Let’s raise money for our local autism community!

Join AuSM for the state’s largest annual autism resource fair and family-friendly fundraising walk in support of individuals with autism in Minnesota.

March 4, 2018 • 8:30-11 a.m. • Southdale Center, Edina, MN

www.SOHWalk.org

Presented by

STEPS OF HOPE FOR AUTISM
IN MINNESOTA 2018

Attend AuSM’s 23rd Annual Minnesota Autism Conference

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Minneapolis Park Place

During Autism Awareness Month, join us for the Minnesota autism community’s event of the year featuring exhibitors, expert-led education sessions, keynote speakers, and the AuSM Bookstore.

April 25-28, 2018
Welcome to AuSM

Since 1971, the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) has supported individuals with autism by offering a welcoming place to learn, access services, and develop skills for navigating emotions, information, and life.

In addition to being a valuable resource for individuals with autism, AuSM reaches out to those who care about individuals affected by autism – parents, caregivers, family members, support staff, educators, employers, therapists, and other professionals in the community.

AuSM’s education offerings include special interest-focused social skills classes that engage youth and adults to interact socially while raising self-awareness and self-esteem; AuSM Skillshops that focus on positive strategies and problem-solving; and specialized training tailored for organizations and businesses, including the Life with Autism series and the Autism Direct Support Certification program.

Understanding the increasing need for opportunities for adults with autism, AuSM developed programs, classes, and adventures to fit the needs of people ages 18+. Check out the special section highlighting activities for adults with autism beginning on page 12.

Explore this catalog to find AuSM programs and services that will enhance your life.

AuSM appreciates the support of its education catalog advertisers. AuSM cannot endorse any commercial products, processes, or services. Special thanks to Allegra Downtown St. Paul, the official print sponsor of the AuSM 2017-2018 Education Catalog.

Thank you, AuSM Premier Partners

Join these companies in making a difference in the lives of individuals touched by autism in Minnesota.

If your company or organization is interested in becoming an AuSM Premier Partner, please contact Kelly Thomalla at 651.647.1083 ext. 25 or e-mail kthomalla@ausm.org.
Discover our services for children and young adults with autism spectrum disorder in homes, community settings and our newly renovated Minnetonka location.

AUTISM DAY TREATMENT | Ages 2-6
AUTISM IN-HOME SUPPORT | Ages 2-26
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY | Ages 1-12
SPEECH THERAPY | Ages 1-12
THERAPEUTIC RECREATION | Ages 11+

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# Table of Contents

## Activities for Youth and Young Adults
Pages 6-11
Special interest-focused social skills classes.
- Como Zoo • Full Spectrum Céili • ComedySportz Improv • Toneworks Creative Arts • AuSM On the Town

## Activities for Adults
Pages 12-16
Programs and activities to help adults with autism connect with peers, education, and resources.
- Bodies, Boundaries, and Healthy Relationships • We’re In This Together Couples Class • Art On the Town • AuSM Skillshops

## Join AuSM Today
Page 17
Your AuSM membership includes reduced rates on AuSM education programs and events and gives you access to resources and services you need to help you accomplish your goals. Become a member today!

## AuSM Skillshops
Pages 20-24
Topic-focused classes designed for individuals with autism, parents, caregivers, family members, support staff, educators, therapists, and other professionals.

## Specialized Autism Training
Page 26
Autism training tailored to the needs of schools, organizations, businesses, and community groups.

## Life with Autism Series
Page 27
Understanding, intervention, and accommodation strategies for every age on the autism spectrum. The range of classes is geared toward parents, caregivers, educators, therapists, professionals, and individuals with autism.

## Autism Basics, Respite Strategies, and Positive Supports
Page 28
AuSM is pleased to introduce two new classes to assist caregivers of those with autism.

## AuSM Autism Direct Support Certification
Page 29
AuSM’s certification training is designed for caregivers and professionals who work with or want to better provide service to those with autism.

## AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services
Pages 32-33
With the help of AuSM therapists, overcome challenges, improve daily functioning, and achieve a more balanced lifestyle. AuSM also offers free support groups.

## Uniting the Autism Community
Page 37
AuSM joins community partners in offering monthly free or low-cost events and activities that present welcoming environments for families and individuals with autism. AuSM organizes many events and fundraisers throughout the year that support its mission of enhancing the lives of those affected by autism.

## AuSM Education Tips

- Register for AuSM education programs online at www.ausm.org. Call 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org with registration questions. Classes have a maximum enrollment. Register early to ensure placement in a class.
- Check with your county case manager to see if your selected AuSM education program can be paid for under the Brain Injury (BI); Community Alternative Care (CAC); or Developmental Disability (DD) waiver.
- Schedules and instructors are subject to change. Visit www.ausm.org for current information and to view AuSM’s cancellation policy.
- AuSM wants to make its programs available to as many as possible. Scholarships are available for those who qualify. Visit www.ausm.org and click on the “Scholarships and Waivers” Quick Link in the box on the right side of the home page.
Activities for Youth and Young Adults

Building real-life skills in real-life environments

Led by autism experts, classes build confidence and self-esteem while participants learn how to make friends, interact with a group, practice socializing, and have fun – all while educators encourage participants to be themselves. Classes offer low-stress, accepting environments in community venues that promote learning and growth while celebrating neurodiversity.

AuSM offers programming that is conducive to youth and adults who fall within the wide range of the autism spectrum. Social skills classes are staffed at a 1:4 staff to participant ratio. If an individual is able to participate safely in a program but requires individual assistance with communication, behavior support, or daily living activities, PCA attendance can be approved so the participant may have the most inclusive experience possible. Call 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org for more information. AuSM is committed to making your class experience positive and rewarding.

**FALL**
- Como Zoo Teens (ages 13-18)
- Full Spectrum Géilé (ages 12+)
- ComedySportz Improv Beginner and Advanced (ages 14-26)
- AuSM On the Town (ages 14-26)

**WINTER**
- Como Zoo Elementary (ages 8-12)
- ComedySportz Improv Beginner and Advanced (ages 14-26)

**SPRING**
- ComedySportz Improv Beginner and Advanced (ages 14-26)
- AuSM On the Town (ages 14-26)
- Toneworks Creative Arts (ages 8-12)

For Activities for Adults, see page 12.

AuSM Social Skills Registration

Register for AuSM Social Skills classes online at www.ausm.org. Call 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org with registration questions. Classes have limited capacity. Scholarships are available for those who qualify. Visit www.ausm.org and click on the “Scholarships and Waivers” Quick Link in the box on the right side of the home page. Schedules and instructors are subject to change. Please visit www.ausm.org for the most up-to-date information and to view AuSM’s cancellation policy.
Como Zoo Skills for Elementary-Age Students (ages 8-12) and Teens (ages 13-18)

AuSM is pleased to continue its partnership with Como Park Zoo & Conservatory to offer fall and winter social skills classes.

**FALL SESSION – SATURDAYS**

**Teens (ages 13-18): Intro to Animal Care**
The well-being of Como’s animals is extremely important. Learn about the valuable work zookeepers do daily including nutrition, animal training, enrichment, exhibit upkeep, and animal first aid, and then try some of these tasks firsthand. Do you have what it takes?

**Class meets from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.**
Sept. 30*; Oct. 7, 14, 28; Nov. 4, 11, 2017 (no class Oct. 21)

*Note: The Sept. 30 Teens class will include orientation from 9:30-10 a.m.

Registration Deadline: Sept. 22, 2017

**WINTER SESSION – SATURDAYS**

**Elementary (ages 8-12): Global Adventures**
Travel around the world – from the Arctic to Africa to Australia! At each stop, encounter amazing plants and animals and visit with the Como staff who care for them. Passport not required!

**Class meets from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.**
Jan. 20*, 27; Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24, 2018

*Note: The Jan. 20 Elementary class will include orientation from 9:30-10 a.m.

Registration Deadline: Jan. 12, 2018

**Location of Como Zoo Skills**
Como Park Zoo & Conservatory
1225 Estabrook Dr., St. Paul, MN 55103

**Cost Per Session**
AuSM Member: $295
Non-Member: $365

Register online at www.ausm.org.
AuSM Social Skills

Full Spectrum Céilí (ages 12+)

AuSM is pleased to partner with North Star Irish Dance to offer this fall social skills class.

Céilí (pronounced ‘kaylee’) is Irish social dancing. The ancestor of American square and contra dancing, céilí dancing is done with repetitive patterns in groups. These social events are a fun way to learn, practice, and integrate skills like joint attention, eye contact, and short-term memory. The instructor intentionally will point out opportunities for these skills while teaching three to four Irish céilí dances. Purchase of Irish dance shoes is NOT required – wear clean athletic shoes and loose clothing. You can make the dancing as intense as you want!

This class will be taught by Beth Pitchford who is the director of North Star Irish Dance, an Irish step dance school with locations in Eden Prairie and Northfield. Pitchford also is an AuSM therapist. She is excited to combine two of her biggest passions: working with the autism community and Irish dance!

The class is made possible in part because of a grant from the Irish Music and Dance Association.

FALL SESSION – SATURDAYS

Class meets from 1-2:30 p.m.
Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28, 2017
Registration Deadline: Sept. 29, 2017

Cost
AuSM Member: $80
Non-Member: $100

Register online at www.ausm.org.
ComedySportz Improv Skills (ages 14-26)

AuSM is pleased to continue its partnership with ComedySportz Twin Cities to offer social skills programs based on the principals of improvisational theatre.

Have fun while learning how to respond to the unexpected, engage in reciprocal interactions, and support fellow participants in keeping a scene moving forward. Each skill can be applied to everyday life as you learn to open yourself to creativity and new ideas, while having fun and making friends. No prior improv experience is necessary. Experienced improv participants may register for the advanced class. Advanced improv class participants must be pre-approved by the instructor.

**FALL SESSION – SATURDAYS**

Fall Advanced Class meets from 12-1:30 p.m.
Fall Beginner Class meets from 2-3:30 p.m.

Sept. 23, 30; Oct. 7, 14, 28; Nov. 4, 11, 2017 (no class Oct. 21)
Registration Deadline: Sept. 15, 2017

**WINTER SESSION – SATURDAYS**

Winter Advanced Class meets from 12-1:30 p.m.
Winter Beginner Class meets from 2-3:30 p.m.

Jan. 13, 20, 27; Feb. 3, 10, 17, 2018
Registration Deadline: Jan. 5, 2018

**SPRING SESSION – SATURDAYS**

Spring Advanced Class meets from 12-1:30 p.m.
Spring Beginner Class meets from 2-3:30 p.m.

April 7, 14, 21, 28; May 5, 12, 2018
Registration Deadline: March 30, 2018

**Location of ComedySportz Improv Skills**

CSz Twin Cities
3001 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55408

**Cost Per Session (regular and advanced)**

AuSM Member: $275
Non-Member: $345

Register online at www.ausm.org.
Toneworks Creative Arts (ages 8-12)

AuSM is pleased to continue its partnership with Toneworks Music Therapy to offer this social skills class for youth with autism.

**SPRING SESSION – SATURDAYS**

Toneworks Music Therapy Services, in partnership with AuSM, will host a music and art workshop focused on transitioning from school to summer. This class will combine movement, visual art, music, and technology to create a culminating project of a music video and mural. Participants will receive a digital download of the final project.

**Class meets from 12-2 p.m.**

April 28; May 5, 12, 2018

*Registration Deadline: April 20, 2018*

**Location of Toneworks Creative Arts**

Toneworks Music Therapy
8401 Golden Valley Rd. #301, Minneapolis, MN 55427

**Cost**

- AuSM Member: $150
- Non-Member: $175

**Register online at www.ausm.org.**
AuSM On the Town (ages 14-26)
Explore the Twin Cities and have fun while participating in team building adventures. Participants must have their own transportation to and from each site. Locations are subject to change.

**FALL SESSION – SUNDAYS**
- **Ramsey County Library – Shoreview** Sept. 24
  4560 Victoria St. N., Shoreview, MN 55126
- **The Bakken Museum** Oct. 1
  3537 Zenith Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55416
- **Wild Rumpus Book Store and Trolley** Oct. 8
  720 W. 43rd St., Minneapolis, MN 55410
- **Walker Art Center** Oct. 15
  725 Vineland Pl, Minneapolis, MN 55403
- **Games Hangout** Oct. 22
  Location to be announced.
- **Mall of America** Oct. 29
  60 E. Broadway, Bloomington, MN 55425

**Class meets from 1-3 p.m.**
Sept. 24*; Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 2017

**Registration Deadline:** Sept. 18, 2017

*Note: The Sept. 24 session will include orientation from 12:30-1 p.m.

**SPRING SESSION – SUNDAYS**
- **New Hope Bowl** April 8
  7107 42nd Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN 55427
- **Sky Zone Trampoline Park - Plymouth** April 15
  13310 Industrial Park Blvd. #160, Plymouth, MN 55441
- **Como Park Zoo & Conservatory** April 22
  225 Estabrook Dr., St. Paul, MN 55103
- **Roller Garden** April 29
  5622 W. Lake St., St. Louis Park, MN 55416
- **Shoreview Community Center – Swimming** May 6
  4580 Victoria St N., Shoreview, MN 55126
- **Bassett Creek Park** May 20
  Bassett Creek Disc Golf Course, Crystal, MN 55422

**Class meets from 1-3 p.m.**
April 8, 15, 22, 29; May 6, 20, 2018 (no class May 13)

**Registration Deadline:** April 2, 2018

*Note: The April 8 session will include orientation from 12:30-1 p.m.

**Drop Off and Pick Up for AuSM On the Town**
Drop off and pick up locations for AuSM On the Town will be at each site.

**Cost Per Session**
- AuSM Member: $275 (includes T-shirt and activity fees)
- Non-Member: $300 (includes T-shirt and activity fees)

Register online at www.ausm.org.
Activities for Adults

With many services ending as individuals with autism reach their early 20s, finding a community dedicated to serving the needs of adults with autism is challenging. AuSM is here to meet you where you are on the spectrum and in your life. AuSM develops programs and activities to help adults with autism connect with peers, education, and resources.

**FALL**
Bodies, Boundaries, and Healthy Relationships Part 1
AuSM Skillshop, Oct. 10: The Most Wonderful Time of the Year: Managing Holiday Stress
AuSM Skillshop, Oct. 17: Anxiety and ASD
ComedySportz Improv Beginner and Advanced (ages 14-26)
AuSM On the Town (ages 14-26)

**WINTER**
Bodies, Boundaries, and Healthy Relationships Part 2
We’re In This Together Couples Class
AuSM Skillshop, Dec. 12: Make New Friends: How to Find and Keep Friends As an Adult with ASD
AuSM Skillshop, March 13: Fidget Frenzy
ComedySportz Improv Beginner and Advanced (ages 14-26)

**SPRING**
Steps of Hope for Autism in Minnesota, March 4, 2018
23rd Annual Minnesota Autism Conference, April 25-28, 2018
Art on the Town
AuSM Skillshop, June 12, 2018: Females on the Spectrum
ComedySportz Improv Beginner and Advanced (ages 14-26)

**ONGOING**

**Free AuSM Support Groups**
AuSM offers free monthly support groups including an Independent Adults with ASD Social Support Group, an LGBTQIA+ Adults with Autism Support Group, and a Women with ASD Support Group.

**Information and Resources**
AuSM’s Information and Resources team is available to listen, help, and sort through options, connecting you to the many effective programs, therapists, services, and support agencies.

**AuSM Resource Directory**
The AuSM Resource Directory is a compiled list of providers, businesses, and organizations that offer products and services to the community. Find it on www.ausm.org.

**Research Studies**
AuSM shares a wide variety of research studies on www.ausm.org. See if there are some in which you’d like to participate.

**Uniting the Community Events**
AuSM is pleased to offer opportunities for families and individuals with autism to come together and enjoy fun activities in supportive, welcoming environments.
Bodies, Boundaries, and Healthy Relationships (ages 18+)

Learn how to better understand privacy, boundaries, public versus private, levels of relationships, consent, different types of contraception, and being safe. Instructors will tackle the nuances of complex issues by building upon more simple, concrete concepts. Participants should be independent and not need support during the class. Participants should have a basic understanding of anatomy and biological functioning.

The class will be separated into gender identified groups during parts of the sessions.

This class will be offered in two parts in the fall and winter. Participants must attend all sessions in Part 1 to register for Part 2.

Prior to registering, we strongly encourage self-advocates or guardians to attend the orientation to learn more about the curriculum to determine if it is the right fit.

Self-Advocate/Guardian Orientation at AuSM
Wednesday, Sept. 13 from 6-7 p.m.
Please register to attend this free orientation session by Sept. 8, 2017 at www.ausm.org.

FALL PART 1 – WEDNESDAYS (Registration Opens Sept. 14, 2017)
Sept. 27; Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25; Nov 1, 2017 from 6-7:30 p.m.
Registration Deadline Part 1: Sept. 22, 2017

WINTER PART 2 – WEDNESDAYS
Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31; Feb. 7, 21, 2018 from 6-7:30 p.m. (no class Feb. 14)

Cost Per Participant/Per Part
AuSM Member: $195; Non-Member: $220

Location of Bodies, Boundaries, and Healthy Relationships
AuSM, 2380 Wycliff St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55114

Orientation Session/Class Registration

Those interested in participating in this class are strongly encouraged to attend the self-advocate/guardian session on Sept. 13. Registration for Bodies, Boundaries, and Healthy Relationships will open Sept. 14 online at www.ausm.org. Scholarships are available. Call 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org with registration questions.
We’re In This Together (couples, ages 18+)

A class for couples featuring strategies for supporting and celebrating your neurodiverse relationship.

This class will guide neurodiverse couples through understanding autism, family rules, arguing, non-verbal communication, parenting, and executive function in regards to priorities and time awareness. Learn about diagnosis disclosure. Classes will follow curriculum from The Asperger’s Couples Workbook. Registration includes one copy of the book.

The class will be led by AuSM therapist, Beth Pitchford, MA. Pitchford values working with adults who want to decode the neurotypical world in order to decrease barriers to community acceptance and to increase a feeling of success. She works with adolescents as they navigate the super-social world of the teenage years. Using cognitive behavioral approaches and her Adlerian training, Pitchford’s goal is to help people better understand not only themselves but also the people in their lives.

WINTER – MONDAYS
Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2018 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Registration Deadline: Jan. 29, 2018

Cost Per Couple
AuSM Member: $200; Non-Member: $250

Location of We’re In This Together
AuSM, 2380 Wycliff St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55114

Register online at www.ausm.org.

We’re In This Together Registration

Register for We’re In This Together online at www.ausm.org. Call 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org with registration questions. Scholarships are available. Class has limited capacity. Please visit www.ausm.org for the most up-to-date information and to view AuSM’s cancellation policy.
Art On the Town (ages 18+)

The arts are a rich part of Minnesota culture. Visit art museums in the Twin Cities including the Minneapolis Art Institute (Mia); The Bell Museum of Natural History; The Museum of Russian Art; Mill City Museum; Minnesota History Center; American Swedish Institute; and the Walker Art Center and Sculpture Garden. Participants will meet at the museum and tour as group with an AuSM staff member. Participants may sign up for the series of museum visits or only the ones in which they are interested. Cost includes museum admission.

SPRING – SATURDAYS from 1-3 p.m.

April 7, 2018  
Minneapolis Institute of Art  
2400 3rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55404

April 14, 2018  
The Museum of Russian Art  
5500 Stevens Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55419

April 21, 2018  
Mill City Museum  
704 S. 2nd St., Minneapolis, MN 55401

April 28, 2018  
Minnesota History Center  
345 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55102

May 5, 2018  
American Swedish Institute  
2600 Park Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55407

May 12, 2018  
The Bell Museum of Natural History  
10 Church St. S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455

May 19, 2018  
Walker Art Center and Sculpture Garden  
725 Vineland Pl., Minneapolis, MN 55403

The registration deadline is one week prior to the planned museum visit.

Cost
AuSM Member: $36 per session/all seven sessions for $225  
Non-Member: $45 per session/all seven sessions for $300

Register online at www.ausm.org.
AuSM Skillshops for Adults

AuSM Skillshops are mini educational workshops designed for the Minnesota autism community. Adults with autism are invited to participate in all AuSM Skillshops, and below is a listing of those AuSM Skillshops that have been tailored especially for adults. Register for AuSM Skillshops online at www.ausm.org.

**Cost:** $10 for AuSM Members with ASD; $40 for Non-Members

**OCTOBER 10, 2017**
**The Most Wonderful Time of the Year: Managing Holiday Stress**
**Presenter:** Amy Carrison, PsyD, LADC  
**Date:** Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Academy of Whole Learning  
Learn strategies for managing your holiday time and expectations, as well as ways to take the breaks you need.

**OCTOBER 17, 2017**
**Social Anxiety and ASD**
**Presenter:** Barb Luskin, PhD, LP  
**Date:** Tuesday, Oct. 17, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Autism Society of Minnesota  
Learn how to cope with stressors and gather resources for reducing anxiety in social situations.

**DECEMBER 12, 2017**
**Make New Friends: How to Find and Keep Friends As an Adult With ASD**
**Presenter:** Beth Pitchford, MA  
**Date:** Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Autism Society of Minnesota  
Learn strategies that will help you decode social interactions, find friends, and build relationships that will last.

**FEBRUARY 13, 2018**
**Self-Advocacy: Finding Your Voice and Asking for More**
**Presenter:** Jillian Nelson  
**Date:** Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Autism Society of Minnesota  
Learn tips on how to self-advocate at home, at work, and other places in your life.

**MARCH 13, 2018**
**Fidget Frenzy: Sensory Tool How-To**
**Presenter:** Sara Pahl, MS, BCBA, NCC  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 13, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Autism Society of Minnesota  
Individuals with sensory processing disorders are hypersensitive or hyposensitive to different types of stimulation. Learn about the eight senses and which fidgets increase and reduce sensory input. Fidgets will be available to test and to purchase.

**JUNE 12, 2018**
**Females on the Spectrum**
**Presenter:** Beth Pitchford, MA and Panel  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 12, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Autism Society of Minnesota  
Learn about current prevalence and differences in how autism characteristics manifest, how sociocultural factors play a major role in how autism presents, and why gender expectations can lead to females receiving diagnoses later in life.
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- LOW PROFILE
- REUSABLE DESIGN
- MULTIPLE TIP SIZES (S,M,L)
- DECIBEL REDUCTION

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**Basic AuSM Membership**
- $60 Household – 2 adults and children or grandchildren, ages 21 and under
- $40 Educator/Professional – individual membership for autism professionals
- $20 Person with ASD – individual membership for adults over age 21

**AuSM Group Membership**
- $150 Non-Profit – includes memberships for employees
- $350 Corporate – includes memberships for employees

**Visit www.ausm.org or call 651.647.1083 to become an AuSM Member today!**
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Traveling with your special needs child can seem intimidating. Navigating MSP Airport helps ease the anxiety with free, monthly practice runs through the airport.

A partnership between the Metropolitan Airports Commission, the Autism Society of Minnesota, and Fraser, this program will allow you to:

- Experience TSA security
- Explore the terminal
- Board a plane and meet a pilot
- Prepare for takeoff
- Gather helpful tips, information and resources

For more information contact: Shelly Lopez at 612-726-5239 or Shelly.Lopez@mspmac.org

www.ausm.org • 651.647.1083
Based on topics suggested by the Minnesota autism community, AuSM Skillshops are mini-workshops designed for individuals with autism and their parents, caregivers, family members, and support staff. AuSM Skillshops also are a valuable professional development resource for educators and therapists who work with individuals affected by autism. AuSM Skillshops are held at the AuSM office in St. Paul and at partnering locations throughout the Twin Cities. Listings in green indicate those AuSM Skillshop topics tailored for adults on the spectrum, but all are welcome to register.

Register for AuSM Skillshops online at www.ausm.org. Call 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org with registration questions. Scholarships are available. Schedules and presenters are subject to change. Visit www.ausm.org for the most up-to-date information and to view AuSM’s cancellation policy.

**Cost Per AuSM Skillshop/Per Individual Registration**

- AuSM Member: $25
- Non-Member: $40
- AuSM Member with ASD or Current Student: $10

**AuSM Members receive a certificate for a free AuSM Skillshop and save $15 on each AuSM Skillshop registration.**
SEPTEMBER 19, 2017
Law & Order: ASD

**Presenter:** Barb Luskin, PhD, LP  
**Date:** Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Autism Society of Minnesota

Studies show that people with autism are seven to 12 times more likely to interface with law enforcement and the criminal justice system than their neurotypical peers. Social and communication challenges can lead to misunderstandings. Whether it’s a misunderstanding or not, having positive response strategies is imperative. Learn about common scenarios involving individuals with autism and how to ensure their safety in the community as well as how to support them through the legal process.

An AuSM psychologist, Dr. Luskin has worked closely with children and adults with ASD for more than 30 years. She specializes in providing both assessments and counseling to individuals with ASD and those who support them.

SEPTEMBER 26, 2017
My Child Has Autism: Do I?

**Presenter:** Beth Pitchford, MA  
**Date:** Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Autism Society of Minnesota

Your child was diagnosed with autism, and you recognize some of his or her traits reflected in yourself. Do you wonder if you, too, could be on the autism spectrum? Is it important to get a formal diagnosis? Learn about the heritability of autism, adult diagnosis, parenting with autism, and the importance of understanding your needs as a parent.

An AuSM therapist, Beth Pitchford values working with adults who want to decode the neurotypical world in order to decrease barriers to community acceptance and to increase feelings of success. She works with adolescents as they navigate the super-social world of the teenage years. Using cognitive behavioral approaches and her Adlerian training, Pitchford’s goal is to help people better understand not only themselves but also the people in their lives.

OCTOBER 10, 2017
The Most Wonderful Time of the Year: Managing Holiday Stress

**Presenter:** Amy Carrison, PsyD, LADC  
**Date:** Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Academy of Whole Learning

Holiday parties, family gatherings, and gift exchanges are part of the holiday season. While they are designed to be fun and joyful, they also can add stress, especially for someone on the spectrum. Caregivers and adults with autism, learn strategies for managing your time and expectations, as well as ways to take the breaks you need.

An AuSM therapist, Dr. Carrison uses cognitive behavioral strategies in therapy to help clients change problematic behavior patterns. She has experience in psychological assessment and testing with the goal of providing individuals with targeted interventions to overcome areas of need. Dr. Carrison has worked with individuals on the autism spectrum in day training program and group home settings.

OCTOBER 17, 2017
Social Anxiety and ASD

**Presenter:** Barb Luskin, PhD, LP  
**Date:** Tuesday, Oct. 17, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.  
**Location:** Autism Society of Minnesota

It’s common for adults with autism to have anxiety and/or depression. Learn how to cope with stressors and gather resources for reducing anxiety. Learn about social stressors and techniques for feeling more comfortable in social situations.

An AuSM psychologist, Dr. Luskin has worked closely with children and adults with ASD for more than 30 years. She specializes in providing both assessments and counseling to individuals with ASD and those who support them.
NOVEMBER 14, 2017
Guardianship: Do We Need It?

Presenter: Jason Schellack, Esq.
Date: Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.
Location: Lionsgate Academy, Minnetonka

At age 18, a child is legally considered an adult. Some youth, however, aren’t yet ready for all of the responsibilities of adulthood. Many children with ASD will continue to need assistance with their IEPs, transition services, making medical decisions, and applying for government benefits. To have legal authority to assist their adult children in these important areas, many parents and caregivers choose to establish legal guardianship. Learn about the legal process for obtaining guardianship and how you can qualify for free legal assistance. Understand the powers and responsibilities guardians have under Minnesota law, and how successor guardians are chosen and appointed.

Jason Schellack is an attorney and the Executive Director of Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC, a law firm dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities and their families. Schellack has worked with individuals with autism throughout his career as a camp counselor, personal care attendant, public defender, and legal advocate. He practices primarily in the areas of guardianship, estate planning, family law, and special education law. Schellack also is a qualified neutral under Rule 114, allowing him to serve as a mediator in family law disputes.

DECEMBER 12, 2017
Make New Friends: How to Find and Keep Friends As An Adult with ASD

Presenter: Beth Pitchford, MA
Date: Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2017 from 7-9 p.m.
Location: Autism Society of Minnesota

Making and keeping friends as an adult is different than making friends as a child. Learn strategies that will help you decode social interactions, find friends, and build relationships that will last.

An AuSM therapist, Beth Pitchford values working with adults who want to decode the neurotypical world in order to decrease barriers to community acceptance and to increase feelings of success. She works with adolescents as they navigate the super-social world of the teenage years. Using cognitive behavioral approaches and her Adlerian training, Pitchford’s goal is to help people better understand not only themselves but also the people in their lives.

JANUARY 23, 2018
Beyond the Crystal Ball: Planning for the Future

Presenter: Molly Giffin
Date: Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.
Location: Autism Society of Minnesota

Planning is key to a secure, happy, and healthy future. Learn about the importance of planning for your loved one with a disability. An attorney who specializes in the disability field also will discuss estate issues to consider.

Molly Giffin is a Planning Services Specialist for The Arc Greater Twin Cities. She helps families plan for the future through Person-Centered Planning, Future Life Options, and the Transition Vision Project. Giffin also supports two individuals as a Personal Care Assistant.

FEBRUARY 13, 2018
Self-Advocacy: Finding Your Voice and Asking for More

Presenter: Jillian Nelson and Panel
Date: Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.
Location: Autism Society of Minnesota

Being a self-advocate goes far beyond one “Day At the Capital”. Day-to-day self-advocacy can change the quality of your life, give you tools to speak up and fulfill your needs, and improve relationships. Learn tips on how to self-advocate at home, work, and other places in your life.

An AuSM employee, Jillian Nelson is a strong advocate for the autism community and wants to close the gap of understanding between individuals with autism and neurotypical individuals. Nelson has worked in education, employment, and advocacy.
**FEBRUARY 20, 2018**  
Taking Care of Yourself Inside and Out: Mind-Body Tools for Life

*Presenter:* Kathy Flaminio  
*Date:* Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.  
*Location:* University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis Campus, Opus Hall Room 201/202

Our busy, stressful lives contribute to poor sleep, diet, and exercise, which leads to stressed children and adults. Practice and explore breathing techniques, integrative movement, and relaxation strategies that can be implemented immediately. Learn how to give your mind, body, and heart what it needs by experiencing practices for soothing and releasing.

Kathy Flaminio is the founder of 1000 Petals LLC, a training and consulting company on the science and practice of mindfulness, movement and social/emotional learning. She is the creator of Move Mindfully™, yoga-based sequencing for self-regulation, focus, and over all well-being.

**MARCH 13, 2018**  
Fidget Frenzy: Sensory Tool How-To

*Presenter:* Sara Pahl, MS, BCBA, NCC  
*Date:* Tuesday, March 13, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.  
*Location:* Autism Society of Minnesota

Individuals with sensory processing disorders are hypersensitive or hyposensitive to different types of stimulation. Learn about the eight senses and which fidgets increase and reduce sensory input. Fidgets will be available to test and to purchase.

An AuSM therapist, Sara Pahl’s professional experience includes working with people with ASD in multiple capacities including mental health counselor, behavior support professional, education specialist, lead therapist, program manager, primary grade teacher, consultant, and director of a teen program. She specializes in working with families and schools struggling with behavioral issues, as well as working with adolescents and young adults with ASD.

**MARCH 20, 2018**  
Guardianship: Do We Need It?

*Presenter:* Jason Schellack, Esq.  
*Date:* Tuesday, March 20, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.  
*Location:* Minnesota Life College

At age 18, a child is legally considered an adult. Some youth, however, aren’t yet ready for all of the responsibilities of adulthood. Many children with ASD will continue to need assistance with their IEPs, transition services, making medical decisions, and applying for government benefits. To have legal authority to assist their adult children in these important areas, many parents and caregivers choose to establish legal guardianship. Learn about the legal process for obtaining guardianship and how you can qualify for free legal assistance. Understand the powers and responsibilities guardians have under Minnesota law, and how successor guardians are chosen and appointed.

Jason Schellack is an attorney and the Executive Director of Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC, a law firm dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities and their families. Schellack has worked with individuals with autism throughout his career as a camp counselor, personal care attendant, public defender, and legal advocate. He practices primarily in the areas of guardianship, estate planning, family law, and special education law. Schellack also is a qualified neutral under Rule 114, allowing him to serve as a mediator in family law disputes.
MAY 15, 2018
Managing Screen Addiction and Cyber Safety

Presenter: Sara Pahl, MS, BCBA, NCC
Date: Tuesday, May 15, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.
Location: Lionsgate, North St. Paul

It is easy to get sucked in and to spend hours playing a game, on social media, or exploring all technology has to offer. While technology and screens can be great tools, sometimes we become too reliant on them. Learn strategies for setting boundaries, time management, and staying safe on the internet.

An AuSM therapist, Sara Pahl’s professional experience includes working with people with ASD in multiple capacities including mental health counselor, behavior support professional, education specialist, lead therapist, program manager, primary grade teacher, consultant, and director of a teen program. She specializes in working with families and schools struggling with behavioral issues, as well as working with adolescents and young adults with ASD.

JUNE 5, 2018
Helping Your Child with ASD Learn to Ride a Bike

Presenter: Alex Uhler
Date: Tuesday, June 5, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.
Location: Autism Society of Minnesota

Challenges with body awareness, balance and motor control, and hand-eye coordination can make riding a bike difficult. Learn a number of tips for successful bike riding including purchasing equipment, making bike adjustments, breaking down riding into smaller steps, clothing protection, practice makes perfect pedaling, staying positive and patient, and working toward the sense of independence and accomplishment that your child will experience when learning to ride his or her own bike.

Alex Uhler is an outdoor enthusiast with more than 40 years of bicycling experience.

Note: This AuSM Skillshop is limited to nine children, ages 5-12. Support adult and child attend together. Child should bring a bike and helmet.

JUNE 12, 2018
Females on the Spectrum

Presenter: Beth Pitchford, MA and Panel
Date: Tuesday, June 12, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.
Location: Autism Society of Minnesota

Autism presents differently in females than in males, and females are diagnosed at significantly lower rates. Learn about current prevalence and differences in how characteristics manifest, how sociocultural factors play a major role, and why gender expectations can lead to females receiving diagnoses later in life. Learn from a panel of women on the spectrum about how autism influences their lives.

An AuSM therapist, Beth Pitchford values working with adults who want to decode the neurotypical world in order to decrease barriers to community acceptance and to increase feelings of success. She works with adolescents as they navigate the super-social world of the teenage years. Using cognitive behavioral approaches and her Adlerian training, Pitchford’s goal is to help people better understand not only themselves but also the people in their lives.

Oct. 16, 2018
Special Needs & Special Sibs: A Family AuSM Skillshop

Presenter: Jennifer S. Reinke, PhD, LAMFT, CFLE
Date: Tuesday, Oct. 16, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.
Location: St. David’s Center

“Autism doesn’t just affect my kid, it affects our whole family,” a mother of an 8-year-old child with autism said. Explore the unique challenges, rewards, and dynamics experienced by families impacted by a variety of special needs. Special emphasis will be placed on the experiences and needs of siblings (ages 10+) who have a brother or sister with special needs. All family members are welcome at this AuSM Skillshop.

An AuSM therapist, Dr. Jennifer Reinke is an Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. She is a Licensed Associate Marriage and Family Therapist, a Certified Family Life Educator, and co-editor of Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science. Dr. Reinke has worked with those affected by autism for more than 10 years.
Sensory Friendly PERFORMANCES 2017-2018 Season
For tickets and more information, visit childrenstheatre.org or call 612.874.0400.

The Abominables
October 13, 2017

Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas
January 5, 2018

The Wiz
March 16, 2018

Corduroy
May 11, 2018

Dr. Seuss’s The Lorax
June 8, 2018

CTC thanks the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) for their valuable Sensory Friendly guidance, training and partnership.

Check out our Special Needs Issue in May, our Education Issue in October and our On Behavior column in every issue, plus tons of content every month geared toward Twin Cities families!

612.825.9205 | mnparent.com

www.ausm.org • 651.647.1083
AuSM helps you support the needs of individuals with autism.

With a prevalence rate of 1 in 68, autism is the fastest growing developmental disability in Minnesota. By learning more about the neurodiversity of individuals with autism, you are taking proactive steps toward acceptance and inclusion. Whether you are a parent, an educator, a business, a community organization, or a direct support professional, AuSM’s education team will provide you with strategies to help you understand the needs of individuals with autism, allowing you to offer a positive, supportive environment for this growing population. AuSM provides state-wide trainings on autism.

AuSM Training Topics

Life with Autism Series
Life with Autism is a series relaying the expected issues faced by those with autism throughout their lives. See Page 27 for more information.

Topical Training for Parents
AuSM can host trainings for parents at schools or other community venues. Many topics are available, including legislative updates, student centeredness and advocacy, transition planning, bullying, cultural influence, and more.

Emergency Preparedness
Learn about the characteristics of autism; how to interpret the behavior of those on the spectrum; anticipated behavior of those with autism in emergency situations; suggested strategies for communication; and behavior management in possible emergency response situations.

Employer Training
Obtain tools to harness the untapped talent of individuals eager to work for you by learning about autism characteristics and the accommodations that support individuals with autism.

Autism Awareness Training and Support
Increase your understanding of autism to improve customer service, offer accommodations in programs, and expand your business to a more diverse clientele. This class can be tailored to address autism support in a specific setting.

Autism Direct Support Certification
This in-depth, 15-hour course will give practical solutions for working with people on the spectrum. See Page 29 for more information.

Medical Provider Training
Doctors, nurses, and hospital staff often are responsible for the support of patients with autism who have chronic or acute co-occurring disability, illness, or injury. Gain practical strategies for improved communication, behavior, and general support of those with autism in clinical settings, inpatient or outpatient.

AuSM's educational trainings were developed with the approval of MDE to fit the needs of educators across the state of Minnesota.

Classroom Support of Learners with Autism
Obtain an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of youth with autism and apply practical, evidence-based strategies to address communication, executive function, behavior, social skills, and general engagement.

Engaging Positive Behavior Strategies for Students with Autism
Learn how to integrate best practices in instruction for students with autism and individual or school-wide initiatives for positive behavior support.

Autism in Early Childhood and Early Intervention
Learn the best practices for identifying and supporting students with autism in early childhood settings as well as program development and delivery for young children with autism. Obtain resources for families in need of early intervention guidance.

Adolescents and Transition
Teens with autism face new challenges as they grow physically and emotionally into young adults. Topics include strategies for addressing mental health, social learning, puberty, hygiene and sexuality, internet safety, and transition planning.

Beyond Sex Ed
A course available as direct instruction to students or as training for educators. Through a series of specific, planned modules, students on the autism spectrum will gain an understanding of bodies, boundaries, and sexual health in a setting that emphasizes skill building and meets their needs.

Mental Health
This course covers the crossroads of mental health and autism. Look at potential misdiagnoses and co-occurring conditions and how you can change your approach in instruction and behavior management.

Autism Awareness for Students
Help elementary, middle, and high school students understand the needs and strengths of their peers on the spectrum.

AuSM will come to your venue to offer training that fits your needs. For more information about AuSM’s custom-tailored autism training and pricing, contact AuSM’s Education Department at education@ausm.org or call 651.647.1083 ext. 22.
Life with Autism Series

AuSM’s Life with Autism Series offers information and strategies to parents, caregivers, family members, relatives, educators, and the community through engaging, age-focused classes led by autism experts and parent speakers. Participants also learn about available services and resources.

Intro to Autism
Develop an understanding of the basics of autism, resource options, and positive behavior supports. Learn how families, schools, and the medical community can work together to educate and support those with autism. Get practical tips on helping individuals with autism meet their potential.

One Session Classes Offered in Fall and Winter
Monday, Oct. 23, 2017 from 6-8 p.m. Register by Oct. 16, 2017
Saturday, Jan. 13, 2018 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Register by Jan. 8, 2018

Cost Per Individual
AuSM Member: $25; Non-Member: $40

Newly Diagnosed (ages 18 mos.-10 yrs.)
Obtain information on autism, parent feelings, neurological findings, therapies, communication strategies, teaching daily living skills, challenging behavior, sensory needs, visual supports, and using social stories.

One Session Classes Offered in Fall and Winter
Saturday, Nov. 4, 2017 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (bring own lunch) Register by Oct. 30, 2017
Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (bring own lunch) Register by Feb. 19, 2018

Cost for One or Two Family Members/Caregivers
AuSM Member: $50; Non-Member: $75

Adolescence and Transition (ages 11-21)
Obtain information on topics including parent emotions, the impact of autism on adolescents, daily living skills, independence public social skills, reciprocal relationships, sexuality, privacy and safety, transitions into adult living and workplace issues, self-determination skills, behavior management, and emotions.

One Session Classes Offered in Fall and Winter
Saturday, Oct. 28, 2017 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (bring own lunch) Register by Oct. 23, 2017
Saturday, Feb. 10, 2018 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (bring own lunch) Register by Feb. 5, 2018

Cost for One or Two Family Members/Caregivers
AuSM Member: $50; Non-Member: $75

Adults (ages 18+)
Obtain information on topics such as impact of autism on adults, daily living skills independence, social skills across settings including the workplace, reciprocal relationships, sexuality, privacy and safety, transitions into adult living, workplace issues, self-determination skills, behavior management, and emotions.

One Session Classes Offered in Fall and Winter
Saturday, Nov. 11, 2017 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (bring own lunch) Register by Nov. 6, 2017
Saturday, March 10, 2018 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (bring own lunch) Register by March 5, 2018

Cost for One or Two Family Members/Caregivers
AuSM Member: $50; Non-Member: $75

Location of All Life with Autism Series Classes
AuSM, 2380 Wycliff St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55114

Registration/Life with Autism Series on Request
Register for the Life with Autism series online at www.ausm.org. Call 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org with registration questions. The Life with Autism Series is structured to meet your needs, and AuSM can bring the classes to your community, to school districts, or to places of employment. If you are interested in having a Life with Autism Series presented at your venue of choice, please contact AuSM at 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org.
Autism Basics, Respite Strategies, and Positive Supports

AuSM is pleased to introduce two new classes to assist caregivers of those with autism. Classes will provide information and strategies that can be used immediately, enhancing the lives of caregivers and those who receive care.

**Autism 101 and the Value of Respite**

If you are considering seeking or are new to respite services, or if you provide respite services, learn about why respite is important for caregivers and individuals alike, and obtain suggestions for finding the respite provider who is right for you. Autism 101 will teach you the basics of autism along with some best practices.

**Who Should Participate**
Caregivers, parents, grandparents, family members, and respite providers will benefit from this class.

**One Session Classes Offered in Fall**
- Saturday, Oct. 14, 2017 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Register by Nov. 7, 2017
- Saturday, Nov. 18, 2017 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Register by Nov. 13, 2017

**Cost Per Individual**
- AuSM Member: $25
- Non-Member: $40

**Location of ASD 101 and the Value of Respite**
Autism Society of Minnesota, 2380 Wycliff St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55114

Register online at www.ausm.org.

**Autism 101 and Positive Supports**

Learn common characteristics of individuals with autism and sensory processing disorders. Obtain valuable insight on evidenced-based best practices to support people with autism and sensory processing sensitivities. Autism 101 will teach you the basics of autism.

**Who Should Participate**
Caregivers, parents, grandparents, group home and day program staff, Personal Care Attendants, and health care staff will benefit from this class.

**One Session Classes Offered in Fall and Spring**
- Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2017 from 9-11 a.m. Register by Nov. 8, 2017
- Wednesday, May 9, 2018 from 9-11 a.m. Register by May 2, 2018

**Cost Per Individual**
- AuSM Member: $25
- Non-Member: $40

**Location of ASD 101 and Positive Supports**
Autism Society of Minnesota, 2380 Wycliff St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55114

Register online at www.ausm.org.
AuSM’s Autism Direct Support Certification Program is designed for professionals who work with individuals with autism or who want to better provide service to those with autism spectrum disorder. This in-depth, 15-hour course will give practical solutions for working with people on the spectrum. Class includes final case study and test.

Training Objectives

• Identify how people with autism think.
• Understand how differences in thinking lead to differences in behavior.
• Understand how different tools/interventions address the strengths and challenges of ASD.
• Identify tools to support clients in different situations.

Who Should Participate?

Job Coaches
Support Staff
Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)
EIDBI Tier 3 Providers
Educational Aides

Direct Support Personnel
Group Home Staff
Day Training and Habilitation Professionals
Anyone who works directly with individuals with autism
Family Members

Fall 2017 Session

Fridays
Sept. 15, 22, 29; Oct. 6, 13, 2017
9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Winter 2018 Session

Saturdays
Jan. 20, 27, 2018 from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
and Feb. 3, 2018 from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Spring 2018 Session

Mondays
March 5, 12, 19, 26; April 2, 2018
6-9 p.m.

Summer 2018 Session

Monday-Friday
June 11-15, 2018
9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Each session is limited to 15 participants. Licensed professionals may submit documentation from the AuSM Autism Direct Support Certification Program to licensing boards for Continuing Education Unit (CEU) consideration (up to 15 hours).

Location of AuSM Autism Direct Support Certification

AuSM, 2380 Wycliff St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55114

Cost Per Session

$250 per person. A group discount is available for 3 or more participants from the same organization. Contact AuSM to register a group of 3 or more participants for the same session.

Registration/Certification on Request

Register for AuSM Autism Direct Support Certification online at www.ausm.org. Call 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org with registration questions. AuSM Autism Direct Support Certification also is available for groups of 15 at your specified location. Contact 651.647.1083 ext. 22 or e-mail education@ausm.org for more information.
Little Gym
Adaptive Gymnastics
Ages 3-6

This class is designed to give children with intellectual and physical disabilities a safe, fun and encouraging environment to learn about their bodies and how to move them.

An experienced and caring instructor will lead the parents or para-educator and children through a variety of physical activities that will increase coordination, balance, strength and flexibility. With experienced adults leading the way, children can safely explore their environment, practice following directions and try new things.

www.mini-hops.com | 952-933-2452 | mail@mini-hops.com

Big Gym
Adaptive Gymnastics
Ages 6+

Children with various special needs will gain independence in the main gym and learn from a professional “kid-expert”. They will experience the gymnastics-based activities that will lead to increased body-awareness, strength, flexibility, and balance. One objective of the program is to help kids transition into grade appropriate gymnastics classes and/or the competitive Special Olympics program.
In the water — it’s so quiet and I’m so free and happy there.
Outside of the water there is always too much stimulation for my eyes and ears. - 13 Year Old With Autism

Swim Possible offers private lessons for all learners - specializing in gentle instruction that helps students with Autism, Anxiety, Attention and other needs become swimmers.

Our proven successful method teaches students to swim by feeling how their body moves in water. Few words. Few directions. Minimal stimulation.

SWIM POSSIBLE, SBC is a Public Benefit Corporation. Our mission is to improve the fitness and safety of learners with Autism. We are expanding to a community near you. Contact us for lessons or to become one of our instructors.

swimpossible.org / facebook / twitter - autism_swims

CAST

AGES 7-17


CAST is an educational program by Stages Theatre Company dedicated to creating a safe, welcoming and comfortable environment for young people affected by autism. Our goal is to foster self-expression, social engagement, creative exploration, perception development, and confidence in each of our students, no matter where they land on the spectrum.

FALL SESSION: Sept 23-Nov 18, 2017
MINI-HOLIDAY SESSION: Dec 2-16, 2017
WINTER SESSION: Jan 20-Mar 17, 2018
SPRING SESSION: Mar 31-May 26, 2018

TUITION ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE! CALL (952) 979-1112 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

REGISTER AT: STAGESTHEATRE.ORG

www.ausm.org • 651.647.1083
The Autism Society of Minnesota’s highly trained therapists have committed their careers to helping individuals with autism spectrum disorder understand their diagnosis. They provide strategies to support each person’s unique autism experience, addressing both the challenges and gifts it can bring. AuSM therapists help individuals from youth through adulthood as they grow at their own pace in a safe, compassionate, and respectful environment.

**Counseling Services**
- Diagnostic assessments for adults
- Functional or behavioral assessments for all ages
- Training for organizations and service providers
- Behavior consultation
- Marriage and couples therapy
- Individual and family therapy

**Consulting Services**
AuSM’s Counseling and Consulting Services team is available to consult with therapists, group home staff, community organizations, employers, day training and habilitation groups, and other professionals who work with individuals with autism to help with general training or to offer strategies related to a specific issue or topic. Contact us for more information.

**We are ready to meet with you**
To inquire about our services, make an appointment, or verify insurance, contact us at 651.647.1083 or e-mail info@ausm.org. We accept Medical Assistance and many private insurance plans.

**Support Groups and Social Coaching**
AuSM offers free monthly support groups to meet the needs of parents, children, family members, and individuals. In addition, AuSM offers social coaching for individuals who want to build specific skills. Visit www.ausm.org for more information.

“It is difficult for me to trust healthcare providers. But I trust my AuSM therapist. And I respect her. Everyone at AuSM seems to understand what I am going through.” – AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services Client
Meet Our AuSM Therapists

Meg Benefield, MSW, LICSW

*pronouns she/ her*

Benefield is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker and is the parent of a child with autism. She uses a strengths-based approach and counsels clients through identifying and building on the unique gifts they possess. She uses a variety of other therapeutic frameworks, including narrative, family systems, solution-focused, trauma-informed, and dialectical behavioral approaches. Her greatest joy as a therapist is watching people become their authentic selves and build lives that meet their needs. She is open to feedback and strives to provide a safe and empowering environment to help people achieve their therapeutic goals.

Amy Carrison, PsyD, LADC

Dr. Carrison is completing a postdoctoral fellowship with AuSM and uses cognitive behavioral strategies in therapy to help clients change problematic behavior patterns. She has experience in psychological assessment and testing with the goal of providing individuals with targeted interventions to overcome areas of need. Dr. Carrison has been licensed in Minnesota as a drug and alcohol counselor since 2002 and has worked in a variety of substance abuse treatment settings with both adults and adolescents.

Barbara Luskin, PhD, LP

Dr. Luskin is a licensed psychologist who has worked closely with children and adults with ASD for more than 30 years in professional and home settings. She specializes in providing both assessments and counseling to individuals with ASD and those who support them. Dr. Luskin’s services include diagnostic and functional assessments, individual therapy for adults and adolescents, and training and consultation for caregivers. She helps them understand ASD, teaches them creative and effective interventions, helps them evaluate progress, and provides guidance when adjustments are needed.

Sara Pahl, MS, BCBA, NCC

Pahl is a Nationally Certified Counselor and a Board Certified Behavior Analyst who has worked with people with ASD for nearly 20 years. She specializes in working with systems, such as families and schools struggling with behavioral issues, as well as working with adolescents and young adults with ASD. Pahl strives to help empower, children, adolescents, and young adults with ASD through self-advocacy and self-determination, no matter what ability, using a non-judgemental, integrated, empathetic, evidenced-based approach.

Beth Pitchford, MA

Pitchford became passionate about working with people on the “invisible” part of the spectrum (formerly known as Asperger’s syndrome) after she realized that many people close to her are on the spectrum and spent most of their lives wondering why they felt so different. Pitchford values working with adults who want to decode the neurotypical world in order to decrease barriers to community acceptance and to increase feelings of success. She works with adolescents as they navigate the super-social world of the teenage years. Using cognitive behavioral approaches and her Adlerian training, Pitchford’s goal is to help people better understand not only themselves but also the people in their lives.

Jennifer S. Reinke, PhD, LAMFT, CFLE

Dr. Reinke is an Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Wisconsin – Stout. Dr. Reinke has worked with individuals and families affected by autism for more than 10 years. Though a diagnosis of an intellectual or developmental disability, such as autism, tends to be given to an individual, Dr. Reinke strongly believes that such diagnoses affect the entire family – including the parent-child relationship, couple relationship, sibling relationship, as well as relationships with grandparents and other extended family. She strives to work with families to acknowledge the unique joys, rewards, and challenges that autism brings to their lives, and to identify possible solutions that will serve to strengthen their family unit.
The Exceptional School for Exceptional Learners

We provide a personalized learning path integrating academic, social and life skills for qualifying students with autism spectrum disorder or related learning differences.

New Location:
3500 Williston Rd.
Minnetonka, MN 55345

Our story on the missing piece:

I still remember the day we were diagnosed with autism! The only sources of helpful information available at that time were my reflection in the mirror and the Internet. Finding the right people who were sensitive and focused on the unique needs of my family was challenging.

I joined the real estate industry to put my valuable personal experiences to work serving as an advocate for families with special needs. I guide families through the real estate environment, helping them find homes that are centrally located to the best special services for their loved ones, and most importantly, fitting their budget needs.

Contemplating a move to better provide for your family with unique special needs? Please contact me and know that I will offer empathy and expertise in your home search journey.

Call/Text: 612-532-1685 ● www.TonyFarah.com ● tony.farah@cbburnet.com

www.aowl.org
952-737-6900
WE ALL HAVE DREAMS.

If your dream involves pursuing higher education, we can help.

Our innovative College+ Essentials program can help you build real life skills, so you can successfully study, live independently, and pursue your vocation in life. We partner with you, your family, educators, and others to set realistic goals and reach for the horizon.

So keep dreaming. We’ll help you get there.

Executive Function Skill Building
for Independence & Success

For those with executive function challenges, ADHD, learning disabilities & other learning differences

LDA’s Executive Function program empowers youth to:

- Improve organization and time management skills
- Learn to prioritize
- Discover and maximize strengths
- Learn important self-advocacy skills
- Increase confidence
- Facilitate successful transition to post-secondary

“Before, I struggled with homework and studying and just keeping up with everything. I’m better at managing it all now.”

- Kai

Executive function skills consist of “higher order” mental processes and behaviors that help the brain to organize and act on information.

Executive Function Skill Building is designed to help middle and high school youth develop the skills necessary to be independent learners:
- Organizing Materials
- Organizing Information
- Study Skills
- Time Management

Middle and High School cohort groups meet for six hours over four to six sessions at LDA Minnesota in Golden Valley. Price $300. Private 1:1 also available.

LDA also offers tutoring, navigation services, assessments & support groups. Contact LDA Minnesota for more information.

www.ldaminnesota.org  info@ldaminnesota.org  952-382-6000
6100 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55422
This is an AuSM Community!

With a prevalence rate of 1 in 68, autism is Minnesota’s fastest growing developmental disability. Everyone knows someone with autism.

For nearly half a century, the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) has been providing programs and services to those affected by autism from birth through retirement. Your generous donations build this supportive community where people with autism can learn, grow, and thrive.

You make us AuSM!
Navigating MSP Airport (Held Monthly)
Take an airport practice run. Navigating MSP Airport is held monthly. Participation is free, but advance registration is required.
Location: Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport

October 14, 2017
AuSM Pumpkin Patch Trolley
Experience the thrill of riding a trolley, spend time with autism families, and pick a perfect pumpkin.
Location: Minnesota Streetcar Museum, Linden Hill Station, Minneapolis
Cost: AuSM Members: $10 Per Family; Non-Members: $15 Per Family; registration is required and space is limited.

October 18, 2017
AuSM Workshop presented by Glenis Benson, PhD
Join AuSM for this opportunity to participate in a full day workshop presented by autism expert, Glenis Benson, who will share insights on the hidden curriculum and executive functioning.
Location: enVision Hotel, South St. Paul

December 7, 2017
AuSM Workshop: Practical Solutions for Autistic Living presented by Judy Endow, MSW, LCSW
Join AuSM for this opportunity to participate in a full day workshop presented by autism expert, Judy Endow, who will share about her personal experiences as an individual on the spectrum and provide practical strategies for supporting students to be the best versions of themselves.
Location: enVision Hotel, South St. Paul

January 29, 2018
AuSM Camp and Summer Social Skills Program Registration Opens
AuSM day and residential summer camps are developed specifically for individuals with autism. Campers are cared for by highly trained, experienced staff, while everyone makes memories that last a lifetime. AuSM Summer Social Skills classes foster self-awareness and self-esteem while participants learn how to make friends and have fun.

March 4, 2018
Steps of Hope for Autism in Minnesota
Time to activate your inner superhero! Steps of Hope 2017 is going to be bigger, more exciting, and raise more dollars than ever for the Minnesota autism community. Build your team, fundraise for AuSM, and join us for the state’s largest autism resource fair. Visit www.SOHWalk.org.
Location: Southdale Center, Edina, Minn.

April 25-28, 2018
23rd Annual Minnesota Autism Conference
Get all of the latest information on autism, all in one place. Visit the AuSM Bookstore, gather information from key autism exhibitors, and spend your conference days learning from high-caliber speakers.
Location: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Minneapolis Park Place, St. Louis Park, Minn.

April 27, 2018
AuSM’s 4th Annual Gala Celebration
AuSM’s gala will bring the Minnesota autism community together for fantastic food, drinks, games, a silent auction, and a celebration of those serving as true inspirations to individuals affected by autism.
Location: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Minneapolis Park Place, St. Louis Park, Minn.

Visit www.ausm.org for the latest community events and AuSM fundraiser information.
Minnesota Life College
Our graduates live independent, self-sufficient, full lives.

For a young person with learning differences or autism spectrum disorder, transitions can be tough. Creating a transition plan for the future can seem nearly impossible. Since 1996 Minnesota Life College has been a transition guide for young people and their families, providing programs that teach Real Skills for Real Life to prepare students for a happy, healthy, and supportive independence.

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You have an AuSM community.

The Autism Society of Minnesota offers a place to learn, access services, and develop skills that enhance your life. AuSM membership connects you to a common community that acts without judgment, nurtures potential, advances knowledge, and builds awareness.

To learn about AuSM’s member benefits and become an AuSM Member today, call 651.647.1083 or visit www.ausm.org.