



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MILESTONES AUTISM ORGANIZATION announces spring topics for workshop series designed by parents for parents

February 3, 2014

CLEVELAND - Milestones Autism Organization, a nonprofit dedicated to providing the Northeast Ohio autism community with resources, support and education, is pleased to announce the launch of its spring 2014 workshop series for parents, Milestones Parent Empowerment Network (MPEN).

"This is the first time in four years, since my son got diagnosed, that I have been able to feel as though I'm not alone, that I am validated and that others understand me and the situation I am in. Coming here helped me to find out new ways to help my child," an MPEN workshop attendee said about her experience during the fall 2013 series.

This ongoing program will feature four skill-building, informative topics including *Funding for Services, Creating & Sustaining Independent Leisure Skills, Transition at Every Stage* and *Challenging Behaviors*. Beginning in February, MPEN workshops will be held monthly.

Funding for Services will teach parents creative ways to utilize funding for occupational, physical and behavioral therapies, independent living skills, alternative placements to public school and county board services. Speakers will include Adrienne Shimek, Director of Rehab Road, on how to fund therapies and independent living skills; Cheryl Bowshier, Special Needs Outreach Coordinator at School Choice Ohio, on the Autism and the Jon Peterson Scholarships; Rachel Torrance, Behavior and Curriculum Intervention Specialist at Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, with Tim Lewicki, Case Worker Supervisor at Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, on free services the County Board can provide; and several parents describing their funding advice.

Designed for parents by parents, MPEN workshops are conveniently held on both the east and west sides of Cleveland at Shaker Family Center (the old Sussex School) in Shaker Heights and Grace Church in Middleburg Heights.

MPEN workshops offer parents the opportunity to meet and learn from creative parents who want to share their out-of-the-box thinking and time-saving tips.

Children aged 3 and up are welcome to join a social/recreational program at each event run by trained autism staff. Advanced registration is required for this service, along with a \$10 fee per child.

To register or for more information about MPEN workshops, please visit milestones.org or contact Elizabeth Mason at 216.464.7600 ext.112 or email emason@milestones.org.

The Milestones Parent Empowerment Network (MPEN) series is supported by grants from The O'Neill Foundation, The Reuter Foundation and Saint Luke's Foundation. A generous partnership with Grace Church and Shaker Family Center helped to make MPEN workshops possible.

About Milestones

Founded in 2003, Milestones is dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. Milestones helps individuals reach their potential through education of family members and professionals in evidence-based, practical strategies. To learn more, visit Milestones Autism Organization at milestones.org or call 216.464.7600.

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