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our mission...

*To provide treatment and remediation to young children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders; to provide training to those who would offer such treatment; to provide trained personnel for the families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders; and to offer these services to low-income or economically disadvantaged families.*



# bia

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION ASSOCIATION

*A California non-profit corporation serving children with Autism Spectrum Disorders since 1993*

## Extraordinary Families

by Hilary Baldi

How many times has a friend or acquaintance said to me, "It must be so rewarding to work with children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)!" In truth, there are too many times to count. However, I do know that each time I respond by telling them that the greatest reward for the work that we do at BIA is to meet and work with such extraordinary families. I'm certain that each and every one of us at BIA who parents our own children, would say that we have had an education in parenting that no amount of money could buy. We learn quickly here that an enormous part of parenting is appreciating your child's each and every accomplishment and choosing your battles. We see time and time again how one step, no matter how small, can and most often does, lead to a big step. While our job is to help children accomplish that small step and to help families choose which battles to fight, it is the family and caregivers who make it possible for us take a bigger step and to move on to the next challenge. Early intervention services, without parent support and involvement, might be compared to training for the Tour de France with only a stationary bike.

In this issue, we've focused on sharing information that supports families and children outside of their intervention hours.



Included is a menu of strategies for the parent or caregiver of a "picky eater" (page 8). To spice up your toy library, we've listed an array of materials, both old and new, that score big with many of our clients (page 9). We've even included a family friendly selection on our "Reference Desk."

With summer around the corner, many of you may be vacationing to far away places. Yet, for those of you staying close to home we invite you to stop by and visit us at our Oakland site as we break ground on our outdoor play space, or join us at the A's game on July 22nd where all donations to the sports memorabilia silent auction will go to BIA. Wherever you are, we wish you well and hope to see you in the future. ●



## Our Dedicated Staff

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Kristin Crawford      Samuel Rocha  
Matthew Fabrizio      ArYang

#### BIA NEW YORK —

Allyson Haselbauer, MA

# Our Philosophy

BIA strives to enhance each child's ability to reach his/her maximum potential by:

- Creating a developmentally appropriate and comprehensive curriculum
- Capitalizing on a child's strengths and interests
- Providing an intensive number of learning opportunities
- Generalizing skills across settings (peers, school, community)
- Educating families
- Assisting and supporting children in mainstream settings

BIA blends together skill-based teaching approaches including:

- ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis): positive behavioral support strategies, pivotal response teaching, discrete trial instruction, cognitive behavior modification
- Visual teaching strategies: PECS (Picture Exchange Communication Systems), visual schedules/visual tasks as found in TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children),

BIA seeks to create a unique relationship with each student built on trust, reciprocity, and shared enjoyment of relating.



# Meeting Our Mission



## Intensive Early Intervention

BIA provides intensive early intervention services to families in the Bay Area and Fresno. These are home and school-based 1:1 programs with 15-30 hours per week of direct services to each child.

## Consult Services

BIA provides consultation services in the Bay Area, Fresno and New York which consist of ongoing program design, development, and recommendations. BIA collaborates with many school districts to evaluate existing services and assess students enrolled in district programs

## The Village Inclusive Preschool Program (Fresno)

An inclusive preschool and educational center fostering learning styles of all children.

## Workshops

BIA provides workshops on: Early Warning Signs of Autism (available in Spanish), Play with Peers, Supporting Students with ASD in Group Settings. Please email or call for more information. Workshops are available throughout the U.S.

## Community Outreach

BIA participates in autism resource fairs and provides speakers in the community on a variety of topics.

## Individual Program Funding

BIA is vendorized with both the state regional center system and the public school system.

## Lending Library

Provides program play materials as well as reference materials for parents and staff. Donations of books or videos on autism, teaching strategies, etc. are always welcome. Our Toys Lending Library space is limited so please contact our office about toy donations and we will be happy to see if we can put it to good use!

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## BIA's Wishlist

Can you help us make our wishlist shorter? If you can provide any of the items below, please contact our office at 510-652-7445 ext. 10. Gently used is more than welcome!

### FOR BIA – BAY AREA

- Landscaping Needs- Flowers & Plants
- Flat screen monitors/TV

### FOR THE VILLAGE PRESCHOOL/BIA-FRESNO

(please contact 559-449-1059 for specifics)\*

- Donations for the Library
- Little Tykes Play Center (commercial grade)
- Large Fire Truck with Springs
- Curved Balance Beam
- Funhoop

\* all available at [www.childforms.com](http://www.childforms.com)



# In Gratitude...

*All of us at BIA are very grateful to the many individuals and organizations who contributed their time and/or money to help us achieve our mission.\**

## Annual Fund Donors\*

### **BUILDING BLOCKS (\$20-\$99)**

Lori Hagerty  
Jack/Annette Heller  
Dr. Meyer Heller  
Jill Herschman  
Linda Heller Lapin  
Paul/Lois Laygo  
Patty Montoya  
Carol Slater  
Western Athletic Club  
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### **FIRST STEPS (\$100-\$249)**

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### **EXPLORERS (\$250-\$499)**

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Western Athletic Club  
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### **CLIMBERS (\$500-\$999)**

AXA Foundation  
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Ryan/Amber Dias  
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Lynne Royer  
Dr. Joel /Sylvia Saldinger

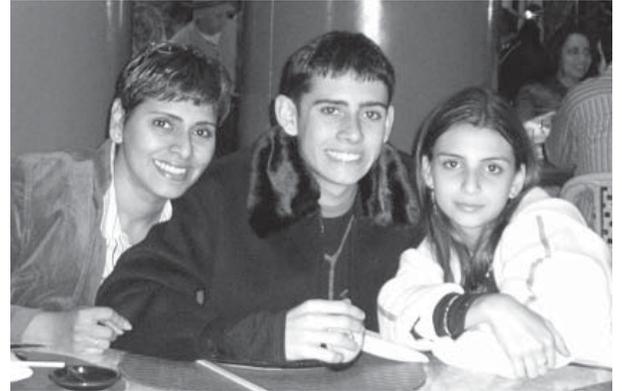
### **TEAM MATES (\$1000 AND ABOVE)**

Jerry/Karen Borden  
Jim/Penny Coulter  
The Chor/Slosberg Fund-Bernard Slosberg  
Google

*\*Donors after our print date will be acknowledged in the next issue.*

# Back with BIA

*By Shanti Kilduff*



My son Josh was diagnosed with autism in 1996. At that time, the Philippines, where I grew up and had both my daughter and son, offered no services for children with autism. Through a friend I heard about BIA and the success that they was having with her son. Josh and I packed up and headed for the States and stayed for 8 months.

I'm not sure who learned more, me or Josh, but it was a fruitful journey. Having BIA educate me and my son prompted me to pursue a career providing ABA services to families in the Philippines. Nine years ago I established an organization that provides home-based services to young children with ASD. I also started a Master's degree in Special Education and took ABA courses on-line.

Having decided to move back to the States, I was fortunate enough to discover that BIA, the very same organization that had been there for me and for my son Joshua, had an opening for a Program Director. Needless to say, I applied for the position and began my employment at BIA on May 1st. I am grateful for the opportunity to join BIA's team in its 13th year of providing the kind of service that changed my life and the lives of many other families.

# SPOTLIGHT

on kids!



**M**atthew Cromaz is head over heels for his new found passion, gymnastics! He started lessons about 2 years ago at a local center and progressed so quickly that he was recently invited to demonstrate exercises for a lower level class! Before starting his intervention program, Matthew's gross motor skills were evaluated and were, in general, delayed compared to his age group. When he joined the gymnastics class his skills clearly lagged other children of his age group who were also just beginning. Matthew always had an interest in gross motor play, though, and was always something of a daredevil when it came to the park. Great job, Matthew!



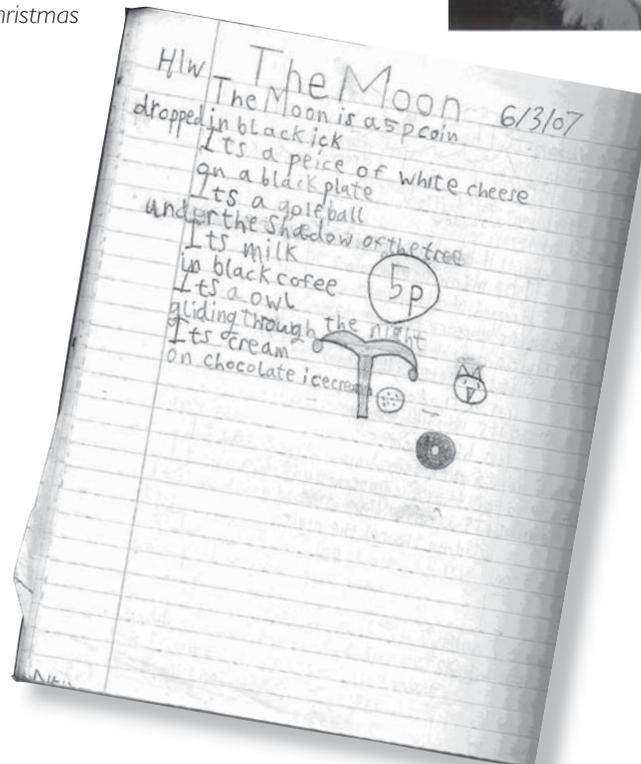
Our next spotlite is on **Molly Ryle** and her taste for the theatre! Since third grade Molly has appeared in over 12 performances by the River City Theater Company. She is now in high school! These photos are from recent parts in *Cats* and *A Christmas Carol*. Bravo, Molly!



We love this poem from **Laurence Bryar**, across the ocean in London. Keep writing, Laurence!

**The Moon** March 6, 2007

*The Moon is a 5p coin  
dropped in black ick  
Its a peice of white cheese  
on a black plate  
Its a golfball  
under the shadow of the tree  
Its milk  
in black cofee  
Its a owl  
gliding through the night  
Its cream  
on chocolate ice cream*



## News from...



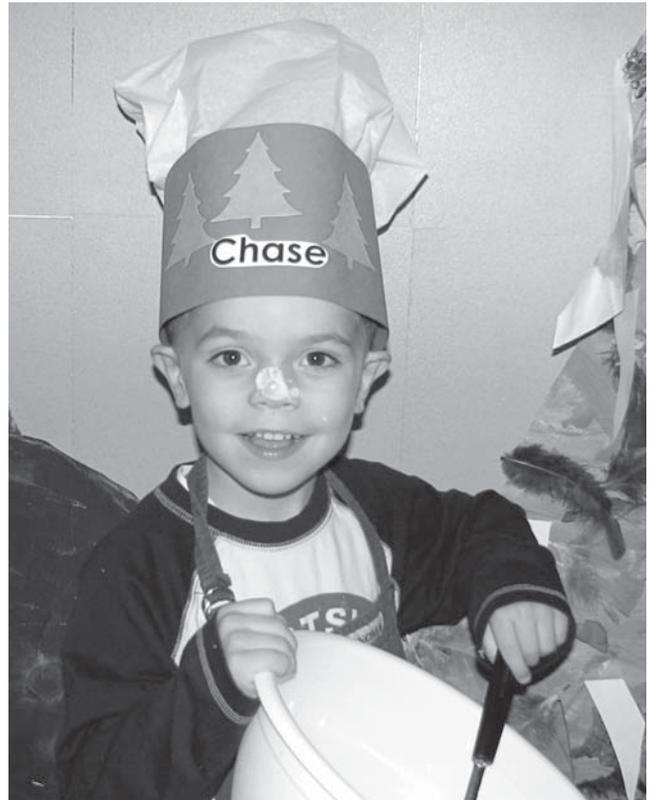
By Monique Bekeschus

*The Village* continues to grow here in the Central Valley. In June, we hope to begin remodeling space on campus for a library, made possible by a grant from the Dyer Family Foundation. In addition, we have nearly completed furnishing the second classroom which is scheduled to open in August 2007. The classroom's focus is on dramatic play and includes a loft area and stage complete with costumes. We hope that offering varying levels of structure from one classroom to the next will ensure that each child has his or her own place to explore regardless of their learning style.

In the first quarter of 2007, BIA & The Village received 2 grants. The first for \$5,000.00 from First 5 Fresno County was given to develop the playground. New equipment has been ordered and is expected to go up in May. The second grant of \$2,500.00 from Children's Services Network went directly into many of the dramatic pieces in the second classroom and new bikes.

Due to many issues that were outside of the luau committee's control, the Kei Ki Luau fundraiser to benefit a scholarship program at The Village preschool was cancelled this year. As it turned out, the day the luau was scheduled, Fresno experienced unusually cold and rainy weather (definitely not luau weather). On a brighter note, the support of the Central Valley was unwavering in that many individuals or businesses who either purchased tickets for the luau or donated items for the silent auction elected that BIA and The Village keep their donation in support of the students and families who attend the Village programs. For this, and for all the hard work put forth by event committee members, Allison Campos (BIA board member), Jeannie Turner and Dottie Florentino, we are extremely grateful.

While indeed, there is much yet to do, we should not forget to stop and look back only 5 years to a time when families of children with ASD in the Fresno area didn't have options such as intensive early intervention programs and the availability of a truly inclusive pre-school for children to learn and thrive. Thank you for your on-going support of this innovative program!



## Integrated Consultation: A Therapist's Perspective

By Kelly Cahill, MA, CCC-SLP

It starts with Chase saying "Miss Kelly's here" and ends with hugs and many good-byes. Yes, I'm talking about the Village Preschool. This inclusive and innovative program, partially funded by First Five, requires weekly therapeutic input and consultation by both an occupational therapist and speech pathologist. Services are delivered through observation, teacher consultation and child interaction. The blending of education needs and social communication is what it's all about. As therapists, we are welcomed into all activities from circle time to garden planting. Natural situations for cueing children in communication and socialization are presented throughout the day. The staff at the Village Preschool are always looking for opportunities to teach to the strengths and support the needs of all children. With typical peer models, the children with autistic behaviors are reinforced by example and direction. "Picking friends" to head off to centers or taking a bite of snack is a given. Respect and kindness towards each and every classmate is expected and acknowledged. It's been a privilege to support the fine staff and watch the students develop effective and appropriate social communication. I truly believe that every child would benefit from this inclusive, innovative preschool program.

# IEP Tips

By Rachel Manfredi

As many of you already know, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a legally binding document that establishes an educational plan for a child with special needs.

It is also a meeting that can be intimidating and scary, but preparing yourself ahead of time can help alleviate a lot of stress and worry. We here at BIA have come up with a short checklist of things you can do and resources you can use to get ready for your next IEP:

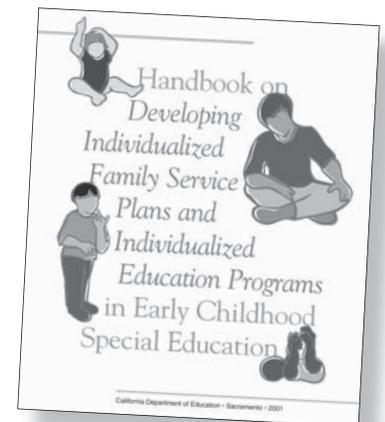
1. **Review and bring copies of all evaluations, assessments and goal updates.** This will help you in establishing your child's current level of achievement and will be useful when determining his/her goals for the next year.
2. **Know ahead of time who will be attending the IEP and what the main purpose of that IEP meeting will be** (i.e. preschool placement, IFSP to IEP transition, discussion of additional services). Make sure all relevant parties will be in attendance.
3. **Visit prospective schools and classrooms** so you can see for yourself if the placement options are a good fit for your child's needs.
4. **Take some time to talk to your child's program directors, teachers, and therapists before the IEP meeting.** Their experience can provide valuable insights and strategies.
5. **Have a plan.** Know what kind of goals you would like to have included in your child's IEP and what specific areas you would like to have addressed.
6. **Remember that you, the parent, are a pivotal member of your child's IEP team.** Do not be afraid to speak up, ask questions and give opinions.
7. **Bring support.** A friend, family member or advocate can be helpful by keeping you focused on the task at hand, take notes on important decisions or just lend moral support.
8. **Bring water and snacks.** Often these meetings run longer than we expect, and it's important to keep your energy up and your mind sharp.

This checklist is just a basic list of things to keep in mind before attending an IEP meeting. To learn more about the IEP process and what it might entail, you can also try accessing these resources:

BIA Newsletter • Summer 2007



- **Workshops** - Several parent groups around the Bay Area such as Support for Families or Parents Helping Parents provide frequent workshops and training seminars that deal specifically with special education and the IEP process. Try checking out their websites for dates and times:  
**Parents Helping Parents:** [www.php.com](http://www.php.com)  
**Support for Families:** [www.supportforfamilies.org](http://www.supportforfamilies.org)
- **Publications:**  
California Department of Education's *Handbook on Developing Individualized Family Service Plans and Individualized Education Programs in Early Childhood Special Education*, provides a comprehensive look at the entire IFSP and IEP process, including timelines, checklists and lists of relevant legal and community resources. [www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/fp/documents/ecifspiiep.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/fp/documents/ecifspiiep.pdf).



Remember, the more prepared you are, the smoother the IEP development process will be!

# Picky Eaters with ASD

By Teri Jasman



Helping young children develop healthy eating habits is a goal that many parents share. However, this goal is more easily achieved with some children than it is with others. Establishing a healthy and varied diet in children can be a struggle for many parents, especially those of children with ASD. Cajoling, airplane noises, creative food presentations and threats of starvation make no difference to the child who simply won't eat anything that is not on his or her personal "OK list."

Autism affects each child uniquely. Therefore, the reasons for a restricted food repertoire may not be the same for each child with ASD. Some common reasons that children with ASD may reject new foods or may stop eating foods that they have previously eaten include sensory issues (aversions to certain smells or textures), oral defensiveness, food allergies, digestive issues and/or desire for sameness. In some cases, professionals may need to be consulted prior to attempting to expand a child's diet (in order to rule out food allergies for example). In most other cases, however, a systematic behavioral approach to increasing food repertoire will yield results.

The following is an example of a step-by-step approach to integrating a new food into your child's diet. Once the child tolerates a step (i.e., does not cry or become upset) for two meals, move on to the next step. Also, don't forget to reinforce your child (with a desired food or activity) each time he/she demonstrates the targeted behavior.

1. Select a food that is similar to one that the child is already eating, such as a different type of pasta noodle or a different flavor of goldfish cracker.
2. During a snacktime or mealtime, put a small amount of the food on a separate plate next to your child's plate. You can bring your child's attention to the new food by eating some and commenting, "This is yummy."
3. Put the food on the child's plate. He/she does not eat the food but has to tolerate the food being on the plate.
4. Now have your child touch the food. You can model touching the food and have the child imitate you. Have a set number of times that the child is expected to touch the food, so that the expectation is clear. For example, tell the child "we're going to touch 3 times."
5. The next step is to have your child pick up the food. You can make this step more concrete for the child by having a set amount of the food out (5 or 6 noodles for example) and having the child move the food from one dish to another.
6. Now have your child put the food to his or her lips. You can tell your child, "give the food a kiss." Again, have a set number of times that this will be expected during the meal.
7. Step 7 is the same as step 6, but have your child put the food on his/her tongue.
8. Have a set number of very tiny bites of the food out (you may need to start with just one bite and work your way up). Have your child eat the bite(s) of food. Over time, you can increase the size of the bites.

Remember, that it may take weeks or even months to integrate a new food into your child's diet. The more systematic and consistent you are, the easier it will be. Before you know it, your child will actually be asking for foods that you never thought he or she would like.



# TOP 10 TOYS

By Anna Kern (a true toy fanatic)

Toys play a tremendous role in a child's development. They are the materials through which we learn, socialize and derive pleasure. Young children learn to share, trade, interact with, and communicate about toys. Choosing the right toy can be particularly challenging for parents of children who have Autism Spectrum Disorders. You must carefully consider many factors such as motor skills, symbolic thinking, areas of interest, and embedded reinforcement. Even when great thought goes into a toy purchase, it may wind up collecting dust on a shelf. Avoid getting discouraged, and remember the right toy can make a tremendous difference in developing primary skills. Here are our latest Top 10 Picks. We hope you find a winner among them.

- 1. Hallabalo** (ages 4+) \$15-20. Very physical game that requires language processing skills.
- 2. Cardboard Brick Blocks** (ages 2+) \$30. Incredibly versatile toy (build a balance beam, road, house).
- 3. Bob the Builder Duplo House Trailer Set** (ages 2+) \$25. Fun for pretend play and building. Best if child can build with Duplos.
- 4. Playmobil Pirate Ship** (ages 4+) \$30. Lots of great props. Requires some fine motor dexterity.
- 5. Color Wonder/Color Explosion** (ages 3+) \$8-13. No mess. Fun to have different mediums for fine motor work. Comes with it's own markers so they cannot be shortened for a better grip.
- 6. Wooden Fruits to Cut** (ages 2.5+) \$12. Great for kitchen play and motor skills.
- 7. Play-Doh Ice Cream making set** (ages 3+) \$12-15. Nice for sensory and pretend play.
- 8. Leap Frog Activity Pad – Infant** (ages 1-3) or **Pre-School** (ages 3-5) \$35. Infant Pad addresses vocabulary, cause and effect, etc. activating pad by touching by touch. Pre-school pad addresses common children's themes (Wiggles, Dora the Explorer), advanced vocabulary, concepts, mazes activating pad with an attached pen. Great leisure activity.
- 9. Aqua-Doodle** (ages 2-5) \$25-30. Nice way to address early fine motor skills and they come in several different styles (e.g., Thomas the Tank Engine, rainbow colors)
- 10. Gears, Gears, Gears- Movin' Monkeys Building Set** (ages 3+) \$20-40. Good for a child who enjoys concrete building toys that spin. Must have some fine motor dexterity.

And remember to always keep your eyes open to ACCESSORIZING any toy. A leftover badge from a conference can make a great addition to a doctor kit. An empty bottle of dish washing liquid and sponge could make that kitchen play just a little bit more interesting. Be creative, have fun, and play!

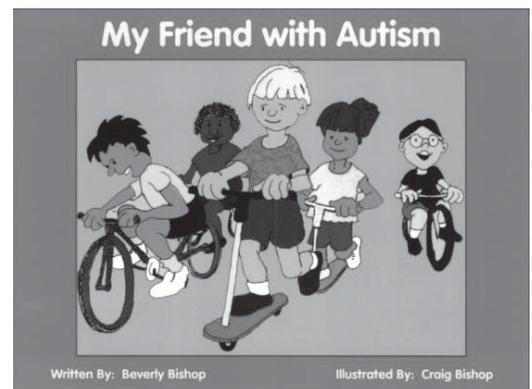


## BIA Reference Desk

By Allyson Haselbauer

***My Friend with Autism: A Coloring Book for Peers and Siblings*** - by Beverly Bishop

“How can I help my child's peers to understand him/her better?” Parents of children with ASD often ask me this question. The book, *My Friend with Autism: A Coloring Book for Peers and Siblings* by Beverly Bishop, is an extremely helpful resource for providing information about autism to children in ways that they can understand. It attempts to demystify behavior that may seem confusing or odd and to frame it in a positive way. For example, to explain a child who is sensitive to sound, the author writes, “My friend's ears work really well. He can hear sounds I may not even hear...this is why he sometimes covers his ears even when things don't seem loud to me.”



Aside from being a coloring book for children, the book contains helpful notes for adults including “Ten Quick Strategies for Helping an Autistic Child.” *My Friend with Autism* provides a wealth of easy-to-read information for any adult (e.g., grandparent, general education teacher) who is not familiar with ASD but who wants to learn more. The author also provides a recommended reading list for those who would like to do more in-depth reading.

# Community Resources

**Local Regional Centers –**  
Provide services, support, programs and funding.

**Regional Center of the East Bay:**  
Oakland office 510-383-1812  
Concord office 925-691-2300  
www.rceb.org

**Golden Gate Regional Center:**  
(San Francisco, Marin, Peninsula)  
415-546-9222  
www.ggrc.org

**Central Valley Regional Center**  
559-276-4360  
www.cvrcc.org

**Community Alliance for Special Education (CASE) -**  
Provides legal counsel support.  
1500 Howard St.  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
415-431-2285  
www.caseadvocay.org

**California Chapter of the National Autism Association –**  
Parent resource group. 510-237-9454  
www.nationalautismassociation.org

**Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) –**  
Public policy law center  
2212 6th St. Berkeley, CA 94710  
510-644-2555  
www.dredf.org

**Exceptional Parents Unlimited (EPU) –** Central Valley parent resource group 559-229-2000  
www.exceptionalparents.org

**Families for Early Autism Treatment (FEAT) –** statewide parent resource group. www.feat.org

[www.insurancehelpforautism.com](http://www.insurancehelpforautism.com)  
Info on insurance and ABA services

**Parents Helping Parents –**  
Family resource center  
3041 Olcott St.  
Santa Clara, CA 95054  
408-727-5775, www.php.com

**Protection and Advocacy -**  
Provides legal counsel support.  
433 Hegenberger Rd., Ste. 220  
Oakland, CA 94621  
510-839-0811  
www.pai-ca.org

**Special Needs Trusts Workshops**  
Support for Families – lists regular seminars on this topic in their monthly newsletter (www.supportforfamilies.org).

**Support For Families Of Children With Disabilities –**  
A family resource center  
2601 Mission Street, #606  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
415-282-7494  
www.supportforfamilies.org

**Talk About Curing Autism (TACA)**  
Southern California parent resource group. www.tacanow.com

**Through The Looking Glass -**  
Assistance with parenting, training and counseling.  
2198 6th St., Berkeley, CA  
510-848-1112  
www.lookingglass.org

*Please notify us with updated information.*

## Review of *Passport to Friendship*

*“Passport to Friendship* – a successor to *Embracing Play* (VL-9/00), which focused on parent-child interaction for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder –addresses the subject of children with ASD playing with friends. While making a new friend can be disorienting for children with ASD, this kind of interaction at an early age is critical in building lifelong social skills. Offering very specific guidelines for planning and leading a play session with a friend, the program emphasizes the need for both structure and predictability, while also encouraging parents and caregivers to keep three main goals in mind: 1) the child needs to stay in the designated play space, 2) the child needs to accept the peer, and 3) the child with ASD needs to learn to express his/her preferences for what will be played. Three types of activities are recommended for each hour of playtime: sensory/motor (physical play, often easiest for ASD children), turn-taking games, and ‘construction play’ (i.e., open-ended play that doesn’t depend on speech). As with the previous title, real parents and kids are featured throughout the program’s vignettes, which are supplemented by expert commentary from Hilary Baldi of the Behavioral Intervention Association. Highly recommended.”

–*Video Librarian* (3 1/2 stars review),  
March/April 2007, Volume 22, No. 2



*TWO DVDs show parents how to use play to improve interaction skills of children with autism*

**From Hilary Baldi, M.A. & Deanne Detmers, M.A.  
of Behavioral Intervention Association**

# Passport to Friendship

## FACILITATING PEER PLAY FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD

**\$34.95 / DVD / 37 minutes**  
Public Performance Rights Included



### Passport to Friendship

Facilitating Peer Play for Children with ASD



**bia**  
BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION ASSOCIATION

PASSPORT TO FRIENDSHIP is an engaging DVD that presents a step-by-step approach to facilitating successful peer play for the young child with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and is a follow-up to the previous release, EMBRACING PLAY.

Using clear examples, insights from parents, and expert commentary, this illuminating film for parents and educators demonstrates how to build structure and predictability into peer play. It features several play dates—each with a pair of preschool-aged children, one with ASD—to illustrate the tips and techniques that facilitate positive peer play:

- Create physical boundaries for the play area
- Limit choices of toys and activities
- Incorporate visual supports (e.g., choiceboard, turn-taking indicator, etc.)
- Choose familiar activities
- Include the playmate's activity preferences
- Provide a balance of activities (sensory motor, turn-taking, construction play, pretend play)
- Review the play date routine (choices, house rules, incentives)

The additional resources (text files accessible by computer) provide lists of tried-and-true peer play activities with simple instructions—from rough-and-tumble games to creative ideas for construction play—giving parents ample material for creating fun and instructive play dates for their child with autism.



# Embracing Play: TEACHING YOUR CHILD WITH AUTISM

**\$34.95 / DVD / 47 minutes / Public Performance Rights Included**

This video teaches parents of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) how to engage their child through play and help kids relate to others. Parents learn how to foster play and shared experiences through "Object Focused Play." Demonstrations of one-on-one play sessions between a child and adult show how to create the structure necessary to capture a child's attention, keep it, and how to gauge success.

**These DVDs are available from Woodbine House (see below).**

## ORDER FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Check here to receive a Woodbine House Special-Needs Collection Catalog.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment:  Check  Visa/MC/AmEx/Discover

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# Some Facts About Autism

Autism is a brain disorder that affects a person's ability to communicate, to reason, and to interact with others. It is a spectrum disorder that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees of severity, and can be found in combination with other disabilities.

The term "autism" and "autism spectrum disorder" are often used interchangeably and refer to three of five disorders known as Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD). The three "autism spectrum disorders" are: Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, and PDD-NOS (Not Otherwise Specified).

## Common symptoms of autism include:

- Severely delayed communication skills (lack of use of gestures, delay or lack of spoken language)
- Restricted play skills (repetitive use of objects, lack of imaginative play)
- Impairment in social interaction (minimal interest in peers, lack of sharing items/experiences with caregivers)

Source: Autism Society of America



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