



AUTISM ALLIANCE OF MICHIGAN PRESENTS

MiNavigator

April 2019

MiNavigator Newsletter Issue 30

Presented by Autism Alliance of Michigan
www.AAoMI.org

Help. Hope. Answers. Today



A Warm Welcome to the Library

*AAoM Interview with Jen Taggart, Assistant Department Head,
Youth Services, Bloomfield Township Public Library*

AAoM: Tell us about the library's efforts to include children with special needs.

Jen: In an effort to reach out to and welcome youth with disabilities and their families, the [Bloomfield Township Public Library](http://www.bloomfieldtownship.org/library) offers a multi-media collection of multisensory materials to encourage cognitive, motor, visual, auditory, and social development. Our Special Needs Collection was developed in collaboration with special education teachers and occupational therapists in our community over ten years ago. In addition, we are offering "After-hours" sensory friendly events, including an ArtABILITY event and a biennial Adaptive Umbrella workshop for librarians across the state working with the disability community.

cont.





AAoM: As you observe children with autism or other special needs engaging with library materials, is there anything in particular that they appear to enjoy most?

Jen: When observing children with autism and other special needs at the library, kids really enjoy the sensory engaging activities in story time, experiencing a story hands-on with their caregiver while playing with one of our story boxes, and little ones with mobility or visual disabilities exploring play in our adaptive and inclusive weekly Wee ALL Play program.

AAoM: Times are changing and we are often competing with screens to access the attention of children. Has that impacted the library, your programming, or your approach?

Jen: We encourage caregiver and child interaction with screens together, exploring Apps together on our Literacy Station iPads or as an element in programs. Apps may be used as another tool to help develop literacy or can also be a great accessible alternative. eBooks offer quite a few accessibility options, such as enlarging font size, adjusting backlighting to create a higher contrast for people with low vision, or people with dyslexia using the dyslexia font option.

Developing Early Literacy Skills in Children with ASD

Contributed by Hetal Patel, M.A., CCC-SLP, Communication Specialist

Early literacy skills play a key role in reading development and are the blueprints for later reading success. Early reading skills are targeted during the toddler and preschool years. Like all issues facing children on the autism spectrum, reactions to reading may widely vary. Some children may discover technological devices, or fixate on other toys or objects, and become resistant to traditional books. Other children may quickly acquire reading acuity, however, lag in reading comprehension or translation of written information to their real world around them. Yet others may simply struggle with the fact that reading requires sustained attention and sitting still. Developing literacy should incorporate everyday activities and routines, conversations, story-telling and play-based fun.

Visiting Early Literacy Skills

- **Alphabet Knowledge:** Knowing that each letter is different and represent different sounds.
- **Print Knowledge:** Understanding that print has meaning as well as a function, and that the words and pictures in a book tell a story.

cont.





- **Phonological Awareness:** A broad term that refers to identification and manipulation of words, sounds, syllables and rhymes.
- **Narrative Skills:** Being able to talk about an event that has happened, or retelling a story, with appropriate detail and order.
- **Vocabulary Skill:** Knowledge and use of a variety of different words.
- **Print Motivation:** Finding enjoyment and interests in books and print.

Activities to Promote Literacy

- **Model it:** Demonstrate holding and opening a book, turning pages and using fingers as a guide when reading to show print goes from left to right.
- **Make a List:** Make a grocery list together by writing out item names or cutting pictures out of an advertisement. At the grocery store, mark things off the list as you find them.
- **Signs for the Home:** Together make different signs for the house. For example, “Joe’s Room”, which helps in understanding that print has meaning. Remember that scribbling is okay!
- **Point it Out:** Show how print is a part of everyday activities, such as the letters and pictures on a cereal box, a billboard along the road as well as name tags and personal items.
- **Pause it:** When watching TV, pause and ask questions about what happened or what will happen; ask what they liked most about a favorite character. This is a great way to check in on a child’s understanding.
- **Rock it Out:** Listen to or sing the ABC’s, nursery rhymes or the latest hit on the radio. Songs are a great way to develop new vocabulary, listening skills and get some movement going as well.
- **Get Crafty:** Pre-writing skills can be easily targeted while drawing or making a craft together.
- **Change it Up:** Read a variety of nonfiction and fiction books to increase knowledge of different words.
- **Make it Up:** Look at wordless picture books together; look at the pictures and create a story to go along with the pictures.
- **Make it Interactive:** Pick “lift and learn” or “touch and feel” books to hold a child’s attention, if needed.
- **Make it an Outing:** Attend a local story time in the community. Libraries and bookstores have weekly story times.

cont.





- **Special Interests:** If a child has an interest in the planets and reads 50 books about the planets, that's okay...they read 50 books!
- **Read, Read and Read Some More!** Read every day. Set a routine that includes reading, such as reading before bed. And it's okay to read the same book over and over again!

I Opened A Book

"I opened a **book** and in I strode. Now nobody can find me.

I've left my chair, my house, my road, my town and my world behind me.

I'm wearing the cloak, I've slipped on the ring, I've swallowed the magic potion.

I've fought with a dragon, dined with a king and dived in a bottomless ocean.

I opened a book and made some friends. I shared their tears and laughter

And followed their road with its bumps and bends to the happily ever after.

I finished my book and out I came. The cloak can no longer hide me.

My chair and house are just the same, but I have a **book** inside me."

~ Julia Donaldson

Apps and Websites for Literacy!

Contributed by Monica Puente-Tabila, M.A., CCC-SLP, Be Heard Communications

Early Literacy

Apps

- **Lively Letters (\$29.99):** letter/sound correspondence, segmenting/blending sounds
- **Abitalk Phonics Apps (\$3.99 each):** letter/sound correspondence, segmenting/blending sounds, word families, spelling
- **PBS Phonics Fair (\$3.99):** phonics, word families, letter sound correspondence

cont.





- **Starfall Learn to Read (\$0.00):** Short vowels, long vowels, phonics and chunking
- **Starfall (\$0.00):** letter/sound correspondence, adapted text to speech books
- **Bob Books #1 Reading Magic (\$2.99):** letter sound correspondence

School Age Literacy

Apps

- **Bob Books #2 Reading Magic (\$2.99):** spelling, repetition, phonics, text to speech
- **Poplet (\$4.99):** brainstorming with text, images, video
- **American Word Speller (\$1.99):** look up words how they sound, not how they are spelled
- **Dyslexia Toolbox (\$4.99):** word prediction, digital overlays, digital document reader

Websites

- **Starfall:** letter/sound correspondence, sight words, text to speech books
- **Reading A-Z (\$109.95):** leveled reading printable books and worksheets

Adult Learners

Apps

- **Building a Strong Vocabulary (\$0.00):** vocabulary development and reading comprehension
- **Teen & Adult Phonics Library (\$0.99):** decodable texts for older emergent readers, custom settings for dyslexia, autism, and ADHD
- **Vocabulary.com (\$2.99):** vocabulary development
- **Teen and Adult Phonics Library (\$0.99):** fully decodable and leveled books

Websites

- [We Can All Read:](#) phonics
- [Skills Workshop:](#) segmenting/blending sounds, dolch words, functional literacy, grammar, higher level language skills





APRIL AT A GLANCE

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| | 1 OUCARES Pre-Employment Skills Training (Rochester) | 2 DWMHA – ECLS: Let's Talk Development! Birth to Six Years Old (Southgate) | 3 Hands-on-Learning: Minor Home Improvements (Troy) Wee ALL Play (Bloomfield Hills) | 4 Learn About: IEP 101 (Stanton) DNOM Living Well Michigan Workshop (Troy) | 5 Living with Autism Workshop (Troy) UP Early Childhood Conference 2019 (Escanaba) | 6 Celebration Cinema Sensory Showtimes (Grand Rapids, Portage, Benton Harbor, Mt. Pleasant, Lansing, Muskegon) |
| 7 Detroit Pistons Autism Awareness Night (Detroit) Calming Bunny (Clinton Township) | 8 OUCARES Pre-Employment Skills Training (Rochester) | 9 Self Determination Training (Sterling Heights) | 10 Parent Engagement Project Wrap Up (Clinton Township) 2019 Autism Conference (Livonia) | 11 2019 MiAEYC Annual Early Childhood Conference (Grand Rapids) Autism Centers of MI Grand Opening (Lansing) | 12 Fowler Center Adult Weekend Respite Camps (Mayville) | 13 2019 Michigan Shines for Autism Gala and Champions' Night Afterglow (Detroit) On Board with Autism (Detroit) |
| 14 Intelligent Lives screening (Grand Rapids) | 15 Sensory Friendly Skate Nights (Muskegon) | 16 Rethinking Guardianship (Farmington Hills) | 17 DN Parent Network Winter Workshop Series (Traverse City) | 18 Learn About: Importance of the PLAAFP Statement (Stanton) Policing Autism (Lansing) | 19 Sibshops (Sterling Heights) | 20 Hope for Autism Foundation 7th Annual Bowl-a-thon (Commerce Twp.) |
| 21 Abrams Planetarium Sensory friendly show (East Lansing) | 22 Fowler Center Travel Adventure Program (New Orleans) | 23 Leelanau State Park - Autism Awareness Month (Northport) | 24 Intelligent Lives screening (Grand Rapids) Breaking Down the Barriers of Autism (Escanaba, Iron Mountain) | 25 The After I'm Gone Program (Livonia) 2019 Blue Bridge Walk for Autism and Sensory Friendly Museum Night (Grand Rapids) | 26 Fowler Center Youth Weekend Respite Camps (Mayville) | 27 FALCONERS "Party for the Planet" (East Lansing) Bowl for Extraordinary Ventures Michigan (Rochester Hills) |
| 28 SF Junie B. Jones (Lansing) | 29 18th Annual START Conference (East Lansing) Is it Sensory or is it Behavior? (Commerce) | 30 Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP) (Grand Rapids) | | | | |

** For more information on any of these events, please contact the MiNavigator line at 877-463-2266.



1  **AutismAlliance of Michigan**
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
Michigan Shines For Autism Gala



Saturday April 13, 2019 | MotorCity Casino Hotel | 2901 Grand River Ave. Detroit, MI 48201

Purchase Tickets at AAoMGala.org or 248.590.2766

