



Founder's Note:

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Welcome to **QuickStart Early Intervention for Autism's** first newsletter!

Like many people, I had heard of autism but I hadn't really paid close attention until it hit home. In September, 2006, my grandson Alex was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In February, 2009, my second grandson, Nathan, was also diagnosed with ASD.

I discovered that the combined waiting times for assessment, treatment and services in Ottawa are years, not months.

QuickStart – Early Intervention for Autism was born of this need to provide immediate help for these children and their families.

Research clearly shows – Early Intervention is critical for children with autism. QuickStart's message is simple: If you are concerned about your child's development, trust yourself and act on it. Even without a diagnosis, your child can be helped.

Just over a year ago, it was difficult to know where to go for help. Now there is a unique clinic in Ottawa called **Getting Started Services**. No referral is required; the parent simply calls and speaks with the expert Clinical Coordinator to have their questions answered. To contact the Clinical Coordinator please call **Cécile Bisson** at **613.737.0871 ext 2293**.

QuickStart's mission is to advocate and to fundraise for early intervention for children at risk of or with autism. We raise awareness of the importance of acting quickly when you have concerns about your child's development. All funds raised go to support the new **Getting Started Services Clinic** (See article on page 4) operated through our partner the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre.

QuickStart Champion: Senator Jim Munson



"There is an urgent need to solve this intricate, complicated, and difficult puzzle we call Autism Spectrum Disorder and we can't do it alone."

Senator Jim Munson from a speech to the Autism One Conference, October 2009.

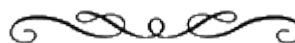
Senator Munson has been working to help families with autism for several years. One way is through his bill *An Act Respecting World Autism Awareness Day*, the passage of which will help make Canadians more aware of autism and the impact it has on families. It will also ensure they are better able to support these families within their communities.

Senator Munson is also working to implement the recommendations from the Senate Committee report, *Funding for the Treatment of Autism, Pay Now or Pay Later, Autism Families in Crisis*.

Central to the report is its underscoring of the need for a National Strategy on Autism Spectrum Disorders.

(Senator Jim Munson, Cont'd)

Thank you, Senator Munson, for being a QuickStart Champion – your unending energy and support for all families struggling to help their children with autism is sincerely appreciated!



Grants:

In February, Unity for Autism awarded QuickStart a generous grant! This grant will be used to further expand the Clinic and to provide more services for the children. We are currently considering three areas of expansion and we look forward to giving you an update in our next newsletter.

Thank you to the Harold Crabtree Foundation for their donation to the Clinic. Through their generous support the Getting Started Services will be hiring a dietician for one day a week! This is a welcome addition to the clinic as so many children with autism have eating and digestive issues.

Fundraising Events

Bertschi Orth Smith 17th Annual Charity Golf Tournament for Insurance Professionals, June 4th, 2010 on the Predator course at Greyhawk Golf and Country Club

Come and join us for a fun day for a good cause!

Foursomes are \$400.00 to \$600.00 and include 18 holes of golf with a cart and buffet dinner. There is a raffle, silent and live auction. You could be enjoying a week's stay at the beautiful Fairmont Hotel in Acapulco, Mexico with the right bid!

Please contact Mr. David Bertschi at dbertschi@boslaw.ca to register today!

10th Anniversary International Golf Classic, June 7th, 2010 at Kanata Lakes Golf and Country Club

The International Golf Classic is a well known first class golf tournament. Foursomes are \$1,500.00. Lunch, cocktails, appetizers, dinner and drinks along with 18 holes of golf, are all included in your day at the International Golf Classic.

Beat the pro, a Caesar hole, raffle, silent and live auctions and more. It's a party and golf all rolled into one!

Please contact Mr. Krishen Gupta at krishang@rogers.com to register today!

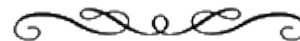
(Fundraising Events Cont'd)

Pocopazzo & Friend's Cookbook - on sale - May 1st, 2010 at Bayshore Shopping Centre from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Come and try some tiramisu!

Restaurant recipes from Cabotto's, Fratelli's, La Porto a Casa, La Cucina, Newport, Pocopazzo, Wildwood and other great recipes.

Cookbooks are \$25, taxes in. All proceeds go to QuickStart for the Getting Started Services Clinic.



Fundraising Events Results:

Pocopazzo & Friend's Cookbook has raised \$23,000 to date for QuickStart! Thank you QuickStart Champions Angela and Emanuele, owners of Pocopazzo restaurant.

Juniper's Dueling Chef's event was great fun! Thanks to everyone who came out and supported QuickStart. Juniper's Kitchen and Wine Bar donated \$3,100 to QuickStart! Thank you QuickStart Champion Richard Nigro, chef/owner of Juniper's Kitchen and Wine Bar.

Getting Started Services

By Cécile Bisson
Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre

Getting Started Services offers families, whose children have not received a diagnosis, access to a multidisciplinary team to address concerns and offer specific strategies for children while they are waiting for developmental assessment.

The objectives of this service are:

- to reduce the wait time between referral and initial contact,
- to have early identification of child and family needs,
- to offer timely discipline specific strategies,
- to give early access to parent group training and community resources,
- to offer emotional and clinical support,
- to assist the team with triage of referrals.

On an initial clinic day, the parent and child are scheduled to meet with an Early Childhood Educator, a Social Worker, a Speech and Language Pathologist and an Occupational Therapist. Afterwards, they are invited to participate in three consultation groups where the child has an opportunity to socialize in a safe environment and the parents have a chance to meet and talk with other parents. Clinicians are available on site to offer further strategies and support in areas such as communication, socialization, play skills, self help skills and behaviour.

Since Getting Started Services began in 2008, more than 200 families have benefited from the service. One parent commented "I feel that I am finally able to 'do' something for my child". Another said

(Getting Started Services, Cont'd)

"The sign language that was introduced was an excellent way for my child to reduce stress".

The team is currently pursuing several initiatives, including: resources to include additional clinicians, expanding the service to offer three clinic days per week and further partnerships with community organizations.



QuickStart is raising awareness:

QuickStart is representing Eastern Ontario with the new Autism Parents Talking (APTALK) group. This is a voluntary group of parents from across Ontario whose purpose is to provide a safe forum for parents to discuss autism and to influence decision makers on how to improve the integrated system of supports and services for families of children with autism. Details of our meeting with Minister Broten will be in the next newsletter.

As your Eastern Ontario Representative we look forward to hearing from you. Please email suzanne@quickstartautism.ca with your stories and suggestions.

QuickStart is pleased to announce that we are incorporating and applying for charitable status.

QuickStart Interview:

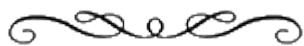
CBC Radio One's Ashley Wright interviewed Suzanne Jacobson and her grandson, Nathan, for the Saturday morning In Town and Out program. To listen to the interview click [here](#).

Exciting new research study results released:

The M.I.N.D. Institute from the University of California published the results of their research study in December, 2009. The study, using the Early Start Denver Model (a modified form of ABA for toddlers) shows that early intervention in toddlers is highly effective. The results: the majority of children were on par with their contemporaries after two years of this modified behavioural therapy! These great results are achieved with 15 hours of therapy per week instead of the recommended 25 – 40 hours per week.

Find this article at:

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/HEALTH/conditions/11/30/autism.study/index.html>



Volunteers Needed

Quick Start is now looking for volunteers to help us grow.....

If you have time, energy or talents to share please contact:

Suzanne@quickstartautism.ca

Breaking News

Canada AM contacted QuickStart last week regarding a series they are doing on Autism.

Heather Sherman, the Senior Producer at Canada AM, was telling QuickStart that the series will air starting next Monday, April 26th and will run all week.

Topics will include:

- the Importance of Early Diagnosis
- Different Types of Therapy
- A 'Day in the Life' of a Family Dealing with Autism including a panel of parents from across the country
- Adults with Autism, and
- the Newest Autism Research being done in Canada.



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Suzanne@quickstartautism.ca