater need for primary care improvement, and a greater desire for education for children with autism compared with both children with other neurodevelopmental conditions and those with chronic medical conditions.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/123/3/966>

Autism Patients in CA are Dealt Insurance Setback

This L.A. Times article highlights the ongoing conflict between education, healthcare, and mental health regarding the provision of coverage for intensive intervention in treatment of autism.

www.latimes.com/features/health/la-fi-autism10-2009mar10,0,3921888.story

Ten Toys that Speak Autism...

Toy "R" Us partnered with National Lekotek Center to produce the Toys "R" Us Toy Guide for Differently-Abled Kids, giving parents and friends of children with disabilities an easy-to-use resource to find toys that offer them the best opportunity for fun and learning. Learn more: www.Toysrus.com/DifferentlyAble

Free Autism Screenings

The [University of Washington Autism Center in Tacoma](http://www.uw.edu/autism) will be offering free, walk-in autism screenings to the community on April 7 and 21 from 9-11am and April 14 and 28 from 3-5pm. Families will be served on a first come/first served basis. For more info, contact Nathan Ketzner, (253) 692-4759.

Legislative News

The following bills were reported on at the CAAC meeting on February 27 - updates are italicized.



Health Coverage for Children (**HB 2128**)

Requires DSHS to offer nonsubsidized health coverage for children beginning 1/1/09 for children living in families with household income above 300% of the federal poverty level. *Passed House, first reading in Senate Health & Long-Term Care on 3/10*

Behavioral Supports (**SB 5117**)

The number of children with developmental disabilities along with intense behaviors is increasing and more families are seeking out-of-home placement for their children. *Passed Senate on 3/5 and is scheduled for hearing on 3/15 in House Committee on Human Services at 1:30 pm (subject to change); The companion bill, HB 1226, failed to move out of the House of origin before the cutoff and is dead.*

Developmental Screening for Children (**SB 5484**)

Requires DSHS to select developmental screening tools consistent with nationally accepted pediatric guidelines and to reimburse providers using the tools to conduct developmental screenings of children.

Passed Senate 3/10

Did Not Pass this Session:

Insurance Coverage for ASD (**SB 5203/HB 1210**)

Requires each health plan offered to public employees and their covered dependents under chapter 41.05 RCW which is not subject to the provisions of Title 48 RCW to include coverage for the diagnosis of ASD and treatment of ASD in individuals less than 21 years old.

Early Intervention (**SB 5373/HB 1161**)

Finds that early intervention services are cost-effective and effectively serve the developmental needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays and their families.

Developmental Screening Through Medicaid (**HB 1337**)

Finds that developmental screening of infants and young children is a cost-effective method to identify developmental delays early and provide appropriate services to reduce the negative impact of the developmental delay.

Neurodevelopmental Therapies (**SHB 1412**)

Finds that access to appropriate early intervention services significantly improves function in children with developmental delays and disabilities.

NOTE: Arzu Forough from Autism Speaks will continue this fight and is looking for help collecting insurance and Medicaid data. To learn how you can help, contact her at: a.forough@comcast.net

Autism Training for Foster Parents (**SB 6071**)

Requires DSHS to develop for inclusion into its current foster parent training program a section devoted to the characteristics, management, and needs of children with autism (by no later than 1/1/10).