



Asperger Manitoba Inc.
Celebrating Abilities

2010 to March 31 2011

Message from the President:

We've come a long way baby!

AMI has been working diligently over the past year to help our membership of individuals with Asperger Syndrome and the families of adults and children with AS to live more informed, supported lives in their communities in Manitoba. From April 1, 2010 until March 31, 2011, we have participated in over 18 presentations to parents, teachers, educational assistants, researchers, supported employment providers and post-secondary disability support providers around Manitoba and across the country! We have also been involved with various coalitions and associations promoting the needs of families and individuals with AS for respite services, for inclusive education, for better transitioning to adulthood and much more.

We were also very proud of our past-president, Bev Larmour for being nominated a Woman of Distinction at the 2010 YMCA awards! Congratulations on all you do for so many of us and our sons and daughters.

Our membership continues to expand as does the public interest in better serving those for whom we advocate.

Our work continues and our dedicated and passionate board members and volunteers are vital to moving us forward! We look forward to a world that is much more supportive and understanding of the gifts and abilities that individuals with AS bring. We are also hopeful that these supports will lead to more productive, rewarding and independent lives for those with AS.

–Anne Kresta, President, AMI

Website unched

As we have updated and added some great content including the "FAQs" (frequently asked questions) our website is becoming a resource for families and professionals alike to gather information and learn about Asperger Syndrome and find out about services available in the Asperger community. We continue to field a large number of phone calls from individuals in the province and try our best to get what they need. Many of the emails we are emailed from individuals with AS, they have been told by a professional that they should visit our website and Charlene Walberg has been instrumental in maintaining the website and we are grateful to her for her dedication to our

The Grand Opening of the Asperger Manitoba Resource Centre (AMRC)

With the opening of our resource centre, AMI realized a dream and began offering skills training to children and adults with AS in our communities. Weekly psychosocial small group programming provides opportunities for adults and children to learn and practice social skills with their peers and with professional support.

Participants learn how to behave appropriately in a wide range of social situations, how to make friends, as well as how to create the structure in their lives that will help them to live healthier, more fulfilling lives.

The [Skills Training Group for Adults](#) with AS is a client-driven program that provides adults with AS and other related disorders an opportunity to gain knowledge and competence in using various skills in their daily lives. Specific skill development areas that may be covered in the group sessions are:

- Understanding non-verbal cues and body language
- Dealing with frustration and anxiety
- Using conversation skills
- Building and maintaining friendships
- Dating and Employment skills, and
- Dealing with school and family demands.

The [Building Social Skills Group for Children and Youth](#) with AS is a social skills training program designed to help individuals with AS to navigate a wide range of social situations and to make friends. Parent/Caregiver sessions are

offered concurrently with the children's social skills group. Students in the Masters level School Psychology program at U of M are facilitating both the adult and children's sessions.

New applications continue to be received for both programs and new applicants are put on a wait list for upcoming sessions.

Pre- and Post-Group evaluation data scores indicate that all participants in the adult groups scored higher on emotional intelligence assessments following their 10 sessions.

Participants have given overwhelmingly positive feedback about their experiences.

A fourth skills-for-living group originally planned for February 2011 will be taking place later in the year.

Participants of the skills groups and other adults with AS will be meeting to discuss the idea of forming an evening peer support group for alumni. Meetings will commence in the fall of 2011 in conjunction with the Parents of Adults support group.

The AMRC and its programs are made possible with grant support from: The Winnipeg Foundation, Investors Group and the University of Manitoba. In addition, a grant to support groups for youth was received this year from the Opt In Grant at St. Mary's United Church.



Capacity

Tony Attwood in a national anth. We had weekly Savings Plan and service l to provide these AS and professionals could ice on alternate years with nference format.

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A new board
has been
formed on the
board. Its with AS
has continued to
work with AS,
and recently, a
board member, Janet
Thompson,
and Caitlyn
are indispensable
to us.

meetings either
at the office
of The Kids
Community.

During the
past year, we
have had several
peer support
groups in
place. We are
looking at how we can
expand our volunteer



Peer Support for Adults with AS

For a number of years we have had a peer support group for adults with AS who have gotten together on a monthly basis to share their life experiences, learn from each other and sometimes host a presentation by a group or individual who inspires them. AMI would like to thank Jeremy Strub, and Janet Thompson for their dedication to this group. While Jeremy will continue with the original group, AMI will be encouraging the development of more peer support groups throughout Winnipeg and the province. There has been much interest from among those attending various post-secondary educational institutions in the province and in a number of regions. We encourage representatives from those areas to get in touch with us and we will explore the possibilities together.

We would also like to acknowledge the continued dedication of our two adults with AS social group, Hazel Birt and Terry Hollier. They have been instrumental in planning annual Halloween get togethers, game nights, Goldeyes Tickets and much more. For more information on these opportunities, please visit our website.





Thank you to our funders and membership. Your support helps us to remain a strong, vibrant organization that can respond the needs of those affected by Asperger Syndrome in Manitoba and beyond.



Our 2010 Board of Directors

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Andrea Villeneuve – Vice President
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