



# Autism Society of Minnesota

## 2010 Annual Meeting President's Report



## Information and Referrals

The Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) provides telephone services for callers to ask for community resources, referrals, and packets of information. Parents of recently diagnosed children can request parent packets which explain autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and offer helpful tips for families. Telephone service also includes parent-to-parent networking.

In 2009, we responded to 4,632 requests.



## Lending Library

AuSM maintains a library of more than 1,000 resources. Available Monday through Friday, items may be reviewed by the public or checked-out by members. In addition the library, AuSM offers many materials and autism-related gifts for purchase through it's bookstore.

In 2009, 155 items were checked out from the library, and more than \$63,000 was raised from book and merchandise sales.



## Support Groups

AuSM provides a variety of support groups to meet the needs of individuals on the spectrum, their parents, and their family members. Support group attendance is free of charge, and it allows participants time to share problems, solutions, joy, and sorrows with one another.

In 2009, 700 participants attended 37 support group meetings.



## Eagle's Nest

Eagle's Nest is a social skills program designed for children ages 8 - 15 with Asperger's Syndrome/High Functioning Autism. The goals of each group are to provide socialization, learn and practice age appropriate social and sensory skills, and to increase self-advocacy. The goals of the group are to provide socialization, and to increase independence through direct teaching of life skills.

In 2009, 86 children attended 13 Eagle's Nest classes.



## Mental Health Clinic & Behavioral Therapy

Behavior consultation is designed to provide support to individuals with ASD. Consultation incorporates current research on ASD with practical experience to understand behavior and design appropriate interventions. It also includes information on behavioral management and proactive behavior strategies. Consultations are tailored to the individual needs of the client.

In 2009, 828 clients were seen as part of the Mental Health Clinic.



## Discovery Series

The Discovery Series is a series of classes for parents of children recently diagnosed with ASD or Asperger's syndrome. The classes, which include insights from a variety of professionals, parents, family members, and individuals on the spectrum, present basic information on diagnosis, helpful intervention strategies for the home, proactive behavioral strategies, and suggestions for working with schools and service agencies.

AuSM presented 13 Discovery Series sessions which were attended by 350 people in 2009.

In addition, AuSM staff were requested for nine of their own presentations. Those sessions were attended by 460 people.



## Workshops & Symposium

Workshops and lectures presented by national speakers are offered throughout the year in both evening and all-day formats, including an annual symposium. Designed for educators and parents who need the latest in ASD research and intervention strategies, AuSM's workshops deliver ideas, tips and protocols that ensure everyday success for individuals living with ASD.

In 2009, AuSM organized six workshops for 300 attendees. The 2009 Minnesota Symposium drew 225.



## Skillshops

Skillshops are a series of workshops designed for people working with children and adults with ASD and reflects AuSM's ongoing commitment to helping people learn individual skills and information for work and family life. Classes are intended for small groups with a "hands-on" approach, encouraging participation, discussion and problem solving on the latest and traditional concerns.

In 2009, 260 people attended 20 Skillshops.



## State Conference

The Minnesota Autism Conference is held each spring, attracting hundreds of participants. The conference features the nation's foremost speakers on research and education, and breakout sessions where parents, teachers, and other professionals share information. The conference also includes a special section for individuals who have ASD and their families.

Nearly 700 participants attended the state conference in 2009.



## Fundraisers

AuSM puts on two large fundraisers each year – Steps of Hope and it's golf tournament. We are also fortunate to be the beneficiaries of community events throughout the year. We can not say thank you enough to our many, many donors and supporters.

In 2009, seven fundraisers brought in approximately \$180,000.



## The People

A very special and heart-felt thank you to the AuSM staff for all of their hard work, dedication, and versatility. Our families are extremely fortunate to have such passionate and caring advocates.

Thank you, also, to the countless volunteers. From the board of directors to the event helpers, AuSM's community presence is defined by help each of you provides.