

ISAND

INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR AUTISM AND NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS



Getting Social with Kyle

Kyle receives support from Speech-Language Pathologist Ali Schwabe in ISAND's Getting Social Program.

Today, eight-year-old Kyle Bumgardner loves playing with his friends, talking to people, and going to school. He has come a long way since he was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) five years ago.

When Kyle started attending daycare at age two, he wasn't talking yet. Even after several months at daycare, Kyle hadn't progressed in his language development. His parents Becky Chen and Justin Bumgardner did not suspect autism, as both English and Chinese were spoken at home.

However, his teacher, as well as the daycare's social worker who

regularly visited to support children with disabilities, were concerned. The significant delay they observed in Kyle's communication and social skills, along with his difficulty playing with other children, led them to suspect he might be affected by ASD. They recommended that Becky and Justin arrange an assessment for Kyle.

When Kyle was diagnosed with ASD at age three, Becky and Justin were shocked and upset.

"I was not expecting Kyle's ASD diagnosis," says Becky. "I thought his speech delay was the main problem and that it was because we were speaking a lot of Chinese

at home. At the time, I believed Kyle might have just been confused between English and Chinese."

The developmental pediatrician who had diagnosed Kyle with ASD referred him to ISAND. While waiting for Kyle's first appointment at ISAND, Becky and Justin enrolled him in short-term autism programs in the community. He then began receiving speech therapy and developmental medical care at ISAND.

While Kyle had already made significant progress with his language development, Becky and Justin were becoming increasingly

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Ask the ISAND Professional

Members of our clinical team answer questions from parents.



*Barbara Muskat,
Ph.D., RSW*



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*Kelsey Ferguson,
M.ADS, BCBA*

“Now that summer is here, how can I help my child keep the gains he made during the school year?”

Summer is right around the corner, and ISAND has some tips for how you can make the most of it! Here are some ideas to help your child maintain the therapeutic, social, and academic gains made during the school year.

Review and revise routines.

Even though summer is a time for less pressure and more fun, it is a good idea to keep some routines in place. Choose which routines are essential to maintain, and which can be relaxed. For example, you may decide that it is important to stick to your child's bedtime routine, but that his lunch routine can be more relaxed. When there are predictable changes in routine, prepare your child in a way that works best for him. Children often find visual schedules helpful when there is a change in the daily routine. If you are going on a holiday, many children are best prepared if you write it on a calendar and talk about your vacation a few weeks ahead of time.

Increase therapy time.

If your child is of school age, the summer break provides an opportunity to schedule additional therapy times. This will help your child build on any previous gains.

Enjoy the outdoors.

Get active and engaged in outdoor activities while the weather is nice. Go on hikes, swim, plant a garden, and discover new playgrounds. During the school year, children have long periods of time free from technology. This should be the same in the summer. Plan ways to keep your child engaged and off of technology unless it is needed for communication or recording fun experiences through photographs or video.

Practice academic skills.

Think of fun ways for your child to practice and maintain the academic gains made during the school year. For example, help your child set up a lemonade stand, have a bake

sale, or write letters to relatives and friends who are away at camp. Go on scavenger hunts around your neighbourhood. Get creative!

Check out summer camps.

There are a variety of summer camps available. Explore camps that specialize in your child's interests and can focus on specific therapeutic goals. Investigate if your child can bring a one-to-one support worker to camp with them, or if the camp can provide the necessary support.

Nurture friendships.

Continue to foster the friendships your child has made both at school and in different after-school activities. For example, arrange playdates throughout the summer. Plan a fun activity for the playdate such as going swimming or visiting a playground. Playdates can be either at your home or at different locations in the community.

Most of all... have fun!



Unity for Autism committed to supporting families

When Kathy Carsley founded the charitable foundation Unity for Autism in 2004, her vision was to have a direct and profound positive impact on individuals and families living with autism. She recognized the crisis that families face as they wait for often scarce autism services as well as the anxiety and frustration caused by delays in treatment and therapy programs.

“We are dedicated to assisting the growing needs of the many excellent service providers for autism who are overwhelmed by the number of families waiting for their services,” explains Kathy. “We seek to reduce financial barriers to treatment and expand availability and are proud to support organizations such as ISAND, which offers an integrated and continuum of care model for families.”

Unity for Autism raises funds to increase access to programs that enhance the development and wellbeing of individuals with autism living in Canada. Over the past seven years alone, the volunteer-driven foundation has raised more than \$6 million to support over 200 service providers.

“Our primary focus is to create immediate access to programs and unique opportunities that maximize the potential of people with autism or a related disorder,” explains Karen St-Denis, Executive Director for Unity for Autism.

ISAND is a grateful beneficiary of Unity for Autism’s vision and support. Since 2014, the foundation has provided



\$88,275 for ISAND’s social skills programs for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

“The funds we receive from Unity for Autism are deeply appreciated and much needed,” says David Gray, ISAND Executive Director. “As a non-profit service provider, we rely on the generosity of foundations, organizations, and individuals. We are inspired by Kathy’s vision and unwavering commitment to supporting autism service organizations across Canada.”

Thanks to the vital funds from Unity for Autism, hundreds of young people have had the opportunity to develop social communication skills that help them build and maintain family connections, friendships, and successful school and work experiences. Program participants are supported by ISAND’s interdisciplinary

clinical team that may include a speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, behaviour analyst, early childhood educator, or a communicative disorders assistant.

“ISAND’s work inspires us,” notes Kathy. “We support ISAND’s social communication programs because they help young people develop skills that can improve their quality of life and open doors to opportunities they might not otherwise have.”



Cynergy Mechanical Charity Gala raises record amount for ISAND!

Thanks to generous attendees, donors, and sponsors, the sold-out 2019 Cynergy Mechanical Charity Gala on April 5 raised a record \$85,000 to support services and programs at ISAND. Since partnering with ISAND in 2016, Cynergy Mechanical has helped raise a total of \$225,000!

"We deeply appreciate the generosity of everyone who helped make the gala such a success," said Gerald McCann, President of Cynergy Mechanical. "ISAND is a small non-profit organization creating

and succeeding at developing a new model of care. Funds from the gala are vital in helping ISAND expand and develop new services and programs that will directly impact families living with autism."

More than 350 guests attended the Charity Gala, enjoying an evening of inspiration as well as fine dining, dancing, entertainment, and live and silent auctions. Event sponsors and supporters of the Charity Gala included TD Securities, HPG, Q Residential, NovaJet Aviation Group, and JD Factors.

"On behalf of all the families we serve, I thank Gerald and the Cynergy Mechanical team for their commitment to supporting families living with autism," said ISAND Executive Director David Gray. "Families often turn to ISAND at an extremely challenging time in their lives. The net proceeds of the Charity Gala will help ensure we are here to provide the help and hope they need."

CYNERGY Mechanical Ltd.



Gerald McCann (left), President of Cynergy Mechanical, welcomed special guest Wendel Clark, former NHL All Star and Captain of the Toronto Maple Leafs.



iCapital Cook-off serves up fun!

iCapital™

The second annual iCapital Cook-off for Autism, held April 26, chopped, sautéed, and grilled its way to raising close to \$25,000 in support of ISAND services and programs! This result brings iCapital's fundraising effort for autism to more than \$130,000 over the past six years.

More than 100 people attended the sold-out event at Cirillo's Culinary Academy in Toronto. Teams were challenged to prepare a variety of delicious dishes from countries across Europe. The top team won bragging rights and a trophy as the iCapital Cook-off winner.

"What a wonderful way to come together for such an important cause," said Domenic Sgambelluri, iCapital Principal. "It was a fun evening, and we're thankful for everyone who helped make it such a success."

iCapital's fundraising efforts are inspired by 20-year-old Anthony Capobianco, an ISAND client and nephew of iCapital Principal Diane Capobianco.

"Our team at iCapital has witnessed first-hand how ISAND is supporting Anthony as he continues to mature," notes Diane. "Anthony inspires us

every day. He works hard with the ISAND team to gain a variety of life, social, and job readiness skills to prepare for the next stage of life." ISAND relies on the generosity of individuals, businesses, and organizations to help provide its comprehensive range of integrated and interdisciplinary services and programs.

"We're deeply grateful for iCapital's commitment to supporting families living with autism," says David Gray, ISAND Executive Director. "Many thanks to iCapital, the volunteer chefs, participants, and sponsors for helping!"



iCapital Principals Domenic Sgambelluri and Diane Capobianco have seen ISAND'S impact first-hand.



David Gray, ISAND Executive Director and Anthony Capobianco.

Welcome new ISAND team members!



Danielle Abbatangelo, M.Ed.



*Barri Trager,
B.Sc., MSc.OT., OT Reg. (Ont.)*

We recently welcomed two new members to our integrated clinical team.

Danielle Abbatangelo has joined ISAND as a Behaviour Consultant, and Barri Trager as our new Occupational Therapist.

Danielle Abbatangelo brings more than five years of practical and theoretical knowledge of Applied Behaviour Analysis. Most recently, Danielle worked as a senior therapist at Under the Umbrella Tree Educational Services. Before this, she worked at the Geneva Centre for Autism as a Community Options Facilitator.

"I was attracted to the idea of working within ISAND's multidisciplinary team, which is unique among the autism services available in the community," says Danielle. "The families that form the ISAND community are incredible, and I am looking forward to continuing to get to know more of them as I continue in my new role."

Danielle, who is bilingual in French, holds an M.Ed. in Developmental Psychology and Education from the University of Toronto, a BA in Psychology from the University of Guelph, and a Social Service Worker diploma from George Brown College. She is currently working toward BCBA certification through the Florida Institute of Technology.

Barri Trager has more than eight years of clinical experience as an occupational therapist in a variety of settings. Most of her experience has involved using a family-centered, evidence-informed, and holistic approach to serving pediatric clients who have various developmental, medical, and learning needs. Most recently, Barri worked at Lauren Reznick Therapy Services and with the York Region District School Board. "What attracted me to ISAND was the wonderful and interdisciplinary team of clinicians," Barri says. "I am

enjoying the opportunity to work in close collaboration with these clinicians to help clients learn new skills and reach their potential."

Barri holds an M.Sc. in Occupational Therapy from Queen's University and a B.Sc. from Dalhousie University. Her extensive professional development activities include the ABA Certificate Course for Educators and the Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder Occupational Therapist Certificate Training Program (Level 1) from the Geneva Centre for Autism, and training in the Sequential Oral Sensory (SOS) Approach to Feeding, Therapeutic Listening, and Assessing for and Developing Functional Sensory Programs for Children with ASD.

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worried about his social communication skills. As Kyle was finding it difficult to interact with others or make friends, Becky and Justin enrolled him in ISAND's Social Peers Program.

ISAND's Social Peers Program uses play to help children build the foundational social communication skills needed to form and maintain friendships and other important relationships. Participants are clinically matched in twos or threes according to their age, strengths, and areas of need. They receive coaching and support from an interdisciplinary clinical team that may include a speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, behaviour analyst, early childhood educator, or a communicative disorders assistant. The program runs in 12-week care cycles, which can be repeated as often as needed.

"Kyle has been in the Social Peers Program several times and has gradually learned how to make friends," says Becky. "He's now moved on to the Getting Social Program."

ISAND's Getting Social Program is built on the Social Thinking® methodology, a research-based approach that helps individuals



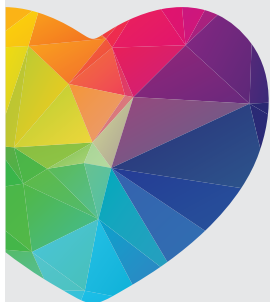
with social and emotional learning challenges better connect with others. The program begins with helping young people understand the thinking processes that underlie their own social behaviour as well as that of others. With this understanding, participants can then learn about behaviour changes needed to foster social connections.

"Kyle has been such a delight to have in our group," says Ali Schwabe, ISAND Speech-Language Pathologist. "More and more, he wonders about what his peers might be thinking or feeling, and makes small shifts to his own behaviour to follow the group plan. When we're thinking about each

other, it's easy to keep the play going and have fun!"

Kyle has completed two care cycles in the Getting Social Program. He has finished second grade and his parents are looking forward to what comes next for their son.

"We weren't sure what was going to happen when Kyle was first diagnosed with autism," recalls Becky. "The programs at ISAND have helped our family in many ways and given us hope and confidence. The support we have received from the ISAND team has made a huge difference. We are optimistic about Kyle's future."



Your support makes a difference.

Donations from generous supporters enables ISAND to provide professional care to even more families living with autism. Please consider making a gift today! www.isand.ca/donate. To explore giving opportunities tailored to your unique philanthropic goals, please contact us at 416-224-5959.

ISAND offers unique integrated approach to care

Do you know a child or young person who may benefit from ISAND services and programs? Our clinical team of professionals includes developmental pediatricians, psychologists and clinicians from a variety of disciplines.

They work together as a team to provide a comprehensive range of services to ensure families receive fully coordinated, integrated and continuous care.

Our professional services and programs include:

- Behaviour (consultation, assessment and therapy)
- Counselling and Support (individual and family)
- Diet and Nutrition
- Developmental Medical Care
- Early Intervention (ESDM / NDBI)
- Education Consultation
- Occupational Therapy (consultation, assessment and intervention)
- Parent Education and Parent Coaching
- Psychology (consultation, diagnostic and psychoeducational assessment)
- Psychology (cognitive based therapy and mindfulness based therapies)
- Social Programs
- Speech-Language Therapy (consultation, assessment and intervention and AAC support)
- Therapeutic Yoga and Rhythmic Movement Training

We embrace the uniqueness of everyone.

To learn more please call 416-224-5959 or visit us at www.isand.ca



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