

CHILDREN AT RISK NEWSLETTER

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THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF CHILDREN AT RISK, OTTAWA

**Tuesday, June 21, 2005
235 Donald Street
Room 212 – 7:00 p.m.**

Please plan to attend the AGM! Agenda is:

- 1. Intro and Greetings**
- 2. Special Presentation to Donors**
- 3. Guest Speaker Lynne Bowes (see below)**
- 4. Reports and Business from 2004**
- 5. Election of New Board of Directors**
- 6. Wine & Cheese Social**

****Special Guest Speaker**** - Lynne Bowes, former Coordinator for the Algonquin College Developmental Service Worker (DSW) Program, will be giving a premier presentation of the NEW Autism & Behavioural Science Program Certificate. The province of Ontario has chosen Algonquin College to be one of the educational institutions in the province to offer this one-year accreditation certificate program! Candidates must have a diploma in other related programs and/or a BA in Psychology. Graduates will be qualified to hold front-line worker positions in the field of Autism. Children at Risk will continue to work closely with Algonquin College, extending the existing partnership for the DSW 2nd year student family course placements. Do not miss this opportunity to get first-hand information on this exciting educational development!!!

With the "retirement" of several long-standing Board Members, there is a critical need for new community representatives to step forward! More information/job descriptions can be obtained by calling the office at 741-8255 or Board President, David Allingham, at 824-7919. Nominations are to be submitted to Brenda Reisch, Charity Coordinator at 741-8255 or carsup@magma.ca

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Submitted by David Allingham

A Letter to members of the Autism Community. Please read this!

Children at Risk needs you! On Tuesday, June 21st, Children at Risk will hold their Annual General Meeting and election of the Board of Directors to represent and govern the charity. With the "retirement" of several long-standing Board Members, we are seeking individuals to represent Children at Risk. It is a mandate of charitable status that a charity be governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. These individuals are responsible for making decisions and taking actions that dictate the operations of the charity. Can you do this? Sure you can!

But first, a little history on Children at Risk, who we are, what we do! For over 26 years, Children at Risk has been helping Autistic children and their families, providing services and supports. Since 2002, Children at Risk has no longer provided publicly-funded programs, with the majority of those services now going through the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre and the Children's Hospital of Ontario with the Preschool Autism Program. Since then Children at Risk has continued as a service provider, offering programs to complement the existing agencies and "fill in the gaps" in services. But what do we do?

- 1) Site-Based "Friendship" Social Skill Therapy Groups
- 2) Outing-Based Pre-Teen and Teen Asperger Syndrome Social Skill Groups
- 3) Sibling Support Social Groups
- 4) Information Workshops and Educational Seminars
- 5) Sponsorship of student home placements with Algonquin College Developmental Services Worker Program
- 6) Community supports through active recruitment of event ticket donations for local sports and entertainment venues
- 7) Helping families to connect with services/supports through dissemination of information via mail, email and website
- 8) Promoting Advocacy and Awareness through special events & activities

The beauty of being a charity and the good news is that Children at Risk can respond to service needs in the community. The only challenge is raising the funds to deliver the services. The bad news is that we must have a Board of Directors to maintain status. Absence of this governing body could mean the eventual discontinuation of operations.

Becoming a Board Member not your cup of tea? We still encourage you to come to the AGM. Give us your input, your feedback, tell us what you would like to see being offered by the charity. It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to listen to the needs of the community and act on what you tell us.

Children at Risk has "been there" for many families over the years. As a separate registered charity, we have the flexibility that is often not afforded to agencies operating publicly-funded programs. Now we need you to "be there" for us! Please consider attending the AGM and possibly representing the Autism community by becoming a Board Member. Children at Risk allows families to have a voice in the community, to make a difference with provision of needed services. Let's keep that voice strong!

David Allingham
President, Children at Risk Board of Directors.

OTTAWA POLICE, FIRE & PARAMEDIC SERVICES
Present:
THE 2ND ANNUAL EMERGENCY SERVICES CHARITY SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT (for Autism)
Saturday, June 18, 2005

WHAT: Charity Fundraiser for the whole family! Features Police and Fire demos with ladder truck, fire safety house, antique fire trucks from the Bytowne Fire Brigade, paramedic, tactical, motorcycle and K-9 units, Moon Bounce for kids, bike raffle, snowcones, cotton candy, BBQ and, of course, great baseball!

WHEN: Saturday, June 18, 10 AM to 4 PM (Children's activities 11 AM to 2 PM)

WHERE: Carlington Park (Woodward & Clyde, on the diamonds & in the parking lot next to the J. Alph Delude Arena)

WHY: Proceeds support the **Ottawa Chapter of Autism Society Ontario & Children at Risk**

HOW: Demos and Baseball are free, Activities and BBQ raise funds for the charities.

Parent Led Education Lobby Group

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Family members,

Our Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) children need us to speak out on their behalf. They need us to tell those responsible for their public education how to make their learning experience more positive, meaningful and productive.

The government has given our children the right to an education that accommodates their disability related needs. Yet the reality is that many ASD children are not being appropriately accommodated. The Ontario Human Rights Commission outlines appropriate accommodations as taking into account three factors: dignity, individuality, and inclusion and full participation in educational life.

Many of our children are not finding understanding and acceptance for their differences. Their dignity is not being respected. For example, ASD children are frequently suspended, punished or reprimanded for behaviours that are not under their control or that they didn't understand were wrong. Our children need to be taught correct behaviour in positive ways such as by using reinforcement or redirection.

Our children's Individual Education Plan (IEP) will often outline their needs but because of limited staffing or resources those needs are seldom addressed with enough attention to truly be helpful. For example, the development of social skills is written on most of our children's IEP but schools seldom have concrete, tangible plans to teach social skills. Individual needs are not being respected.

Again, because of limited support or because the support isn't delivered effectively, our children are not being included or participating at school in positive ways. Children with anxiety problems are sent home rather than being helped to manage their anxiety at school. Our children need teachers who have the expertise and time to help our children develop the necessary skills to make inclusion and participation successful. Inclusion and full participation are not being promoted effectively.

This situation is unacceptable and we need to let the school boards and the Ministry of Education know that we are not happy with the quality of service that they are obligated to provide.

There will be an upcoming meeting for parents who are interested in participating in a parent lobby group that would focus on securing better educational support for ASD children - Monday, June 20/2005, from 7-9 p.m. at the Bronson Centre at 211 Bronson Ave. at Nepean St., Room 212. If you are interested in this initiative, please contact me at 841-3099 or e-mail me at michelle.dewar@rogers.com

Sincerely,
Michelle Dewar.

PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING:

Karen Halchuk & Alice Kozculab

Karen & Alice have given notice to Children at Risk that they will not be continuing as Facilitators for the Sibling Support Groups this Fall.

"I have enjoyed the challenges and learning experiences I have had over the past six years. These children are pretty amazing and have such big hearts. Thank-you to Children at Risk for allowing me the opportunity to be part of such a caring and supportive organization. All the best to all of the families. May the journey ahead be one that allows all of us to be all that we can be and to have some fun and laughter along the way. Take good care!"
Karen

"I believe the Siblings Group provides an indispensable service to families. Thank-you to all the dedicated volunteers and Board Members for giving me an opportunity to work for you. I will miss the friendly, warm atmosphere and the wonderful enthusiasm of the kids."
Alice

The good news is that both Karen and Alice have pledged their time to help train new Facilitators, to share information and ideas for running the Sibling Support Groups! Appreciation to both ladies for their dedication and commitment, for helping to bring some fun and understanding into the lives of children growing up with an Autistic brother or sister!!

MINTO DONATION

"Minto celebrates 50 years by donating \$5,000 to 50 different local charities for 50 weeks!"

Since 1955, Minto has helped build this community. In turn, this community has helped build Minto. You and your neighbours have helped make Minto Ottawa's Favourite Builder!

From the many hundreds of submissions received, 50 local charities and organizations were finalized that will receive \$5,000 from Minto. To see the recipients to date, visit www.minto.com and click on the 50 charities/50 graphic.

Children at Risk is honoured to be chosen as one of the recipient charities for this generous community initiative!

KIDS HELPING KIDS!



Jason Xu presenting a cheque for **\$215** to Brenda Reisch. Jason raised this money for Children at Risk by asking the guests at his 10th birthday party to bring a donation instead of gifts. Jason wanted to help Autistic children like his little sister, Katie!



Jason Loo, a classmate of Jason Xu's, thought that Jason's idea was so great, he did it too! On his 10th birthday, he collected **\$210** for Children at Risk!!

HATS OFF TO BOTH JASONS FOR MAKING THEIR SPECIAL DAY HELP OUR SPECIAL CHILDREN!

FUNDRAISING UPDATE:

Submitted by Brenda Reisch
Fundraising Chairperson

4TH ANNUAL "ROCKIN' FOR RISK" 50s/60s/70s DANCE

We had a rockin' good time on **Saturday, April 2nd, 2005** with the Children at Risk "Rockin' for Risk" fundraising dance! Hosted by MC "Brother Bob" of Oldies 1310, the evening included live retro tunes from the band Intersection, along with songs by The Capital Chordettes quartet "Sleepless" and a return visit by The King himself – "Elvis" (Ottawa's premier Elvis Tribute Artist, Shawn Barry). With the raffle and silent auction, this wonderful evening of fun and fundraising raised \$7,000! Thanks and appreciation to many of our families and friends, who either attended and/or volunteered to help make the event a terrific success. **Mark on your 2006 calendars Saturday, April 1st for the 5th Annual "Rockin' for Risk" 50s/60s/70s dance!!**

SHAWN BARRY PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

On Saturday, April 9th, the Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre and Oldies 1310 featured "**An Afternoon with Elvis**". After two performances of Elvis favourites, fans were able to get their photos done with Elvis Tribute Artist Shawn Barry. Japan Camera processed the photo packages, with **\$745** being raised through picture purchases and donations, including funds raised by the West End Academy of Beauty! Many thanks to Leah Dixon of Riocan Properties and the merchants of Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre for their participation. Look for a \$500 gift basket on the Children at Risk Annual Raffle ticket, courtesy of Lincoln Fields' merchants!

GRECO MARTIAL ARTS SHOW

The best of the best in local martial artists showcased their talents on May 15th with **Tony Greco's** Martial Arts Extravaganza! For the third time, Children at Risk was invited to sell raffle tickets for prizes generously donated by local merchants and businesses to support the event. Attendees were able to meet Kurt Stoodley of The New RO and Miss Canada Lynsey Bennett, raising a grand total of \$425 for Children at Risk!

YOUTH BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Hosted by the MYCO Youth group from St. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, a basketball tournament with teams from a group of churches was held. **\$500** from raised from this event was donated to Children at Risk!

MACMILLAN FROZEN FOODS CAMPAIGN

Once again our families and friends supported the Spring MacMillan Frozen Foods campaign! Always a popular fundraising activity, this campaign brought in over **\$500** profit! Look for our fall campaign in November!!

UPCOMING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- **BBQ Fundraiser at Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre in July (details to follow)**
- **Entertainment 2006 Coupon Books (available in August)**
- **11th Annual Celebrity-Carved Pumpkin Contest – October 27 – 29, 2005**
- **MacMillan's Fall Frozen Foods Campaign**

CHILDREN AT RISK

Tenth Annual Raffle

Tickets are **STILL AVAILABLE** for our Tenth Annual Fundraising Raffle!

Our Raffle offers:

- * Tickets \$2 ea., 3 for \$5 or book of 12 for \$20!
- * Prizes worth total of \$7,102! (a record high!!)
- * 40 draws, with an average Prize Value of over \$177 (1st 9 prizes \$300+ value each!)
- * Maximum 4,000 tickets sold - That's a 1 in 100 chance of winning!
- * Minimum Prize Value of \$25!

(Note: Tickets can only be sold to persons 18+ years!)

The Raffle will be drawn at our Annual Family Picnic for Children at Risk, The Autism Society Ottawa Chapter and the Asperger's Support Group on Sunday, June 26th, 2005.

For tickets call 741-8255 or email
carsup@magma.ca

DONOR'S CORNER:

- In memory of Edward Bedard \$232
- Bell Canada Employees' Donation \$584
- IBM Employees' Charitable Fund \$1,374.86
- Eagle Professional Resources Inc. – Photocopier and Computers

ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC

Sunday, June 26, 2005

12 Noon to 3 PM

Join us for fun and frolic at the Annual Family Picnic for the Ottawa Chapter of the Autism Society, the Asperger's Support Group and Children at Risk, held at **Brewer Park** (Bronson & Sunnyside, across from Carleton University, near the play structures).

Activities include:

- * **BBQ with cooking supplied by Enbridge Gas**
- * **A visit by the Shriner's clowns**
- * **Fish pond, cookie decorating, balloons, water balloon toss and more!**
- * **Annual Raffle draw for Children at Risk**
- * **Water play for the kids**

Come and enjoy a relaxing afternoon in the park with an opportunity to network with other families living with ASD!

All activities at low cost or free!

PIPPY'S WISH

Local author **Selena Robins** is known for her fiction and non-fiction writing, with her most recently published award-winning novel "**Sabrina's Destiny**". Selena wrote a children's book called "**Pippy's Wish**" that she hopes can be used for charitable purposes.

Pippy is an Angel-in-Training. She is very much like most of the rest of us. She gets in trouble. She makes mistakes. Sometimes, in fact, she thinks she'll never be able to do anything right. If only she could be like everyone else...if only she didn't have to be her imperfect self!

Selena will be offering her book to Children at Risk to be printed and, hopefully, sold retail for fundraising this fall. We are currently approaching some local, retail chain stores to support this idea. More information will be coming on this exciting venture! You can visit Selena at www.selenarobbins.com or drop her a line at selenarobbins@rogers.com

CHARITY COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

Submitted by Brenda Reisch

Summer is almost here, though you would think with the hot weather of late, it has already arrived! While the Children at Risk offices will still operate throughout the summer (with some holiday closings), most of the Social Skill Therapy Groups* will finish

their sessions in July. Sessions will not start until September, with "meet and greets" scheduled for new referrals late August, early September. We are hoping to start some new groups like Life Skills Groups for higher-functioning children and Low-Ratio Groups for children with higher needs.

Children at Risk also looks forward to partnerships with groups like the Autism Society for workshops and seminars this coming fall.

In August, we will be sending out information about the Family Placements for the Algonquin College Developmental Service Worker Program.

I want to wish everyone a safe and happy summer!

*JUST A REMINDER - With reference to the Groups, I would like to remind members that Children at Risk is a separate, registered charity with no public funding. While we subsidize the groups over 50% of the cost (group cost only, overhead of rent & administration are extra) with fundraising and donations, we still are required to charge some fees. Group participation is usually confirmed first by verbal confirmation and then submission of a written registration form. When a child is booked, that spot is confirmed and we do not call any more candidates. While timely confirmations are desired, if there is uncertainty about participation, we ask that all schedules be checked before giving a commitment.

Recently we have had a couple of instances where a verbal confirmation was made, then a cancellation just before or after a group had started. This results in a rushed attempt to re-book that spot with another child or, worse yet, the spot going unfilled. Our group facilitators are paid for the sessions, not per child, so it ends up costing the charity even more if groups are not full.

While we would love to offer the groups at no cost, the nature of our charitable status does not allow this. It is understood that our busy lives sometimes result in unexpected changes. All we ask is that you understand the process in booking children for the group sessions and respect the parameters described!

AUTISM SOCIETY EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

(for more information, go to www.autismottawa.com or call 230-6305)

Camp Leo

Location: Britannia Clubhouse
2825 Dumaurier Avenue

Cycle for Autism

When: Sunday, September 25, 2005

Location: Ron Kolbus Centre, Lakeside Gardens
10, 20, 60 and 100 km ride to support Camp Leo