

P.A.C.E.S. Program Offers Social Opportunities for Families Affected by Autism



P.A.C.E.S (Parents of Autism and Children Empowering Success) was created several years ago by a parent of a child with autism and three educators of Empresa Elementary School in the Vista Unified School District. The program originated from a desire to connect families of children with autism to other local families.

"We wanted a venue that would bring parents together with shared concerns and interests, but also a program that would give students with autism an opportunity to develop friendships and strengthen social skills," said Donna Harper, Special Education Teacher and co-Founder of the P.A.C.E.S. Program. "We wanted to create a program that the students could look forward to attending."

This is the first program of its kind in North San Diego County, and is provided free of charge to all K-8 families in the Vista Unified School District. The P.A.C.E.S. group meets once a month at the Empresa Elementary school site. The evening starts with dinner, then the last 1 ½ hours are devoted to separate Parent and Children's Programs. The Children's Program consists of a socialization activity, art or music, and a 30 minute movie. Teachers and other professionals (including speech pathologists, occupational therapists, special day class teachers, resource specialists, and behavior consultants) volunteer their time to facilitate the children's activities program.



The Parent's Program typically includes a guest speaker with topics ranging from health, family dynamics, socialization, behavior implementation strategies, occupational therapy, medical research, and nutrition.



Program.

Over the past few years this program has grown from approximately 12 families to 30 families and is rapidly gaining popularity. To assist them with the expansion of the program, NFAR awarded funding for audio/visual equipment as well as for the purchase of specialized materials for the Children's

Happy Holidays!!



We wish you and your family a very Happy Holiday Season!

Register now for NFAR Teacher's Networking Forum Feb. 4th 2009!

NFAR is hosting our first **Teacher's Networking Forum** for educators of students with autism. Educators from across San Diego County are invited to come, eat, mingle and learn about programs, and strategies teachers are using successfully to teach students with autism.

Learn more about future NFAR teacher's grant opportunities too.

Teachers, aides, parents and professionals are welcome!



**Wed., Feb 4, 2009
Marshall Middle School
San Diego Unified School District
5:00 pm - 7:30 pm**

Free with pre-registration
[Reserve your spot now!](#)

"We were happy to lend our support to a program that offers parents, students and siblings an opportunity to meet and share experiences with other local families of similar circumstances." said Sharon Leon, Executive Director for NFAR. "We liked the fact that the P.A.C.E.S. Program provides opportunities for siblings, who can often feel isolated, and uncomfortable about inviting peers into their homes. We believe that the P.A.C.E.S. program is helping to strengthen the relationships between parents, professionals, siblings and hopefully help to create some life-long friendships for those with autism."

If you would like to learn more, please contact NFAR at 858-679-8800 or info.NFAR.org

Free Parent Education Workshops

The Center for Autism Research, Evaluation and Service (CARES) is offering an Integrative Parent Education Program for families of children with autism.



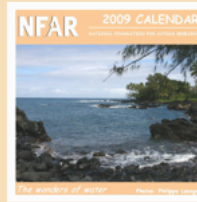
The Program consists of 2-3 hour workshops with nine different types of workshops to choose from, such as an Overview of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), Pivotal Response Training, Social Stories and Social Skills Training, Self Help Skills, Biomedical and Pharmacological Interventions, and more. All workshops will be conducted at the CARES office in Scripps Ranch, and are offered numerous times throughout the month at rotating morning, afternoon, and evening timeslots.

With NFAR's support, Caroline White, a Behavior Supervisor with CARES and Doctoral candidate at the California School of Professional Psychology (CSPP), is currently looking for families of young children with Autism Spectrum Disorders to participate in a research study on the efficacy of this Integrative Education Program.

Persons participating in the research study will be asked to complete a total of 4 workshops (of their choosing). Workshops will be offered at no cost to families who are eligible for research participation, and each participant will be awarded one movie theater ticket.

For more information, please contact:
Caroline White, M.A., CSPP Doctoral Candidate
(858) 444-8823 x1225 or Caggwhite@hotmail.com

Great Gifts!



Enjoy our 2009 calendar, with beautiful, panoramic photos by local photographer Philippe Lesage.

Each calendar is only \$12.50 and all proceeds benefit NFAR.



I Wish I Could Fly – Local Children's Author Donates Proceeds of Her Latest Book to NFAR. Each book is \$10.50.

[Click here to place an order](#)