

*January 2012*

## Happy New Year!!

We hope all of you are enjoying the new year and had a lovely holiday season. There are always changes and new challenges to face each new year. One very large change happening in California is the signing of a new law called SB946. This law requires California health plans to offer coverage of what the law defines as “behavioral health treatments” for members with autism spectrum disorders. These requirements take effect on July 1, 2012.

Those of us working in outpatient hospital settings are bracing ourselves for a flood of children diagnosed with autism to come in for their medical speech-language evaluation to qualify for these services. ASPS, Inc. contracts with a large outpatient healthcare company in California, and they’ve already requested two new full-time SLP’s from our agency just for their Orange County location. We will probably receive more requests soon.

For those of you with keen observational skills, you may have noticed another change at the top of our newsletter. That’s right, we have a new logo! Over the past few years we have been expanding our staffing support beyond speech-language pathologists. We also provide wonderful occupational therapists, physical therapists, and educational psychologists, therefore, we decided it was time to change our logo. What’s the twist? Our president Orna likes to say, “The twist is—we’re honest!” ☺

## Autism Resources

None of us have time to read every Advance Magazine article or ASHA Leader. In the latest online ASHA Leader live, there were some useful links to resources to use for the assessment and treatment of autism. Some of us graduated from school so long ago, that autism was not the hot topic that it is today. For those people, there are good videos of some lectures from Prof. Fred Volkmar of Yale that you can download for free from iTunes.

These are class lectures, so they are about 45 – 90 minutes long. At [autismteachingstrategies.com/our-how-to-videos-2/](http://autismteachingstrategies.com/our-how-to-videos-2/) there are many short videos about how to teach social skills to children with autism. One video explains how to use The Conversation Train kit that is available for purchase from [autismteachingstrategies.com](http://autismteachingstrategies.com).

Another website you may find useful is [cccoe.net/social/skillslist.htm](http://cccoe.net/social/skillslist.htm). This website provides forms that focus on social skills for children in middle school. Subjects include accepting criticism, accepting “no”, apologizing, and asking a favor. Each form provides dialogue to teach the children to learn and practice in a role-play situation. There is also an evaluation checklist. There are hundreds of situations on just this one website page. Many of them seemed appropriate to use with verbal 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade students with autism or Asperger’s as well. Hopefully you will find these tips useful in your treatment!

## Congratulations!!

*Congratulations to the following therapists for their good news!!*

Candice Pellam; engaged  
Kelly Magee-Greene; baby girl  
Amanda Macielinski; baby boy

## Awards!!!

*Congratulations to the following therapists who were recognized and presented with awards at this year's holiday party!*

Kelly Flynn, Jen Connaghan,  
Lucille Delligatti, & Anzhela Yerman

## Picture Round-Up!

We have some fun pictures to share with you of events that occurred since the October newsletter. We had another successful ASHA convention in San Diego in November. We were surprised that it was less busy than the ASHA convention in Philadelphia. Maybe all of that good Philadelphia food attracted everyone from around the country. ASPS, Inc. also hosted another fun holiday dinner to honor all of you. Thanks to all of you for the high quality work that you provide to our clients.



Our balloons were the hit of the convention.



Two of our clinical directors, Erin & Liz hanging out at the holiday party.

## Therapists enjoying some dinner and scintillating conversation with friends and spouses!



Anzhela Yerman, Julie Glover, Kerri Kelly, & Jaclyn Heilman



Christine Heimark, Wendy Kazan, Diana Brisson, Julia Watt, and Emily Kocher

***PLEASE RECYCLE YOUR NEWSLETTER!***