

AANE - Asperger/Autism Network

Presentation by Debbie Curtiss, Parent Support Specialist

The Asperger/Autism Network (AANE) works with individuals, families and professionals to help people with Asperger syndrome and similar autism spectrum profiles build meaningful, connected lives. They do this by providing information, education, community, support and advocacy, all in an atmosphere of validation and respect.

Child and Teen Services typically focus on children on the spectrum who would have been previously diagnosed with Asperger's Disorder. The Child and Teen staff work with children and teens through the end of High School, although AANE also provides support to adults. You can start by taking advantage of a free 30 minute consultation and if desired, can schedule further appointments. Parent coaching is an hour long session with one of our clinicians when you have more on your mind and we also offer a two hour IEP Review. Parent Coaching and the IEP Review are programs associated with a fee, but if financial needs are a concern, you can contact us by e-mailing the Director of Child and Teen service, Nancy Parker at nancy.parker@aane.org. No one is ever turned away because of an inability to pay.

The best way to start learning how AANE can help you is to sign up for a phone call, IEP meeting or parent coaching. All appointments can be made electronically via our website www.aane.org

The biggest part of our work at AANE is coaching parents. There are four clinicians in Child and Teen services who can help parents, who are themselves parents with a child on the spectrum with or without mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.

We provide a bi-monthly workshop for newly diagnosed children and which is designed to help parents learn how to advocate for your child. We can also support parents with IEPs, reviewing the reports and current or proposed IEP for an hour and then holding a one on one parent meeting for an hour.

If you suspect your child is on the spectrum, you can contact the team at the Asperger/Autism network for a consultation and we can advise what you can do next to confirm the diagnosis.

We have a huge database of resources on our website www.aane.org including details of neuropsychologists, camps, dentists etc. as well as details of all our support groups and more than 100 hours of webinars.

We hold parent support groups which are all separated by age and gender and will be starting an online parent support group in January 2019. In addition we hold regular social events for parents and also support group for grandparents, LGBTQ members and also neurodiverse couples. We have very strong programs delivering support to women and girls who are the “hidden members” of the Asperger and autism community.

AANE holds conferences twice a year as well as regular workshops and events in the community. We provide free training in the summer for teachers which is contracted through us by DESE and which can be taken for credit by registering and paying a fee through Fitchburg State. We also provide training for school districts, after school programs, libraries, first responders etc.

Please visit our website at www.aane.org to learn more about what we do and how we can help you. It includes details of our LifeMap program for teens which helps kids to decide what they want to do; our WorkMap program for kids who don't want to go on to college and which offers services such as interview preparation and goal setting. Our College Map program assists with college selection, essays and skills needed to be successful in the college environment.

AANE also provides direct services to people who have graduated from college. These include regular social events like Pizza and Game Night, Holiday parties and social outings for women.