



FUNDACION AUTISMO ARUBA

# Newsletter

## Inside this issue:

Carnaval Senses: tips to prevent sensory overload	1
Happy New Year: FAA in 2011!	1
Meet our new board member: Andre!	2
Hopus Ipad app & Assistive Technology	2
FAA Services: Tips 4 Teachers Presentation	2
Parent Support in 2011	3
Butterflies & Autism & More!	3

## Carnaval Senses tips to prevent sensory overload!

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With the 2010 holiday season behind us, Aruba is now celebrating it's 57th Carnaval season.

If you know someone on the Autism Spectrum (AS), you might have experienced how these individuals can have a meltdown due to sensory overload. Imagine if your senses were more sensitive than usual, meaning you see, hear, smell, taste and feel more intensely than your peers in combination with slower processing of information around you...you might just feel overwhelmed too by the music and people in colorful costumes celebrating under our hot sun!

Nonetheless it is important to weigh in the fact that you want your loved ones to celebrate this season with you and experience a part of

Aruba's culture. That is why the FAA invited Irielle Cabral to set up a list of preventive tips that caregivers can use to help their loved one(s) with AS:

- Apply sun block
- Use earplugs
- Drink plenty of water
- Stand/sit in shade
- Discuss the sequence of events & senses they will experience.
- Stand in one specific place/avoid walking around too much especially on road.
- Use a chair as resting spot and discuss where your loved one can go and what you will do if he/she is agitated or tired. For example incorporate visual material to ease communication

- Discuss rules and set clear conditions.
- Stand/sit near toilet facility.
- Avoid 'hanging around'-leave when parade is over.
- Arrange babysitting for small children-it is generally advised to not take kids to the parade. (if not kids' parade)

Remember that people with Autism sometimes enjoy social activities as much as anyone else; they might just do it in a different way!



## Happy New Year! FAA Plans 2011

We are excited about our plans for 2011! This year we are covering topics like Parent Support, Inclusion, Adolescence & Autism, Acceptance, Education and Sports & Recreation. For the latter, we now have a new workgroup with the help of enthusiastic volunteers and international support. Please visit

our website for updates & events. Throughout the year we support parents, teachers and other professionals with information.

Thank you for helping us make a difference in 2011!

We hope to see you soon!



## Meet Andre Domacasse! New board member FAA

As of October 2010 Andre Domacasse joined the board of the FAA with a fresh outlook on raising awareness on a national level with emphasis on hope for all families dealing with Autism in Aruba. A true family man and father of a "little guy" as Andre calls him, with Autism; he faces along with his family the challenges of living with Autism in Aruba. When asked during a Parent Support group meeting to compare himself as a father of a child with Au-

tism to an animal, Andre inspired all present with the following:

*"I am like a camel; I trod through the desert stopping only occasionally for a drink of water, so I can continue my journey whilst being strong and carrying my family."* Andre highlighted the camel's perseverance and ability to navigate through deserted places.

The FAA is honored to share this journey with Andre!



## Hopus Ipad application-opening doors for the use of assistive technology in Aruba

On October 23rd, 2010 a small crowd of children with Autism Spectrum disorders along with their parents, helped author and illustrator Liliana Braamskamp introduce 'Hopus'- a children's book based on the author's experience with her son with Autism-as an Ipad application that will be sold internationally in several languages. All children present had the chance to experience the application on the Ipad.

After the activity, the FAA wrote a small, but significant article which was published by newspapers in Aruba. The foundation got the opportunity to discuss the use of assistive technology and its benefits for those on the spectrum. We hope to stimulate the use of technology to better communication for people who have a communicative disorder and ask professionals as well as parents to look into it as an option.



**For more on assistive technology, contact the FAA!**

## FAA Services: Presentations-Autism in the classroom

At the beginning of the school year of 2010-2011, each school in Aruba got an invitation to schedule a presentation with the FAA titled 'Autism in the Classroom'. The presentation covers the basic questions teachers ask when presented with the challenge of having a child with Autism in their class. Natasha Richardson, project coordinator of the FAA and mother of an autistic child

shares personal and professional insight on the disorder along with practical and easily applicable tips that benefit all involved in the child's education and entire class!

We invite schools (of all levels and types of education) to schedule a presentation with the FAA if you haven't already. Keep up so you won't miss out on further developments!

### AUTISMO DEN KLAS: HOUDINGS

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- Highlight e parti Positivo di e mucha--wak su potencial



## Parent support in 2011

Equipped with the needs and ideas parents expressed last year during individual contact and parent support meetings, the FAA set up an extensive Parent Support calendar for 2011!

Parents play an important role at the FAA; they advocate on behalf of their children and family. When parents approach us with concerns about their child's behavior, education and treatment, we try to help as best as we can, but also we discover the gaps in our society concerning diagnosing, education and treatment of Autism in Aruba. Our task is to communicate

these gaps and stimulate quality support for these individuals and their families. The FAA stimulates group contact and arranges meetings with professionals. This year we are taking it to a new level and involving experts like author Valerie Paradiz (Autism Society of America, ISA ) to participate in training parents on how to influence their situation.

**Parents can follow this development on our website and keep the following calendar for 2011** ➡

### FAA 2011 Parent Support

Jan. 26-PS meeting 7-9pm  
Feb.24-PS meeting 7-9pm

Mar. 10- Apr. 14 P training 7-8.30pm

May 26-Adolescence & Autism

June 23-PS meeting 7-9pm  
Aug. 25-PS meeting 7-9pm

Oct. 27-PS meeting 7-9pm  
Nov.23-PS meeting 7-9pm  
Dec.20-PS meeting 7-9pm

## Butterflies & Autism

On October 16th Butterfly Farm & the FAA created the 'Miekie's Autism Awareness Garden' dedicated to the efforts of the FAA president and co-founder, Monique Kuiperi, in raising awareness on ASD in Aruba. The garden consists of colorful flowers that coincide with the colors on the international ribbon that represents Autism. The garden attracts local butterflies and hopefully visitors who can now

come in contact with the FAA via Butterfly Farm Aruba. The FAA wishes to thank Tony & Lori from the Butterfly Farm along with the friendly employees who help keep the garden growing as we continue to stimulate the growth of more research and knowledge of Autism in Aruba! We also thank Roy & Grace Maduro and Marian Krozendijk for their attentiveness and generosity.



## International: New Social Network for Autism

Theautismnews.com published the announcement of a new online social network for 'people focusing on the autism spectrum'. The online community is a platform for sharing the joys and struggles of living and working with Autism on a global scale. It is a great way to keep up with the latest news and development on Autism in differ-

ent countries. Membership is free and you can join different groups and discussions on the site.

World Autism Community is created by People CD inc., a technology company in Las Vegas, whose President & CEO John LeSieur has 2 grandchildren on the Autism Spectrum.



[www.worldautismcommunity.com](http://www.worldautismcommunity.com)

# Coming Soon!

**Parent Support**—Parents, please mark your calendars for the next parent support meeting at the FAA on February 24th at 7-9pm.



**EPI Movie night**— EPI students are invited to attend the screening of the HBO movie *Temple Grandin* (in the Collegezaal EPI), which recently won a Golden Globe, adding one more award on its prestigious list of recognition. After the movie, students will discuss ‘Communication & Autism’ in the OLC at EPI.



**Parent Training Course**— The Parent Support Professionals along with author and ISA instructor Valerie Paradiz created a six-week parent training course starting March 10th 2011. This course offers practical information and tools parents can use at home to stimulate social skills and behavior of their child(ren) with Autism. Workshops are held once a week and have 3 main subjects. Registration fee is 5 afl. and space is very limited! Parents have to contact the FAA to sign up.



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**Parents are invited to sample Toddler Health on February 24th 2011 at the Parent Support Meeting!**