



REFLECTIONS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | APRIL 2022 ISSUE

APRIL IS AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

April is Autism Acceptance Month. For many years, the community recognized this as a time to raise awareness for people everywhere with autism spectrum disorder. In recent years, we're asking to push even farther. **What if we do more than raise awareness?** What if we actually accept everyone for who they are, no matter what they bring to the table.

ECHO Autism Communities is dedicated to pushing this initiative year-round. We're honored to have had expert guest speakers to touch on the topic, like authentically engaging and involving autistic people or understanding the importance of letting individuals advocate for themselves.

No matter which way you slice it, there are plenty of ways to let those in your life know they are heard, they are valued, and they are accepted. Looking to join the movement? Celebrate Autism Acceptance Month with ECHO Autism Communities by downloading a resource, watching an expert video, or joining our online community. Together, we can create a better world **for everyone.**



IN A DIFFERENT KEY: THE MOVIE

Join ECHO Autism Communities at **Forum Christian Church, 3900 Forum Blvd., Columbia, Missouri 65203**, beginning at 6pm on Monday, April 25, 2022, for an amazing sneak-preview event of "In a Different Key: The Movie."

This documentary is about a remarkable mother of an autistic adult son who found the first person in the U.S. diagnosed with autism during her research and discovered how one community got it right.

Watch "In a Different" filmmakers Caren Zucker and John Donovan by reserving your FREE seats [here](#).



HELPING TEENS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM TRANSITION TO ADULthood: BY DR. SOHL

A patient I will call Matt was 8 years old when I diagnosed him with autism spectrum disorder. I didn't know what his future held, but as we got to know each other, we learned together.

He learned how to contribute to his doctor's appointments, and I learned about his interests and how to help him reach his goals. At 12, he struggled to find his way in school. At 16, he wanted to drive, but there were bumps along that path that were frustrating. We worked through them by making plans that included managing his autism, anxiety, and ADHD as well as setting short-term goals to help him succeed. By 18, he had his driver's permit and had mastered the names of his medicines, refilled them on his own, and started to lead his medical visits. He is now 20, a high school graduate, and he has his first job at a local grocery store.

I love seeing him thrive on his own terms. It's an honor to be there for each step of his journey.

If your patient has autism spectrum disorder, preparing them and their caregiver(s) for the transition to adulthood can be a game-changer.

[READ MORE](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON: KENTUCKY CHFS OFFICE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

If you're a clinician in Kentucky looking to better understand the management of autism symptoms, we've got a solution for you! The Kentucky CHFS Office just started their own ECHO Autism Communities program, meeting the first Wednesday of every month.

Focus: Management of Autism Symptoms

Target Audience: Pediatricians, Family practitioners, Nurse practitioners, Therapists, Psychologists, Referring Providers

Program Meeting Information: First Wednesday of every month from 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm EST; Runs through August 2022 with plans to renew.

Hub Team Members and Roles:

- Virginia Barbosa, MD – Psychiatrist
- Gregory Barnes, MD – Neurologist
- MyraBeth Bundy, PHD, BCBA – Behavior Analyst
- Grace Kuravackel, MD – Psychologist
- Mike Miller – Educator
- Zecheriah Stone – Co-Facilitator & Coordinator
- Marisa Toomey, MD - Developmental Pediatrician
- Gail Williams, MD - Developmental Pediatrician

To Register/Join:

https://kentuckyccshcn.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bI7iS6DHy5Fak4u

