



North Durham Region

Providing support to families with children who have barriers to learning.

NEWS UPDATE — FALL 2000

Providing Support

Join with other parents who face similar challenges.



Linking Resources

The Speech, Language and Learning Centre comes North!



Raising Awareness

Facing Autism

Financial Assistance

Your contributions go a long way!

Providing Support

Parent Support Group

Our Parent Support Group continues to meet at 9:30 AM on the third Thursday of each month at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Uxbridge (next to the Township office on Toronto Street South). This is a wonderful time to chat with other parents (usually moms, but we encourage you to join us, too, dads!). We share information, occasionally have special guest speakers, and enjoy coffee, tea and something home baked. Child care is provided. Mark down these dates:

- November 16th - Vicki from Resources for Exceptional Children discussing Assessments
- December 21st - Christmas party
- January 18th - We will meet in Sunderland or Cannington for this meeting.

Linking Resources

Literacy Program

We are excited to partner with the Speech, Language & Learning Centre from Ajax to provide 8 fall "Reading Readiness" sessions in Uxbridge. The SLLC is bringing their program north on Saturdays from October 14th to December 2nd and Precious Minds has subsidized the program to make it more financially possible for parents to enroll their children.

Thirty-two children are registered in this program and will work in small groups to review and boost their literacy skills. The positive response to the literacy program affirms the need for support in North Durham and the Precious Minds team is delighted to provide this opportunity for families in this area.





Raising Awareness

A Focus on Autism

by Elisabeth Graham

Editor's Note: Elisabeth is the mother of seven year-old Zachary who was diagnosed with PDD (Pervasive Developmental Disorder under the autism spectrum) at the age of three. Elisabeth is a careful researcher and active advocate for Zachary's programs and development. She is a valuable member of the Precious Minds team as coordinator of resources and facilitator of the parent support group.

Perhaps one of the most devastating things you can learn is that your child has been diagnosed with autism (PDD). A multifaceted disorder, autism has long baffled parents and professionals alike. At one time, doctors gave parents virtually no hope for combating the disorder. But, in recent years, new treatments and therapies have demonstrated that improvement is possible. Children are recovering!

Recently, I attended the Defeat Autism Now! Conference in San Diego, California hosted by the Autism Research Institute. It was an exciting and emotional weekend as several thousand parents and medical practitioners gathered to hear international research scientists and medical professionals share new developments in treating autism. At the conference, I met Lynn Hamilton, a parent of two young children, Ryan and Victoria. Ryan was diagnosed with autism shortly before his third birthday and, as a result of intensive Applied Behaviour Analysis therapy and his parents' efforts to investigate many avenues of treatment, his life has been reclaimed from the confines of autism.

Lynn has written a wonderful book, *Facing Autism*, in which she shares her family's journey. I picked up a copy and immediately found it to be a terrific resource. The book covers the first ten things to do after a diagnosis — applied behavioural analysis, dietary intervention, biomedical interventions, sensory issues and more. One mother commented that "reading Lynn's book is like having a long, friendly, and supportive conversation with someone who understands. The research is meticulous and expansive, yet the book is a delight to read."

I strongly recommend this guidebook for anyone who is involved with a child with autism or PDD. I wish such a resource had been available when we received our son's diagnosis. But, even now, four years later, I find it's the perfect book to share with my family, support workers, and friends. Blue Heron Books in Uxbridge is happy to order it for you. Just give them a call at 905-852-4282.

Here are two other great books. The first one was lent to me by a friend and has made a significant impact on how we are currently treating our son — a must read!

Unraveling the Mystery of Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorder; A Mother's Story of Research and Recovery by Karen Seroussi

Special Diets for Special Kids by Lisa Lewis, Ph.D.

Lisa and Karen are the founders of the Autism Network for Dietary Intervention (ANDI) which has quarterly newsletters packed full of useful information and recipes. You can learn more about ANDI on their website at <http://www.autismndi.com>

More good websites: Autism Link Page www.transmil.nl/alp/
Autism Research Institutewww.autism.com/ari



Financial Assistance

- Private tutoring
- Sessions at the Listening Centre
- Therapy through the Davis Method
- Brock Youth Centre Summer Camp
- Therapy through Autism Partnership
- Accessible Equipment
- Therapy with the LEAP Program
- Assessments
- Literacy Program

THANK YOU to the people who are supporting Precious Minds with financial gifts. We really cannot do this work without you! In this first year of our existence as a charity we are thrilled to have contributed \$15,000 toward the therapies and interventions listed above. In addition, we have subsidized two Precious Minds resource events to make it financially easier for people to take part — the Spring Resource Conference and the Fall Family Day at Windreach Farm. Both events have been well received and attended. We recognize the many professionals who volunteered their time to lead informative and helpful workshops and thank them for their time and efforts. Also, a big thank you to the volunteers who gave their time to help with childcare at our support group meetings and fall event, and for a special lady who sacrificially typed our resource manual. You are all wonderful!

This fall, we committed to bring the Speech, Language and Learning Centre to Uxbridge to provide a more localized program for families. It is our intention that by providing this excellent resource at a greatly reduced rate, many more children will benefit. That excites us very much!! Will you partner with us to fund this event? Our cost is \$150 per child and we have 32 children benefiting from the program. We appreciate your interest and contributions!

The operating costs of Precious Minds are endless. We are committed to raising awareness and providing financial assistance to families in North Durham. Obviously, the more we have, the more we can support. As we approach the end of this year, we want to remind you that we provide tax-deductible receipts for all donations and we greatly appreciate your consideration toward our efforts.

We are grateful to the many businesses that have provided resources to assist us with the expenses of Precious Minds events during this last year. We acknowledge them and say THANKS...for believing in us and for your generous contributions!

- 2-4-1 Pizza, Uxbridge
- A Perfect Touch Floral Shop, Uxbridge
- Blue Heron Books, Uxbridge
- Canadian Tire, Uxbridge
- Kisko Products, Markham
- Lenbrook Industries, Pickering
- Luke's Country Store, Port Perry
- MacLean's Paint and Wallpaper, Uxbridge
- McDonald's, Uxbridge
- Mulberry Moon, Uxbridge
- Nutty Chocolatier, Port Perry
- Quaker Pharmacy, Uxbridge
- Roxy Theatre, Uxbridge
- Scholar's Choice, Ajax
- Settlement House, Port Perry
- Shopper's Drug Mart, Uxbridge and Port Perry
- Subway, Uxbridge
- Sunderland Lion's Club
- Swiss Chalet, Uxbridge
- Tim Horton's, Port Perry
- Tim Horton's, Uxbridge
- Uxcom, Uxbridge

The Precious Minds Team

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