About us

Mission: The Autism Society of Maine provides education and resources to support the valued lives of individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.

The Autism Society of Maine is a non-profit organization founded in 1976, whose membership consists of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), their families, members of the community, and the professionals who work with them. As an affiliate of the Autism Society, our mission is to promote lifelong access and opportunity for all individuals on the autism spectrum to become participating members of their communities. Education, advocacy, support and public awareness form the cornerstones of the Autism Society of Maine’s efforts to carry forth our mission.

Strategic Plan

1) Increase lifespan programs and services that advance an individual’s and their family’s quality of life.
   - develop webinars — update, finished 4 mini videos around legislation
   - formalize training manual — friend for life — update, finished 6 modules with another 3 in the works. Working on a power point for the modules.
   - develop mentor opportunities

2) Effectively advocate and increase awareness at local, state and national levels to improve services, and strengthen protections.
   - Provide trainings and opportunities regarding advocacy
   - Develop targeted PSA to help educate the public and Legislators
   - Informing membership around public policy voting record and positions

3) Expand education and training opportunities for professionals, employers, families, and individuals.
   - Identify various groups to educate about ASM — update, ASM has provided 4 workshop to Sweetser and it’s employees. Work with a lend student through CCIDS.
   - Identify a corporate champion who can help advance the successful employability of adults with autism

4) Improve information and referral services while expanding outreach efforts.
   - Continual assessment of where individuals gain meaningful information — update, end of October 2019 board will be reviewing surveys from membership
   - Assure that ASM information is in line with 4.a
   - Annual needs assessment for targeted ASM stakeholders — update, assessment/survey being distributed to membership in early October via survey monkey

5) Increase organizational capacity by ensuring solvent financial resources and the right mix of qualified staff and board members to maximize efficiency and effectiveness
   - Evaluate capacity of current staff and board to address strategic plan objectives
   - Identify financial resources needed for plan implementation Update, revitalized the Fundraising committee with a marketing person.

Work gives you meaning and purpose and life is empty without it.
Stephen Hawking
2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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** Indicates incoming new board member

A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.
John C. Maxwell

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Office Assistant

Tena Hinds
Coordinator Autism Information Specialist Program

Consultant
Betsy Mahoney
Community Outreach Liaison

2018 Annual Meeting

Staff members
Information and Referral
July 1, 2018 thru June 30, 2019

ASM provides outreach, information, and referral connecting Maine families to services in their local area.

Calls responded to: 1,283 (see map for area of call intakes)

Emails responded to: 7,513

Walk in: 200

When your values are clear to you, making decisions becomes easier.
Roy E. Disney

Material Disseminated

ASM brochure: 1,319
AIS brochure: 716
ASD brochure: 795
Children’s brochure: 735
Law Enforcement brochure: 394
Autism Awareness Ribbons: 1,800

42 Out of State calls
Autism Family Retreat Weekend

The Autism Family Retreat Weekend, held in July, is for parents, grandparents, children, and any family member wanting to meet and learn from other families. The retreat is held at St. Joseph’s College in Standish with over 110 in attendance. Families stay in dorm room for a two-night stay with 5 meals provided. Respite is provided for the children with ASD, adults with ASD, and typically developing children. The children are entertained with swimming, rock climbing, arts and crafts and activities in the gym. Parents can attend workshops or just relax and meet other parents. Entertainment is provided on Saturday night for all to enjoy.

19 families in attendance for the retreat
26 children and adults with autism
7 Siblings
15 respite workers provided care
3 staff and one big U—Haul truck……

There needs to be a lot more emphasis on what a child can do instead of what they cannot do.
Temple Grandin

Total numbers for the AIS program

Hours of service by a AIS for the year: 469
Total participants who attended workshops or presentations: 3,986
Workshops or presentations provided: 27
Informational tables at conferences: 32
One on one meetings with parents: 49
Attendance at IEP’s: 36
Support around Law Enforcement or court cases: 7
Fall Conference by ASM attendance 170
Adult Social Group meets monthly along with a teen social group. Each month the group averages around 8 in attendance per group.

Autism Information Specialist

Autism Information Specialists (AIS) contract with the Autism Society of Maine and have varying degrees of expertise. Some prefer to concentrate on attending and participating in educational, transitional, and vocational planning meetings such as, Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), Person Centered Planning meetings (PCP’s) or Individual Educational Plan meetings (IEP’s). Others work with first responders and corrections professionals who interact with individuals who have Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Some Autism Information Specialists give presentations and workshops on various topics related to autism for agencies and community organizations around the state.

Autism Information Specialists also provide resource information for families, schools, the work place, and the community to foster empathy, understanding, and compassion for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Currently there are 25 AIS across the State.
Camp Summit

The Autism Society of Maine holds a summer camp program for children ages 8–13 with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The purpose of this program is to develop effective communication skills and peer relationships in a social group setting. This summer program will consist of structured activities supervised by two professionals, and 12–16 college students or paraprofessionals participating in a field experience and earning credits towards their degrees and/or professions.

This summer camp program takes place in Farmington during the month of August. This is a two week day program that runs Mondays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There are two separate camp sessions

10 children attended camp with 8 camp counselors, 1 Director, 1 Assistant Director, and 1 college Professor

Goals of the summer camp:

- It will provide a positive learning environment where children can mature and grow socially in a setting especially created to respond to their unique sensory, motor and cognitive needs.
- It will provide an invaluable learning experience for college students to learn more about autism spectrum disorder and hopefully make a career dedicated to working with individuals with autism.

Finding the Pieces

The Autism Society of Maine, City of Biddeford and University of New England hold a summer camp program for children (K-5) in York County. The intent and purpose of the Finding the Pieces Camp is to provide an enriching summer camp experience for children who have autism that celebrates differences and provides opportunities to interact with peers both on and off the spectrum.

The summer program will consist of structured activities supervised by two professionals and 8–10 college students participating in a field experience and earning credits towards their degrees and/or professions. The children will have really fun activities from arts and crafts, sports and games, special events, swimming at Rotary Park and field trips.

The camp takes place at the Ross Center, 189 Alfred Street, Biddeford and will run August 6 through August 17. This is a two week day program that runs Monday – Friday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

10 children attended camp, 10 college students, 1 Director, 1 Assistant Director, and 1 college Professor
Walk for Autism

ASM started the very first Walk for Autism in 2003 in Biddeford, Maine. The Walk originally was to raise money for the very first summer camp for autism. As it turns out, it did a lot more than raise money - it raised awareness! The Walk for Autism is the biggest autism event held in the state. We now have 5 walks around the state and over 1,200 people participating each year. The walks are held during April Autism Awareness Month on the last Sunday of the month.

Total revenue 2019, $59,567

Ride For Autism

The Ride for Autism was added in 2007 by a parent from a cycling family who wanted to “give back”. At the first event we had 12 riders. Now our event has over 100 riders. The route takes each rider along the beautiful coast-line through Biddeford and Kennebunkport. There are three rides to choose from: 10 mile, 25 mile, or 50 mile. Many families ride together.

Total revenue 2019 $27,265
Let ME spread the word on AUTISM

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