

# Information and Community Resources for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Kent County, Michigan

Professionals and organizations on this list are not endorsed by Autism Support of Kent County. This list was compiled to help individuals find out information about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and/or to help locate services for individuals with ASD.



**Autism Support of Kent County, Inc.**

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Grand Rapids, MI 49515  
(616) 752-8577

[www.autismssupportofkentcounty.org/](http://www.autismssupportofkentcounty.org/)

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## WHAT ARE AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS?

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Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are a group of developmental disabilities caused by a problem with the brain. Scientists do not know yet exactly what causes this problem. ASDs can impact a person's functioning at different levels, from very mildly to severely. There is usually nothing about how a person with an ASD looks that sets them apart from other people, but they may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in ways that are different from most people. The thinking and learning abilities of people with ASDs can vary – from gifted to severely challenged. Autistic disorder is the most commonly known type of ASD, but there are others, including “pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified” (PDD-NOS) and Asperger Syndrome.

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## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SIGNS OF ASDs?

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People with ASDs may have problems with social, emotional, and communication skills. They might repeat certain behaviors and might not want change in their daily activities. Many people with ASDs also have different ways of learning, paying attention, or reacting to things. ASDs begin during early childhood and last throughout a person's life.

A child or adult with an ASD might:

- not play “pretend” games (pretend to “feed” a doll)
- not point at objects to show interest (point at an airplane flying over)
- not look at objects when another person points at them
- have trouble relating to others or not have an interest in other people at all
- avoid eye contact and want to be alone
- have trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about their own feelings
- prefer not to be held or cuddled or might cuddle only when they want to
- appear to be unaware when other people talk to them but respond to other sounds
- be very interested in people, but not know how to talk, play, or relate to them
- repeat or echo words or phrases said to them, or repeat words or phrases in place of normal language (echolalia)
- have trouble expressing their needs using typical words or motions
- repeat actions over and over again
- have trouble adapting when a routine changes
- have unusual reactions to the way things smell, taste, look, feel, or sound
- lose skills they once had (for instance, stop saying words they were using)

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## WHAT CAN I DO IF I THINK MY CHILD HAS AN ASD?

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Talk with your child's doctor or nurse. If you or your doctor think there could be a problem, ask for a referral to see a developmental pediatrician or other specialist, or you can contact your local early intervention agency (for children under 3) or public school (for children 3 and older). To find out who to

Speak to in your area, you can contact the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) by logging onto [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org) or call **1-800-695-0285**. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has links to information for families on their Autism Information Center Web page ([www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/aic/resources](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/aic/resources)).

Right now, the main research-based treatment for ASDs is intensive structured teaching of skills, often called behavioral intervention. It is **very** important to begin this intervention as early as possible in order to help your child reach his or her full potential. Acting early can make a real difference!

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## SCREENING AND DIAGNOSIS

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Diagnosing autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) can be difficult, since there is no medical test, like a blood test, to diagnose the disorders. Doctors look at the child's behavior and development to make a diagnosis.

ASDs can sometimes be detected at 18 months or younger. By age 2, a diagnosis by an experienced professional can be considered very reliable. [1] However, many children do not receive a final diagnosis until much older. This delay means that children with an ASD might not get the help they need.

Diagnosing an ASD takes two steps:

### 1. Developmental Screening

Developmental screening is a short test to tell if children are learning basic skills when they should, or if they might have delays. During developmental screening the doctor might ask the parent some questions or talk and play with the child during an exam to see how she learns, speaks, behaves, and moves. A delay in any of these areas could be a sign of a problem.

All children should be screened for developmental delays and disabilities during regular well-child doctor visits at:

- 9 months
- 18 months
- 24 or 30 months
- Additional screening might be needed if a child is at high risk for developmental problems due to preterm birth, low birth weight or other reasons.

In addition, all children should be screened specifically for ASDs during regular well-child doctor visits at:

- 18 months
- 24 months
- Additional screening might be needed if a child is at high risk for ASDs (e.g., having a sister, brother or other family member with an ASD) or if behaviors sometimes associated with ASDs are present

It is important for doctors to screen all children for developmental delays, but especially to monitor those who are at a higher risk for developmental problems due to preterm birth, low birth weight, or having a brother or sister with an ASD.

If your child's doctor does not routinely check your child with this type of developmental screening test, ask that it be done.

If the doctor sees any signs of a problem, a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation is needed.

## 2. Comprehensive Diagnostic Evaluation

The second step of diagnosis is a comprehensive evaluation. This thorough review may include looking at the child's behavior and development and interviewing the parents. It may also include a hearing and vision screening, genetic testing, neurological testing, and other medical testing.

In some cases, the primary care doctor might choose to refer the child and family to a specialist for further assessment and diagnosis. Specialists who can do this type of evaluation include:

- Developmental Pediatricians (doctors who have special training in child development and children with special needs)
- Child Neurologists (doctors who work on the brain, spine, and nerves)
- Child Psychologists or Psychiatrists (doctors who know about the human mind)

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## TREATMENT

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There is no single best treatment for all children with ASDs. However, well-planned, structured teaching of specific skills is very important. Some children respond well to one type of treatment while others have a negative response or no response at all to the same treatment. Before deciding on a treatment program, it is important to talk with the child's healthcare providers to understand all the risks and benefits.

It is also important to remember that children with ASDs can get sick or injured just like children without ASDs. Regular medical and dental exams should be part of a child's treatment plan. Often it is hard to tell if a child's behavior is related to the ASD or is caused by a separate health condition. For instance, head banging could be a symptom of the ASD, or it could be a sign that the child is having headaches. In those cases, a thorough physical exam is needed. Monitoring healthy development means not only paying attention to symptoms related to ASDs, but also to the child's physical and mental health, as well.

### Early Intervention Services

Research shows that early intervention treatment services can greatly improve a child's development.[1],[2] Early intervention services help children from birth to 3 years old (36 months) learn important skills. Services include therapy to help the child talk, walk, and interact with others. Therefore, it is important to talk to your child's doctor as soon as possible if you think your child has an ASD or other developmental problem.

Even if your child has not been diagnosed with an ASD, he or she may be eligible for early intervention treatment services. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) says that children under the age of 3 years (36 months) who are at risk of having developmental delays may be eligible for services. These services are provided through an early intervention system in your state. Through this system, you can ask for an evaluation.

In addition, treatment for particular symptoms, such as speech therapy for language delays, often does not need to wait for a formal ASD diagnosis.

## **Types of Treatments**

The National Institute of Mental Health and the Autism Society of America suggest a list of questions parents can ask when planning treatments for their child.

There are many different types of treatments available. For example, auditory training, discrete trial training, vitamin therapy, anti-yeast therapy, facilitated communication, music therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and sensory integration.

The different types of treatments can generally be broken down into the following categories:

- Behavior and Communication Approaches
- Dietary Approaches
- Medication
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine

## **Behavior and Communication Approaches**

According to reports by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Research Council, behavior and communication approaches that help children with ASDs are those that provide structure, direction, and organization for the child in addition to family participation.

### **Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)**

A notable treatment approach for people with an ASD is called applied behavior analysis (ABA). ABA has become widely accepted among healthcare professionals and used in many schools and treatment clinics. ABA encourages positive behaviors and discourages negative behaviors in order to improve a variety of skills. The child's progress is tracked and measured.

For example, a teacher might ask a child put his toys away. If the child puts his toys away, the teacher will praise the child (e.g., "Great job!"). If the child does not put the toys away the teacher might guide the child's hand or withhold a reward until the child puts the toys away. The teacher would then record how many times the child put his toys away to see how well the treatment is working.

ABA methods are used to:

- Teach new skills
- Increase new positive behaviors
- Continue positive behaviors
- Cut down on behaviors that interfere with learning

There are different types of ABA. Following are some examples:

- Discrete Trial Training (DTT)  
DTT is a style of teaching that uses a series of trials to teach each step of a desired behavior or response. Lessons are broken down into their simplest parts and positive reinforcement is used to reward correct answers and behaviors. Incorrect answers are ignored.
- Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI)

This is a type of ABA for very young children with an ASD, usually younger than five, and often younger than three.

- **Pivotal Response Training (PRT)**  
PRT aims to increase a child's motivation to learn, monitor his own behavior, and initiate communication with others. Positive changes in these behaviors should have widespread effects on other behaviors.
- **Verbal Behavior Intervention (VBI)**  
VBI is a type of ABA that focuses on teaching verbal skills.

Other therapies that can be part of a complete treatment program for a child with an ASD include:

### **Developmental, Individual Differences, Relationship-Based Approach (DIR; also called "Floortime")**

Floortime focuses on emotional and relational development (feelings, relationships with caregivers). It also focuses on how the child deals with sights, sounds, and smells.

### **Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication- Related Handicapped Children (TEAACH)**

TEAACH uses visual cues to teach skills. For example, picture cards can help teach a child how to get dressed by breaking information down into small steps.

### **Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy teaches skills that help the person live as independently as possible. Skills might include dressing, eating, bathing, and relating to people.

### **Sensory Integration Therapy**

Sensory integration therapy helps the person deal with sensory information, like sights, sounds, and smells. Sensory integration therapy could help a child who is bothered by certain sounds or does not like to be touched.

### **Speech Therapy**

Speech therapy helps to improve the person's communication skills. Some people are able to learn verbal communication skills. For others, using gestures or picture boards is more realistic.

### **The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)**

PECS uses picture symbols to teach communication skills. The person is taught to use picture symbols to ask and answer questions and have a conversation.

### **Dietary Approaches**

Some dietary treatments have been developed by reliable therapists. But many of these treatments do not have the scientific support needed for widespread recommendation. An unproven treatment might help one child, but may not help another.

Many biomedical interventions call for changes in diet. Such changes include removing certain types of foods from a child's diet and using vitamin or mineral supplements. Dietary treatments are based on the idea that food allergies or lack of vitamins and minerals cause symptoms of ASDs. Some parents feel that dietary changes make a difference in how their child acts or feels.

If you are thinking about changing your child's diet, talk to the doctor first. Or talk with a nutritionist to be sure your child is getting important vitamins and minerals.

## **Medication**

There are no medications that can cure ASDs or even treat the main symptoms. But there are medications that can help some people with related symptoms. For example, medication might help manage high energy levels, inability to focus, depression, or seizures. Also, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the use of risperidone (an antipsychotic drug) to treat 5- to 16-year-old children with ASDs who have severe tantrums, aggression, and cause self-injury.

## **Complementary and Alternative Treatments**

To relieve the symptoms of ASDs, some parents and healthcare professionals use treatments that are outside of what is typically recommended by the pediatrician. These types of treatments are known as complementary and alternative treatments (CAM). They might include special diets, chelation (a treatment to remove heavy metals like lead from the body), biologicals (e.g., secretin), or body-based systems (like deep pressure).[3]

These types of treatments are very controversial. Current research shows that as many as one third of parents of children with an ASD may have tried complementary or alternative medicine treatments, and up to 10% may be using a potentially dangerous treatment.[4] Before starting such a treatment, check it out carefully, and talk to your child's doctor.

## **Additional Treatment Resources**

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders has a website to help individuals with an ASD who have communication challenges.

The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research has a website to help health professionals with the oral health care needs of patients with an ASD.

Clinical Trials.Gov lists federally funded clinical trials that are looking for participants. If you or someone you know would like to take part in an autism study, go to the website and search "autism."

The Autism Treatment Network (ATN) seeks to create standards of medical treatment that will be made broadly available to physicians, researchers, parents, policy makers, and others who want to improve the care of individuals with autism. ATN is also developing a shared national medical database to record the results of treatments and studies at any of their five established regional treatment centers.

***[www.cdc.gov/actearly](http://www.cdc.gov/actearly)***

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## **ADVOCACY, INFORMATION AND SUPPORT**

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### **Arc Kent County (The)**

Tammy Finn, Executive Director  
629 Michigan Ave. NE, Ste. D  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 459-3339  
[www.arckent.org](http://www.arckent.org)

The Arc Kent County advocates for the rights and full participation of all people with Developmental Disabilities and is committed to building inclusive communities through advocacy, support and information.

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### **Autism Society of Michigan**

1213 Center St. Ste. B  
Lansing, MI 48906  
(517) 882-2800 / (800) 223-6722  
[www.autism-mi.org](http://www.autism-mi.org)

The mission of the Autism Society of Michigan (ASM) is to assure full participation and self determination in every aspect of life for each individual. We will realize this vision by opening avenues of self advocacy and advocating on behalf of others in a way that values equity, respect, dignity and diversity in all communities. ASM is committed to empowering individuals with autism and their families by offering educational resources and materials, workshops, seminars and other services. ASM advocates that "Making Human Connections" in a supportive, integrated community is a right of all persons. Please feel free to explore our website; learn about autism, the programs and services offered by ASM and consider supporting our ongoing advocacy efforts by becoming a member.

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### **Autism Support of Kent County, Inc.**

Richard Elias III, President  
P. O. Box 150348  
Grand Rapids, MI 49515  
(616) 752-8577  
[www.autismssupportofkentcounty.org/](http://www.autismssupportofkentcounty.org/)

ASK provides support, resources and guidance to those who are diagnosed with, care for and live with autism. Meetings are generally the first Tuesday of every month during the school year at the Kent Intermediate School District Educational Service Center.

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### **D.A. Blodgett for Children**

805 Leonard St. N.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 451-2021  
[www.dablodgett.org](http://www.dablodgett.org)

Supports Coordination – Professional support service staff work in an environment convenient to the child and family to assist with linking, monitoring, and coordinating services. Respite services provide temporary assistance to the unpaid primary caregiver in order to support the ability of the individual to live in his/her natural community home. Enhanced Health Care services are available to those that are authorized for supports coordination services including, but not limited to psychiatric services and medication reviews. Family Support Subsidy – Provides approximately \$200.00 per month in financial assistance to families who have a child with an eligibility category of: Cognitive Impairment , Severe Multiple Impairment and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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### **Disability Advocates of Kent County**

David Bolowski, Executive Director  
3600 Camelot Drive Southeast  
Grand Rapids MI 49546  
(616) 949-1100  
[www.disabilityadvocates.us](http://www.disabilityadvocates.us)

We exist to advocate, assist, educate and inform on independent living options for persons with disabilities and to create a barrier-free society for all.

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**Early On of Kent County**

1800 Leffingwell NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
(616) 365-2310  
[www.kentisd.org/earlyon](http://www.kentisd.org/earlyon)

Provides free in-home evaluation and service coordination for children from birth to three years of age, who have a developmental delay. Anyone can make a referral when there is a concern about a child's development. Additional services may include: professional early intervention services, free workshops and developmental information, and opportunities to network with parents.

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**Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan**

678 Front Avenue NW, Suite 180  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504  
(616) 454-7979 / (800) 377-6226  
[www.epilepsymichigan.org](http://www.epilepsymichigan.org)

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan provides education and consultation services, public awareness, camp programs, support services, advocacy, and employment guidance for people with epilepsy, their families and the general public. [mcooke@epilepsymichigan.org](mailto:mcooke@epilepsymichigan.org)

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**Friendship Ministries**

Nella Uitvlugt, Executive Director  
2215 29th St SE #B6  
Grand Rapids, MI 49508  
(888) 866-8966  
[www.friendship.org/](http://www.friendship.org/)

Friendship Ministries is an international, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to share God's love with people with cognitive impairments. In its twenty plus years of service, the ministry has worked with more than 800 churches and organizations to provide a program model, consulting services, and religious education resources for people with cognitive impairments.

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**Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids**

3035 Prairie St. SW  
Grandville, MI 49418  
(616) 532-4200 / (616) 451-8800  
[www.goodwillgr.org](http://www.goodwillgr.org)

To assist people with disabilities or other barriers to employment to realize their full potential to be self-reliant, self-supporting, contributing members of society. Provides career development, employment and occupational skills training, and job placement services.

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### **Gray Center (The)**

c/o City on a Hill Ministries  
100 Pine Street, Suite 121  
Zeeland, MI 49464  
Phone: 616-748-6030  
[www.thegraycenter.org](http://www.thegraycenter.org)

Dedicated to individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and those who work alongside them to improve mutual understanding. The Gray Center approaches the social impairment in ASD as a shared impairment and works to improve social understanding on both sides of the social equation, helping both persons with ASD and those who are considered to be 'normal' to be able to communicate. Our services include: - Providing education through conferences, workshops and speaking engagements, - Providing information through our book store and library, - Providing education, information, referral and networking through social groups for teens and young adults with ASD, and networks for parents, grandparents and the community.

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### **Hispanic Center of Western Michigan**

730 Grandville Avenue SW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 742-0200  
[www.hispanic-center.org](http://www.hispanic-center.org)

We provide services to the Hispanic and broader community in the Greater Grand Rapids area. We specialize in interpretation and translation, employment, youth programming, cultural education, immigration assistance, and community outreach.

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### **Holkeboer Advocacy**

P. O. Box 571  
Jenison, MI 49428  
(616) 805-5297  
[www.holkeboeradvocacy.net](http://www.holkeboeradvocacy.net)

Kathy Holkeboer: "As a parent of a special needs child, I have advocated on her behalf for the past 10 years, I have developed a clear understanding of issues involving special education. I understand the challenges and frustrations that sometimes come in dealing with the school system. I have learned the importance of building bridges and working together as a team in order to reach the best outcome for the child.

The maze of special education can be difficult and I am here to help you through this process. My goal is to teach you to become an advocate for your child and support you during this process. Advocating is a lifelong job. As parents we need to learn these skills to help our children and potentially teach them how to advocate for themselves."

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### **Hope Network West Michigan**

755 36th St. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49548  
(616) 248-5900  
[www.hopenetwork.org](http://www.hopenetwork.org)

Hope Network is a non-profit Christian organization founded in 1963 to empower people with disabilities or disadvantages to achieve their highest level of independence. We provide a continuum of specialized care for those with brain and spinal cord injuries, mental illness, developmental disabilities, substance abuse disorders and other disadvantages. Our support services include transportation, subsidized housing, case management, community based services and workforce development. Hope Network cares for the whole person addressing the social, mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

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### **Kent Collaborative Autism Network**

Kent Intermediate School District  
2930 Knapp Street NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
(616) 365-2299  
[www.kentisd.org/Special\\_Education/kentcan/](http://www.kentisd.org/Special_Education/kentcan/)

Our Mission Statement: To build a comprehensive model for identification, training, shared resources, and effective practices which promotes collaborative and consistency between families, educators, and community partners in support of our students with ASD.

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### **Michigan Alliance for Families**

1819 South Wagner Road, P.O. 1406  
Ann Arbor, MI 49106-1406  
(800) 552-4821/ (734) 994-8100 ext. 1590  
[www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org](http://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org)

Provides information, support and education to families of children and adults with disabilities from birth to age 26 who are in the educational system. The purpose of the projects are to increase the involvement of families in their children's education and the educational system in general.

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### **Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services**

4095 Legacy Parkway, Suite 500  
Lansing, MI 48911  
(517) 487-1755  
[www.mpas.org](http://www.mpas.org)

Assists people with disabilities throughout Michigan by providing advocacy information and rights protection through a variety of services. Client Assistance Program (CAP) assists people who are seeking or receiving services from Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Consumer Choice Programs, Michigan Commission for the Blind, Centers for Independent Living, and Supported Employment and Transition Programs.

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### **MOKA Foundation - Kent County Regional Office**

4145 Kalamazoo SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49508  
(800) 688-2434 and (616) 719-4263  
[www.moka.org](http://www.moka.org)

MOKA is a nonprofit charitable agency serving persons with disabilities in a ten county area in western Michigan. Founded in 1978 by a small group of concerned parents and citizens, MOKA has grown to be a leader in the field of disabilities. Our agency provides a variety of services including individual job placement, residential and community living support, independent living training as well as a family supports program for the families of children with autism and other disabilities.

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**Network 180**

Access Center  
790 Fuller Avenue NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 336-3909  
Toll Free: (800) 749-7720  
[www.network180.org](http://www.network180.org)

The community mental health authority for Kent County, network180 connects individuals and their families to services for mental illness, substance use disorders or developmental disabilities.

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**Social Security Administration (The)**

50 College Ave. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 742-2373  
[www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)

Administers the Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs. This Federal Government agency provides assistance for completing applications for retirement, survivor, disability, and SSI benefits, and Medicare. Make appointments to file by calling 1-800-772-1213 from 7:00 am-7:00 pm or file on the Internet at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

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**Spectrum Community Services**

3353 Lousma Dr. SE  
Wyoming, MI 49548  
(616) 241-6258  
[www.spectrumhuman.org](http://www.spectrumhuman.org)

Spectrum Community Services was established to provide long term, community-based, residential treatment as an alternative to institutionalization for mentally and physically disabled individuals. We specialize in community integration by operating residential group homes that provide services specifically for individuals that have developmental, mental and physical disabilities. Mental health services and special assistance are provided to enable consumers to live in the least restrictive environment and to build independent skills to a maximum level.

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**START (Statewide Autism Resources & Training)**

Grand Valley State University  
401 W. Fulton Street  
388C DEV  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504  
(616) 331-6480  
[www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter](http://www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter)

The Statewide Autism Resources and Training (START) project is committed to creating a sustainable structure of support for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders within each region of Michigan by provide training and technical assistance to educators and families that support students on the autism spectrum.

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### **Tardive Dyskinesia Center**

2317 North Wickham Road  
Melbourne, FL 32935  
(800) 584-6601  
[www.tardivedyskinesia.com](http://www.tardivedyskinesia.com)

Tardive Dyskinesia (TD) is a result of damage to the bodily systems that process dopamine, and is typically caused by exposure to certain anti psychotics, and Reglan. Tardive Dyskinesia victims suffer from involuntary, repetitive movements which continue after the medication has been discontinued. We feature the most up-to-date information on TD, its causes and all known treatment options. The best treatment is prevention.

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### **West Michigan Inclusion Network (WIN)**

P.O. Box 889  
Ada, MI 49301  
(616) 889-3808  
[www.wmin.org](http://www.wmin.org)

The West Michigan Inclusion Network is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed by parents of students with disabilities to provide education and support to other parents, educators, and other interested people. The mission of WIN is to promote the effective inclusion of students with disabilities into general education classrooms with appropriate supports and services.

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### **Wrightslaw**

[www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)

Website contains information about legal advocacy for children with disabilities. For parents, educators, advocates and attorneys who want information about special education law, education law, and advocacy. Articles, cases and free resources on many related topics. Has free online newsletter--The Special Ed Advocate.

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## **KENT COUNTY SCHOOL INFORMATION**

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Kent Intermediate School District Directory:

[www.kentisd.org/downloads/about\\_kisd/09\\_10\\_directory.pdf](http://www.kentisd.org/downloads/about_kisd/09_10_directory.pdf)

Kent Intermediate School District (ISD) Plan for the Delivery of Special Education Programs and Services: [www.kentisd.org/downloads/sped\\_elibrary/isd\\_plan\\_june09\\_2nd.pdf](http://www.kentisd.org/downloads/sped_elibrary/isd_plan_june09_2nd.pdf)

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## CHILDCARE, AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND REFERRAL AGENCIES

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### **Kent Regional 4C**

233 East Fulton St Ste 107  
Grand Rapids Michigan 49503-3262  
Phone: (616) 451-8281 (800)-448-6995  
General Fax: (616) 451-8327 Admin Fax: (616) 451-3629  
Website: [www.4Cchildcare.org](http://www.4Cchildcare.org)  
Email: [info@4Cchildcare.org](mailto:info@4Cchildcare.org)

Helps parents find a licensed early care and education facility in an area close to their home or work.

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### **Teachable Moments Child Care**

(616) 454-6200  
E-mail: [teachablemoments@childcare.net](mailto:teachablemoments@childcare.net)

Our daycare is located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We use the Montessori learning approach. We specialize in special needs children and are willing to make adaptations whenever possible. We enjoy sharing each child's pride in developing new skills and in feeling good about themselves. Our goal is to help each child understand their self and others, gain self-discipline, and most of all, like the person he or she is becoming. We provide a dependable, secure, thoughtful learning environment for each child. We try our best to meet the developmental needs of the whole child, which is the mind, the body, and the spirit...to help each child reach his or her full potential, by meeting the needs for their growth, independence and self-esteem. TMCC uses all IEP's, MET's and Behavior Plans, our staff will work with the child's educational team.

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### **United Way's 2-1-1**

Updated yearly by Heart of West Michigan United Way, this website offers detailed program information on services, times, availability, locations, and cost. Offers a comprehensive list of services throughout the community related to health and human services, emergency needs, education, training and after school programs. [www.hwmuw.org/211.php](http://www.hwmuw.org/211.php)

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### **YouthNet**

Maintained by the City of Grand Rapids Office of Children, Youth & Families, YouthNet provides Geographical Information System (GIS)-based after school program information for Grand Rapids. You can search by neighborhood, program time, location or by clicking on the map to find programs in your area. Questions? Please contact Janay Brower at (616) 456.3102 or at [jbrower@grcity.us](mailto:jbrower@grcity.us).  
<http://maps.grand-rapids.mi.us/ynet/viewer.htm>

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## SUPPORT GROUPS

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### **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Support Group**

Email: [asdsuppgrpkentcounty@yahoo.com](mailto:asdsuppgrpkentcounty@yahoo.com)

The ASD Support Group meets twice monthly during the school year. One meeting per month is held in the evening and one meeting is held in the morning.

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## ART, CAMPS, RECREATION, SPORTS

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### **Aerials & Baranis Gymnastics Center**

Special needs gymnastics class.  
6001 Coit NE  
Grand Rapids, MI, 49525  
(616) 364-8320 or (616) 308-3300

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### **AYSO VIP (Very Important Player) Soccer**

Lynn Denzinger, VIP Coordinator  
Phone: (616) 531-2448  
Email: [volunteer767@lycos.com](mailto:volunteer767@lycos.com)

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### **Gymco Sports**

2306 Camelot Ridge Court SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
(616) 956-0586  
[www.gymco.com](http://www.gymco.com)

Gymco was established to provide gymnastic training in a positive, healthy environment. Over the 27 years of Gymco history, we have added multiple sport programs for children, adults, schools, and churches. Gymco has grown from our humble beginnings to a new 16,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility and has been recognized by numerous awards. We continue to add new and innovative programs that teach athletic skills and build confidence.

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### **Hearts for the Arts**

Shannon Harris, Owner/Instructor  
(616) 450-1922  
[www.hearts4theartsnet](http://www.hearts4theartsnet)  
Email: [hearts4thearts@live.com](mailto:hearts4thearts@live.com)

Hearts for the Arts is a venue in Grand Rapids that serves as an outlet for all people; young, old, disabled and non-disabled; to achieve creative expression through the arts. We strive to enrich the community with the diversity of art by holding bi-monthly exhibitions as well as by giving artists the opportunity to sell their work in the Hearts for the Arts gallery. We are currently accepting new members and group appointments - all ages are welcome. Contact Shannon Harris if you would like to schedule workshop hours or have questions about the program.

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### **Indian Trails Camp**

Tim Hileman, Executive Director  
O-1859 Lake Michigan Drive  
Grand Rapids, MI 49534  
Phone: (616) 677-5251  
Fax: (616) 677-2955  
Website: [www.indiantrailscomp.org](http://www.indiantrailscomp.org)  
Email: [info@indiantrailscomp.org](mailto:info@indiantrailscomp.org)

Indian Trails offers a barrier-free camp setting in which those with disabilities can participate in all manner of activities the outside world is ill-equipped to provide. It is a place filled with fun, recreation and friendship. Campers learn perseverance, team-work and self-reliance. ITC services students with ASD, Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy and Spina Bifida. ITC also provides respite opportunities during the fall, winter and spring seasons. Respite weekends offer similar programs to those in the summer but with a seasonal emphasis. In addition, ITC offers Holiday Camp over the New Year holiday. This weeklong program provides campers the opportunity to enjoy activities in great contrast to the summer sessions.

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### **Special Olympics Michigan - Area 11**

1239 76th Street SW, Suite E  
Byron Center, MI 49315  
(616) 583-1202 / (800) 644-6404  
Email: [area11.specialolympics@gmail.com](mailto:area11.specialolympics@gmail.com)

Our Mission...to provide year round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendships with their families, other Special Olympic athletes, and the community.

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### **TOPSoccer of Grand Rapids**

920 Cambridge SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
(616) 245-6973 / (616) 464-1000 ext. 19  
Email: [920wilson@comcast.net](mailto:920wilson@comcast.net)  
3701 32nd St. SE  
Kentwood MI 49512  
(616) 464-1000

Offers a soccer program, run by volunteers, for mentally and/or physically disabled kids ages 8 through 19. They practice once a week during the fall and spring seasons and periodically throughout the winter. Kids of all abilities play!

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### **VSA (Very Special Arts) of MI (GR)**

300 Ottawa Ave Suite 0200  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
Phone: (616) 885-5866  
[www.vsagr.org](http://www.vsagr.org)

VSA brings the arts and art projects to children, youth and adults with disabilities. We serve residents of Kent, Ottawa and Montcalm counties and offers programs in the visual arts, music, dance and drama.

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### **YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin**

Therapeutic Riding Horse Day Camp -- Special Needs Young Adult Weekends  
1095 N. Briggs Rd.  
Middleville, MI 49333  
Phone: (888) 909-2267  
[www.campmanitou-lin.org](http://www.campmanitou-lin.org)

Respite Weekends for Young Adults with Special Needs. Weekend activities can include hayrides, nature hikes, camp crafts, boating, and campfires.

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## **THERAPEUTIC SERVICES**

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### **A Closer Look**

7375 Thornapple Pines Dr. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
(616) 676-0144  
[www.acloserlookatkids.com](http://www.acloserlookatkids.com)

The professional services provided by our staff are extensive. We take a closer look at the child's needs and address any problems or delays which may prevent educational success. The Closer Look team will collaborate with parents and teachers to determine if a child needs special education services in the schools or if a home program can meet the needs.

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### **Autism Asperger Associates of Michigan**

Kristen Priem  
7027 10 Mile Rd NE  
Rockford, MI 49341  
( 616) 780-1358  
[www.autism-asperger-associates.com](http://www.autism-asperger-associates.com)

Social Skill Classes and Workshops. Offers social skills instruction for individuals with autism, Asperger Syndrome or related special needs. Includes outings in the community. Workshops for families offer practical strategies and materials on a variety of topics. In-home consultation for ABA programs and behavioral programs. Consultation for IEP's, transition and employment training. Summer programs available with community based instruction opportunities.

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### **Behavioral Resources and Institute for Neuropsychological Services (BRAINS)**

3351 Eagle Run Dr. NE Suite C  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
(616) 365-8920  
[www.brainspotential.com](http://www.brainspotential.com)

Our highly qualified and experienced psychologists and therapists provide expertise in a variety of areas, including specialization with children through adults. Our services are extensive, including neuropsychological and diagnostic assessments, counseling, behavioral interventions, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/language therapy, neurofeedback, Special Education consultation, and specialized tutoring. Educational seminars, therapeutic groups, and multidisciplinary summer classes are offered as well.

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**Center for Autism**

Hope Network Behavioral Health  
3361 36th Street SE  
Kentwood, MI 49512  
(616) 954-3540  
[www.hopenetwork.org/autism](http://www.hopenetwork.org/autism)

The Center for Autism provides comprehensive outpatient services to families struggling with autism across West Michigan. The Center focuses on treating autism spectrum disorders from a multi-disciplinary approach that includes psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, behavior analysts, speech and occupational therapists. Our highly specialized clinicians assess and treat autism and other neurodevelopmental disabilities, as well as learning disabilities, ADHD, and social/emotional disorders. By providing all of our services in one location, it reduces the stress of multiple locations for the individual and their family. In addition, all the specialists are in one location so we can work together to treat symptoms and behaviors to maximize the individual's potential. The Center was specifically built to incorporate unique design elements that will make a visit less stressful for the person with autism.

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**Center for Childhood Development (The)**

7086 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Jenison, MI 49428  
Phone: (616) 667-9551  
[www.thecenterforcd.com](http://www.thecenterforcd.com)

The Center for Childhood Development is a multi-disciplinary assessment and treatment center located in West Michigan. Our multi-disciplinary team of occupational therapists, speech therapists, and psychologists has extensive experience in working with children, birth through adolescence, and their families. By looking at the child's individual developmental profile, we work to assist the family in determining their child's optimal treatment plan. Through collaborative efforts with the child's family, school and community professionals, our goal is to maximize a child's adaptation/functioning within these environments.

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**Comprehensive Therapy Center, Inc.**

Jean Silbar, Executive Director  
2505 Ardmore SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
(616) 559-1054  
[www.therapycenter.org](http://www.therapycenter.org)

Comprehensive Therapy Center's mission is to meet the therapeutic and educational needs of adults and children with disabilities who are at-risk or disadvantaged, through skill building, academic enhancement and social emotional support. We help adults keep or increase their independence. We help children to walk, talk, learn and play. Since 1982, our summer program Therapy and Fun has served over 650 children with disabilities who need ongoing therapy. Therapy and Fun integrates speech-language, motor and sensory therapies to maximize progress for children with disabilities. Unique in West Michigan, our program offers children nine hours of intensive therapy per week, offers teen volunteers a meaningful learning experience and gives families support, encouragement, and respite.

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**Easter Seals of Michigan, Inc.**

West Michigan Therapy Center  
Ms. Denise Durkee, Director  
4065 Saladin Dr. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
(616) 942-2081  
[www.essmichigan.org](http://www.essmichigan.org)

Offers an eight week individual occupational therapy program for children 0-12 years of age and group sensory programs for children. Programs aim to increase children's self-confidence, communication, speech and language, focus, and gross and fine motor skills through a sensory integration-based approach. Also offers Sensory Summer Camps.

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**EnCourage Institute for Teaching and Learning**

Mary Rozendal, Ph.D.  
2845 Wilson Ave. SW, Suite D  
Grandville, MI 49418  
(616) 530-2224  
[www.encourageinstitute.com](http://www.encourageinstitute.com)

EnCourage Institute provides specialized interventions for learning needs. EnCourage Institute is a licensed agency for The P.L.A.Y. Project (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters). The PLAY Project is a home consultation early intervention program for children (ages 18 months-7 years) developed by Dr. Richard Solomon based on the Greenspan DIR/Floortime model. Parents learn to use play activities with their child on the ASD spectrum to provide intensive intervention needed for functional and social development. Other services include Music Play! classes (birth-age 5), consultation, advocacy, diagnostic evaluations for learning concerns and tutoring.

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**Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding**

3777 Rector Ave. NE  
Rockford, MI 49341  
(616) 866-3066  
[www.equestcenter.org](http://www.equestcenter.org)

Works to improve quality of life through equine-based therapy to physically, mentally, and socially/emotionally challenged individuals. Unique program integrates academic, social, and physical skills, using the horse as a catalyst. Individual riders, as well as groups of riders from schools, hospitals and group homes enjoy the benefits of Equest each week at its year-round, heated facility.

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**Franciscan Life Process Center**

11650 Downes Street  
Lowell, MI 49331  
(616) 897-7842  
[www.lifeprocesscenter.org](http://www.lifeprocesscenter.org)

The Franciscan Life Process Center, a religiously-oriented non-profit organization, is located on a 230 acre site thirteen miles east of Grand Rapids, Michigan. It is a non-residential facility which houses day, evening and weekend programs. The individual programs and types of services provided are: Counseling, Music Therapy, Music Education, Preschool, Art, Individual/Group Retreats and a Volunteer Program. A unique aspect of the Center is its location on a working Michigan farm. The orchard, nature trails, woods, and animals are sometimes integrated into different aspects of programming.

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### **Horizons Developmental Remediation Center**

Nicole Beurkens, Director  
3120 68th Street SE  
Caledonia, MI 49316  
(616) 698-0306  
[www.horizonsdrc.com](http://www.horizonsdrc.com)

Evaluation and treatment planning for children, adolescents, and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders and/or other Developmental Disabilities. Focus on developing balanced treatment plans and empowering parents to work with their children. Specific services include Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) Program, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Feeding Therapy, School Consultation, Family Consultation, Employment Training, and Summer CAMPS Program.

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### **Integrative Therapeutic Services, LLC**

5337 Burton Ct, SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
(616) 464-0724  
Email: [info@integrativetherapeuticservices.com](mailto:info@integrativetherapeuticservices.com)

ITS uses a holistic affect based sensory integrative approach incorporating Occupational, Speech, Physical and Vision Therapies, etc. to meet the needs of individual clients, families or small groups. Therapeutic Listening, SAMONAS, and Auditory Integration Training (AIT) available.

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### **Kent Special Riding Program**

9705 Morse Lake Road  
Alto, MI 49302  
(616) 891-0057  
[www.ksrp.org](http://www.ksrp.org)

Kent Special Riding Program is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing high quality therapeutic and recreational horseback riding instruction to physically, mentally, and emotionally challenged individuals in Kent and surrounding counties. KSRP strives to maximize the potential of all individuals involved in the program in a safe and stimulating environment.

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### **LifeLine Service Dogs**

2328 Dean Lake Avenue  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505  
(616) 363-1044  
[www.followtheball.org/lifeline.html](http://www.followtheball.org/lifeline.html)

We specifically work with unique needs including -- but not limited to -- allergies, fears of dogs, limited time constraint, older people who would normally be turned down by large organizations, children of all ages, and nervous system disorders limiting physical contact.

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**Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital**

235 Wealthy St. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 242-0300  
[www.maryfreebed.com](http://www.maryfreebed.com)

Pediatric Therapy Services. Provides services for children presenting multiple therapy needs in a one to one setting. May focus on motor, cognitive or perceptual skills based on need.

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**Parents' Partner, Inc. (The)**

Linda A. Kelley, MA, CCC-SLP  
4120 Chicago Dr. SW #6  
Grandville, MI 49418  
(616) 260-3013  
[www.theparentspartner.com](http://www.theparentspartner.com)

Serve the communicatively challenged child – assisting each in reaching his or her individual potential in speech, language, and related skills. Provides therapy for speech clarity (including feeding issues, oral motor, apraxia of speech), language development and stuttering. Occupational therapy services also available, including sensory integration work by Steve Prins. MS.

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**Paws with a Cause**

4646 Division Avenue South  
Wayland, MI 49348-9727  
(616) 877-7297  
[www.pawswithacause.org](http://www.pawswithacause.org)

Persons with autism use service dogs to help them focus and to help prevent them from dangerous behaviors -- such as running into the street. Service dogs of all kinds not only perform tasks that assist the owner, but also aide in social interaction. Paws With A Cause® trains Assistance Dogs nationally for people with disabilities and provides lifetime team support which encourages independence.

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**Sensory Learning Center of West Michigan**

Patricia Roslund, OD  
11301 Commerce Rd.  
Allendale, MI 49401  
(616) 895-9550  
[www.SensoryLearning-WestMichigan.com](http://www.SensoryLearning-WestMichigan.com)

The multi-sensory program uses light, motion, and sound to simultaneously stimulate the visual, vestibular, and auditory systems improving integration of sensory information. Every day, we receive inquiries whether an individual (diagnosed with Autism, Aspergers, PDD, Birth Trauma, OCD, ADD/ADHD, Bipolar, Stroke, Dyslexia, Traumatic Brain Injury, Vertigo, Depression, Dementia, unspecified diagnosis, etc.) can be helped with this Sensory Learning Program. At the Sensory Learning Center of West Michigan, we look beyond the labels and identify the underlying sensory dysfunctions that this program can address.

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### **Specialized Language Development (SLD) Center**

3056 Walker Ridge Drive NW Suite A  
Grand Rapids, MI 49544  
(616) 361-1182  
[www.sldcenter.org](http://www.sldcenter.org)

The SLD Center is committed to bringing the power of reading, writing, and spelling to all individuals with dyslexia or other unique learning styles, enabling them to achieve their full potential.

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### **Thresholds**

1225 Lake Drive SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
Phone: 616-235-6604  
[www.threshnet.org](http://www.threshnet.org)  
email: [main@threshnet.org](mailto:main@threshnet.org)

As a non-profit social service agency, we provide services to Kent County residents who have a developmental disability and to their families. Our mission is to enable **adults** with developmental disabilities to live as productively and independently as possible in the community. Thresholds' array of services includes supports coordination services, specialized residential supports and services, respite care supports, services to families, and screening, assessment, and referrals. A Contract Agency of network 180/A United Way Participating Agency/ Accredited by CARF

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### **Vision and Sensory Center**

4467 Byron Center Avenue SW  
Wyoming, MI 49519  
Phone: (616) 534-4953  
[www.vscenter.com](http://www.vscenter.com)

VSC provides Occupational Therapy, Vision Therapy and Speech-Language Therapy, including assessment and treatment in the Grand Rapids area for children as well as adults. VSC is dedicated to providing customized, individual treatment and specializes in a variety of complementary therapies in a professional and supportive environment.

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## **PSYCHIATRIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES**

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### **Behavior Health Partners, PLC**

PO Box 2947  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501  
(616) 363-2200  
[www.behaviorhealthpartners.com](http://www.behaviorhealthpartners.com)

Sheryl Rozema, PhD. and Christie Nutkins, PhD, licensed psychologists, have recently created Behavior Health Partners PLC which specializes in the assessment and treatment of behavior and learning challenges of childhood and adolescence. Serving youth with a wide range of developmental and behavior difficulties, their practice uses a collaborative model to provide services including academic accommodations, behavior plans, individual behavior therapy, parent education and training, school consultation and strategy development for children to learn new and more appropriate skills.

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**Clark Institute for Infants, Children, and Adolescents (The)**

Dr. Matthew Clark, Clinical Psychologist  
600 Broadway Ave NW  
Suite 435/C5  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504  
(616) 690-5437  
[www.theclarkinstitute.com](http://www.theclarkinstitute.com)

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**Developmental Enhancement, PLC**

7086 8th Ave  
Jenison, MI 49428  
(616) 667-9551  
[www.developmentalenhancement.com](http://www.developmentalenhancement.com)

Developmental Enhancement is a small group of clinical psychologists specializing in the assessment and treatment of autism and other developmental concerns. We are also partnered with the Center for Childhood Development, a group of Occupational Therapists and Speech-Language Pathologists.  
Contact: David Laman, Ph.D, [dlaman@developmentalenhancement.com](mailto:dlaman@developmentalenhancement.com)

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**Helen DeVos Children's Hospital  
Pediatric Psychology**

330 Barclay NE- Suit 203- MC 151  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
Phone: (616) 391-2957  
[www.devoschildrens.org](http://www.devoschildrens.org)

Families are encouraged to check their mental health benefits to determine coverage of services. If families need further assistance, we have Insurance Verification Specialists at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital.

**Located in the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital:****Stephen Albrecht, PhD, Limited Licensed Psychologist**

Special Interest: Treatment nonadherence; coping/adjustment to chronic medical conditions, behavioral pediatrics

**Michelle Mastin, PhD, Limited Licensed Psychologist**

Special Interest: Pediatric feeding disorders, internalizing disorders including anxiety and depression, developmental assessment.

**Dr. Steven. L. Pastyrnak, PhD, Director, Pediatric Psychology**

Special Interest: Infant & toddler development, ADHD, anxiety disorders, cognitive behavioral therapy, pediatric research

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**Dr. Mark Hinshaw, MD, Psychiatrist**

1000 Parchment Dr. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
(616) 957-9197

Diagnostics, prescription medication

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**Dr. Michael D. Ruch PhD**  
**Psychologist**

3300 Burton St. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
Phone: 616- 957-2576

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**Dr. James Van Haren**

Mazur, Mazur, Penning & Pommer  
833 Kenmoor Ave SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
(616) 956-5585

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**Dr. William (Bill) Walters, DO**  
**Psychiatrist**

1179 E. Paris Ave. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
(616) 454-2004

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**NEUROLOGISTS**

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**Madeline A. Chadehumbe, M.D.**

Pediatric Neurologist  
Helen DeVos Children's Hospital  
1300 Michigan Street NE Suite 102  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 391-2185

Special Interests - neuromuscular disorders, epilepsy, autism, pediatric stroke

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**Dr. Jason T. Umfleet, M.D.**

Pediatric Neurologist  
Helen DeVos Children's Hospital  
1300 Michigan St NE Ste 102  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 391-2185

Special interests – epilepsy, pediatric stroke

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## DEVELOPMENTAL-BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICIANS

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### **Dr. Wendy Burdo-Hartman**

Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics  
100 Michigan Street NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 643-9347

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### **Dr. Anthony J. Richtsmeier Behavioral Pediatrician Helen DeVos Children's Hospital**

330 Barclay Avenue NE  
Suite 203 MC 151  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 391-2242  
[www.devoschildrens.org](http://www.devoschildrens.org)

Special Interests: Autism Spectrum Disorder, noncompliance in preschoolers, ADHD Pediatric Developmental Behavioral Health, Pediatrics

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## PEDIATRICIANS

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### **Dr. Dana Leary- Pediatrician**

4444 Kalamazoo Avenue South East,  
Grand Rapids, MI 49508  
(616) 281-5800

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### **Dr. Erica Pott- Pediatrician**

3637 Clyde Park Sw  
Wyoming, MI 49509  
(616) 534-9881

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## DENTAL SERVICES

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### **Thomas J. Burdo D.D.S.**

1100 4 Mile Road NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49544-7397  
(616) 784-6377  
[www.burdodds.com](http://www.burdodds.com)

Working together with St. Mary's Hospital, Dr. Burdo and his staff provide exceptional care and extra attention for patients with special needs, both children and adults alike. Dr. Burdo is one of a few dentists in West Michigan with hospital privileges to serve special needs patients who, for a variety of reasons, cannot tolerate dental care in an office setting.

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**Gary A. Cook, DDS**

**Pediatric Dentistry**

2017 Eastcastle SE Suite A  
Grand Rapids, MI 49508  
(616) 455-4646

Special Interests -- Hospital dentistry (peds) only.

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**Amy K. DeYoung, DDS**

1750 Grand Ridge Court NE Suite 202  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525-7043  
(616) 447-7900

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**Jonathan Eagle, DDS**

2872 East Beltline NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
Phone: (616) 361-9330  
[www.eagledds.com](http://www.eagledds.com)

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**Richard J. Elias DDS**

535 Greenwood Ave. SE  
East Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
(616) 458-2048  
Cell and Emergency: (616) 502-4217

Dr. Elias provides dental services for persons with ASD in a clean and controlled environment. He believes that with time and patience, most ASD patients can be treated without the use of sedative or hypnotic medications. Dr. Elias is a parent of a child with autism and works very well with ASD patients.

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**Partners in Dental Care**

**Timothy H. Gietzen, DDS**

**Shawn M. Dial, DDS**

**Christine M. Mason, DDS**

**Matthew K. Gietzen, DDS**

2565 Forest Hill Ave. SE Suite 200  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546-7535  
(616) 949-0230  
[www.partnersindentalcare.com](http://www.partnersindentalcare.com)

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**Robert C. Payne, DDS**

**Pediatric Dentistry**

1179 East Paris SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
Phone: (616) 942-9840  
Fax: (616) 942-0170  
[www.pediatrictoothdoc.com](http://www.pediatrictoothdoc.com)

Specialist in Dentistry for Infants, Children, Teens, & Young Patients with Special Needs.

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**Aimee C. Valleau, DDS**  
**Christopher Vandeven, DDS**  
**Pediatric Dentistry**  
2000 43rd Street SE Suite B  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508  
Phone: (616) 455-1301  
Fax: (616) 455-6533

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## LEGAL SERVICES

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**Daniel Blauw - Attorney**  
1515 Michigan Street NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2031  
Phone: (616) 336-5098  
Email: [danblauw@iserv.net](mailto:danblauw@iserv.net)

Solo law practice with emphasis on disability law, including Special Needs Trusts, Guardianships, Public Benefit appeals, Special Education appeals, probate work, and Housing Development for persons with disabilities.

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**Thomas A. Geelhoed (Law Office of)**  
Social Security Disability Lawyer  
600 McKay Tower  
146 Monroe Center NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 454-0300  
Email: [tom@geelhoedlaw.com](mailto:tom@geelhoedlaw.com)

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**Howard PC**  
25 Ionia Ave. SW Suite 230  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-6415  
Phone: (616) 827-7028  
Toll-Free: (866) 719-9593  
Fax: (616) 235-6061  
[www.howardlawgr.com](http://www.howardlawgr.com)

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**Lauretta K. Murphy, Attorney**  
Miller Johnson  
Calder Plaza Building  
250 Monroe Avenue NW Suite 800  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2250  
(616) 831-1733  
[www.millerjohnson.com](http://www.millerjohnson.com)

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**C. Jill Smith-Goodell, PLLC**

2525 East Paris SE Suite 100  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
Phone: (616) 204-3316  
Fax: (866) 364-5151  
[www.smith-goodell.com](http://www.smith-goodell.com)

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**W. Michael Van Haren - Attorney  
Warner Norcross & Judd LLP**

900 Fifth Third Center  
111 Lyon Street NW  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503-2487  
Phone: (616) 752-2000  
Fax: (616) 752-2500  
[www.wnj.com](http://www.wnj.com)

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**Westerbeke Law Firm, PLLC**

2525 East Paris SE  
Suite 100  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
Phone: (616) 975-0153  
Fax: (616) 775-6444  
[www.michiganlegacyplan.com](http://www.michiganlegacyplan.com)

Offers assistance to clients who have special needs family members by creating Special Needs Estate Plans. These tailored plans help to preserve government benefits while having loved ones cared for in all areas of their lives: financial, educational, medical, emotional and personal.

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**Wolven and Coonen, PLLC**

8450 Algoma Avenue NE Suite D  
Rockford, MI 49341  
Phone: (616) 866-1531  
Fax: (616) 866-1548  
[www.wolvenandcoonen.com](http://www.wolvenandcoonen.com)

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**FINANCIAL SERVICES**

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**Paula Hampson, Financial Advisor**

Northwestern Mutual  
Office: 616-774-2031  
PO Box 295  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0295  
[www.paulahampson.nmfn.com/](http://www.paulahampson.nmfn.com/)

Planning for a dependent with special needs can be complicated. It is recommended that you work with a team of experts – including an attorney, a financial professional and a social service professional. As a key member to the special needs team, I provide solutions for families with special needs.

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**David Knooihuizen, MBA, CLTC**

Mass Mutual Financial Group  
3152 Peregrine Drive NE #110  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
(616) 447-6229  
[www.foursquarefinancial.com](http://www.foursquarefinancial.com)

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**GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

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**Family Hope Foundation**

Lara Kitts  
7086 8th Avenue  
Jenison, MI 49428  
(616) 780-3839  
[www.thefamilyhopefoundation.org](http://www.thefamilyhopefoundation.org)

Family Hope Foundation invests in children with special needs through family support, engaging community experts, advocacy through collaboration and financial assistance to provide access to therapies.

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**Miles for Special Smiles**

3272 Rosewood st  
Hudsonville Mi 49426  
616-371-1155  
[www.milesforspecialsmiles.com](http://www.milesforspecialsmiles.com)

Our goal is to empower local families in the acquisition of equipment or therapy by providing financial assistance to those who lack the resources needed to attain the medical services for their children. Children must qualify for special education services or have a diagnosed disability. Children must be under the Age of 21 and currently resided in Kent or Ottawa County, Michigan. Medical services must help the child advance. Parents are given a fundraising goal as part of our efforts. MfSS will expand the geographical area as we grow.

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**HOUSING INFORMATION AND SUPPORT**

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**Guardian Angel Homes**

1345 Monroe Ave. N.W., Ste. 334  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505  
(616) 458-7000  
[www.guardianangelhomes.org](http://www.guardianangelhomes.org)

Guardian Angel Homes is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing and supporting the lives of adults with developmental disabilities. Our mission is to “mobilize the community to create faith-based home environments that inspire, affirm and empower adults with developmental disabilities in their life choices.” We realize our vision by offering living and life building skills to adults with developmental disabilities by providing residences, programs and services that engage community inclusion and empowerment.

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## Homes for Autism

Anne Gerard, Executive Director  
248-588-2111  
[www.homesforautism.org](http://www.homesforautism.org)

Homes for Autism has provided seven residences that encourage and provide independent living to adults with autistic challenges - giving the freedom of independent living to our members and peace of mind to their families. We own homes in Wayne, Oakland, Livingston and Washtenaw counties. We also helped establish a home in Monroe County and an apartment in Oakland County. We're flexible. **We will build or buy a home anywhere in the state.** Through management of housing needs, we help those with autism to develop their talents so that they and their families can enjoy long-term security and care. Families who benefit from Homes For Autism's residential program become an important part of the Homes for Autism network. Families volunteer their time, support one another and, through Homes for Autism, they are informed of national, state and local issues regarding autism.

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## LIFE COACHING SERVICES

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### Laurel Falvo, Certified Family Life Educator

The Gray Center for Social Learning and Understanding  
100 Pine St. Ste. 121  
Zeeland, MI 49464  
(616) 748-6030  
[laurel@thegraycenter.org](mailto:laurel@thegraycenter.org)

Laurel provides Social Coaching and *Social Response Pyramid(TM)* coaching to assist parents, professionals, children, teens, and young adults in setting and achieving goals of increasing social effectiveness. Find out more at [www.thegraycenter.org/](http://www.thegraycenter.org/)

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### Kim Gleason, Life Coach

Coaching for Life Purpose  
(616) 364-7459  
[www.coachingforlifepurpose.com](http://www.coachingforlifepurpose.com)

As a life coach, workshop facilitator, and mother of three special-needs children, Kim Gleason partners with you to live out a life of purpose, to create the life you want, and to reach your goals. The areas of coaching she specializes in include working with parents of children with special needs, marriage and relationships, time management and organization, and life purpose. Just as you are your child's advocate, let Kim be your advocate! Contact her today for a complimentary coaching session to see how coaching may benefit you. "Coaching you to create the life that you want, on purpose, with purpose."

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## TOYS AND THERAPY PRODUCTS

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### **Discovery Toys**

Kathy Casey  
491 Johnson St SE  
Caledonia, MI 49316  
(616) 891-0111  
[www.discoverytoysinc.com](http://www.discoverytoysinc.com)

Discovery Toys has been helping parents to "Teach. Play. Inspire." with our high-quality educational toys, books, games and music for over three decades. The company was founded by an early childhood educator in 1978 and continues to grow from our passion for helping children through play. Today, we are the leader in learning toys for early childhood education as the foremost direct marketing company of its kind.

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### **OTvest, LLC**

(269) 329-3287  
[www.otvest.com](http://www.otvest.com)

Weighted vests are used as a means of applying deep pressure, which can be helpful in decreasing purposeless behaviors, hyperactivity and inattention (often seen in autistic and ADHD children and those with sensory processing difficulties). The deep pressure applied by the OTvest™ has a calming effect upon children that is comfortable to them, and provides an alternative or adjunct to medication.

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### **S.M.A.W.L. Steps Sensory**

Steve Utter  
P.O. Box 334  
Rockford, MI 49341  
(616) 334-9503  
Email: [smawlsteps@smawlsteps.com](mailto:smawlsteps@smawlsteps.com)

Children and their unique needs are the reason we began crafting sensory equipment. Some of our clients have very unique needs that cannot be met without a custom "fitting" of therapy equipment. We understand what it means to be entrusted with a child who has sensory needs. If your child's needs cannot be met by one of our standard products, we can and will design special equipment to help your child on his or her journey of small steps. Call or e-mail for an appointment.

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### **Therapy Shoppe Inc.**

P. O. Box 8875  
Grand Rapids, MI 49518  
(800) 261-5590 / (616) 696-7441  
Email: [thershoppe@aol.com](mailto:thershoppe@aol.com)

On our site you will find a wonderful assortment of therapy merchandise: specialty toys and games, hard-to-find favorites, innovative new products you haven't even heard of yet, and lots of other great goodies and gadgets. We're looking forward to serving you and to providing one of the most exciting and inclusive selections of therapy products anywhere. We are an Occupational Therapist-owned and operated company, celebrating our 15th year serving therapists, families, teachers and others.

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## GLUTEN FREE-CASEIN FREE FOODS

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### **Coco Charlotte**

Gluten Free Bakery  
2481 32nd Street SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49512  
(616) 957-3706  
[www.coco-charlotte.com](http://www.coco-charlotte.com)

We promise to produce the highest quality, all natural baked goods for those with certain allergies or alternative eating needs. We promise to use only natural ingredients, excluding all genetically modified products, refined sugars, trans fats and hydrogenated oils. We support and encourage our customers to buy local. We promise to support the Grand Rapids and Michigan economy by purchasing as many locally produced items as possible. We support the fair trade market and organic farming in our country and around the world.

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### **Harvest Health Foods**

[www.harvesthealthfoods.com](http://www.harvesthealthfoods.com)

Store Locations:

6807 Cascade Road SE  
Grand Rapids MI, 49546  
(616) 975-7555

1944 Eastern Ave SE  
Grand Rapids, MI  
(616) 245-6268

4150 - 32nd Ave.  
Hudsonville MI, 49426  
(616) 896-6630

Harvest Health Foods is here to provide you with the finest quality fresh, natural, organic and whole foods, nutritional products, body care products and health information in a fun comfortable clean, safe environment. Make us your doorway to total health.

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### **Saffrons**

4196 Plainfield Ave., Suite A  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
(616) 447-9902  
[www.saffronsglutenfree.com](http://www.saffronsglutenfree.com)

SAFFRONS is the only food store in western Michigan where 100% of its extensive inventory is gluten-free! And, with an inventory of more than 700 different gluten-free products, you can easily find your tried and true favorites, and perhaps add a few more, from among our new products -- arriving weekly.

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## LISTSERVS, MAILING LISTS AND ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

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<http://www.bridges4kids.org/>

<http://autism-michigan.tripod.com/>

<http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/Autism-Michigan/>

[http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/autism\\_in\\_michigan/](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/autism_in_michigan/)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SpecialEdLawMichigan/>