



AUTISM awareness



 **AUTISM SOCIETY**
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Illinois

connecting and supporting the
autism community through hope,
possibilities and options



By Janice Youngwith

Dean Myles is a man on a mission. He's determined to make the world a better place for those with autism or an autism spectrum disorder one law at a time.

When the Itasca deputy chief of police first learned of his 3-year-old daughter's autism diagnosis, his quest for information and action led to a newfound passion for advocacy on behalf of those with developmental disabilities and autism spectrum disorders.

As a member of the Autism Society of Illinois' board of directors, Myles' commitment to being an advocate for those who can't advocate for themselves has doubled.

"As a law enforcement officer, I first took classes on autism and the role of first responders," says Myles, an Aurora resident and the father of two — Thomas, 15, a West Aurora High School sophomore, and Hannah, currently a sixth grade level student at the Krejci Academy in Naperville. "After learning of Illinois' dismal 51st ranking for funding services for the developmentally disabled — below any of the other states and the District of Columbia — I knew I had to do something."

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. It is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a spectrum disorder that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees.

Taking the first plunge into the advocacy arena

Working with Rep. Patricia R. Bellock, (R-47th District), Myles took his first dive into the advocacy arena

Autism prevalence on the rise

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the prevalence of autism has risen to one in every 110 American children, and almost one in 70 boys.

The startling findings were cited by the CDC in their ADDM autism prevalence report, which looked at a sample of eight year olds in 2006. Issuance of this report caused a media uproar, but the news was not a surprise to Autism Society of America or to the 1.5 million Americans living with the effects of autism spectrum disorder.

— working to help develop and eventually pass legislation requiring autism awareness recognition and training for all new police officers attending basic police academy training.

Passage of that 2008 legislation led to a position on the board of directors of the Autism Society of Illinois, a state chapter of the Autism Society of America.

The Bethesda, M.D.-based national grass-roots organization exists to improve the lives of those affected by autism — by increasing public awareness about the day-to-day issues faced by people on the spectrum, advocating for appropriate services for individuals across the life span and providing the latest information regarding treatment, education, research and advocacy.

Founded in 1965 by Dr. Bernard Rimland, the organization is headed by Lee Grossman. It consists of a strong chapter network most of which are led by parents of children with autism — including a very active

Illinois chapter. The organization has spearheaded numerous pieces of state and local legislation, including the 2006 Combating Autism Act, the first federal autism-specific law.

Making waves on the statewide legislative front

As a member of the statewide organization's board and now completing his second year of service, Myles says his personal 2010 goals mirror those of the group, hoping to advocate on behalf of a variety of state and federal initiatives for those with autism.

Myles cites a variety of 2009 legislative accomplishments designed to aid those with autism and families struggling to care for loved ones on the autism spectrum.

New statewide legislation establishing a Premise Alert Program now is in place and local police personnel with computer aided dispatch capabilities are able to register special family information into a local database designed to help first responders learn of family members with disabilities and special needs before on-site arrival in an emergency.

"Registration enables families to include information on nonverbal children with autism, special medical needs, service animals and medical equipment used by family members residing in their home," Myles says. Local suburbs like Aurora and the entire DuPage County emergency response system were among the first to implement the program.

While special statewide Silver Alert legislation did

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Little City Foundation Praised for First-Class Service to Children with Autism

Little City Foundation commended by City of Chicago and State of Illinois for 50 years of innovative, cutting-edge programs and services to hundreds of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Renowned for therapeutic programs supporting both the child and the family, Little City Foundation has established itself as one of the leading non-profit organizations of its kind.

"Our team of dedicated counselors, clinicians and staff provide everything from in-home service facilitation, counseling and training for parents, to 24/7 residential, educational and therapeutic care," commented Executive Director Shawn Jeffers.

Little City's ChildBridge Community Services offers Department of Human Services (DHS) Home-Based Medicaid Waiver Supports, clinical behavior intervention and treatment, and even specialized foster care and adoption services to those affected by Autism throughout the Chicago area. Its ChildBridge Residential Services in Palatine offer full-time residential care along with a multitude of educational and therapeutic services including art, music and movement classes, sensory building therapies,



and recreational and sporting activities.

"From award-winning arts programs to a therapeutic horticultural center, individuals with disabilities are promised countless opportunities to develop their talents and grow to their fullest potential," commented Mayor Richard M. Daley in a proclamation to Little City.

"Since its founding 50 years ago, Little City Foundation has provided an example of how we should care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, by providing opportunities to live safely, work productively, and learn throughout their lifetimes," added Governor Pat Quinn in a salute to Little City.



For more information, contact Little City at info@littlecitcity.org or call 847-221-7825 or visit www.littlecitcity.org.

Tapping into technology for home-based services

By Janice Youngwith

From robots to telemedicine, 21st century technology is bringing the future into homes across the suburbs.

"The challenge today is finding ways to leverage technology to meet growing home-based needs," says Steve Kaufman, co-founder and chairman, Autism Home Support Services, a Northbrook-based provider specializing in providing home-based services, skill development and life enhancement for children ages three to 22 with autism.

"That's especially important when looking at home-based services for individuals with autism, many requiring intensive assistance for therapeutic programs, structured care, skill development and behavioral support."

Kaufman, who has a long history of creating business ideas, patents and solutions in addition to his 30 years experience in manufacturing and technology development, says meeting the intensive needs of children with autism can be especially challenging.

"Telemedicine is no longer the wave of the future," Kaufman says. He also recently worked on finding innovative solutions in the field of special education serving as chief technology and information officer for Educational Services of America. "Computer technology for videoconferencing or data logging also is especially vital to respite aides and in-home caregivers providing in-home help after school, in the evening and on weekend."

From cellular-based home medication reminders

Autism Home Support Services

Collaborative communication is key to many families who say the ability to share challenges, success and information throughout the school day, after school and on weekends is what truly makes a difference to helping their children navigate day-to-day community life.

Autism Home Support Services currently offers trained respite aides and skills coaches that provide cost effective support and therapy backed up by trained therapists in both the North Shore and Naperville area. Both in-home staff members and families benefit from data support and real-time contact via a telemedicine system linking professional staff to the family.

For an Autism Home Support Services pre-care assessment or information on care plans, support services, the secure online reporting system or ongoing collaborative communication tools, call (847) 564-0822 or e-mail contact@AutismHomeSupport.com.

to video conferencing to remote cardiac or blood glucose monitoring and even diagnosis, experts say technology can mean you're never really alone — even in your own home. Used by health providers in a growing number of medical specialties, specialists in dermatology, oncology, radiology, surgery, cardiology, psychiatry and home health care concur telemedicine is no longer the future dream.

Kaufman invented the first home telemedicine device known as Home Assisted Nursing Care, which

enables many elderly individuals to remain in their own homes independently by monitoring vital signs, charting medication and helping to maintain scheduled activities. He also developed the first pharmacy automation technology by working collaboratively with Baxter Healthcare and Sanyo.

"With growing numbers of children being diagnosed with autism, it's imperative we find ways to provide high-quality, lower cost services and care," Kaufman says. His vision involves finding ways to enhance services through online support and technical expertise.

"For example, in our program, in-home care providers seamlessly tap into the expertise of physical, occupational, developmental, behavioral and speech therapists, or other specially trained autism experts through videoconference Skype technology for one-on-one assistance," he says. "With the aid of a video camera and simple laptop, communication can be enhanced as providers demonstrate and provide visual examples, receive suggestions, analyze results and monitor feedback."

Kaufman also cites newly implemented data logging tools especially vital to home care providers working to capture data during applied behavioral analysis (ABA) training or other programs.

"Caregivers are very receptive to the technology," says Laura McKee, Autism Home Support Services CEO. For many families the after-school transition time can be especially stressful. "They like the idea they are not alone and the link to a telemedicine system for 24/7 backup is reassuring."

little city **BIG IMPACT**

Little City Foundation is a first-class service provider focused on children with autism through our **ChildBridge** programs in the Chicago area.

- **In-Home Personal** and Family Supports
- **Clinical/Behavior** Intervention
- **24/7 Residential** Services
- **Specialized** Foster Care and Adoption

Contact us for more information:

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