

Preface

An Autism Spectrum Disorder touches your life, whether in your family, your friend, your colleague or yourself. It touches your emotions, you want to challenge your mind and do something to help. You want to know more, feel a connection, get support or teach others to understand.

These stories, resources and coping strategies come from the experiences of individuals who are living with Autism Spectrum Disorders. They have been organized into three sections. In the “Head” section, our stories talk about living with and understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders. The “Heart” Section contains stories about the day-to-day human realities of living with ASD. In the “Hands” section, our authors share how they have put into place some coping strategies and practical techniques for living with ASD.



Please enjoy some, part or all of this living document.

Jean Woolford
Special Projects, Autism Ontario

Margaret Spoelstra
Executive Director, Autism Ontario



Supporting Groups

Autism Ontario gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the following:



THE ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION
LA FONDATION TRILLIUM DE L'ONTARIO

The **Ontario Trillium Foundation**, an agency of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, annually receives \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative. The Foundation provides grant to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts, culture, sports, recreation, environment and social service sector.



Brickenden Speakers Bureau Inc.

provided support to Autism Ontario through the 19th annual "Access to Success", a daylong



event held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in December 2005. This executive education forum featured 18 of North America's most respected professional motivational speakers and entertainers. Visit Brickenden Speakers Bureau Inc.'s website at www.brickenden.com for more information on future events.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Click on the title to read the story.

Head (Understanding ASD)

- Dear Teacher
- Dual Diagnosis
- A Place to Be
- Trying to Relate

Heart (Living the Experience)

- A Lesson in Fear
- Liz does Disney – The Misadventures of a Smug Mom
- One Path
- Dreams and Potential

Hands (Getting Practical)

- A Circle of Friends
- Finding the Way Back Home
- La bonne route à chez moi
- Summertime – and the Living is Easy ?
- When Someone Gets It