

HOPE

THE AUTISTIC SOCIETY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO NEWSLETTER

JULY 2015

World Autism Awareness Day

On April 2nd 2015, the world celebrated World Autism Awareness Day. A special function was held at The Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago Headquarters (ASTT) at Ragoo Road, D'abadie to commemorate the event. A panel of speakers spoke to a medium sized audience about the need for more awareness and financial support for Autism in Trinidad and Tobago.

Speakers included: Mrs. Teresina Sieunarine, President of ASTT; Karen Yip Chuck, General Manager Trust Services and Republic Bank Limited Champion for Autism; Yvette Hood, Co-ordinator of Child Development, Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development; and Nichol Alves, General Manager of ASTT. Opening remarks were delivered by Mrs. Halena Kong Ting and the function was chaired by Ms. Joy Valdez. The vote of thanks was delivered by Ms. Sarah Soo Hon.

ASTT's President delivered the UN Secretary General's message for 2015. In it Mr. Ban Ki-moon issues a "Call to Action", encouraging all companies to make a commitment to hire persons with Autism. Mrs. Sieunarine also spoke about the need for more Government funding for Autism and about the need for continued awareness. Karen Yip Chuck pledged continued support from Republic Bank Limited and urged other businesses to do the same. And last but not least, Ms. Nichol Alves revealed that 2015 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago.

"2015 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago"

"ASTT was started in 1990 and today serves a client base of approximately 600 families"



(L-R) Ms. Joy Valdez, Nichol Alves, Teresina Sieunarine, Karen Yip Chuck, Halena Kong Ting, Yvette Hood, Sarah Soo Hon

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Adults at Camp Fire Circle Time.

Autism Awareness Walk

On the 26th April 2015 the Autism community together with family and friends came out for ASTT's and Republic Bank Limited's annual Autism Awareness Walk at the Queen's Park Savannah, Port of Spain.

Also in attendance were Reema Carmona, wife of President Anthony Carmona and Minister of the People and Social Development Christine Newallo-Hosein.

Below :

ASTT's President Teresina Sieunarine (center right) with Mrs. Reema Carmona, (center) wife of President Anthony Carmona.

Summer Camps 2015

The Adult Therapeutic camp was held from the 13th to the 17th July; whilst the Kids Camp was held from the 20th to the 24th of July. The camps were enjoyed by all. Activities included Arts and Crafts, Cooking, music, Theater sensory and movement activities, out door play and water play. Both camps were held at Autism Place.

Volunteers included Jason Backes (Autism Education Specialist and Occupational Therapist), Ewura-Abena Adomako (Speech and Language Therapist), Frederick Felix (Behavioral Therapist) and students and teachers from

The highlight of each camp was the field trip. The adults lined at Lopinot River for a big cook and a bath and the kids visited the popular Harry's Water Park.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the camps was the opportunity for both volunteers and participants to form new social bonds and make new friends.

Below: The Kids Camp at Harry's Water Park.



Calendar of Events

August

1st ...Emancipation Day

September

8th...Elections

9th...ASTT Reopens School Reopens

24th...Republic Day

26th...General

Meeting

(Movie Night to be announced.)

October

25th...General

Meeting

30th...Movie Night



Back To School Transition Tips

As a mom of two young kids I know full well that the most challenging aspect of transitioning back to school for them, is having to wake up early and then having to deal with a long sensory filled school day! Below are a few tips to ease the transition:

- ◆ To get the kids up earlier, start gradually waking them up earlier over the last month of the vacation. For example if they wake up at 9am during the holidays , in week 1, wake them up half hour earlier. In week 2, move it to 1 hour earlier to 8am. By week 3, wake them up at 7.15 am and by week 4 wake up time shifts to 6.15 am. So by the first week of school wake up time shifts to 6am. Simultaneously let bedtime shift to earlier especially if they are waking up very tired.
- ◆ In week 3, provide a reward for completing the first step in the morning school routine and by week 4, reward the first two steps in the routine.
- ◆ To get them to transition to the demands of school work, ask teachers to start the day with preferred activities, to discourage sleeping, use half of the school day to give short breaks and to use visual schedules with time cues.

ASTT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

(Circle or tick the type of membership below)

Basic \$20.00

Financial \$100.00

Lifetime \$500.00

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and products.

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Visit us on the web at
www.autismtt.org

Or check us on Facebook



Early Warning Signs of Autism

The most obvious signs of autism and symptoms of autism tend to emerge between 2 and 3 years of age.

6 months:

- * No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions.
- * Rarely makes eye contact when interacting with others.
- * May not show curiosity about things around them.
- * May not respond to others emotions.

9 months:

- * No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles, or other facial expressions.

12 months:

- * Lack of response to name.
- * No babbling or "baby talk".
- * No back-and-forth gestures, such as pointing, showing, reaching, or waving. Repetitive body motions, e.g. rocking, hand flapping.
- * Lacking pretend play e.g. 'peek a boo'.