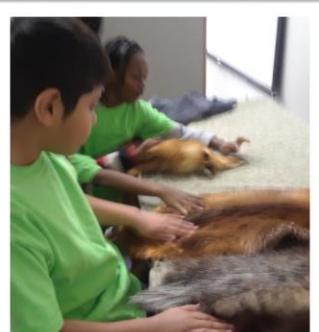
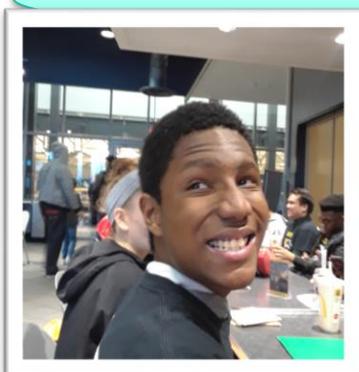


# April is Autism Awareness Month! Let's Live, Love and Learn Together!



# The Center Connector!

Where all the pieces fit!



Special Edition!

March/ April 2018

LINKING THOSE LIVING WITH AUTISM TO THEIR WORLD! - PHONE 301-618-8395

IN THIS ISSUE -2018 – SEVEN LIFE LESSONS!

**APRIL** is the season of **HOPE** for all who live with Autism and **LESSONS** for Everyone in our World!

**AT THE END OF LIFE, OUR QUESTIONS ARE VERY SIMPLE: DID I LIVE FULLY? DID I LOVE WELL?**  
JACK KORNFIELD



*April is a very special time of the year for those of us who live with autism. As a mother and physician, I am daily reminded of the simple yet beautiful lessons that those with autism teach us. I always say that my children and the children I am privileged to serve, will teach me more in my lifetime than I will ever impart to them. As we seek to bring awareness of the challenges that exist for those living with autism, let us also stop and learn from their unique and authentic perspectives on life. Join us as we create a community where those living with autism live well and love fully; and where all are open to the lessons they teach us! Enjoy the seven we share this month!*

*Abila*

*Abila Tazanu, M.D. is a pediatrician and mother of three children with autism. She is the founder and executive director of the One World Center for Autism. Her heart's desire is to give hope to all who OWCA serves as they journey with autism.*

## Respite Clubs Updates!



## A Walk on the Wild Side! Children's Respite Fun!

*Our World, Our Time* respite club participants had a wild and uninhibited time over the past two months at the Watkins Nature Center and the Patuxent Wild Life Center. Our kids enjoyed meeting furry, feathered and scaled friends up close! They showed no fear and their inquisitive natures taught us to live in the moment and enjoy the lessons in nature all around us!



## Lesson #2 Do not limit yourself or others!



### The Sky is the Limit! Teen and Young Adult Respite Fun!

In February, *World Explorers* respite club participants explored the amazing world of flight at the Udvar-Hasey Air and Space Museum in Dulles, Virginia. It was a rainy day and a long ride, but our explorers looked past all barriers to enjoy the colorful and historical flight exhibit and a 3D movie on flight. We even got to see one the last surviving Tuskegee Airmen in honor of African American History month. Our young adults taught us that they are more than capable of exceeding expectations and overcoming barriers to experience life!

## Lesson #3 Keep Growing!



In March, *World Explorers* visited the Botanical Gardens in Washington, D.C. We took a walk through blooms and blossoms of various terrains and vegetations. We returned to the center to celebrate one of explorer birthday, as he grew another year older. Again, our participants showed us that over the years they have grown into amazing unique beings who make our world more colorful, humorous and diverse; like the plant life we explored! Each participant received their own plant to nurture at home!

**Respite clubs are designed to be a socially stimulating time for participants and a much-needed break for caregivers!** Increasing social awareness, encouraging relationship building and navigating our community are all basic foundations of these programs. Life and self-care skills are additional components of our program for older participants. We have a 1:2-3 staff: participant ratio for these programs. Personal 1:1 support workers are welcomed, once they complete a background check. This program is covered by LISS funding. Interested? Contact [brenda@worldforautism.org](mailto:brenda@worldforautism.org)

- **"Our World Our Time"- Ages 3-13 years-** meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month except May, August and November (no respite) and December, where we meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday. **Cost- \$50 and \$25 for siblings (an activity charge may be additional depending on the community navigation offering)**
- **"Our World Explorers"- Ages 14 years to 24years-** meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month except May, August and November (no respite) and December, where we meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturdays. **Cost- \$50 and \$25 for siblings (an activity charge may be additional depending on the community navigation offering)**

### Family Enrichment Updates!



#### "GPS for Special Education"

OWCA continued its series of caregiver enrichment, with **GPS for Special Education- A caregiver's guide**. Our partner, **Ms. Victoria Lawson** presented on this critical topic. Our discussion and concerns ran deep, and we explored ways to make this offering even more empowering to those we serve! Victoria is a mother of two on the autism spectrum, a Certified Addictions Counselor (CAC1), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and a Master Addictions Counselor (MAC). She is also the founder and director of **A Purposeful Journey**, a family wellness consulting agency. **Cost- Free (donations are welcomed)** Interested? Contact [brenda@worldforautism.org](mailto:brenda@worldforautism.org)

**Workshops will generally be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month from 1-3 pm. Childcare is available on a 1<sup>st</sup> come 1<sup>st</sup> serve basis for a nominal charge of \$15 in our dedicated classrooms.**

#### Parent Empowerment Conference!

OWCA in conjunction with community partners, hosted the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Parent Empowerment Conference. This annual conference drew greater than 80 participants and featured keynote Speaker **Dr. Rick Lavoie, a consultant on Learning Disabilities and Author of "It's So Much Work to Be Your Friend: Helping the Child with Learning Disabilities Find Social Success"**. Dr. Lavoie and other conference speakers imparted rich and useful lessons for caregivers to implement in their parenting journey. We are grateful for the power of collaboration in education and want to thank the following organizations for their longstanding partnership!

- Pathfinders for Autism
- Prince George's County Public Schools
- Prince George's County SECAC
- The Parents' Place of Maryland



**JOIN US! Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> for "LIVING FULLY and LOVING WELL"- a Community Conversation on Adult Outcomes and Autism led by Abila Tazanu, M.D.- 1-3 pm**



Our first **Mom 2 Mom** support group in March 2018 was an authentic and wonderful exploration in mindfulness led by our partner Ms. Victoria Lawson, mother of two on the autism spectrum and director of *A Purposeful Journey*, a family wellness consulting agency. As mothers we assessed what self-care looked like in each of our lives and shared barriers to self-care. We discovered or rediscovered our passions and established one simple step, that we each could take to move us towards better-self-care. Although our lives are challenged, we unlocked the power of non-judgmental support to move us in the direction of greater physical and emotional health! **Join us on April 7<sup>th</sup> from 1-3pm as we discuss "Navigating Interpersonal Relationships" on our caregiver journey.** Childcare is available on a 1<sup>st</sup> come 1<sup>st</sup> serve basis for a nominal charge of \$15 in our dedicated classrooms. The amazing, Ms. Victoria Lawson will facilitate. **Cost- Free (donations are welcomed)**

Are you interested in being a part of our Mom 2 Mom planning committee? Contact us at [brenda@worldforautism.org](mailto:brenda@worldforautism.org).



### SIBZONE- Spring and Fall Sibling Retreats

Siblings are often overlooked when it comes to family support, but they need an emotionally safe space to express their emotions about being a sibling to a child or youth on the autism spectrum. This year OWCA will spotlight our siblings at our **Spring and Fall SIBZONE retreats**. Sibs 6 years and older will participate in an all-day retreat led by adult and teen special needs siblings. Together they will learn about autism, use creative media to express their emotions and celebrate what makes them unique! At the conclusion of this activity, they will know that they are not alone and have new friends in their journey. Each retreat will also include a fun-filled community trip and meal. **Cost for this retreat is \$75. Retreat dates for 2018 are Saturdays May 12<sup>th</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup>. Time 11-7pm.** Interested? Contact [brenda@worldforautism.org](mailto:brenda@worldforautism.org)

### Community Outreach!



Educating the community at large is near and dear to OWCA's heart and mission. **We offer a variety of Autism 101 Workshops for various professionals and peer groups at very reasonable rates.**

Questions or want more information about our organization? Visit [www.worldforautism.org](http://www.worldforautism.org) Call: 301-618-8395

If you are interested in us participating at a community event, please contact us and be our partners in awareness! Contact [samuel@worldforautism.org](mailto:samuel@worldforautism.org)

### Individual Support!

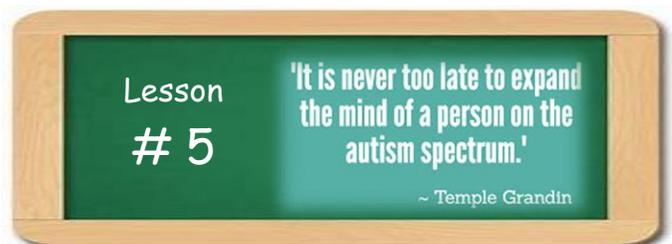


### Let's Move SPRING SESSION is Here!

#### Strength | Stability | Motor Planning | Coordination

Our family friendly fitness and wellness program spring session will start on April 4<sup>th</sup>! Our winter session was a blast! Through our partnership with **SMS Fitness**, as we encouraged greater movement through fun filled activities that promoted health and social awareness! Pre and post measurement of weight, height and BMI are a standard part of this program and provided accountability for participants and caregivers! Join us for another session of fun as we take on the outdoors with warmer weather approaching!

**Fitness program cost for an 8-week session is \$220. Classes occur on Mondays and Wednesdays for a total of 16 classes in each session. Winter Session January 29<sup>th</sup>-March 21<sup>st</sup>. This program is covered by LISS funding.** Times will be dependent upon enrollment numbers and ages of participants. Ages 6 and above are welcomed! Interested? Contact [brenda@worldforautism.org](mailto:brenda@worldforautism.org)



### Everyone Can Learn! - Individualized Learning and Life-skills Instruction

Everyone is capable of learning at any point in life! Temple Grandin, a renowned Doctor of Veterinary scientist and woman with autism spectrum disorder said it best with the quote above. If your child needs additional supports, let us help customize their learning with our educational consultants who understand and support the unique learning styles of children and youth on the autism spectrum and with related learning differences. Dr. Matthews-Somerville's is the director of EFM Educational Services and an educational consultant with an expertise in mentoring children, youth and their families! She has a heart for educating children of all abilities and helping them achieve their maximum potential. **These services are offered on a 1:1 basis in the home or community and is covered by LISS funding.** Please contact [Miguel@worldforautism.org](mailto:Miguel@worldforautism.org) for cost.

**April Dates to Remember!**

Dates	Offering
4 <sup>th</sup>	Let's Move- Spring Session begins
7 <sup>th</sup>	Mom 2 Mom- Exploring Interpersonal Relationships!
14 <sup>th</sup>	"Our World Explorers"- Teen and Young Adult Respite Club
21 <sup>st</sup>	"Embrace Our World"- Living Fully and Loving Well- A community discussion on adult outcomes for those with ASD
28 <sup>th</sup>	"Our World, Our Time"- Children's Respite Club

**VOLUNTEER!**



**Volunteers are critical to our success at the One World Center for Autism.** Our volunteers serve as partners in implementing our mission and programs and are essential to our day-to-day operations. Whether you are a high school, college, or university student, or an adult with an interest in serving those with special needs, we welcome you!

Volunteers can assist us in a variety of ways:

- Board development
- Respite program assistants
- Family Fun Day/special events
- Child and youth social skills program assistants
- Fundraising and resource development
- Childcare assistants
- Grant-writing
- Needs assessments and evaluations

Please note that for the safety of our participants, we perform background checks on all volunteer applicants! **Please contact [brenda@worldforautism.org](mailto:brenda@worldforautism.org) for more information!**

**April 2018**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

**Meet the OWCA Family!**

<b>Abila Tazanu, M.D.</b> , founder, executive director, pediatrician and mother of children with autism	<a href="mailto:abila@worldforautism.org">abila@worldforautism.org</a>
<b>Miguel Gonzalez</b> , Office Manager	<a href="mailto:miguel@worldforautism.org">miguel@worldforautism.org</a>
<b>Brenda Reed</b> , Clinical Administrative Assistant and Respite Program Planner, mother of child with autism	<a href="mailto:brenda@worldforautism.org">brenda@worldforautism.org</a>
<b>Samuel Gonzalez</b> , Participant Care and Community Outreach Coordinator	<a href="mailto:samuel@worldforautism.org">samuel@worldforautism.org</a>
<b>Edwinna Reed</b> , Care Coordinator and mother of son with autism	<a href="mailto:Edwinna@worldforautism.org">Edwinna@worldforautism.org</a>
<b>Paul Mendiola</b> , Administrative and Program Assistant, self-advocate	<a href="mailto:Paul@worldforautism.org">Paul@worldforautism.org</a>
<b>Aldene Ault, R.N.</b> , Community Outreach Nurse for Physician Outreach	<a href="mailto:aldene@worldforautism.org">aldene@worldforautism.org</a>
<b>Rhonda Mitchell</b> , Community Outreach Coordinator for Physician Outreach (Prince George's County Health Department)	<a href="mailto:Rhonda@worldforautism.org">Rhonda@worldforautism.org</a>



**WE NEED YOUR HELP and SUPPORT** in realizing our vision and fulfilling our mission for the greater than 1,600 children and adolescents living with autism in Prince Georges County in our county!

The One World Center for Autism, Inc. is a 501c3 grassroots non-profit serving individuals living with autism and other related special needs in Prince Georges County, Maryland. Our mission is to empower those living with autism through family support, community awareness, and individual therapeutic and medical services. Every gift makes a difference! Donate at [www.worldforautism.org](http://www.worldforautism.org) or send your gift to One World Center for Autism, 7401 Forbes Blvd, Suite A, Lanham, MD 20706

**DONATE** to help those with autism live full and loving lives!