Autism Parentin Magazine

Issue 116

Coping with Caregiver Burnout

CONTEXT LINDNESS its Impact on Older Kids

Are Your Expectation S **Affecting** Your Child?

Top Tips for **Mastering Virtual** Learning

Oral Motor Exercises to Try at Home

ENHANCING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Celebrating Our 2020 RIBUTOR HEROES

By Emily ANSELL ELFER, BA Hons, Dip.

2020 has not been an easy year for anyone, with the COVID-19 virus affecting people's lives and lockdowns restricting daily living. For the autism community, it's been particularly challenging as families were forced to abandon their usual routines and ASD children found themselves living in an unfamiliar world.

At Autism Parenting Magazine, we take the opportunity every year to reflect and thank our exceptional contributors who have written for us over the previous 12 months. This year, our gratitude is exceptionally high as our readers required advice and support more than ever.

Many autism specialists, scientists, educators, doctors, advocates, parents, and carers collaborated with us over 2020 and every one of them deserves applause. Choosing names for our 2020 Contributor Awards was no easy task and I would like to add a huge thank you to every single supporter; you know who you are.

Drum roll please.....! We are thrilled to announce the following writers have been selected as our 2020 Contributor Awards recipients:

2020 TOP CONTRIBUTOR AWARDS



Top Autism Advocate DERRICK HAYES

Derrick Hayes, also known as the "enTIEtainer", is an author, professional speaker, consultant, and entertainer who lives in Columbus,



Georgia. He provides interviews with autism parents for the magazine each month by asking six questions through each letter in the word "autism". Derrick's interviews offer readers insightful perspectives from parents, experts, entrepreneurs, and other leaders in the field.

Website: www.derrickhayes.com Email: info@derrickhayes.com



Top Autism Solutions Writer DR. RON **MALCOLM**



Dr. Ronald Malcolm is an Assistant Director of Special Education for a public school district, an Associate Faculty

Member with the University of Phoenix, and a Special Graduate Faculty member at the University of Kansas. He has bachelor's degrees in English and Special Education. He holds master level degrees in Counseling, Special Education, and School Administration. His doctorate degree is from Northern Arizona University in Educational Leadership. His post graduate degrees are in Positive Behavior Supports and Autism Spectrum Disorders. He has worked for the past 36 years with autistic students between the ages of three and 21 in various school and community-based settings.



Top General **Advice Writer JC ELLINGER**

JC (Juliet) Ellinger is an autism mom who enjoys sharing and learning through writing. She draws upon her own experi-



ences in her magazine articles in order to support and inspire other parents. Juliet is currently working on her first children's book geared at bringing relatability and support to other ASD children just like her amazing son. She carries an MBA from Regis University and a BA in Communications from CSU Long Beach.

Facebook: <u>www.facebook.com/jc.ellinger.writer</u>
Instagram: <u>www.instagram.com/jc.ellinger</u>

Email: <u>Juliet.ellinger01@gmail.com</u>



Top Expert
Advice Writer
RACHEL
BÉDARD, PhD



Rachel Bédard, PhD is a licensed psychologist practicing in Fort Collins, Colorado. She uses a

strengths-based approach and her clients note she has the ability to help them laugh about even the most stressful or embarrassing events in life. Dr. Bédard has co-written two books alongside speech-language pathologist Mallory Griffith. Their most recent book is You've Got This!: The Journey from Middle School to College, As Told by Students on the Autism Spectrum and Their Parents.

Websites: <u>www.drrachelbedard.com</u> and thesociallearningproject.com



Top
Occupational
Therapist
REBECCA
CONNICK,
MOT, LOTR



Rebecca Connick, MOT, LOTR is a pediatric occupational

therapist and the OT Program Coordinator at Crane Rehab Center for Behavior, Language, and Learning in New Orleans, LA. Rebecca has extensive experience in treating children with ASD and feeding disorders as part of an outpatient interdisciplinary therapy program. Rebecca also authors the blog Fingertips: Pointers from a Pediatric Occupational Therapist, where she posts content on a range of topics relevant to all parents.

Website: https://fingertips.blog/

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/fingertipsblog



Top Autism
Therapy Writer
DR. ANNETTE
NUÑEZ

Dr. Annette Nuñez is founder and director of <u>Breakthrough Interventions</u>, <u>LLC</u> and <u>Breaking Through Autism</u>. She is a licensed psycho-



therapist and has worked with children with ASD and other related disorders for over 22 years. As part of her doctorate work at the University of Denver, Dr. Nuñez developed the Children's Social Competence Scale (CSCS). The CSCS is an early intervention evaluation tool that measures social competence in young children. She served as the Program Director for Connect Us, a non-profit organization that helps children cultivate positive relationships through facilitated play. Her research interests include the mainstreaming and socialization of children with high functioning autism. Dr. Nuñez conducts seminars nationally and internationally and has consulted with many schools in China and South Africa. Dr. Nuñez also consults and supervises the therapists at the Breakthrough Interventions site in South Africa. Dr. Nuñez has been widely featured in the media and hosts a podcast entitled Behind the Breakthroughs, where she shares advice.

Websites: <u>www.btinterventions.com/</u> and <u>www.break-</u>inathrouahautism.com/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/breakingthroughautism/ Instagram: www.instagram.com/breakthrough-autism/



Top Speech-Language Pathologist

MALLORY GRIFFITH, MA, CCC-SLP



Mallory Griffith, MA, CCC-SLP is a speech-language pathologist living

and working in Fort Collins, CO. In her office, she primarily works with people on the spectrum, coaching social communications skills. Mallory has co-authored two books with Rachel Bédard, PhD, including: Raising a Child on the Autism Spectrum: Insights from Parents to Parents, and, You've Got This!: The Journey from Middle School to College, as told by Students on the Autism Spectrum and Their Parents.

Website: <u>www.mallorygriffithslp.com</u> Email: mallorygriffithslp@gmail.com



Top Autism Rights Writer SARA COLOROSA, PhD



Sara R. Colorosa, PhD, is the owner of The Engagement

Catalyst, LLC. She completed a research study in an organization where employees and managers shared their experiences aligning people's diverse skills, abilities, and interests with career opportunities, especially for those on the spectrum. Sara understands the gap between theory and practice and focuses on adult learning styles, diversity in the workplace, and leader's roles in organizational success. She is passionate about helping individuals develop their executive functioning, organizational skills, and study habits to achieve career goals.

Website: www.theengagementcatalyst.com.



Top Autism Safety Advisor JOSEPH PANGARO



Joseph Pangaro is a retired police lieutenant and former director of school

security. He is currently the CEO and Chief Security Officer for True Security Design, a national company that provides safety, security assessments, and staff training for schools, businesses, houses of worship, and summer camps. Lt. Pangaro is also an award-winning writer for several publications and the author of Securing Our Schools, a Roadmap to Safety.



Top Autism Health Writer DENISE VOIGHT, MS



Denise Voight, MS, is a clinical nutritionist with a Master of Science in Hu-

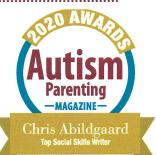
man Nutrition and Functional Medicine specializing in

Nutritional Intervention for autism spectrum disorders and ADHD. She is an expert in applying scientifically proven food and nutrition therapies to improve health, learning, and behavior in children with ASD and ADHD.

Website: https://www.denisevoight.com/



Top Social
Skills Writer
CHRIS
ABILDGAARD,
LPC, NCC, NCSP



Chris Abildgaard, LPC, NCC, NCSP, is a Nationally Certified School

Psychologist, a board-certified national counselor, and a licensed professional counselor with a specialization in autism spectrum disorders. He is the owner and director of the Social Learning Center, LLC. located in Cheshire, CT, and an Adjunct Professor at the University of St. Joseph, located in West Hartford, CT. Chris earned a graduate certificate from the University of Massachusetts Lowell in Behavioral Interventions in Autism and is pursuing his doctorate of Education (EdD) in School Psychology from Loyola University.

Facebook: <u>@SocialLearningCenter</u> Instagram: <u>@sociallearningctr</u>

Twitter: @SLC545

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/chrisabildgaardslc



Top Communication Advisor

KAREN KAPLAN



Karen Kaplan recently completed ten years as Executive Director of Wings Learning Center, a school

for children 5-22 years old with autism spectrum disorders, located in Redwood City, CA. She served as an instructor in the Autism Spectrum Certificate program at Alliant University. She completed her BS and MS in Speech Pathology from Arizona State University. She minored in Special Education and holds an Educational Administrative Credential and Moderate to Severe Teaching Credential. She has sat on non-profit boards to help build capacity for those with special needs. She founded and directed a residential school for nearly 20

years in Sacramento. Karen is an author and speaker, and she spent time globally helping non-governmental agencies in Indonesia and Africa. Currently she is consulting with families, schools, and adult programs.

Website: <u>www.karenkaplanasd.com</u> Email: karensupportsu@comcast.net



Top Parental Advice Writer DEANNA PICON



Deanna Picon is founder of Your Autism Coach, LLC, which provides personal-

ized guidance, support, and seminars for parents of special needs children. She is a parent of a non-verbal young man with autism. Deanna is the author of The <u>Autism Parents' Guide to Reclaiming Your Life</u>, which is available at www.amazon.com.

Website: <u>www.yourautismcoach.com</u>



Top Education
Writer
CRYSTAL
GALLAGHER



Crystal Gallagher is a special education teacher and mom of two sons with autism. She

is passionate about advocating for all students with special needs. She lives in Chesapeake, VA with her husband, two sons, and their mini zoo (two dogs, two cats, and one very old quinea pig).



Top Personal Narrative Writer

RUTHANGELA BERNADETTE Autism
Parenting
—MAGAZINE—

Ruthangela
Bernadette
Ton Personal Narrative Writer

Ruthangela Bernadette is the author of <u>Special Kid to</u> <u>Super Kid</u>. She's a supermom

who launched her daughter from super-stuck to super-

hero. Her passion is to inspire and empower parents to do likewise, but that's only her day job. Her real job is raising her eye-rolling, door slamming, make-up wearing super daughter, and of course, saving the universe before dinner time.



Top Young
Writer
CLAUDIA
ROSE ADDEO



Claudia Rose Addeo holds a master's degree in Literacy Education and currently works at one of the top-rated school

districts on Long Island. Claudia was diagnosed with pervasive developmental disorder (PDD) at two years old. As a flourishing freelance writer and inspirational speaker, Claudia aims to give hope to parents of special needs children, as well as to special needs children themselves.

Instagram: <u>@claudia.addeo</u> Facebook: claudia.addeo



Top Autism
Poet
RACHEL



Rachel Alexander is married with two children, Max and Isla, and lives in Houston, Tex-

as (although she is originally from the UK). Max was diagnosed with autism at the age of two and it was her family's autism journey that inspired Rachel to start writing poetry. Rachel hopes her poems will help other autism parents to know that they are not alone, and that her work can help encourage acceptance and create a better understanding of life with autism.

Website: www.autismthroughpoetry.com/ Facebook: <a href="http://www.facebook.com/au-racebook

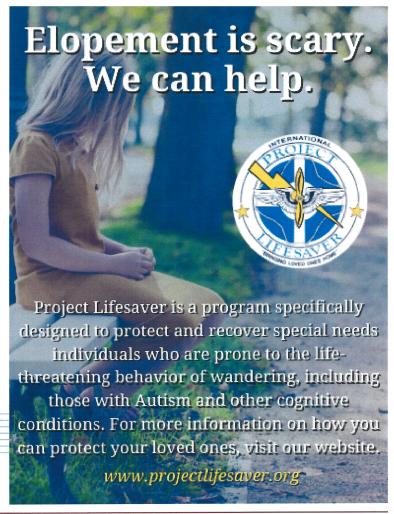
<u>tismthroughpoetry</u>

AUTISM NEWS



Emily Ansell Elfer, BA Hons, Dip. is Editor of Autism Parenting Magazine, where she coordinates an extensive group of therapists, autism specialists, and writers to publish news and professional guidance for families affected by autism. An NCTJ-qualified journalist, Em-

ily's work is published in newspapers, magazines, and across multiple websites. She previously managed content for women's careers website, <u>Where Women Work</u>, is a former Editor of a food magazine group, and is a former Deputy Editor of <u>Toy World Magazine</u>.





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