



# Arc of Vigo County Newsletter

APRIL 1, 2014

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 12

## ***Our Mission***

*Arc of Vigo County is a non-facility, family centered organization providing individualized community services to assist persons with disabilities in choosing where they live, work, and play. People know that we are in existence for our consumers and that we are willing to work with families, other agencies and the community at large to complete our mission.*

## **Welcome to the Arc of Vigo County Newsletter**

Welcome, our newsletter will be offering information such as but not limited to upcoming Community events, employee recognition and helpful hints. The Arc of Vigo County has made all reasonable efforts to ensure that information provided through its publications is accurate at the time of inclusion and accepts no liability for inaccuracies or omissions. If anyone has an article or information to share please contact us at 812-232-4112.

## **What's happening?**

### **April is Autism Awareness Month**

In order to highlight the growing need for concern and awareness about autism, the Autism Society has been celebrating National Autism Awareness Month since the 1970s. The United States recognizes April as a special opportunity for everyone to educate the public about autism and issues within the autism community.

### **What is autism?**

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain, impacting development in the areas of social interaction and communication skills. Both children and adults with autism typically show difficulties in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities. Autism is a spectrum disorder and it affects each individual differently and at varying degrees.

**Arc of Vigo County**

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[www.arcvigo.org](http://www.arcvigo.org)

### **What are the most common characteristics of autism?**

Every person with autism is an individual, and like all individuals, has a unique personality and combination of characteristics. Some individuals mildly affected may exhibit only slight delays in language and greater challenges with social interactions. They may have difficulty initiating and/or maintaining a conversation. Their communication is often described as talking at others instead of to them. (For example, a monologue on a favorite subject that continues despite attempts by others to interject comments).

People with autism also process and respond to information in unique ways. In some cases, aggressive and/or self-injurious behavior may be present. Persons with autism may also exhibit some of the following traits:

- Insistence on sameness; resistance to change
- Difficulty in expressing needs, using gestures or pointing instead of words
- Repeating words or phrases in place of normal, responsive language
- Laughing (and/or crying) for no apparent reason; showing distress for reasons not apparent to others
- Preference to being alone; aloof manner
- Tantrums
- Difficulty in mixing with others
- Not wanting to cuddle or be cuddled
- Little or no eye contact
- Unresponsive to normal teaching methods
- Sustained odd play
- Spinning objects
- Obsessive attachment to objects
- Apparent over-sensitivity or under-sensitivity to pain
- No real fears of danger
- Noticeable physical over-activity or extreme under-activity
- Uneven gross/fine motor skills
- Non-responsive to verbal cues; acts as if deaf, although hearing tests in normal range

On the evening of **April 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014** you will see many office buildings **Light it up Blue** to raise awareness for **Autism**. You can raise awareness also by wearing blue clothing or your Autism Speaks puzzle piece. Light your house up by using blue light bulbs in any outdoor fixtures.

### **World Autism Awareness Day April 2, 2014**

World Autism Awareness Day aims to increase people's awareness about people, especially children, with autism.

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**UPCOMING EVENTS:  
BLUMBERG TOPICAL SERIES:  
PROGRAMS ON CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL ISSUES IN  
INDIANA**

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**Autism: Awareness and Understanding**

Augmentative communication can be beneficial to those that have limited communicative abilities. Learn about Camp Bruce, and using core vocabulary with individuals with Autism and the importance of motor planning.

**Presenter:**

April Newton, Director Camp Bruce

**April 10, 2014**

4:00 - 5:30 PM (Eastern Time)

University Hall: Whitaker Conference Room 110G

401 N. 7th St

Terre Haute, IN 47809

Learn how assistive devices can be beneficial to those that have limited communicative abilities.

Session is free but registration is required:

[https://indstate.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_e2jg7mD5UGwM1P7](https://indstate.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_e2jg7mD5UGwM1P7)

Certificates of Attendance and any printed materials will be provided. For more information, contact [Marlene.Lu@indstate.edu](mailto:Marlene.Lu@indstate.edu) or call 812-237-2830.

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## **Developmental Disabilities**

There are many kinds of developmental disabilities. This month we will talk about Cerebral Palsy.

### **What is Cerebral Palsy?**

Doctors use the term cerebral palsy to refer to any one of a number of neurological disorders that appear in infancy or early childhood and permanently affect body movement and muscle coordination but aren't progressive, in other words, they don't get worse over time. The term *cerebral* refers to the two halves or hemispheres of the brain, in this case to the motor area of the brain's outer layer (called the cerebral cortex), the part of the brain that directs muscle movement; *palsy* refers to the loss or impairment of motor function.

Even though cerebral palsy affects muscle movement, it isn't caused by problems in the muscles or nerves. It is caused by abnormalities inside the brain that disrupt the brain's ability to control movement and posture.

In some cases of cerebral palsy, the cerebral motor cortex hasn't developed normally during fetal growth. In others, the damage is a result of injury to the brain either before, during, or after birth. In either case, the damage is not repairable and the disabilities that result are permanent.

Children with cerebral palsy exhibit a wide variety of symptoms, including:

- lack of muscle coordination when performing voluntary movements (*ataxia*);
- stiff or tight muscles and exaggerated reflexes (*spasticity*);
- walking with one foot or leg dragging;
- walking on the toes, a crouched gait, or a "scissored" gait;
- variations in muscle tone, either too stiff or too floppy;
- excessive drooling or difficulties swallowing or speaking;
- shaking (*tremor*) or random involuntary movements; and
- difficulty with precise motions, such as writing or buttoning a shirt.

The symptoms of cerebral palsy differ in type and severity from one person to the next, and may even change in an individual over time. Some people with cerebral palsy also have other medical disorders, including mental retardation, seizures, impaired vision or hearing, and abnormal physical sensations or perceptions.

Cerebral palsy doesn't always cause profound disabilities. While one child with severe cerebral palsy might be unable to walk and need extensive, lifelong care, another with mild cerebral palsy might be only slightly awkward and require no special assistance.

Cerebral palsy isn't a disease. It isn't contagious and it can't be passed from one generation to the next. There is no cure for cerebral palsy, but supportive treatments, medications, and surgery can help many individuals improve their motor skills and ability to communicate with the world.

More Information can be obtained from National Institute of Neurological Disorders.

[http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/cerebral\\_palsy/detail\\_cerebral\\_palsy.htm](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/cerebral_palsy/detail_cerebral_palsy.htm)

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## Upcoming Events

**Apr 1<sup>st</sup> ----- -- April Fools Day**

**Apr 2<sup>nd</sup> -----Light it up Blue  
Autism Awareness  
Wear your Blue in support.**

**Apr 5<sup>th</sup> -----Spring Fever Craft Bazaar  
9am-3pm  
4950 E Wabash Ave  
Terre Haute, IN**

**Apr 5<sup>th</sup> ----- Friends of Vigo County Public Library  
April Book Sale  
1 Library Square Lower Level  
9am – 3pm**

**Apr 6th -----Friends of Vigo County Public Library  
April Book Sale  
1 Library Square Lower Level  
1pm – 4pm**

**Apr 15<sup>th</sup> ----- Mandatory In-Service  
Arc of Vigo County  
Direct Care Staff  
Vigo County Public Library  
Room C 4:30pm**

**Apr 17<sup>th</sup> -----Easter Story performance  
Passion in the park  
Shows start at 6-7-8pm.  
Fairbanks Park 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Terre Haute, IN**

**Apr 18<sup>th</sup> -----Good Friday**

**Apr 20<sup>th</sup> -----Easter Day**

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## **Service Recognition**

On behalf of the Arc of Vigo County we would like to recognize the following employees for their one or more years of dedicated service for the month of April:

**Caren Elrod for Ten years of service.**  
**Michelle Wagner for Fourteen years of service.**  
**Meghan Pepelea for One year of service.**  
**Lisa Herzog for One year of service.**

Remember, if you would like your name included in our service recognition list for your anniversary month, please drop by the office and sign a pre-authorization form.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

For Employees who were born in April, and have signed a pre-authorization form, the Arc of Vigo County would like to take this time to wish each of you a Happy Birthday:

**Pamela Browne**

**Joseph Lane**

## Helpful Hints

## Time to think about Spring Cleaning

Spring  
Cleaning  
Time

### Materials

- Cleaning Supplies    Bucket    Old Rags
- Old toothbrush    Newspaper

### Instructions

**Work on one room at a time. Start at the top of the house and work your way down. Clean ceiling fans, light fixtures and other high-up items first. Tackle walls and cabinets next. Finish with floors and baseboards**

**Use an old toothbrush to clean grout, corners and crevices.  
Use newspaper to clean windows, leaves no streaks.**

## Contact information

The office staff is always here to answer any of your questions.  
Office: 812-232-4112

### Our Staff:

Joni Scioldo - Executive Director - [jscioldo@arcvigo.org](mailto:jscioldo@arcvigo.org)  
Bekki Garthwaite-Office Manager- [bgarthwaite@arcvigo.org](mailto:bgarthwaite@arcvigo.org)  
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