



FUNDACION AUTISMO ARUBA

# Newsletter

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## 'Different But Not Less' walk for Autism!

On September 10th 2011 a multitude of people participated in the 'Different But Not Less' walk, organized by the dynamic crew of the Aruba Way Foundation.

This walk was the 6th walk this crew has organized and it was their largest yet! They had support from the bank CMB and their very own Valero Refinery workers. A grand total of 100.000 afl,- was raised and donated to the FAA after the walk. Other sponsors and contributors helped out with prizes for participants.

On that same day, a very special girl with Autism, Josie, turned 9 and the large crowd sang 'Happy Birthday' to Josie! Other parents with children who have Autism and volunteers of the FAA were also present at the walk along with FAA's board and colleagues.

The FAA wishes to thank Aruba Way Foundation, CMB and all

Who contributed towards the walk and its success!

The FAA also thanks the following people who joined us at the walk September 10th and/or contributed to the event: Minister of Health Richard Visser, Melvin Garcia, Phil 'Mr. Blue' Schouten, Erik Jan Eman and his crew and Hildward Croes with Dushi Band.

The FAA is working hard towards raising awareness; the coming months will be spent on designing and executing a **Media campaign** on Autism.

Alongside, the FAA will invest in 4 main areas:

**Parenting** across the spectrum, **Education** and practical tools for the classroom, **Detection and Treatment** options plus the fourth focal point for the FAA is **Integration** of people with Autism in our community.

Thanks to Aruba Way Foundation and the support they gathered for Autism Awareness in Aruba this September, the FAA's upcoming projects get a real boost!



## The FAA is proud to announce...

We are thrilled to announce that Uleike Tromp, volunteer and now a new board member of the FAA, is representing the needs of people with Autism in Aruba in the Patients' Council of the Dr. Horacio E. Hospital in Aruba. Uleike Tromp has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and is currently enrolled in the

Master's program specializing in ABA. Uleike's professional experience as a therapist to children with Autism, both in the U.S. and in Aruba, give her a broad view of not just what we experience in Aruba, but also treatment options and tools used the U.S. that might be implemented also locally.

The Patients' Council is a platform for a selected few (9 members in total) to represent their target groups while advising the local hospital's board and management on policy development concerning the hospital's services.



## Puzzle Party 2011: Sponsors and volunteers come together and create a fun Autism-friendly party!

A spontaneous little girl with Autism approached the FAA with the question: "Help me make friends. Organize a party, and I'll make friends." It was a request honored by different sponsors and volunteers who quickly jumped on board to create an Autism-friendly party, where friendship was the main theme. Cedes, E-Z Party Solutions, Butterfly Farm Aruba, Aruba Trading Co., Burger King, Team Aruba, The Cupcake Factory, Circle K, Ingenuity Creative Marketing, T.H. Palm & Co., Visser

Trading, Racquet Club, Phil "Blue Schouten, Ruben Garcia, Rosita Richardson and an organizing committee consisting of Melisa Richardson, Uleike Tromp and Martha Echeverry; all pitched in and made the event certainly an unforgettable one for the children, siblings and parents who attended. The FAA wishes to thank each and every one who made this party a success!

For pictures of the Puzzle Party, please visit our facebook page "Autismo Aruba



## Expo Salud Aruba 2011

A sound health management is crucial to best treat developmental disorders, including Autism. This is also why FAA deemed it important to participate in the First Aruba Health Expo, held at the end of July 2011.

A large number of health care providers displayed their services, and some, like FAA were given the platform to address seminars regarding their focus groups.

FAA's main goal is awareness and the FAA made good use of the exposure granted at the Health Expo to teach a larger public and also other health care providers on the disorder. More importantly, the possibilities that exist to help people affected by autism.

The FAA is extremely happy that we were part of the Expo Salud Aruba 2011 representing people with Autism in the community of Aruba.



## Profiling for Aruba's Minister of Economic, Social and Cultural Affairs

On June 15th 2011, Project coordinator of the FAA Mrs. Natasha Richardson had the opportunity along with other representatives of member foundations of the Platform for International Disabilities Treaty Aruba to profile each foundation's vision, goals and plans in order to improve services, for local minister Michelle Winklaar-Hooyboer.

The successful meeting ended on a high note when the Minister shared how moved she was by testimonies from 2 members of the platform who battle differing disabilities themselves and our very own Natasha Richardson was invited to share a short account of her own experience as a mother of a child with Autism.

Minister Winklaar-Hooyboer expressed

her commitment towards helping foundations who do so much with little resources. Her first order of business was inviting several members of the platform as her guests at the "Women in Leadership Conference". Carrol Kock of the Department of Social Affairs, who leads the dynamic platform, expressed her utmost appreciation to all who profiled that day and all concluded that the presentations left a lasting impression!

## Cascabel Bikers hold “Ride for Autism” 2011

A fun-filled weekend starting from the 27th to the 29th of May 2011; a Ride for Autism that around 300 participants will not forget soon, tore through the streets covering the island from east to west with roaring engines.

Cascabel Motorcycle Club did a wonderful job attracting a lot of attention when they held a day-long ride to raise awareness and funds to support the efforts of the FAA to continue informing our community about Autism.

The FAA extends a big ‘thank you’ the Cascabel Motorcycle Club and all who

participated in this event. Cascabel bikers raised a total of 7500 afl. with this ride, which will go towards continuation of services of the FAA to the community who live with Autism in Aruba.



## Back 2 School Support— Tips for teachers

Children with autism can experience sensory overload at any moment. This may present in different ways including tantrum like behavior. It is important to remember that tantrum like behavior is NOT “naughty” behavior. It generally occurs in response to a trigger factor.

Sensory overload can be caused by many different factors including too many lights or a change in routine, not enough lights or a change to the environment: too much noise or the tag on a school shirt, not enough noise or a sudden loud noise.

Sensory overload can be observed in behavior that includes:

- Hitting
- Scratching
- Jumping
- Screaming
- Kicking
- Running
- Hiding
- Pinching
- Tantrum behavior
- Repeating a phrase over and over

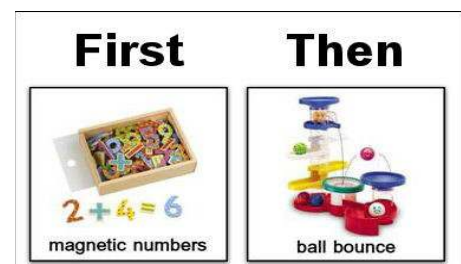
### How can teachers prevent sensory overload?

One of the greatest things teachers can do for their students with autism is schedule “de-stress” breaks throughout the day. This will assist the student to manage their stress levels in a simple and effective way.

Have a designated chill out zone within the classroom. Ensure that there is a bean bag or cushions to relax on, books to read, or sensory toys available in the chill out zone and an electronic timer. Set the timer and incorporate scheduled breaks. Some children may need a 5-minute break every hour, others may need more and others less.

‘Unpredictability’ is not a friend to a child with Autism. Changes in routine can be very stressful and cause significant behavioral issues for many children with Autism. It is important to go through the classroom schedule every day. And to announce any changes like celebrations, change in décor and class

Visual schedules are wonderful resources and can assist a child with Autism to independently manage their school day. The ‘first/then board’ can be used throughout the day to advise the child with Autism of the current activity and what is happening immediately after the current activity.



Many tools and techniques that teachers use and apply for kids with Autism, can also be used with other children in the class, who don’t have Autism. It is worthwhile to learn more about these tools!

Teachers and other school staff can call the FAA for presentations and any questions concerning education of children with Autism in Aruba.

## Coming Soon!

**Project Bejaarden Zorgcentrum**— A new elderly care center 'Bejaarden Zorgcentrum', will house paintings representing Autism in a permanent expo starting November 2011. FAA & Cedes is collaborating with 2 local artists and 4 children with Autism who have been selected for their talent to paint on canvas for display in 3 locations. Melisa Richardson (for FAA) & Maria Teresa (Cedes) are also painting for this project, while they guide their art students towards artistic expressions of themes that represent several aspects of Aruba; e.g. specific birds and other flora. The FAA wishes all artists involved in this project by DOW, SABA, FDA, SDA & Project manager Rosanna Koelewijn -Tromp of the Atelier La Bonne Vie.



**Parent Support Meeting October 27th** — The meeting starts at 7 pm at FAA's office in Irenestraat 21. Please call us, and let us know if you will join us!



**Horses of Hope**— invites parents of children with Autism to learn more about sessions where your child gets to interact and ride specially trained horses at minimum costs (35 afl,-). Hariette de Kool and Claudia de Cuba do a tremendous job with children who have Autism and other disabilities. Contact the FAA for a brochure!

Your Questions and comments mean a lot to us!

Please keep them coming and share our newsletters with others.



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

**Thank You!**

T.H. Palm & Co.— The FAA received a generous donation from the Tikkun Olam project.

Angelo Koolman—Who is sponsoring 2 integration packages for the FAA.

Compra Frisian Flag Walk—Decided to donate proceeds from their walk to the FAA.

**PLACE AN AD IN OUR NEWSLETTER—CONTACT FAA FOR MORE INFO!**

