



Tips to Support Your Child
with Virtual Learning
P.3



Hope Campaign
P.6

ISAND

Integrated Services for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders

So much has changed around the world and at ISAND since March 2020. Although there have been predictions of a world-wide pandemic for years, most of the planet was unprepared for this event and the impact it is having.

When we closed the doors to in-person visits on March 16, 2020 many believed that within a month or two, things would return to “normal”. Almost a full year later, the questions being asked are, “when will this be over”, and “what will normal look like”? With so much confusing and conflicting information coming from the health experts and governments trying to decipher this information and respond, it is a difficult and stressful time for all.



At ISAND we have tried to be flexible adapting our therapy models as needed – offering virtual therapy for individuals and groups, slowly and cautiously opening for in-person appointments, changing the lengths of sessions, using alternate spaces and more.

Virtual therapy has proven to be very effective in certain situations and will continue to be part of the service continuum of the future. We also recognize that in-person appointments are necessary in many circumstances and, after a short break, ISAND re-introduced limited sessions early in June following strict COVID related protocols as recommended by Public Health.

ISAND therapists have creatively adapted both virtual and in-person treatments to meet the needs and strengths of the children. One of many examples of the creativity shown

was the re-design of the **Ready for School Program**. We didn't have adequate physical space at ISAND to re-start the program on-site and, as most of the participants would be starting school in September after being more isolated since March, it became very important that we provide the service.

The ISAND team rallied together and created a program that took place at the neighbouring park. Three mornings a week for five weeks, we went to Hendon Park (*only one rain out day*) for activities, exercise and socialization. The experience was greatly appreciated by parents and children alike! In the follow up evaluation, 100% of parents responded that their child had benefitted from the program and that they would recommend it to others.

Throughout the pandemic, we've enjoyed the generous support of community groups, businesses and individuals who have donated money, personal protective supplies, and other services. We would like to thank everyone for their donations to ISAND (*lists of donors can be found later in the newsletter*).

At ISAND, we help to make a difference in the lives of those with ASD and their families. The huge impact that our therapists continue to have can be best summed up by the following message sent to a therapist by a mother of a child in treatment, “Thank you for everything that you do. Thank you for your magical ability to challenge my daughter while making her so happy and eager to attend your sessions. We consider ourselves very lucky to be in your company and looking forward to it again soon”.

GOODBYE

ALI (ALEXANDRA)

SCHWABE, M.H.Sc., CCC-SLP, Reg. CASLPO. Ali has been with ISAND since September 2015, with a short (two year) break to continue her education, develop new skills and specialization with Social Thinking ©.

Ali developed and delivered both ISAND's Getting Social Program, and partnering with one of our Clinical Psychologists with the Feeling Social Program. In addition to her achievements at ISAND, Ali also presented at the 2016 Galactosemia Conference and 2019's Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (OSLA) Autism Symposium, an organization for which she also serves as a board member.

JESSICA LOO-YONG-KEE,

M.H.Sc., Reg. CASLPO. Jessica started volunteering with ISAND in February 2015 and came on board as an SLP in September 2017. Children that Jess has worked with have experienced some fantastic outcomes, including one young person who is visually impaired and has ASD learning to communicate through a tactile communication board. Another child, a six year old boy, learned through Jess's intervention to communicate using word phrases despite, many specialists telling his parents that he would never speak.

Please join us in thanking Ali and Jessica for the time they have spent with ISAND and wish them well in the future!

WELCOME

JIGNA (JIGNASHA) BHATT, B.Sc. O.T., M.Sc. Yoga, OTR, O.T. Reg. (ON), Rejoining the ISAND Team after a two leave to pursue a Master's Degree in Yoga, Jigna is returning to join the ISAND Team as of February, 2021.

Having certification in ESDM, iLS, Sensory Integration, HWT, Paediatric assessments and a master's in Yoga, Jigna has extensive experience providing therapy and rehabilitative programs that address sensory processing issues, daily living skills, and general independence.

JOANNA TICKER, M.S.Ed., SLP Reg. CASLPO, joined ISAND in February providing both group and individual Speech and Language services. Joanna brings more than seven years' experience to ISAND, with extensive experience working with children and adolescents with a variety of abilities. Joanna is passionate working with the pediatric population and their families to support diverse communication needs including: language, motor speech, social communication, fluency, and voice.

Joanna has received training and/or certification in a number of speciality areas including: Early Start Denver Model (Advanced training); *Talkability and More Than Words* (Hanan Centre); and introductory for PROMPT. Joanna has experience running social skills groups using aspects of the social thinking model as well as designing and implementing training seminars for clinicians and providing parent coaching for families in service.

EREK (EREKLE) NATSVLISHVILI, has joined the Admin Team as a Clinical Front Desk Assistant filling in for Nastassia Meyer's Maternity Leave. EreK completed an Internship with ISAND to complete his Business Administration diploma. Upon completion of his internship, EreK volunteered three days a week with ISAND. During both his internship and his volunteer time with us, EreK has shown a strong work ethic, initiative and a respectful manner to everyone. We're looking forward to working with him for the coming year!

SHEILA CONDON, M.A., BCBA joined the ISAND family in February as well providing behavioural therapy to individuals and groups. Sheila will also be looking to provide training, coaching and other supports to families and other ISAND Clinicians. With more than eighteen years' experience working in Ireland, Toronto and Edmonton, Sheila has many skills and great expertise that will benefit us all. She has received training in SCERTS (Social Communication Emotional Regulation, Transactional Supports) and obtained her BCBA in 2010. Sheila is a member in good standing of Ontario Association for Applied Behaviour Analysis (ONTABA)

Sheila specializes in Family Centred programming, Parent coaching, Teaching skills in a natural environment, and Functional Behavioural Assessments.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the month of March 2021, ISAND will have provided:

701
Therapy
Sessions

401
Virtually

In March 2020, the number of sessions provide virtually? - 10

TIPS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD WITH VIRTUAL LEARNING (SCHOOL)

We've been hearing a lot about screen fatigue for both children and adults. Here are some tips to help your child have greater success with virtual learning. By Sami Cohen, M.Cl.Sc., Reg. CASLPO



Sami Cohen
M.Cl.Sc., Reg. CASLPO

- Take frequent movement or "wiggle" breaks- There are tons of YouTube videos for this, or you can play a game like Simon Says.
- Have 'fidget' objects or toys available to fidget with or colouring books, stickers, or anything else to keep busy and increase engagement at the screen.
- Implement token charts/reward systems (*i.e.*, "I am working for....."). This can be something preferred that your child is working for on a break.
- Create a daily schedule in order to add structure and predictability to the day.
- Implement 'break cards'- can have a certain number of breaks/day that your child can use.
- Request to have the worksheets emailed to you ahead of time from the teacher, to allow for pre-teaching of concepts/ independent work time off of the screen when necessary.
- Turn off the audio and video of peers, in order to reduce/limit distractions.
- If possible, designate a 'work' space in the home for virtual school to take place (*preferably not in a room that is filled with preferred toys/activities!*).
- If logging into school is just too challenging for one day, allow yourself to take a day off to reset. Being on the screen all day every day is challenging for everyone, especially for little guys!
- Have snacks available to support focus and attention!

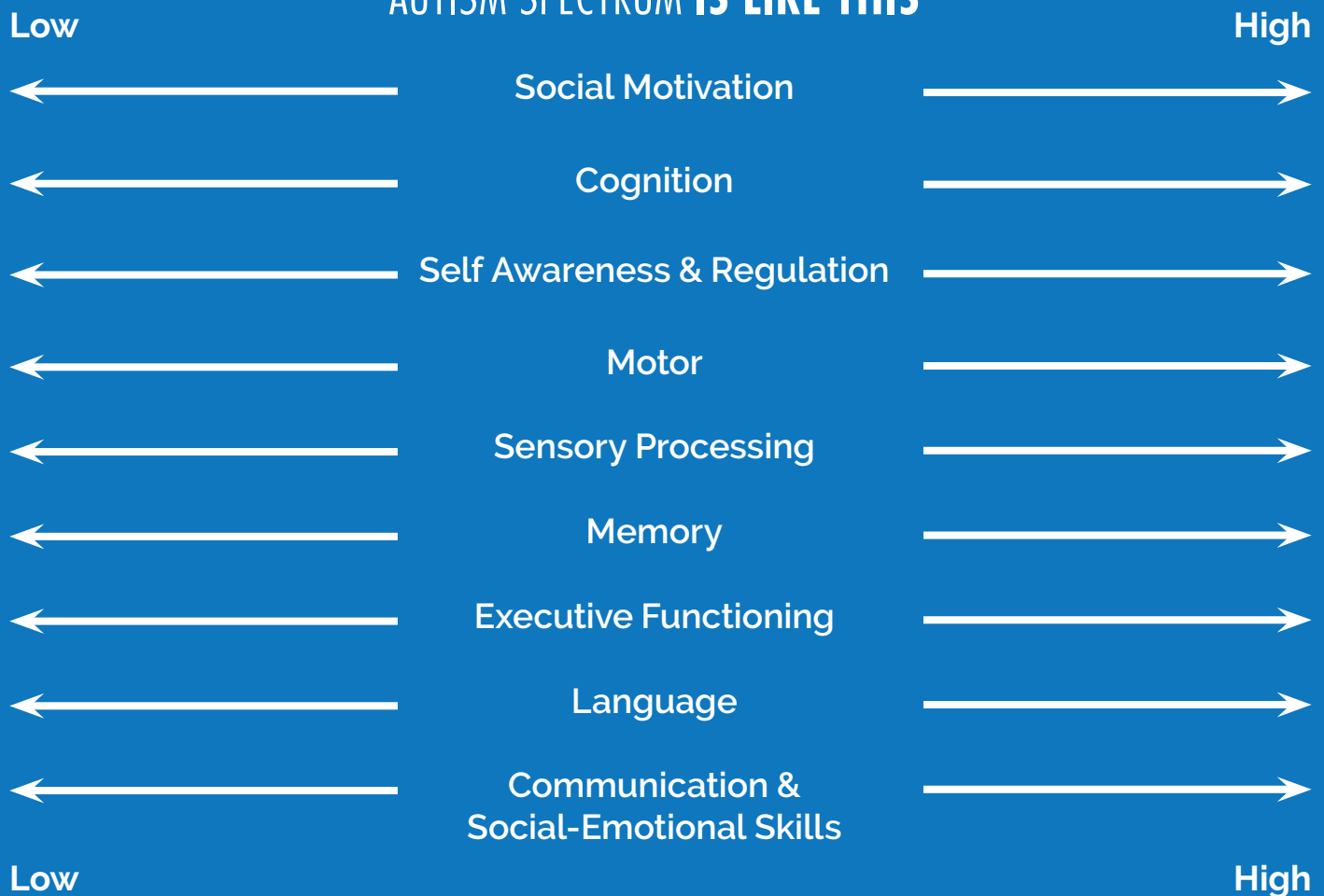
AUTISM SPECTRUM

We are often asked for a simple response to “*Describe someone with Autism Spectrum Disorder*”. The fact is that there is no simple answer. Each person with an ASD diagnosis, like any neurotypical person, is complex – they have different levels of skills and abilities across a number domains. Someone does NOT have “*mild or severe autism*”, their unique profile will look more like the one illustrated below. Source: www.theexpertally.com @theexpertally

AUTISM SPECTRUM IS NOT LIKE THIS



AUTISM SPECTRUM IS LIKE THIS



DID YOU KNOW?



On Wednesday December 9, 2020 **Ali Ehsassi**, Member of Parliament Willowdale, came to ISAND for a tour and to provide us with four bags of PPE. Mr. Ehsassi, a supporter of ISAND and the work that we do provided us with masks, hand sanitizer, Canadian Flags, and a Certificate thanking and acknowledging ISAND for our role in helping families by providing leading edge therapy to children, youth and adults with ASD.

MINASSIAN VERTICT



March 3, 2021

It is with some relief that Justice Anne Molloy ruled against the Not Criminally Responsible (NCR) plea used by the defence of John Doe (Alex Minassian) because of his ASD diagnosis. John Doe was found guilty today of all charges laid against him for the April 2018 van attack in Toronto in which ten people were killed and sixteen others wounded.

We hope that today's verdict brings some measure of closure to the families of the victims.

The defence team argued that Mr. Doe, did not know that his actions were morally wrong. In her sixty eight (68) page verdict, Justice Molloy was clearly of the opinion that Mr. Doe thought about the crimes he was going to commit, put in significant planning and considered the consequences of his actions. "Mr. Doe, understands that death is permanent. He understood the impact that his actions would have on his family and the families of his victims. He knew that what he was planning do to was morally wrong by society's standards", said Justice Molloy when presenting her verdict.

Although a measure of justice has been served, many in the autism community are concerned about the lasting impact of the defence strategy. Incorrect perceptions about people on the spectrum lacking empathy, or being violent were somehow reinforced by the defence tactics and the media coverage. The fact that Mr. Doe's on-line radicalization, his quest to be famous, and his misogyny were the significant factors behind his crimes, may, unfortunately, be overshadowed by his diagnosis of ASD.

It's up to each and every one of us to take every opportunity that we have to inform the public of the real factors behind these horrific accidents.

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Autism AWARNESS Day

Every year on April 2 we mark World Autism Awareness Day. This annual awareness day was established in 2008 by the United Nations General Assembly to highlight the need to improve the quality of life of those with autism so they can live full and meaningful lives as an integral part of society. Every day at ISAND we celebrate the uniqueness of every child, youth and young adult that we serve, together with their families. We recognize that each person has gifts, abilities and strengths that contribute to the vibrancy and diversity of our communities. In addition to celebration, World Autism Awareness Day shines a spotlight on the hurdles that families living with autism face each day. Every year the ISAND team assists hundreds of individuals and families in many different ways, continually striving to find the most effective ways to support them. We are grateful for this privilege and are honoured by the trust that families place in us.

2 April 2021



Hope Campaign 2020

(January 2021)

The Hope Campaign is ISAND's year-end annual giving campaign. Our 2020 campaign was the most successful so far. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to these Individuals, corporations and community groups.

Individuals

Alexandra Schwabe
Alex George
Amhlaoibh Lynch
Angela Lai
Barry Richler
Beatrice Sanchez
Bob Butella
Brian Fiset
Christine Fischer Guy
Christian Hernandez
Cindy Bieber
David Gray
Elia DiLoreto
Gail Nixon
Glen Dalzell
Gordon Turner
Jackie Ventresca
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Jon Bricker
Karan Puri
Kelly D'Souza
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Michael Miller
Michelle Caskie
Michelle Volpatti
Mike Moran
Manon Thivierge
Marion Greenberg
Mary Mallin
Matthew Rosenberg
Maya & Steve Castle

Murray Irving
Oscar Rombola
Pat Zita
Peter Stabins
Rita Dann
Rosanna Soda
Saul Muskat
Silham Haddad
Steve McDonald
Susan Harris
Susmita Dutta
Tammy Kemp
Tina Capobianco
Umberto Martini
Umma Habiba
Vivian Cafazzo
Vivian Ellis

Corporations & Community

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CRESA
eCapital Fright Factoring
Effective Professional Consulting Group
Hop Skip Marketing

JC Enterprises
JD Factors
Phenix Group
Silver Apple Foundation

List of Donors 2020/2021

ISAND would like to thank the following corporations, community groups, and individuals for their generous support. Together they have provided more than \$180,000 this fiscal year to help support our Mission.

Individuals: 2020 HOPE campaign

Adelle Purdham
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Bob Butella
Deanna Weinberg
Dr. Wendy Roberts
Elaine Tung
Janis Rotman
Jamie & Patsy Anderson
Karen Chappell
Olesya Zaremba
Laurence Rose
Martin Forgie
Myra Sourkes
Mike and Kathi Way
Print3 Woodbridge
Randy A. Gangbar
Roy Klementti
Sue, Taylor, Nicholas & Perry Dellelce
Zejko Cvijanovic

Community Groups, Foundations & Other Granting Bodies:

Autism Speaks
Brighter Together
Charities Aid Foundation
Fidelity Investment Employees Fund
Five B Family Foundation
NovaJet Aviation Group
TD Securities Underwriting Hope
Unity for Autism

Corporations:

iCapital
iSource Solutions (*in kind*)
Zoono (*in kind*)

INTERNATIONAL PEACE AWARDS 2020



The International Peace Awards, presented by the Gandian Initiative for Development of Support Services (GIDSS), aim to promote Peace, Harmony and Community Service around the world. There are thousands of people around the world who are dedicating their lives to help the needy and marginalized groups without any personal gain. Through these awards, their efforts will be acknowledged and brought before others to inspire similar initiatives.

ISAND has been nominated for this prestigious award in the category of Disability Empowerment in recognition of our adaptability in providing services during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Winners to be announced at the awards ceremony to be held April, 2021.

Award winners were determined by a panel of jurors representing:

Researchers
Academics
Business Executives
Activists
Advocates

To view video details about award winners, click on the following link:

[InternationalPeaceAwards.com](https://www.internationalpeaceawards.com)

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 & Therapy*)
- Counselling & Support (*Individual & Family*)
- Diet & Nutrition
- Developmental Medical Care
- Early Intervention (*ESDM / NDBI*)
- Education Consultation
- Occupational Therapy (*Consultation, Assessment & Intervention*)
- Parent Education & Parent Coaching
- Psychology (*Consultation, Diagnostic & Psychoeducational Assessment*)
- Psychology (*Cognitive Based Therapy & Mindfulness Based Therapies*)
- Social Programs
- Speech-Language Therapy (*Consultation, Assessment, Intervention & AAC Support*)
- Therapeutic Yoga & Rhythmic Movement Training

We embrace the uniqueness of everyone. To learn more please call **(416) 224-5959** or visit us at **www.isand.ca**

