



Milestones Autism Organization  
**10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
**CELEBRATION**

HONORING OUR FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS

**Chantal Akerib**

**Bart Bookatz**

**Carol Lader**

**Sally Wertheim**

November 3, 2012

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November, 2012

Greetings,

Many of you may have viewed the Milestones video and "met" Evan, my dear friends' (Carol and Scott Burg's) son. Evan is my hero, my daily inspiration and the reason why I originally volunteered to assist Ilana and Mia with some governance guidance nearly a decade ago. It didn't hurt that Dr. Sally Wertheim, my treasured mentor, connected me and Ilana. I hardly could have predicted that introduction would morph into committee involvement, board membership, and leadership. As I reflect, I should have known better. Sally's mentorship has shaped my life in very significant ways.



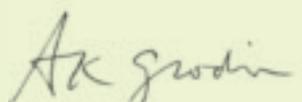
Andrea Kanter Grodin

Little did I know on this journey that I would often encounter friends and acquaintances also affected by autism. Serving the Milestones Autism Organization is without a doubt one my most rewarding volunteer activities. Our trustees are a distinguished, eclectic group of talented individuals who are passionate about helping the community affected by autism. Their wisdom, ideas, energy, and generosity also inspire.

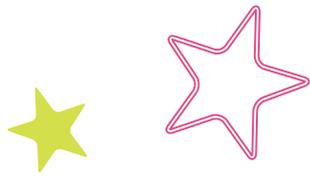
I am proud to honor our founding trustees **Chantal Akerib, Bart Bookatz, Carol Lader, and Sally Wertheim** tonight. I do however think it is slightly amusing that our event invitation describes them as persons who took a leap of faith in creating a new resource for our community. Really? A leap of faith? It didn't take a leap of faith to believe in Ilana and Mia. Anyone who has ever spent more than ten minutes with them knows that they are a force field. Putting our investment in them to lead a new organization for the community was a sure bet. And the amazing growth and depth of Milestones' services and impact over these past ten years is evidence of their talent and relentless pursuit of resources for our autism community.

Many thanks to our entire Milestones community: our students, volunteers, professional staff, and donors. Together we've grown from humble beginnings in the basement of a residence. Together we promote life-long strategies for success for individuals with autism, from childhood through adulthood.

Looking forward to our next decade —

  
Andrea Kanter Grodin  
Board Chair

November, 2012



Dear Community,

It is with great pride and humility that we write this introductory letter to the Milestones Tribute Book celebrating 10 years of service. We are grateful to our founding board members, **Chantal Akerib, Bart Bookatz, Carol Lader and Sally Wertheim**, who took a leap of faith with us and helped guide the creation and development of Milestones Autism Organization.



Mia Buchwald Gelles



Ilana Hoffer Skoff

Milestones was a dream started at our kitchen table. Ours is a story of how we can pull together to improve our community. We certainly did not envision the growth of the organization and the vast numbers of families and professionals we could support through Milestones.

We are here because of you—our partners, sponsors, funders, volunteers, and friends. You have given your time, effort, and financial support to ensure that Milestones' programs reach the people who need education, guidance and coaching throughout Northeast Ohio and beyond. This partnership ensures that Milestones Organization remains productive, responsive, and sustainable.

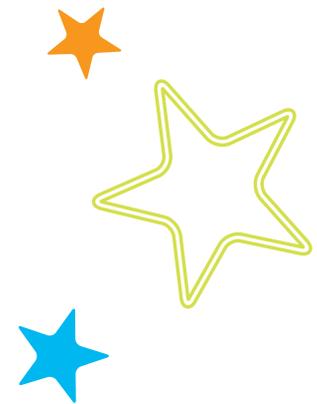
We especially thank our board of directors, composed of family members impacted by autism, professionals in the field of autism, and community leaders, for continuing to guide Milestones into the next decade. The board works hand in hand with our stellar, dedicated staff. We are grateful for your commitment to improving autism services for all.

Finally, we thank our families who support us unconditionally and are daily reminders of why we do what we do. As our own children have grown, so too has Milestones. As our grasp of what is possible for our children has expanded, so too has our vision expanded to help all individuals with autism reach their full potential.

With gratitude,

Mia Buchwald Gelles  
Co-Founder

Ilana Hoffer Skoff  
Co-Founder



## MILESTONES STAFF

**Ilana Hoffer Skoff, MA**  
Executive Director

**Mia Buchwald Gelles**  
Operations Director

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# HONORING MILESTONES FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS

Being the *first* to tackle any significant challenge is never easy. And so it was 10 years ago when Milestones Autism Organization's founding board members channeled their collective vision, drive and expertise to create a better future for those whose lives are impacted by autism. These visionary leaders were among the *first* to bring autism into the public eye here in Greater Cleveland. They were among the *first* to begin educating, teaching and equipping parents and professionals with practical autism tools and strategies. They were among the *first* to make it known that autism could no longer be overlooked in Greater Cleveland.



## Chantal Akerib

Sometimes it seems like you need to be a rocket scientist in order to understand the complexities of autism. Chantal Akerib comes close. Chantal has a Ph.D. in molecular biology and worked as a research scientist until her son was born. Chantal's quest for real scientific information prompted her involvement with Milestones after her son was diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. Parents are often in a vulnerable state when their child is diagnosed—they're scared, and although there is a wealth of autism information available, there is an equal wealth of misinformation. Chantal's goal was to help spread the word about evidence-based autism therapies and to provide parents and professionals with reliable information.

Chantal jumped in and helped plan Milestones' first annual conference. She worked on publicity, recruited volunteers, and found a book vendor and other exhibitors. After the conference, Chantal officially joined Milestones' first board of directors. As a parent, Chantal has attended Milestones' conferences and workshops through the years and has witnessed tremendous growth in Milestones' educational programming. Today, Chantal describes Milestones as the go-to source for autism resources in Greater Cleveland.



## Bart Bookatz

Bart Bookatz has been a leader in the Cleveland community for more than 40 years. His philanthropic and volunteer efforts span numerous Jewish organizations and medical associations, as well as Milestones, of which he is a founding member. Bart had experienced first-hand the frustration of getting help for a family member affected by special needs. When he agreed to join the Milestones board, there was no doubt in his mind that there was plenty of work to do. Bart rose to the challenge of helping create a place where frustrated and concerned family members could get answers and connect with resources.

Bart recalls Milestones' early days when the founders gathered in coffee shops, basements, and around dining room tables to discuss how Milestones would fulfill its mission of bringing autism education and training to parents and professionals. Bart believes that Milestones' most important accomplishment has been its ability to educate teachers. Milestones' educational arm has provided training for hundreds of classroom teachers in Northeast Ohio which directly impacts the quality of education for their students. Bart recognizes just how far Milestones has come when he calls the organization's Beachwood offices today and finds a menu of extensions and options from which to choose. Yet, he knows that challenges continue for families affected by autism, and Milestones is not an organization that will rest on its laurels.



If you know any of Milestones' founding board members—**Chantal Akerib, Bart Bookatz, Carol Lader and Sally Wertheim**—then you know that you are fortunate to be counted among their families and friends. You know that each is passionate about making this community—this world—a better place. And you know that each is passionate about helping individuals with autism realize their full potential.

If you don't know any of Milestones' founding board members, read on and get to know them. They surely will inspire you and remind you that each one of us—whether we are parents, grandparents, teachers, business owners, friends or neighbors—can make a difference.



### Carol Lader

What would you do if your grandchild was diagnosed with autism? Carol Lader was faced with this very question 18 years ago when her grandson Daniel was first diagnosed. Carol, along with fellow grandmother Adele Silver, decided to take on autism. Since there were no autism resource agencies in town to turn to, the two women found themselves on their own. The gutsy grandmas delved into autism research, made telephone calls, spoke to doctors, and gathered as much information as they possibly could. Still, they found few trained professionals with autism experience in the Cleveland area who could help.

The need for a local autism-centered agency to educate families and professionals became crystal clear to Carol. Carol was excited to join Milestones' founding board to help create a force that could deal with the challenges that autism poses for local families and provide greatly needed training for teachers and other professionals. Carol's enthusiasm for Milestones rubbed off on her husband, Marv, who has also been actively involved with the organization for several years. Carol and Marv serve as co-chairs of the Milestones Endowment Committee, and also launched the organization's Annual Fund. Without question, what started as a labor of love for one grandchild has impacted thousands of families who now have a place to turn.



### Sally H. Wertheim

Sally Wertheim did not have a personal connection to autism when she was asked to help found Milestones. Instead, it was Sally's personal mantra, "If I can make something better, I'm on board," that connected her to the group. Luckily, Sally realized that her leadership abilities, grounding in education and a longstanding career as a professor, were a perfect fit for Milestones' founding board. Since 2003, Sally has continually improved services for individuals affected by autism. As an active board member, she has helped shape the strategic direction of the organization and helped to guide its professional growth through the hiring of a skilled staff capable of meeting the diverse needs of a growing autism population.

Backed by her strong belief that learning is a life-long process, Sally has been instrumental in helping Milestones cultivate ongoing professional development and innovative opportunities for autism professionals to network, coach, and learn from one another. Sally also consults with Milestones to evaluate current programs and assess their impact. She is a constant reminder that it's often not how much you do, but how "well" you do something that really matters.





**HONORARY CHAIRS**

**Tamar & Milton Maltz**  
**Audrey & Albert Ratner**  
**Adele Silver**



**HONORARY VICE CHAIRS**

**Norma Lerner**  
**Susan & Jim Ratner**

**TRIBUTE COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**Rochelle & Mark Nyer**  
**Peggy & Philip Wasserstrom**

**TRIBUTE BOOK CHAIR**

**Stephen Rudolph**

**TRIBUTE COMMITTEE**

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CoCo & Elias H. Akouri  
Mindi Kogan Axner  
Daryl & Ronald Bailey  
Genevieve Bauer  
Nancy & Jaye Benjamin  
Stacey & Adam Berebitsky  
Mary & David Betsill  
Faye Birns  
Carole Bookatz  
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Julie Felder  
Suzann & Patrick Fleming  
Sherri Foxman  
Carol & Morton Frankel  
Phyllis & Avrum Froimson  
Joyce & Gary Fromson  
vic & joan gelb

Mia & Joseph Buchwald Gelles  
Sally Good  
Lois & Henry Goodman  
Andrea Kanter Grodin & William Grodin  
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Elizabeth Stiles  
Janet & Will Sukenik  
Mark Swaim-Fox  
Jeanne & Jordan Tobin  
Stanley Wertheim & Family  
Anita Rothschild & Steven Wexberg  
Nancy Whitman  
Judy & Steven Willensky  
Donna Yanowitz  
Deborah & Mark Zielinski  
Lisa & Rob Zimmerman



## MILESTONES—A HOMEGROWN AUTISM ORGANIZATION

If you are raising a child with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) today, Cleveland is a very good place to be. In fact, Cleveland has become a destination for families that are affected by autism. Yet until recently, this was not the case. Only a decade ago, the prospects for meeting the myriad of challenges associated with autism in Cleveland, were significantly different. There were no schools here that specialized in autism and interventions for children on the autism spectrum. Local resources were few and far between. Families and school districts that could afford to brought autism consultants and specialists into town from other parts of the county. Some families even traveled out of town for services.

In 2003, Milestones' co-founders, Ilana Hoffer Skoff and Mia Buchwald Gelles, were each raising a young child with ASD. They were each facing the challenges of finding therapies that would work for their children. They were each in desperate need of trained professionals to join forces with. They were each discovering vast gaps in autism education, resources and services in Northeast Ohio. These gaps in services drove Ilana and Mia to pool their collective talents in order to establish Milestones, a local autism organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals on the autism spectrum. Here is their story.

**MILESTONES WAS FOUNDED  
BY PARENTS FOR PARENTS  
AND PROFESSIONALS.**



**MILESTONES EDUCATES  
ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES FOR  
INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM.**

**MILESTONES PROVIDES  
PRACTICAL STRATEGIES  
FOR REACHING GOALS.**



## On a Mission

Ilana Hoffer Skoff and Mia Buchwald Gelles first met in the waiting room of a speech therapist's office. They had seen each other dozens of times rushing by to get their children to and from appointments. Then one day, they began a conversation that has lasted for the past ten years. As they began to talk, they realized they had a great deal in common. Both had discovered a recently published book about autism that detailed a curriculum focused on utilizing behavioral strategies to teach everything from how to play, to how to talk; from how to develop social skills, to how to teach self-help skills. *Behavioral Intervention for Young Children with Autism* by Catherine Maurice became their guidebook. They each started home programs using ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) to teach their children the life skills that typical children learn naturally.

**“Milestones is about making a difference. What you see today can change. I really believe that education raises the potential for everyone.”**

**– Ilana Hoffer Skoff**

The two mothers became friends—mentoring each other through the ups and downs of autism. They shared hopes and dreams for their children. But more importantly, they shared what was working with their children, and they learned from each other. They realized that small steps added up, and they saw their children make real progress using ABA. The question in their minds slowly shifted from “How can we help our own children?” to “How can we help other families?”

Once their children entered school, Ilana and Mia had more time on their hands and were compelled to share their experience and knowledge in an effort to help others. Both women strongly agreed that the way to improve services for individuals with autism was to better train the professionals and family members working with them. With this mission, Milestones was born.

## Getting Started

No fancy desks. No high-tech laptops. No big offices with panoramic views. Ilana and Mia simply sat around the kitchen table in Ilana's Cleveland Heights home to brainstorm ways to bring education and training to the local community. Each had professional backgrounds in non-profit organizations. Ilana was well versed in development, while Mia possessed extensive project management and database design experience. Without hesitation, the determined duo decided that what Cleveland needed was a major autism conference here in town. With that, the pair took on the task of planning the first Milestones Autism Conference.

Mia and Ilana enlisted the support of their families and friends. In fact, both of their husbands helped shape Milestones. Rabbi Joshua Skoff, Ilana's husband, brainstormed the name “Milestones.” And Mia's husband, Joe Gelles, devoted hours of his time as a graphic designer creating professional-looking conference materials for the organization.



**Milestones Autism Organization's mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. Milestones helps individuals reach their potential through the education of family members and professionals in evidence-based practical strategies.**

Milestones' first conference volunteers also included Carol Burg and Barbara Gonick who helped plan workshop topics. Chantal Akerib and Cindy Oakley volunteered their time in preparing marketing materials. **Environmental Health Watch** and **Cleveland Hearing and Speech** acted as the fiscal agents for the first conferences and a \$2,500 presidential grant from **The Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation** covered speaker expenses and a down payment on the conference facility.

Ilana knew exactly who she wanted the first keynote speaker to be—Bridget Taylor. Bridget was a pioneer in using ABA therapy in the treatment of children with autism and her work was notably documented in the 1994 book *Let Me Hear Your Voice*. Bridget traveled from New Jersey to be Milestones' first keynote speaker. On August 4, 2003, 400 people flooded Milestones' full day conference on "Social Strides for Children and Teens with Autism." Today, Mia and Ilana still laugh about that first conference, admitting that they had no idea if anyone would actually show up.

## The Fab Four

The conference was a clear indication that an organization like Milestones was a necessity in Northeast Ohio. It was also a clear indication that there was much work to do and that a few more hands would certainly be needed. Working with the **Milton A. Kramer Law Clinic Center** at Case Western Reserve University, Ilana and Mia took the necessary steps to incorporate. In March of 2004, Milestones became a non-profit organization.

During this time, Ilana and Mia invited four outstanding community members—**Chantal Akerib, Bart Bookatz, Carol Lader, and Sally Wertheim**—to join Milestones' first board of directors. All agreed to volunteer their time and talent to the organization. Taking a leap of faith together, they championed Milestones' early years and commitment to bringing practical life-long strategies for success to individuals affected by autism in homes, schools, and communities in Greater Cleveland.

Today, Milestones' board of directors has grown to 26 individuals representing three pillars: family members impacted by autism, educational and medical professionals in the field of ASD, and community members dedicated to providing and improving resources. The board is currently chaired by Andrea Kanter Grodin, Executive Director of The Cleveland Clinic Division of Operations. The board meets five times annually and continues to be a driving force behind Milestones' educational programming, fundraising efforts, special committees, and annual autism events.



*Milestones' first official board meeting on March 12, 2004*

**"When we started Milestones, nothing was here. We decided to create our own force to deal with autism and to start helping families."**

**- Carol Lader**



## Milestones Steady and Strategic Growth

It's no secret that the number of children being diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder has skyrocketed in the last decade. Milestones has grown steadily and strategically in response to the escalating needs of the autism community. Capacity building grants from **The Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation**, **The Treu-Mart Fund** and the **Meisel Family Foundation** have enabled Milestones to grow from a volunteer organization to a professional organization. Over the years, Milestones has thoughtfully added staff and developed programs to bridge the gaps in autism services and resources in Northeast Ohio.

Today,  
**1 in 88**  
children  
are living  
with autism.

Center for Disease  
Control, April 2012

**Milestones' website, [www.milestones.org](http://www.milestones.org), receives more than 1 million hits a year. Visit today to find out why.**



In 2004, Milestones' first website, **www.milestones.org**, was designed pro bono by **Fathom IT**. The website is a clearinghouse of information and a gateway for connecting people to the resources they need. Milestones spent much of the beginning of this anniversary year renovating and upgrading the site to include an expanded resource center, practical tips and videos for families and professionals, and a comprehensive autism community calendar. Generous funding for this special project came from the **William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation**, **Lois Joan Davis**, and the **David and Robert Stein Family Foundation**.

Milestones has presented an annual conference for ten straight years, bringing world-renowned speakers, cutting edge technology, local experts and exhibitors, and the latest in autism research to Cleveland. Some of the most respected researchers and practitioners in the field of autism have presented at Milestones' conferences including Catherine Maurice in 2004, Vincent Carbone in 2005, Jed Baker in 2008, Brenda Smith Myles in 2009 and 2012, and Michelle Garcia Winner in 2011. Local experts have also shared a wealth of knowledge with conference attendees, including speakers from **University Hospitals of Cleveland**, **The Cleveland Clinic Center for Autism**, **Monarch Center for Autism**, **The Achievement Centers for Children**, **PEP Prentiss Autism Center**, **Hattie Larlham**, and **Notre Dame College**.

As Milestones' conferences have grown bigger and bigger each year, corporate sponsors such as the **Cleveland Clinic Center for Autism**, **UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital**, **Case Western Reserve University**, and **Cleveland State University** have supported the undertaking of such a large-scale event. Milestones has welcomed the **Organization for Autism Research (OAR)** and **Kent State University** as presenting sponsors of the conference. These organizations chose to partner with Milestones instead of hosting independent conferences.



Milestones has educated thousands of parents and professionals at its annual conferences.



Rochelle Nyer, Milestones board member, presents professional appreciation awards to Aletta Sinoff, formerly with the Cleveland Clinic Center for Autism, and Karin Hess-Hopkins, Monarch Center for Autism.



*Milestones provides hands-on teacher training.*

In addition to a summer conference, it became clear early on that there was a need for year-round educational programming. To that end, Milestones conducts workshops and trainings throughout the year for parents, family members, educators, and other professionals covering a wide range of topics, from communication and challenging behaviors to transition planning. Milestones' staff is adept at customizing workshops for school districts, parent groups, and local agencies.

In 2006, *Milestones School Team Training* was developed after staff from the Cuyahoga Special Education Service Center approached Milestones to organize and implement a hands-on training program in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). A dedicated committee of behavioral consultants and special education teachers

from **Cleveland Metropolitan School District** developed a model for training school personnel to use ABA with students with autism. Funding from **The Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation** and the **Senkfor Family Foundation** enabled Milestones to develop this innovative format. Teachers from more than 45 public school districts in Ohio have participated in this week-long training and are putting evidence-based practices into action in classrooms throughout the state. In 2012, scholarships from **The Cleveland Foundation** and the **Martha Holden Jennings Foundation** afforded teachers from low-income districts the opportunity to attend this training.

During the last 10 years, Milestones has remained at the forefront of addressing the needs of an aging autism population. Over time, families and providers have become faced with the brand-new challenges of preparing and transitioning teens and young adults into the real world of work and community living. In 2010, with support from **The Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation**, the **Meisel Family Foundation**, the **David & Inez Myers Foundation**, and **Saint Luke's Foundation**, Milestones launched *The Roadmap to Adulthood Project*. This one-of-a-kind program assists families and providers in successful transition planning and provides information and resources for adults with ASD. Income from the **Pathway to the Future Endowment Fund** will ultimately help sustain the project for the long term. The fund, maintained by **The Cleveland Foundation**, began with a lead gift from **Carol and Marvin Lader** and includes ongoing contributions from more than 50 donors.

Through the years, Milestones' physical facilities expanded as well. In 2005, the organization moved to its first professional offices in Cleveland Heights. In 2009, with generous support from **NAI Daus**, Milestones moved to its current offices in Beachwood. Furniture was graciously donated by **Forest City** and the **Cleveland Jewish News**. In addition to individual offices, this location also has a large workshop space that is well-suited for meeting with families and conducting on-site educational programs and trainings.



**"So many times you go to a workshop and by the time you get back to the classroom you've forgotten the strategies. Here we work with the kids right away and it reinforces our own learning process."**

**- Megan Ghetti, School Psychologist, Cleveland Metropolitan School District**



*Ann Freimuth, Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation, Ilana Hoffer Skoff, and Deborah Zielinski, Milestones board member, at the 2009 opening of Milestones' Beachwood offices.*





## Community Collaboration

Milestones is grateful to the community that has embraced its work day in and day out. Local businesses, colleges and universities, hospitals, area restaurants, individual and corporate sponsors, sports teams, school districts, family members, and partnering autism agencies have continuously stepped up to the plate and joined Milestones in helping to fulfill its mission. From attending planning committee meetings and co-sponsoring events to volunteering to stuff envelopes, thousands of Clevelanders have had a hand in Milestones' history of helping families and individuals navigate the barriers that autism poses.



**Beta Theta Pi Fraternity at John Carroll University** hosts an annual talent show that benefits Milestones.



Robin Swoboda lent her warm sense of humor to emcee Milestones Best of Cleveland Comedy Benefit.

**“The need for autism-related services and education is overwhelming. The autism population is growing and aging year after year. Milestones is here to meet these needs. We are working to make the future brighter.”**

*– Mia Buchwald Gelles*

Funding has been critical to Milestones' success. Milestones has received generous annual support from major donors including the **Lader Family Foundation, The Albert B. and Audrey G. Ratner Family Foundation, Forest City Charitable Foundation, the Rosen-Fromson Philanthropic Fund, Michael Friedman of Ganley Volkswagen & Subaru, Ernst & Young,** and the **Arthur B. McBride, Sr. Family Foundation.** Their generosity, along with the generosity of additional individual donors and corporate sponsors, has enabled Milestones to thrive.

## Milestones Today

Today, Milestones' well-rounded staff of seven serves more than 1,500 families and professionals in the autism community every year. Ilana Hoffer Skoff and Mia Buchwald Gelles continue to provide hands-on leadership to the organization as Executive Director and Director of Operations respectively. Leslie Rotsky manages all educational publications and handles referral calls for younger children. Beth Thompson coordinates services and workshops for teens and adults. Maya Holtz Groys manages development, including the Annual Fund and sponsorships, with assistance from Nicole Herrera. Tara Tonsetic heads up marketing and conference planning. Together with the Cleveland community, Milestones looks ahead to continue raising the bar for individuals affected by autism.



# MILESTONES INNOVATIVE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Whether you are a professional or a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin, or sibling, Milestones' staff is available to answer autism-related questions, provide knowledgeable advice, and help troubleshoot concerns.



## Coaching

Milestones offers coaching by phone, email, or in person. Here are some of the many areas Milestones can assist with:

- Concerns related to a new diagnosis
- School and IEP issues
- Effective behavioral interventions
- Recreational and therapeutic resources
- Summer camp programs
- Adult services

## Conference and Workshops

Every year, Milestones hosts an annual conference that brings leading experts in the field of autism together to share evidence-based strategies and best practices. Professionals and family members can attend educational sessions covering a wide range of topics. They get practical, field-tested ideas that can be implemented immediately. The conference also provides a forum for networking and provides an opportunity to visit dozens of exhibits featuring autism-specific products and services.

Milestones, in collaboration with autism experts, provides year-round workshops and hands-on training for both parents and professionals. Milestones designs workshops based on the needs of the autism community. Here are some frequently requested topics:

- ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis)
- At-Home Strategies
- Challenging Behaviors
- Transition Planning
- Self-Advocacy Training
- Independent Living Skills



## Milestones School Team Training

Many well-intentioned educators are simply not trained to teach students with autism. *Milestones School Team Training* is an intensive, hands-on training that focuses on effective behavioral interventions for the classroom. With the goal of improving student outcomes, school team members learn practical teaching strategies that can be implemented with students of all ages and all levels of functioning. Techniques to implement ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) in both individual teaching environments and inclusion settings are emphasized.



*Demonstration classroom at Milestones School Team Training.*

**"I have been teaching for 14 years and consider myself a master teacher but never really had behavioral strategies to use before attending this training. It's been the best training of my career."**

**- Renee Schonhiutt, Intervention Specialist, West Geauga Local Schools**





*Dr. Michael Roizen presents at MCAP.*

## **Milestones Consortium for Autism Professionals (MCAP)**

Launched in 2010, Milestones Consortium for Autism Professionals was created to support professionals serving the autism community, and broaden their connections with others in their own and complementary fields. Teachers, physicians, speech therapists, behavior consultants, social workers, and psychologists come together to talk and learn about autism—sharing their perspectives, challenges and expertise. Quarterly MCAP events include speaker presentations and professional networking to build relationships among autism providers.

## **Milestones Roadmap to Teen and Adult Services**

Parents and families affected by autism face particular challenges navigating the transition from public school to adulthood. *The Roadmap to Adulthood Project* empowers families to access resources, advocate for their adult children and navigate government support systems. Through this project, Milestones Organization trains service providers to more effectively work with young adults with autism spectrum disorder and links both parents and professionals with services.

## **Internship Program**

Research has proven that the greatest factor in the long-term employment success for individuals with ASD is work experience prior to graduating high school. Milestones has developed an internship program to provide real-life job experiences for high school students on the spectrum. With on-site job coaching, even individuals thought to be unemployable in the community are finding success working at Milestones.



*Milestones' high school internship program provides on-the-job training.*

**“Milestones is proud to foster the development of high school students on the spectrum through our internship program which provides year-round, community-based vocational experiences.”**

**– Beth Thompson, Milestones Teen/Adult Services Coordinator**

## **Consultation Services**

Milestones provides phone and office consultations for teens, adults, and family members. Consultations and action plans are tailored to specific individual needs and can cover concerns related to independent living, employment, post-secondary education, social, and recreational programs. For teens, consultation services are available to prepare and review Individualized Education Plans. Guidance is also offered for assistance seeking funding for transition-related needs.

