

THE VOICE



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Calendar:

Board Meetings

ASK Office—2505 Ardmore SE
Grand Rapids, 49506

6:30 p.m., Public welcome.

- November 11, 2019*
*offsite
- January 6, 2020
- February 3, 2020
- March 2, 2020
- April 13, 2020
- May 4, 2020
- June 1, 2020

Events:

Parent Support Group

- November 12, 2019

Pool Party at Indian Trails

- November 17, 2019

Connor's Friends at GRMC

- November 20, 2019

ASK Holiday Party

- December 9, 2019

Walk for Autism

- May 3, 2020

Golf Classic

- July 31, 2020



NEWS FROM ASK

Thanks to all of you who have attended our family events, the special performance of "Frozen Junior", and our Support Groups. It's been great to see you! Please join us at our annual Holiday Party. Dinner is provided, and it is fun for all ages. We would love to celebrate the holiday season with you, our autism family.

I recently had the privilege of meeting with some practitioners at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. As you may know, a couple of years ago we were part of a large fundraising campaign that raised over \$200,000 to pay for the first year of additional staff in the Autism Assessment Center at the Children's Hospital. Since that campaign, the number of patients seen in that autism clinic has grown from 200 annually to over 600! We are very proud to continue to be part of the important work being done at one of the most highly-respected Children's Hospitals in the Midwest.

The addition of staff members has dramatically reduced the wait time for a diagnosis appointment and allowed for better, more frequent, and more comprehensive communication for patients as well. Given that the majority of patients being seen are 3-5 years old, this early intervention is making a big difference for many families. The clinic is also seeing an increase in service of patients from outlying areas, so previously undiagnosed teens are being

seen, assessed, and hope is given to those families as a result.

The relationship between Autism Assessment Center staff and geneticists at Spectrum Health is growing as well. The geneticists at Spectrum Health see about 1500 patients per year, many of whom have autism. Getting a genetic diagnosis for autism can be helpful, Dr. Caleb Bupp explained, because it gives comfort that families are doing the right thing for their child. It can also result in earlier intervention for hard to diagnose people and it can serve as comfort knowing a bit of the "why". Given that over 50% of cases of autism are explained by genetics, it's important for families to have the opportunity to explore genetics when they seek treatment for their child with autism. Adding genetic counseling to the already wide range of services the clinic offers makes it possible for the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Autism Assessment Center to continue to serve autism families very well. We are thankful to you, our donors, for allowing us to be part of this great organization.

As we enter the holiday season, we are especially thankful for you, the families we serve, for our Board Members who make it possible, for our donors and sponsors and walkers and golfers, and for the many people who work tirelessly and constantly behind the scenes to help make life better and more productive for the awesome people with autism in our lives.

We exist solely on donations from generous supporters like you, so please remember ASK in your giving this season!

Pam Liggett
ASK Executive Director

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

Our Support Group Meetings are open to everyone. Please join us — no reservation necessary!

Unless otherwise stated, all Support Group Meetings are held at 7:00 pm at the new ASK Office at 2505 Ardmore Street SE, Grand Rapids, 49506 (lower level).

Tuesday, November 12

Speaker: Dr. Michael Wolff from BRAINS

Topic: *The Top 10 Best Things You Can Do for Your Child With Autism*
(see the flyer on page 6)

Contact Pam at (616) 752-8577 for questions or more information.



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!

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.

Visit our website to view and/or download the ASK Community Resource Directory:

www.autismsupportofkentcounty.org



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!



Indian Trails Camp/IKUS Life Enrichment Services
Sunday, November 17, 2019
2:00 — 4:00 p.m.

- * Snacks Provided!
- * Registration limited to 35. Siblings and friends are welcome.
- * Register on the website:
www.autismsupportofkentcounty.org (click on “Events”)
- * Please specify number of swimmers.
- * Lifeguard on duty!



indian
trails
camp

O-1859 Lake Michigan Dr. NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49534
Phone: (616) 677-5251
info@ikuslife.org



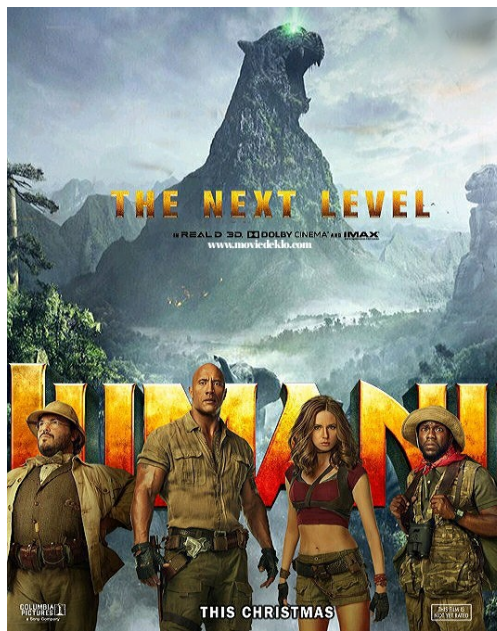
Sponsored by Autism Support of Kent County



Enjoy the BIG SCREEN experience in an accepting environment! Developed in partnership with Family Hope Foundation, Sensory Showtimes make movies extra welcoming to guests with special needs, including autism. So come relax, be yourself, and enjoy a movie at Celebration! Cinema! Lights will dim, but remain on • Volume will be lowered • Movies begin at show time with limited previews • Shown in 2D with open captioning • Cheering, calling out, or even strolling around the theatre is welcome!



Frozen 2
November 30



Jumanji: The Next Level
December 21

10:30 a.m. showing with regular matinee pricing.

Check the website for a theatre near you at

<https://celebrationcinema.com/events/sensory-showtimes/>

HAPPY
HOLIDAYS



Presents

CONNOR'S FRIENDS

A special night for children and
families affected by autism.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2019

FREE EVENT | STARTS AT 6:00 PM | FREE VALET PARKING

Space is limited and reservations are required.

Registration information coming soon!

Visit grcm.org for more information.

22 SHELDON AVENUE NE, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

Conferences, Workshops, and Webinars

Parenting Workshop

November 8, 2019 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Family Tree Therapies

2251 East Paris Ave. SE., Grand Rapids, MI 49546

In this class we will discuss how to set limits, foster cooperation, communicate clearly, handle big emotions, and understand our own triggers and challenges as adults! Call the front office to sign up at 447-7799.

<http://familytreetherapies.com/>

2020 Michigan CEC Conference

March 4–6, 2020

Grand Rapids, MI

Michigan CEC is celebrating our 80th annual conference by presenting national speakers, over 120 breakout sessions, 40+ exhibitors and unique networking opportunities. Mark your calendar! Registration will be opening soon!

<http://www.michigancec.org/home>

Autism One Conference

May 20–24, 2020

Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel

Rosemont, IL 60018

Attend specialized lecture tracks designed to cover the newest information on subjects ranging from support for parents facing a new diagnosis to the education of medical professionals on the latest research and treatments. Register: <https://autismone.ticketspice.com/autismone-2020-conference>

Michigan Alliance for Families On Demand 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 free webinars can be viewed anytime on the Michigan Alliance for Families YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/MichiganAlliance/videos>

Autism Support of Kent County presents

The Top 10 Best Things You Can Do for Your Child With Autism

Tuesday, November 12, 2019

7:00 p.m.

ASK Office

2505 Ardmore SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49506



Presenter:

Michael Wolff, PSYD, ABPDN
Neuropsychologist/Co-Owner
BRAINS

For more information, call
ASK at (616) 752-8577



Autism Support of Kent County P. O. Box 150348 Grand Rapids, MI, 49515 www.autismsupportofkentcounty.org

Please join us on Tuesday, November 12 for this inspirational presentation from Dr. Michael Wolff of BRAINS!

Here is Dr. Wolff's bio from the BRAINS website:

Dr. Wolff completed his doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology, progressing thereafter through pre and post-doctoral training to specialize in Clinical Neuropsychology. Dr. Wolff has completed specialization in Pediatric Neuropsychology. He enjoys working with children and families experiencing medical complications and a variety of other factors that may influence their ability to reach their potential. Dr. Wolff has been faculty at Grand Valley State University, Calvin College, and Azusa Pacific University. He has awards for his contributions to the field of psychology and has a history of committee participation through the National Academy of Neuropsychology, the American Psychological Association as a graduate student, and is a Professional Advisor for the Epilepsy Association of Michigan.



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

FAMILY HOPE AUTISM SPECTRUM FREE MONTHLY EVENTS

YMCA Family Hope Program SPARTANNASH YMCA

Free and Open to the Public! This program is for parents and young adults (ages 17 and older) who experience challenges related to Autism Spectrum Disorder or other social impairments. Classes meet once a month and parent participation is required.

EVENT DATES	TIME	ACTIVITY
SATURDAY, OCT 12	11:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Fall Festival at Wolverine YMCA
SUNDAY, NOV 10	1:30 – 2:30 PM 2:30 – 3:30 PM	Zumba at SpartanNash YMCA Pizza and games
FRIDAY, DEC 13	6:30 – 8:30 PM	Holiday party at Spartan Y Cookie decorating/swimming

SPARTANNASH YMCA
5722 Metro Way, Wyoming, MI 49519
616.885.5500 • grymca.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO RSVP
Email cgage@grymca.org or call 616.885.5500.

ASK HOLIDAY PARTY

DECEMBER 9TH

6:00 PM



E. GRAND RAPIDS
MIDDLE SCHOOL
2425 LAKE DRIVE SE

COST: \$5.00/FAMILY

FOOD FROM YESTERDOG, DESSERT, CRAFTS, MUSIC,
AND A VISIT FROM SANTA!

Join us at our annual Holiday Party! Bring your
camera for lots of photos! RSVPS ARE REQUIRED!

Register and pay on the ASK website at
www.autismsupportofkentcounty/events

PEOPLE WITH AUTISM DOING AWESOME THINGS!



Pictured from left to right: panel members Sarah Frisch, Rebecca Flannagan, Cori VanderSluis, and Nathan Brause and *Puzzle Partners* Young Adult Leader Ann Mary Dykstra

On October 22, first and second-year med students of MSU hosted a panel discussion by members of ***Puzzle Partners***. Their goal was to learn how to better serve the autism community in the area of medical health. Sarah Frisch gave a short talk about ASD to introduce the topic, since some of the med students had no knowledge of ASD at all. The panel members had the questions ahead of time and had indicated which ones they would be willing to speak to. Some of the questions were suggested by the med students. It was a wonderful, free-flowing discussion and well received!



Puzzle Partners
Young Adult Group
Halloween Party
October 31, 2019



Thank you Mitten Brewing Company!

Once again, ASK was fortunate to be chosen as a Charity of the Month by the Mitten Foundation of The Mitten Brewing Company. Not only did we receive funds from the sales over the month of October, but we got 50% of food sales from every meal on October 28! ***This generous commitment to us resulted in ASK receiving a check for \$3,289.00!***

This donation will help fund music therapy in ASD classrooms, aid to disadvantaged students, workshops, holiday events, and more!

Thank you, Mitten Brewing Company, for all you do for us! It is truly appreciated!



What started out as a typical football Saturday at **Putt Putt's Bar** turned into much more! When two diehard fans of University of Michigan and Notre Dame got together at Putt Putt's, craziness ensued. Quickly the game turned into an amazing and special surprise for Autism Support of Kent County – from friendly jabs back and forth, to talk of the winner shaving his head, to 1,500 in donations! Two fans decided that they would both get special haircuts, no matter who won, because other patrons donated \$1,500 for them to do so! Susie Fischer Dennis' family owns Putt Putt's and Susie is an ASK Board Member, mom to adorable Charlie – who has autism – and a great advocate for autism awareness.

Thanks to Tyler Maslowski, Ryan Sandford, Rob Desrochers, Charlie Fischer, and stylist Jessica Alicki from Studio Bliss for donating her time and talent!

We are beyond grateful for these fun-loving and well-groomed friends of not only the Putt Putt family, but of ASK as well. Thank you all!



AUTISM SUPPORT OF KENT COUNTY

P. O. BOX 150348
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49515

Phone: (616) 752-8577
autismsupportofkentcounty.org
Email: info@autismsupportofkentcounty.org

Do you **facebook** ?

To find our Facebook page, simply type **Autism Support of Kent County** in the “Search” bar located in the upper left corner. Click on “like” to join our page and receive updates. *Be sure to tell your friends and family!*

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.



**Autism Support
of Kent County**

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 Autism Support of Kent County does not endorse any specific therapy, product, treatment, strategy, opinions, service, or individual.