

THE VOICE



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Calendar:

Board Meetings

ASK Office—160 68th St. SW
Grand Rapids, 49548

6:30 p.m.

- January 9, 2023
- February 6, 2023
- March 6, 2023

Art Gala and Auction —2/23/23

Family Events

- Roller Skating and Pizza Party—2/5/23
- Easter Egg Hunt—3/25/23

Grand Rapids Civic Theatre Sensory Friendly Performances

- Elephant and Piggie—1/29/23
- Puffs—3/8/23

Social Groups for Teens and Young Adults

- Trip to Glow Golf—1/19/23
- Bowling and Pizza Party—2/12/23
- "Puffs" at GR Civic Theatre—3/8/23

Parent/Caregiver Support Groups

- 1/24/23
- 2/21/23 (Dr. Michael Wolff)
- 3/28/23 (Dr. Anthony Richtsmeier)

Walk for Autism—5/21/23



NEWS FROM ASK

Happy New Year! I hope that your holidays were restful and enjoyable.

We have BIG NEWS to share with you and I am so excited!

First of all, because we have so many talented and wonderful artists in our ASK family, we have decided to hold our first-ever **Art Gala and Auction** in February! This event will take place on Thursday, February 23, and will be so much fun with great food and cocktails, music by our very own musicians, a silent auction, and wonderful art to look at and purchase. Tickets are \$35 per person and includes food and a drink ticket. Dress is business casual. Stay tuned for information on ticket sales, but save the date. You won't want to miss this awesome event that supports the programs and services that ASK provides!

And in even BIGGER NEWS — ***our 2023 Walk for Autism is heading to LMCU Ball-park!***

We are thrilled to have this whole place to ourselves on Sunday, May 21, for fun, games, food, togetherness, and a wonderful celebration of our autism community. Because this event serves as our main fundraiser and pays for over half of all that we do, it's a very important event for us, so please save the date. We are rolling out some cool, new changes and additions to the event that we know you will love. It's going to be awesome! More information is coming soon!

2022 was a wonderful year for ASK. We saw growth of current programs, the launch of a few new programs, lots of old friends, and new participants coming from all over. We love witnessing the personal growth, increased confidence, and lots of happiness that people in our programs display.

As we grow and change and set goals for 2023, our mission remains: Acceptance. Support. Knowledge. Connection. Thank you for being a part of what we do!

Best wishes for healthy and happy 2023!

Pam Liggett
ASK Executive Director



ASK Announces 2022 — 2023 Board of Directors

ASK proud to announce its 2022–2023 Board of Directors.

Executive Board:

Richard Elias III, President
Doug Domine, Vice-President
Mary Kay Anderson, Treasurer
Jenny Shumard, Secretary

Directors:

Jennifer Amorose
Nancy Cool
Lynne Kindy
Judi Kuiper
Tasha Oltman
Renee Walter

TEEN & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL GROUP: TRIP TO Glow Golf!

Thursday, January 19, 2023
6:30—8:00 pm

Join us for fun, friendship, GLOW-IN-THE-DARK MINI GOLF AND ARCADE GAMES!

This event is open to anyone ages 12 and up. We ask that a guardian accompany each participant.

We will meet at: Great Lakes Glow Golf, 3494 Plainfield Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525.

Cost is \$12.75 each golfer, payable to Great Lakes Glow Golf. Please RSVP to Pam at PamLiggettASKC@gmail.com



TEEN & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL GROUP: Bowling & Pizza Party!

Sunday, February 12, 2023
4:00—6:00 pm
Spectrum Lanes*

Join us on Sunday, February 12, for pizza and bowling at Spectrum Lanes!

This event is open to anyone with autism ages 12 and up. We ask that a parent or guardian attend too. Many awesome individuals attend this group each month, and everyone is welcome! (Sorry - no siblings unless the sibling is acting as guardian.)

Like everything else, the cost of bowling has gone up. Cost is \$15 per person. Only participants pay to bowl. REGISTER BELOW:

<https://www.autismsupportofkentcounty.org/new-products/2-12-23-teen-young-adult-bowling-party>

*5656 Clyde Park Avenue Southwest,
Wyoming, MI 49509
Phone: (616) 530-2400

TEEN & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL GROUP: Trip to the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre to see "Puffs"

Wednesday, March 8, 2023
6:00—7:30 pm



ASK is proud to be a sponsor of this Low-Sensory Performance at the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre, so we thought we would bring the Social Group! More show information coming soon, so watch for emails and Facebook notifications.

This production is fun and is suitable for all ages! Ticket prices are discounted, capacity is reduced, and changes have been made to the script to make this performance comfortable for those with sensory sensitivities.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION COMING SOON!
(We will buy tickets and sit together as a group.)



SENSORY FRIENDLY
PERFORMANCE

ELEPHANT & PIGGIE

Grand Rapids Civic Theatre
Saturday, January 29, 2023
2:00 — 3:30 PM

Get ready for a hilarious musical experience, ripped from the pages of Mo Willems' beloved, award-winning, best-selling children's books! *Elephant and Piggie's We are in a Play* will leave audiences doing the "Flippy Floppy Floory" dance all night long!

ASK is proud to be a sponsor of this Low-Sensory Performance at the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. (Save the date for "Puffs" on March 8, 2023, too!)

This production is fun and is suitable for all ages! This event is open to anyone with autism and their family. Ticket prices are discounted, capacity is reduced, and changes have been made to the script to make this performance comfortable for those with sensory sensitivities.

For tickets, please call the GR Civic Theatre Box Office at 616-222-6650.



Low-Sensory Performance of "Puffs"
Grand Rapids Civic Theatre
Wednesday, March 8, 2023
6:00 — 7:30 PM

ASK is proud to be a sponsor of this Low-Sensory Performance at the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. (More show information coming soon.)

This production is fun and is suitable for all ages!

This event is open to anyone with autism and their family.

Ticket prices are discounted, capacity is reduced, and changes have been made to the script to make this performance comfortable for those with sensory sensitivities.

For tickets, please call the GR Civic Theatre Box Office at 616-222-6650.



Art Gala & Auction

SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED SPORTS & INCLUSION CENTER
160 68TH STREET SW
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49548

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT
AUTISM SUPPORT OF KENT COUNTY

ASK

FEBRUARY 23
6:00 - 9:00 PM

TICKETS: \$35

FOOD • COCKTAILS • MUSIC • ART AND SILENT AUCTION

Visit our website to view and/or
download the ASK Community
Resource Directory:
www.autismsupportofkentcounty.org





**United
Way**



**Heart of West Michigan
United Way**

Heart of West Michigan United Way investors can choose to designate all or part of their annual contributions to Autism Support of Kent County.

To designate your gift to ASK, use the United Way *Designation Form* and write: *Autism Support of Kent County, Grand Rapids, Michigan.* Thank you!

AUTISM SUPPORT OF KENT COUNTY

FEB 5

\$10 PER PERSON



SKATING & PIZZA PARTY

GRSKATE and Event Center in Byron Center
5:30 -- 7:30 PM

3651 84th Street SW, Byron Center, MI 49315
 Space is limited - pre-register on the website at
www.autismsupportofkentcounty.org/events

AUTISM SUPPORT OF KENT COUNTY

EASTER EGG HUNT

MARCH 25

10:00 TO 11:30 AM

JOIN US FOR DONUTS, BINGO, CRAFTS, AND A FUN AND RELAXED EGG HUNT!



MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION COMING SOON!

FULL SPECTRUM PLAYERS THEATER GROUP NEWS!

This group is open to anyone ages 12 and up. Everyone gets a part, and we encourage everyone to join us! It's so much fun and a great way to make friends.

Improv/Try-It Nights are Tuesdays, January 10, January 17, and January 24, from 6:30—8:00 pm.

Parts will be chosen and formal rehearsals will begin on Tuesday, January 31. Rehearsals take place on Tuesday evenings at the Special Olympics Center Auditorium every Tuesday from 6:30—8:00 pm.

Cost to participate in the Theater Group is \$25 and scholarships are available.

The Center is located at 160—68th Street SW, Grand Rapids. It's an old school building and is between US131 and Division Avenue. Park in the EAST lot and enter under the triangle roof. Someone will direct you from there.

*Please email me with any questions:
PamLiggettASKC@gmail.com*



Parent/Caregiver Support Group

Tuesday, January 24, 2023
7:00–8:30 pm

Please join us at the first Support Group of 2023.

Join other parents, families, caregivers, and professionals to network, share ideas, and get support for all things relating to having an autistic family member.

We will meet in our office at the new Special Olympics Center. The Center is located at 160 - 68th Street SW, Grand Rapids, between US131 and Division Avenue. Park in the EAST lot, enter under the triangle roof, and head down the main hallway to our office, room #4.

We do not offer childcare, as our insurance policy doesn't provide coverage for that, but you are welcome to bring children if they can avoid being too disruptive.

Please RSVP to Pam at
PamLiggett-ASKC@gmail.com



Parent/Caregiver Support Group

Dr. Michael Wolff

Tuesday, February 21, 2023
7:00–8:30 pm

Please join us for a wonderful and informative presentation by Dr. Michael Wolff from BRAINS.

Dr. Wolff is one of the most knowledgeable, well-respected, and kindest practitioners in West Michigan and will be happy to answer questions.

Join other parents, families, caregivers, and professionals to network, share ideas, and get support for all things relating to having an autistic family member.

We will meet in our office at the new Special Olympics Center. The Center is located at 160 - 68th Street SW, Grand Rapids, between US131 and Division Avenue. Park in the EAST lot, enter under the triangle roof, and head down the main hallway to our office, room #4.

We do not offer childcare, as our insurance policy doesn't provide coverage for that, but you are welcome to bring children if they can avoid being too disruptive. Please RSVP to Pam at
PamLiggettASKC@gmail.com



Parent/Caregiver Support Group **DR. ANTHONY RICHTSMEIER**

Tuesday, March 28, 2023
7:00–8:30 pm

To know Dr. Tony is to love him. As one of the founders of the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital's Autism Clinic, Dr. Tony knows as much about autism as anyone. He is happy to take questions, offer advice, problem-solve, and talk about the best things to do for your person with autism at each stage of life.

Join other parents, families, caregivers, and professionals to network, share ideas, and get support for all things relating to having an autistic family member.

We will meet in our office at the new Special Olympics Center. The Center is located at 160 – 68th

Street SW, Grand Rapids, between US131 and Division Avenue. Park in the EAST lot, enter under the triangle roof, and head down the main hallway to our office, room #4.

We do not offer childcare, as our insurance policy doesn't provide coverage for that, but you are welcome to bring children if they can avoid being too disruptive.

Please RSVP to Pam at:
PamLiggettASKC@gmail.com

FEEL FREE TO EMAIL QUESTIONS AHEAD OF TIME.



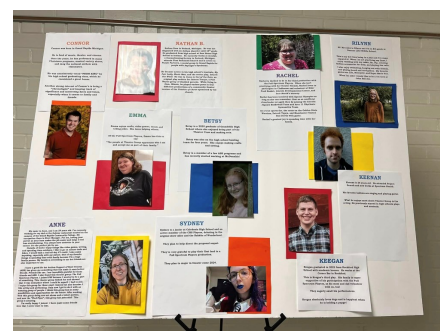
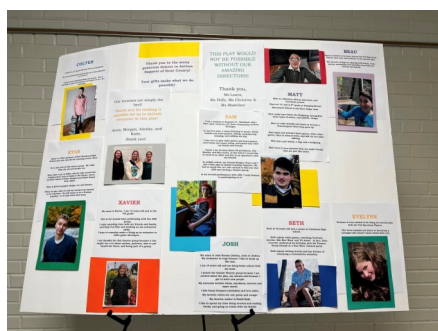
**WE ARE BURSTING WITH PRIDE!
THE CAST OF THE FULL SPECTRUM
PLAYERS WAS AMAZING! THEIR DECEMBER
2022 PERFORMANCES WERE TOP NOTCH!**

Thanks so much to Ms. Laura, our Director,
Ms. Christine, Ms. Madeline, and Ms. Holly, our
Assistant Directors, our wonderful mentors Katie,
Anna, and Morgan, and to Ms. Lynn and Ms. Brenda,
for their behind-the-scenes help.

STAY TUNED TO ASK EMAILS AND OUR FACEBOOK
PAGE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE WINTER 2023
SESSION OF THE THEATER GROUP!



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS
2022 THEATER GROUP SPONSORS



Conferences, Workshops, and Webinars

Michigan Alliance for Families On-Demand Free Webinar Series

A webinar is an online presentation you can attend without having to leave your home or office. It's an opportunity to hear an expert speak for about an hour on a topic that interests you. These webinars can be viewed at any time on the Michigan Alliance for Families YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MichiganAlliance/videos>

Online Learning Opportunities

<https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/upcoming-events/>

Autism Alliance of Michigan List of Virtual and In-Person Community Events:

<https://autismallianceofmichigan.org/events/>

22nd Annual START Conference

May 1, 2023 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center
219 S Harrison Rd, East Lansing, MI 48824
Focus: Inclusion

<https://www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter/start-conference-167.htm#registration>

(MAC) Annual Michigan Autism Conference

October 12–13, 2023
This conference is geared to parents, educators, mental health professionals, and practitioners working with individuals with autism.

<https://michiganautismconference.org/>



On November 29, ASK hosted a **Legal and Financial Planning Workshop for Individuals with Autism** with Attorney Sarah Kirkpatrick and Financial Advisor Kevin Gardenier. A video of the presentation is available on the ASK Facebook page. You can view it here:

<https://www.facebook.com/295631512467/videos/813874869844995>

COVID-19 POLICIES

- We ask all in attendance to self-screen before deciding to attend. Please do not attend if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or have recently been exposed to COVID.
- You will attend our events and programs at your own risk. All programs and services will be conducted in accordance with local restrictions and guidelines in effect at time of program.
- Please call Pam Liggett at 616-752-8577 with any questions or concerns.

Autism Support of Kent County (ASK) is on Facebook, so visit our page for updates on our programs and events. Don't forget to "like" our page to stay up to date on what's happening. Click [here](#) to visit us on Facebook.



SOCIAL GROUPS

We currently offer three **Social Group Programs**. Email Pam, ASK Executive Director, at PamLiggettASKC@gmail.com for more information on any of our groups. Pam can be reached by voice or text at 616-649-2665.

TEEN & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL GROUP

This group is run by Pam Liggett, ASK Executive Director. This group meets either monthly or twice each month for fun and friendship. It's open to anyone ages 12 and up.

Events are publicized on the EVENTS page, in our email blasts, and on Facebook. A guardian must accompany each individual to the events.

YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL GROUP-PUZZLE PARTNERS

This is a closed group that is ONLY for individuals with Level I autism and social challenges. Individuals must be at least age 18 to participate.

This group is run by Jennie Miller, ASK Social Programs Manager. Contact Jennie at PuzzlePartnersYA@gmail.com. This group meets 3 times each month for fun, friendship and support. To participate in this group, you must be verbal and able to communicate back and forth 3-4 times, be free from behaviors, and would be able to attend on your own.

To be eligible to join, you must have a short phone call with the Group Leader, Jennie. Events are only publicized by an email from Jennie.

AUTISTIC ADULT MEET UP GROUP

This is a closed group that is ONLY for individuals with Level I autism and social challenges. This is a group for anyone with diagnosed or suspected autism who is over age 30.

This group is run by Ann Mary Dykstra, longtime ASK volunteer and group leader. Contact Ann Mary at PuzzlePartners@gmail.com.

To be eligible to join, you must have a short phone call with the Group Leader, Ann Mary. This group meets monthly for fun, friendship and support.

Events are publicized through emails from Ann Mary only.

ELEMENTARY AGE SOCIAL GROUP

Coming soon! Stay tuned. We are working hard to make this happen!



Are you an adult with autism over age 30, or do you know someone who fits that description?

If so, join us for support, resource-sharing, understanding, and friendship.

If you are interested, please contact Pam: PamLiggettASKC@gmail.com or by phone/text to 616-822-0944.

Are you interested in a Social Group for Elementary-Age Kiddos?

We are gathering interest regarding the start of a Social Group for kids with autism who are in elementary school. Dates and times TBD.

If you are interested, please contact Pam: PamLiggettASKC@gmail.com or by phone/text to 616-822-0944.



CLUBHOUSE SOCIAL PROGRAM

Halloween Party
Hearts for the Arts Studio
"This Ability" Art Market
Holiday Party



Remember ASK in Your Estate Plan

We often receive gifts in memory of an individual who has been touched by autism. Thank you to these special families who think of ASK at such a sad time.

Please remember ASK in your estate plans, too. These gifts are treated with the utmost care and respect. Contact us for more information on how you can include ASK in your charitable giving plans at 616-752-8577.

Thanks to these organizations for donating to us this year! We are so thankful for your partnership, which allows us to continue the work we do!

The wonderful people at the JW Marriott Grand Rapids are always thinking of us, and we so greatly appreciate it! We were the charity recipient for the Halloween event and are thrilled to accept this big check. Special thanks to Andre, Becky, and TJ for making the event such a success!



We are so grateful to Pucks for Autism for the BIG check that will go towards our social programs! Thank you Shawn, Walker, and Henry! We appreciate your support!

Mr. Mike McArdle puts on a beautiful holiday light show display in Comstock Park that is FREE to visit — but all donations go to ASK! The show is located near 4 Mile Rd and West River Drive (311 Dana St NW, Comstock Park). Thanks so much Mr. Mike for your generosity!!



Thanks so much to Jason Douglas of Gallagher Insurance/Risk Management/Consulting for facilitating an \$800+ donation to ASK from its October Employee Giving Program!

The employees at the Lowell Meijer voted for us to receive funds from the Meijer Gives program! We are overjoyed and so grateful! Thank you, Meijer!





TEEN/YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL GROUP

Halloween Party
Holiday Party



Autism Support of Kent County (ASK) in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization of parents, school staff, and others who actively seek to support and advocate for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families.

ASK is committed to partnering with local schools and agencies to promote the welfare of individuals with ASD in our community.

Please note that ASK does not endorse any specific therapy, product, treatment, strategy, opinion, service, or individual.

Disclaimers

Articles, conferences, workshops, presenters or information contained in this newsletter or at meetings are not endorsed by Autism Support of Kent County.

Articles occasionally offer information about medical/pharmacological research, treatment and therapies or legal issues. This information is given for informational purposes and is not intended to act as a substitute for professional advice. Readers are encouraged to consult with their own practitioners for individual or specific advice.

**ASK Autism Support
of Kent County**





Our Family Holiday Party is always so much fun! Thanks to all of the wonderful families who came out, to the many sweet and kind volunteers who helped out — and to jolly Santa himself! The ASK Board Members showed up in full force too, so thanks to all of them!





In addition to the generous sponsors of our **Walk for Autism, Golf Outing, and Theater Group**, many loyal supporters give to us each and every year. Thank you for your gifts in 2022 which allow us to continue the important work that we do!

Richard and Rose Admiral In Memory of
Robert Hoffman
American Legion Post - Comstock Park
AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary
Amway
Mary Kay Anderson
Bill Anderson
Anderson Corporation
Larry and Celia Andrus
Brianna Armour
Arthur J. Gallagher Foundation/
Gallagher Employees
Sharon Attar
Dan and Marne Baker
Elyse Bradford
BRAINS Foundation
Amber Campbell
Choice One Bank
Patrick Clay
Toni Clay
Eli Colyn
Lisa Colyn
Joanne Colyn
Jock Crane
Lindsey Dabrowski
Martha Damstra
Dennis Darmody
Dale Day
Maggie DeBoer
Marianne Diachenko
Brent Domine
Doug Domine
Robert Easley
Dr. Richard and Amy Elias
Sam Elias
Russell Elias
Dick and Joan Elias
Gerard Farage
Laura Finelli
Dan and Sandi Folkertsma
Dan Fornatto
Michael Garbaty
Kevin Gardenier
Brian and Lisa Gardner
Nickolas Georgiopoulos
Michael Golczynski
Dianne Golczynski
Ryan Golczynski
Tim Gray
Gun Lake Casino
Laura Hall
Steven Hall
Scott and Madeline Hamlin
Hearts for the Arts

Shelly Herrera
Dana Hiemstra
Randall Hoekstra
Wendy Honey
House of Wine
Criag and Mary Hunt In Memory of Holli
Dever
Roberta Jacobson
Richard Jones
JW Marriott
David Kagan
Nicky Kearney
George Kerr
Lynne Kindy
Julianne Klumpp
Steve Koskuc
Mary Krell
Kurt Kruse
Tom Lantz
Michael Ley
Jeff and Pam Liggett
Magna Corporation
Arianne Mankey
Lawrence Marcotte
Masco Corporation
Marnie Masterson
Marjorie May
Michael McArdle
Katie McCormick
Jacob and Jennie Miller
Mitten Brewing
Vicky Monterusso
Kimberly Olson
Orchard View Elementary - Forest Hills
Larry Peters
Bruce and Becky Pienton
Cindy Pitcher
Laurel Pope
Susan Potter
William Prue
Dr. Anthony and Jane Richtsmeier
Micaela Richtsmeier
Bryan Ritch - In Honor of Patrick Stanley
Bell
Sara Robinson
Nancy Roth
Alicia Ruiz
Anthony Russell
Rachael Schwartz
Mary Shapton
Justin Shounia
Jim Siegel
Linda K. Siler
Mitch and Belinda Stapley

Judy Stine
Kevin Swanson
Total Quality Logistics
Ryan Tubbs
Sarah Tyler
Renee Veltema
Peter VerLee
Phillip VerLee
Thomas VerLee
Jayne VerLee
Kerrie VerLee
Charles Vidro
Renee Walter
Michael Warners
Jamie Wiley
Tom Williams
Brent Willman
Grant Wilson
Lindsey Wilson
Witte Family/Lisa's Quality Rags
Anna Worbois
Susie Yoon
Bruce Young
Macoy Zukowski



When you shop at **AmazonSmile** and designate Autism Support of Kent County as your charity, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to ASK. For more information, and to add ASK as your charity of choice, visit:
<http://smile.amazon.com>
Thank you and happy shopping!

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS 2022 WALK FOR AUTISM SPONSORS

Event Sponsor



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



Sign and Resource Fair Sponsors



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS 2022 GOLF FOR AWARENESS SPONSORS

Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Beverage Cart Sponsor



Meal Sponsor



Hole-in-One Sponsor



Bronze Sponsors



Tee Sign Sponsors



ASK AUTISM SUPPORT OF KENT COUNTY 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Our Services

WE REMAIN THE MOST ACTIVE AUTISM ORGANIZATION IN THE STATE! Our focus is on making life better and more productive for people with autism by sharing resources, being here for families, offering social programs, providing opportunities for connection, and by giving people with autism the chance to grow, learn, make friends, and become the best they can be.

2022 WAS FILLED WITH SO MUCH TIME TOGETHER!

- 47 Clubhouse Gatherings
- 30 Young Adult Level 1 Group Events
- 18 Teen and Young Adult Social Group Events
- 12 Family Events
- 10 Support Groups
- 5 Hiking Group Outings
- 4 Gatherings of the New Autistic Adult Meetup Group
- 4 Performances of the Full Spectrum Players Theater Group
- 1 Sensory Friendly Performance at the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre

WE DID SOME OTHER GREAT STUFF TOO!

We held a Walk for Autism with over 600 attendees

We had the 14th Annual Golf for Awareness Event with a full flight of golfers.

We held the 2nd Ride for Autism with bikers riding between 25 and 100 miles.

We collaborated with many other nonprofits who serve people with special needs.

We offered resources and a listening ear to over 450 people via calls, texts, and emails.

We participated in an inclusion design workshop with Steelcase.

We held informational workshops for parents and caregivers:

- * Speech Therapy Options
- * Safety Presentation by the Kent County Sheriff's Department
- * Legal and Financial Planning

AWARENESS. SUPPORT. KNOWLEDGE. CONNECTION.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT THE WORK THAT WE ARE DOING:

FROM A PARENT: "The friends my son has made at Clubhouse has given him a kind of confidence he needed to begin to express himself. He has been opening up to me so much more as well, such a joy to see. I can't thank you enough for inviting him into this group. It gives him a safe place to learn, connect, and blossom. He hasn't had any friends since 8th grade, so this just made my whole year!!!!"

FROM A GRANDPARENT: "Most individuals on the autism spectrum struggle socially. They tend toward isolation and seem lost in their own little worlds. Our grandson is no exception. We are extremely grateful for the opportunities and events that ASK has made available to him. He participates willingly in social events and has even formed a few friendships; something that has proven difficult for him over the years. The ASK Theater Group in particular has been a godsend. We have seen him come out of his shell and perform (in public) with great enthusiasm. ASK has become one of the charities we regularly support and would encourage any additional support that can be made available."

FROM A YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT: "Puzzle Partners young adult group has been very important to my social life and well-being. I have had the opportunity to have new experiences and make new friends. The positive impact Puzzle Partners has made on my life is incredible, and I am lucky to be a part of it."

FROM A PARENT: "ASK leadership, staff, and volunteers continually strive to improve and expand inclusive programs. Their heart for our special community is immeasurable, their work is excellent and we could not be more appreciative."

FROM A YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT: "ASK has given me a tremendous sense of belonging, thanks to the meetings and events I have had the privilege of attending. Since I became a member, I've become so accepting of how my autism is a part of me, no matter how much society has told me to suppress it."

FROM A YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT: "I have a good life but Autism Support of Kent County has given me something that has made it even better. Friends. Friends like me. I am incredibly grateful for these friends and ASK."

FROM A YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT: "The people at Theater Group appreciate me as I am and accept me as part of their family."

FROM A YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT: "ASK is my second home. I am loved and listened to and my identity is respected. I am thinking of trying to get a job and a driver's license now, too."

FROM A YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT: "People listen to you at ASK and care about the things you care about. We have fun here, and I have friends for the first time."