

P.O. BOX 51  
SEYMOUR, IN 47274  
812-522-3480  
www.mentalhealthamericaofjacksoncounty.org  
mhajc@cabjackson.org  
Agency of the Jackson  
County United Way

**Special points of interest:**

- Autism
- Thank you to Christmas Gift Lift Donors
- Wreath Fundraiser
- Fourth Quarter Activities
- Need New Board Members
- Upcoming Events

# Mental Health America of Jackson County

Volume 23

January 2014

## Autism

Autism is one of the mental, emotional and behavioral disorders that appear in early childhood. Autistic children may have a serious lifelong disability. However, with appropriate treatment and training, some autistic children can develop certain aspects of independence in their lives. Parents should support their autistic children in developing those skills that use their strengths so they will feel good about themselves.

### Signs of Autism:

When a infant or toddler: does not cuddle or respond to affection; does not make eye contact; appears to be unable to communicate; displays persistent failure to develop two-way social relationships in any situation; does not show preference for parents over other adults; does not develop friendships with other children; has poor language skills, or non-existent ones; shows unusual, extreme responses to objects—either avoidance or preoccupation; finds moving objects, such as a fan, hold great fascination; may form an unusual attachment to odd objects such as a paper or rubber band; displays repetitive activities of a restrictive range; spins and repeats body movements, such as arm flapping; may repeat television commercials; may indulge in complex bedtime rituals.

The symptoms of autism range from mild to severe. Although symptoms of the disorder sometimes can be seen in early infancy, the condition may appear after months of normal development. About 7 in every 10 children and adolescents with autism also have a developmental disability or other pro-

blems with brain function or structure.

Recent studies estimate as many as 14 children out of 10,000 may have autism or a related condition. About 125,000 Americans are affected by these disorders, nearly 4000 families across the county have two or more children with autism. Three times as many boys as girls have autism.

Researchers are unsure what causes autism. Several studies suggest that autistic disorder might be caused by a combination of biological factors, including exposure to a virus before birth, a problem with the immune system, or genetics.

Parents who have suspect autism in their children should ask their family doctor or pediatrician to refer them to a child and adolescent psychiatrist, who can accurately diagnose the autism and the degree of severity, and determine the appropriate educational measures. In addition to working with the autistic child, the psychiatrist can help resolve stress—for example, a feeling among siblings that they are being neglected in favor of the autistic child, or embarrassment about bringing their friends home. The psychiatrist can help parents with emotional problems that may arise as the result of living with an autistic child and help them provide the best possible nurturing and learning environment for the child.

**Autism Society of America**  
[www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)

MENTAL HEALTH  
AMERICA OF  
JACKSON COUNTY

P.O .Box 51 Seymour,  
Indiana 47274  
812-522-3480  
www.mentalhealthamer  
icajc.net  
mhajc@cabjackso.org

Agency of the Jackson  
County United Way



**MHAJC Board of  
Directors**

Vicki Johnson, President  
Doris Kovener, Secretary  
Carolyn Bruce, Treasurer  
Becky Boas  
Ben Brown  
Mary Jane Lasater  
Karen Metz  
Libby Roberts  
Bob Dembek, Director

*Thank you to Christmas Gift Lift Donors*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Bowling Transport , Inc., F.O.E. Ladies Auxiliary, F.O.E. # 655, Roberta Speaker, Gene & Joan Knott, Ruby Niccum, Sandra Zickler, Glen Heide- man, Masonic Lodge #146, Ruth Ann Rebber, Loyal Devoir of Central Christian Church, Prudential Indiana Realty, VFW Ladies Auxiliary 1925, Dicksons, Tri Kappa Ladies, Jan Morrison, Seymour American Legion Auxiliary Post #89, Cathy Howie, Thomas Cooley, Delta Kappa Gamma, Jane Thomas, Katie Hunsucker, Brownstown Afternoon Extension Home- makers, Kids N Kettles Extension Club, Kathy Mead, Mark & Susan Haskett, Ruth Sweany, Cummins Third Street Plant Employees, Frische Eye Care Employees, Kremers Urban Pharmaceutical Employees, Sey- mour Community Schools, Crothersville Schools, Jackson County United Way, Tribune, State Bank of Medora, Delta Delta Chapter ESA, Weslynn Davis, Jason & Kerry Stahl and numerous anonymous donors.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Wreath Fundraiser**

Thank you to the Board Members and Roberts Tree Farm for our success- ful Wreath Sale. Thank you to all the people who supported the sale by purchasing a wreath, spray ,centerpiece or mantel piece. We sold 186 items and made \$1200.00 to help with our programming.

**Fourth Quarter Events:** Monthly Thumbbody classes and topics were: Work- ing Hard and doing the Right Thing, Responsibility-Being Responsible for our Ac- tions and Healthy Lifestyle-Value Good Health Habits. MJHAJC had a display in the front window of the Community Agency Building for December. A lot of time was spent on the preparation for the Annual Christmas Social. Over 100 people attended the event. 170 clients were served through the Christmas Gift.

**Need New Board Members**

MHAJC is looking for new Board Members. If you are able to give 2 - 3 hours a month, to help individuals facing some form of mental illness, please call Bob at the office at 522-3480 or email mhajc@cabjackson.org for more information.

**Upcoming Events**

February 10—Free Meal ,Community Diner, at Seymour Community Center,  
5:00PM  
February 18—MHAJC Winter Social, at Seymour Community Center,  
5:00PM  
February 19 —Mobile Pantry , Anchor House, at Bullard Building 209 E. 2nd  
Street 10:00AM - 12Noon  
March—Disability Awareness Month,  
April 8—ARC of Jackson County, Spring Fling, at the American Legion  
April 10, 11, 12—MHAJC Garage Sale