

# THE KEY



Spring 2002

## A.S.K. Meetings

Meetings are held the Second Saturday of each month

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at

Kentucky School for the Blind

1867 Frankfort Ave

Louisville KY

Directions on Page 4

Child care is provided at no charge.

Guest speakers every other month.

For more information, call Laurie Spezzano at 222-4706.

### Inside this issue:

Autism Institute 2002	1
Legislative Update—HB455	2
Early Intervention Posters	4
ASK Membership Form	5
The Sunshine Foundation	6
Books, Videos, and CDs Available OnLine	6
Movie Time	7
Indiana Family Programs and Funding	8
Mark Your Calendars	8
Kentucky Autism Training Center Resource Request	9
Kimberly Noel Myers Memorial Scholarship	10

## Message from the President

by Kitty Wagner

Many years ago for a brief time, I watched a short-lived TV show called, *My World and Welcome to It*. The story line doesn't matter but the title sticks with me because we all have different "worlds" that we inhabit each day. I have people from my work, my church, the school, my book group etc. But always there is the world of autism for my family

and I, and the Autism Society of Kentuckiana is a big part of that world. We did not always "belong" in this world nor did we necessarily want to be a part of it at first but now that we are here and settled, the landscape is not nearly as frightening as I thought it might be!

What is so unique about the world of autism is that it is so broad and incorporates so many different faces. The majority of the

faces are male, although we have some girls scattered within the world. We have young people with autism who are almost completely nonverbal and communicate in a variety of other ways and we have individuals who are very verbal but sometimes socially isolated. There are degrees of communication and social abilities in between.

My son with autism at age 10 is defi-

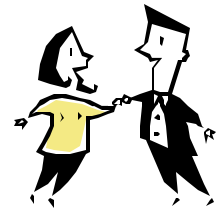
*(Continued on page 7)*

## Autism Institute 2002

Plans for this year's Autism Institute are well underway. It will be informative and interactive and it will provide professionals and parents with opportunities to participate in application and discus-

sion sessions. The Institute is designed for participants with varying levels of understanding and knowledge of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The goal of Autism Institute 2002 is to provide family



members and professionals with practical and effective strategies to promote the academic achieve-

*(Continued on page 3)*

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE—HB455

by Nat McKay

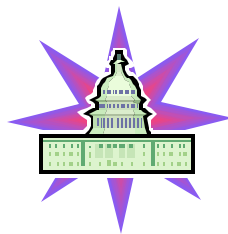
State Representative Scott Brinkman has filed House Bill 455 in the Kentucky General Assembly which is now in session. The bill would create an autism waiver in Kentucky with services for those eligible provided through the Office of Medicaid.

A waiver in effect eliminates the normal eligibility requirements of Medicaid and allows it's own eligibility requirements to replace them. In this case, the diagnosis under the Pervasive Developmental Disability umbrella found in DSM IV would be the first criteria that must be met to be eligible. Most families, if not all, that participate in ASK would qualify.

The bill itself has limitations that may concern many of our members. It specifies that only a certain number of children will be served and that they will receive a maximum dollar amount per individual.. This is due in part to the tight budget constraints of the Medicaid program this year. The dollars funding the waiver would be equiva-

lent to the FY 2001-2002 expenditures incurred for children with autism in the Medicaid Impact Plus program. An exact dollar amount has never been verified but it is in the range of \$1.7 million.

The bill and the waiver have the backing of the Medicaid Office in Kentucky and it appears to be moving through the Legislature with little problem. Rep. Brinkman has stated that he knows this is just a "foot in the door" on the issues of providing much needed services to families affected by autism. We are hopeful, should this bill pass, that in future Legislative sessions finding additional dollars for the waiver program will be a priority.



### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

If you are a Kentucky resident, call, write, or email your Representative

and Senator today. Tell them who you are and that you live in their district. Ask them to **SUPPORT** and **VOTE FOR HB 455**. It will provide families with much needed services for their children with autism. Get your family and friends to call, write, & email too.

If you know who your State Representative and Senator are,

**Write to them** at: Rep. / Senator \_\_\_\_\_  
Legislative Offices  
701 Capitol Ave.  
Frankfort KY 40601

or **Leave them a message** at:

1 (800) 372-7181

Most legislators can be **emailed** using this format: firstname.lastname@lrc.state.ky.us (example: scott.brinkman@lrc.state.ky.us).

If you don't know the name of your State Representative or Senator, please call me, Nat McKay, at 241-7784.

## Autism Institute 2002

(Continued from page 1)

ment and community inclusion of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Autism Institute 2002 will be held at the Galt House Hotel in downtown Louisville on June 10th - 12th. It will be comprised of multiple limited enrollment tracks that will involve interactive and discussion breakout sessions.

### **Families with Newly Diagnosed Children**

The sessions on the first two days of this track will focus on promoting a greater understanding of autism spectrum disorders, providing an overview of effective behavioral and medical intervention approaches, and discussing the teaming process with educators and other professionals. The third day will allow parents the opportunity to learn about national, regional, and local resources. Some sessions will give parents a chance to hear individuals explain the process of initiating contact with various agencies. Lastly, along with other valuable sessions on the third day, there will be a parent net-

working session.

### **New and Emergency Certified Teachers**

Based on requests from administrators and other education professionals, Autism Institute 2002 will have a track designed to help initially prepare new and emergency certified teachers in the fundamentals of establishing effective programs for children with autism. This track will have sessions pertaining to the various levels of education from early elementary through high school. The purpose of this track is to complement the existing preparation of these educators.

**Beyond the Basics** A third track will contain breakout sessions regarding more advanced strategies for social, communication, and sensory programming. This track is geared toward those who already have the basic knowledge about autism, and are seeking more in-depth training.

**Adolescents and Adults** This track will contain sessions on such topics as transition and

employment, sexuality, and social issues. This track will be of special interest to anyone dealing with adolescents and adults on the autism spectrum such as case managers, supported employment providers, high school teachers, occupational therapists, guidance counselors, instructional assistants and parents.

### **Other Specialty Topics**

Autism Institute 2002 will also have motivational keynote speakers, a panel of individuals with autism, and seminars pertaining to specialized topics including the early identification of autism, the management of medical issues of individuals with autism, mental health issues and best practices, understanding autism from a sibling perspective, and interpreting and evaluating the latest research.

The KATC would like to thank all of those who made Autism Institute 2001 such a success and we invite all of you back for Autism Institute 2002! Hope to see you all there!

## Early Intervention Posters

### *EARLY INTERVENTION POSTERS/BROCHURES TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO KENTUCKY PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS IN APRIL FOR AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH*

Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder with clinical manifestations evident at an early age. Early intervention is considered crucial for later success in home, school and community settings. For this reason, one of the Kentucky Autism Training Center's primary initiatives has been to target early identification. As part of this effort, posters and brochures will be distributed to pediatricians and family practitioners throughout the state of Kentucky.

The posters emphasize the fact that children with autism have no physical

characteristics which distinguish them from other children by stating that "The face of autism may be a familiar one". The posters then highlight behaviors or concerns that often characterize autism at an early age. These include delayed language, lack of response to name, lack of pointing or gesturing, lack of social smile, playing in isolation and repetitive behaviors.

The posters encourage caregivers to talk with their doctor about concerns or contact the Kentucky Autism Training Center for more information. The brochures include basic facts about autism such as "Autism is a common developmental disability believed to occur in approximately 1 in 500 individuals." and "Children with autism of-

ten have an uneven profile of strengths and weaknesses."

Several agencies are also listed as helpful resources in autism.

Posters and brochures will be distributed in April for Autism Awareness Month. Physicians are being asked to display these in the waiting rooms of their offices to be shared with families. It is hoped that the posters and brochures will foster an awareness of social and communication behaviors that may need further evaluation. In this way, many children with autism may be identified at an earlier age and educational and behavioral intervention may be initiated in a timely fashion.

## Directions to the Kentucky School for the Blind

**Directions to the Kentucky School for the Blind**  
1867 Frankfort Avenue  
Louisville, KY

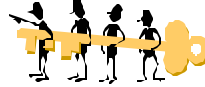
From I-64, take the Mellwood Exit. Turn right onto

Mellwood (a one-way street) and then turn right onto Frankfort Avenue and proceed a few blocks (three or four). Turn left into a driveway between the American Printing House for the Blind

and the Kentucky School for the Blind.

Park in front of Evans Hall. Child care will be provided in the Recreation Center.

# ASK Membership Form



January is the time of year that we collect dues for the Autism Society of Kentuckiana. We do not send a separate mailing for membership renewal. Consider this your reminder to mail your check in today. We rely on the support of family members and professionals to make our organization viable. In return, by becoming a member of ASK you will have opportunities to attend conferences at a reduced rate in some cases. You will have the opportunity to connect with other family members of people with autism. You will share your knowledge and you will benefit from the experiences of others. Membership in the Autism Society of Kentuckiana is priceless in many ways. As the research and education in the field of autism change every year, it is important we have all the current information and equally important that the people we know with autism feel supported by a strong organization acting as their advocates. Join us for 2002 and the future. Fill out the form below and mail it with your check made payable to the Autism Society of Kentuckiana or ASK.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Family Member

\_\_\_\_ Professional

Child with Autism: (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Individual (\$12.00)

\_\_\_\_ Family (\$20.00)

Mail this form and the check to:

Autism Society of Kentuckiana  
P.O. Box 90  
Pewee Valley, KY 40056

# THE SUNSHINE FOUNDATION



*By Deanna Gadjen*

Since 1976, The Sunshine Foundation has granted over 28,000 special dreams to children, ages 3-21, who are seriously ill, physically or mentally challenged or abused.

The most requested dream is a trip to Disney World. Other top requests are: meeting a celebrity, going on a special family vacation, or receiving a special gift, such as a computer, swimming pool, puppy, etc...

There is a waiting list after you get your approval. It takes about 18 months to 2 years from the first form to your dream.

I found out about this program in the spring of 2000. I sent for an application, filled it out and sent it in. Next, I received more papers to be completed. Some of these forms had to be filled out by Jesse's doctor too. All requested forms were filled out and sent in.

On October, 18, 2000, we received a letter stating that Jesse's dream had been approved. On March 21, 2002, Jesse gets his dream. We are going to Discovery Cove in Orlando, FL., to swim with the dolphins. Then we are going to Sea World.

The Sunshine Foundation is paying for the round-trip airfare for our whole family. They have a Dream Village of cottages, which is where we will stay. They are also paying for tickets to Sea World and Discovery Cove. To complete our trip, they are giving us \$500.00 spending money.

To get an application, call (863)424-4188 or go online at [www.sunshinefoundation.org](http://www.sunshinefoundation.org).

In the next newsletter, I'll tell you all about Jesse's dream, complete with pictures.

## Books, Videos, and CDs Available Online

You can now find most of the Future Horizons bookstore inventory at ASK's web site, [www.ask-lou.org](http://www.ask-lou.org).

Just click on "Home", then "A.S.K. Bookstore". The products will be listed, with photos and descriptions. When you click on "purchase now at Future Horizons" and

complete the purchase, Future Horizons will donate 20% to the Autism Society of Kentuckiana.

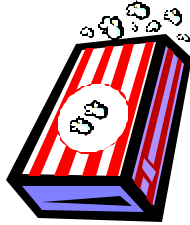
This is a great way to shop for the most popular autism products, and support our chapter at the same time.

## Movie Time

The River Falls Cinema in Clarks-ville, IN. has agreed to give us (families with children with autism) a private showing of every G-rated movie that they show.

The movie will be on Saturday mornings at approximately 10:15. The date will vary, depending on how often they get a new movie. The price is \$5.00 per person and the concessions will also be open.

Some of our kids have trouble with darkness and sound, so the lights



will not be totally turned off and the sound will be turned down to accommodate our kids. They are even going to skip the previews.

As each date is planned, information will be sent out by our phone tree. Please make sure we have your correct information. If you know other families with children with autism who are not members of The Autism Society of Kentuckiana (ASK), encourage them to join and invite them to our Movie Time.

## Message from the President

*(Continued from page 1)*

nitely one of the "in-betweeners". My family has been a part of this world for five years when Chris was diagnosed with autism at age 5, although we had suspected for a few years before that. We joined the local support group immediately, but I will be the first to admit, it was not an easy fit for me in the beginning. I guess I had to grow into the job as a Mom of a child with autism. I went to some workshops and conferences. Time to learn all I could about my new "world". Then I agreed to be secretary of the local chapter of ASK. After that, I went to two national Autism Society of America (ASA) conferences. There is

nothing quite like that experience for getting you in the deep end of the pool!



Now I've agreed to be President of the local chapter for this year. How did that happen, I ask myself? Fully embracing the world of autism actually has made it easier for me to live with it. I no longer think about cures and recoveries so much but rather what adaptations can I make to have a successful experience here for my child.

I'm usually pretty up front about telling people that my child has autism and sometimes they don't believe me, ("He seems so normal!") but it

gives me an opportunity for a mini autism awareness lesson. Sometimes I don't even bother. Not everyone needs to know everything about everybody to have interactions with him or her! Other times an explanation is necessary. At any rate the people and professionals I have met through the Autism Society of Kentuckiana have made the whole experience easier to navigate. So now I would like to be one of those people for someone else. If you are reading this newsletter and have not been to a meeting or it has been a long time, please join us in 2002. It is a safe and comfortable place to learn more about the world of autism. It is *"My World and Welcome to It!"*

# Indiana Family Programs and Funding

## Residents of Indiana

*By Deanna Gadjen*

There are several programs and places to get funding for family members to attend workshops/conferences to learn more about their child's disability. They each have their own guidelines and forms. I have used all 6 of these resources. Call these phone numbers to get applications and more information.

This information is particularly important this year because The Autism Society of America's National Conference is being held in Indianapolis, IN. in July 2002.

1. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT FUND  
(800)332-4433 or (219)234-7101  
Limit- \$250.00 per person, per year  
Reimbursement only
2. INDIANA GOVERNOR'S PLANNING COUNCIL

(317)232-7770 or GPCPD@in.net  
Limit- \$1000.00 per person, per calendar year  
One out-of-state conference every 2 years  
Maximum- 2 non-council sponsored events  
Money can be received in advance or reimbursement

3. YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL  
This is usually limited to registration fee
4. INDIANA RESOURCE CENTER for AUTISM  
(800)825-4733  
Limit- Specific amount of money per conference divided among all applicants
5. AUTISM CHAPTER  
Limit- Specific amount of money divided among all applicants
6. ORGANIZERS of STATE CONFERENCE  
Limit- Sometimes scholarships available  
If anyone needs help filling out their forms, I will be glad to help. Give me a call at 949-2922.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The **ASPERGER'S SUPPORT GROUP** (for people in the Louisville area with Asperger's Syndrome and the people who care for them) meets on the third Monday of each month from 7 to 9:00 pm at Christ Church Cathedral, 421 S. Second Street in Louisville, on the second floor. For additional information, contact Debbie M. at [cathedrlou@aol.com](mailto:cathedrlou@aol.com) or Cindy R. at [clouise@mindspring.com](mailto:clouise@mindspring.com).

**June 10-12, AUTISM INSTITUTE 2002**  
Galt House Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky  
For more info. call Kentucky Autism Training Center: 502.852.4631 or 800.334.8635 ext. 4631, or follow our link to KATC site.

**July 17-21, ASA NATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
"Champions and Challenges" Marriott Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. For registration information, please email [conference@autism-society.org](mailto:conference@autism-society.org) or check their site for updates.

## Kentucky Autism Training Center Resource Center Request Form

Thank you for your interest in the Kentucky Autism Training Center's Resource Center. Your selection will be mailed to you upon receipt of this form and a security deposit of \$25.00. The borrower may request up to three items at a time. If you wish, the security deposit may be retained for up to six months for ongoing use of the Resource Center. The borrower assumes responsibility of damaged and/or lost materials and agrees to return the materials to the Kentucky Autism Training Center within three weeks.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Please Check:

Parent \_\_\_\_\_ Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Family Member \_\_\_\_\_

Material Requested: (Please indicate if your request is a book, video tape, or audio tape and please include the author's name, when applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form and all materials to:  
 Kentucky Autism Training Center  
 Attn: Resource Center  
 571 S. Floyd St. Ste. 100  
 Louisville, KY 40202-3828

For Official Use Only

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Sent: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Check Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**We receive new materials monthly, please contact the katc for an updated list at 502.852.4631.**

## Kimberly Noel Myers Memorial Scholarship



1999 Panasonic VSA Arts of Kentucky Young Soloist recipient Kimberly Myers passed away unexpectedly on June 24, 2001 in her hometown of Mayfield, Kentucky.

Kimberly was an incredibly gifted vocalist who overcame a disability to achieve her dream of becoming a singer. She performed at several official VSA arts of Kentucky functions.

Her love of music will continue through a memorial music scholarship Fund. Her parents are producing a CD of 17 songs that Kimberly recorded before her untimely death. The CD is now available. The proceeds from this project will go to the Kimberly Noel- Myers Memorial Scholarship Fund to help other young people achieve their dreams of becoming accomplished musicians, singers and songwriters.

To order a copy, please fill out this form and send it along with your check to:

The Kimberly Noel -Myers Scholarship Fund  
1334 Cherry Drive  
Mayfield, Kentucky 42066

\$15 each -Plus \$3 Shipping (\$6 Max. for a qty. of 2 or more)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

*(Continued on page 11)*

# Kimberly Noel Myers Memorial Scholarship

*(Continued from page 10)*

## DECLARATION OF GIFT AND GUIDELINES FOR THE KIMBERLY NOEL MYERS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

### HISTORY

The Kimberly Noel Myers Memorial Scholarship was established through the generous gifts of the family and friends of Kimberly Noel Myers.

Whereas Kimberly Noel Myers was a senior at Mayfield High School, Mayfield, KY, class of 2002; and whereas Kimberly was an incredibly gifted vocalist who overcame a disability to achieve her dream of becoming a singer; and whereas she was a 1999 Panasonic VSA Arts of Kentucky Young Soloist Recipient; and whereas she performed at several official VSA Arts of Kentucky functions; and whereas her parents, Robert and Melissa Myers, Produced a CD of 17 songs that Kimberly recorded before her untimely death on June 24, 2001.

Whereas Kimberly Noel Myers placed a high value on education and demonstrated her love of music through hard work and numerous performances; and whereas her family wish to assist others in obtaining an education to prepare them for a successful career, they have made a generous donation to Murray State University to establish an endowment for that purpose.

Whereas Murray State University and the Murray State University Foundation wish to assist Kimberly's family in this gracious and noteworthy endeavor; they do hereby establish the following guidelines for the operations of the Kimberly Noel Myers Memorial Scholarship in accordance with their wishes.

### GUIDELINES

1. The scholarship shall be known as the "Kimberly Noel Myers Memorial Scholarship."
2. Applicants shall submit a video of a musical performance as well as a short, written biography that includes a list of performances, educational background and their aspirations as far as where they want their music to lead them (i.e. career in music, music teacher, etc.)
3. Recipients of the scholarship shall be enrolled as full-time students at a full, accredited university in Kentucky, Tennessee, Illinois, Missouri, or Indiana and shall have or maintain at least a 2.5 GPA on a scale of 4.0.
4. Recipients shall be selected by the MSU Foundation Scholarship Committee in conjunction with Robert and Melissa Myers and or their appointee and/or successors.
5. In the event applicants are equal in talent and ability, financial need shall be a determining factor.
6. Recipients with disabilities are urged to apply.
7. Recipients of the scholarship shall have an earnest desire to succeed and may reapply.

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
AUTISM SOCIETY OF  
KENTUCKIANA**

**P.O. Box 90  
Pewee Valley KY 40056  
Website: ask-lou.org**

**The Mission of the Autism Society of Kentuckiana  
is to provide families and individuals affected by  
autism and related disabilities with support, infor-  
mation, and advocacy.**

This newsletter was edited by :  
Earlene M. Chambers  
D & E Consulting, LLC  
1000 Seatick Rd  
Otisco IN 47163  
812-256-2692  
812-989-7508  
E-mail : e.m.chambers@att.net  
All suggestions are welcomed.

D & E Consulting specializes in computer  
consulting and technical writing. Call us to set up  
your computer systems or to write your  
proposals, employee handbooks, user manuals,  
brochures, newsletters, and more.

---

**The Autism Society of Kentuckiana  
P.O. Box 90  
Pewee Valley KY 40056**