



CULTURE
BUILDS
FLORIDA

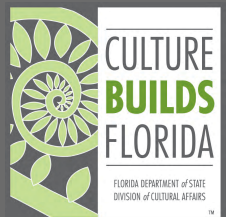
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE
DIVISION *of* CULTURAL AFFAIRS

TM

Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs

How to Plan a Sensory-Friendly Show: The Tools for Creating a Successful Autism-Centered Event

February 2013



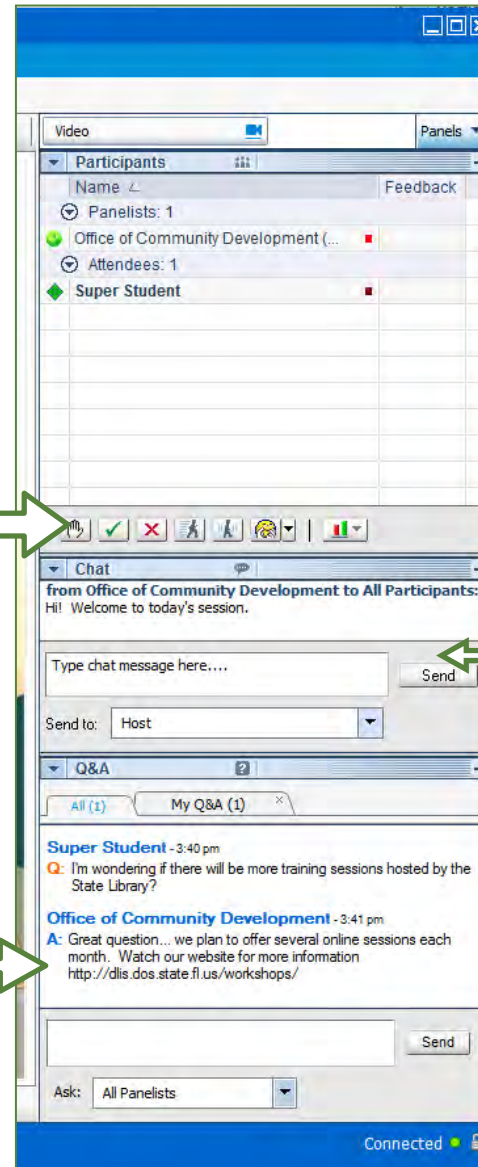
Tools you can use



Click on the X if you have technical problems.

Use the Participants Panel to raise your hand, respond to y/n questions, and indicate your status.

Use the Q&A Panel to ask a question. One of the presenters will answer it during the program.



Use the Chat Panel to 'talk' to presenters and participants.

*6 TO MUTE AND UN-MUTE

Join the Teleconference

1

Call-in toll-free number
888.670.3525

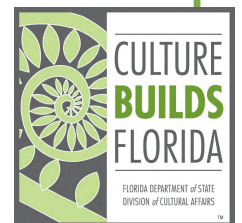
2

Follow the instructions.

Conference Code
856 353 1004

3

Press *6 to mute
And un-mute
the phone





The Florida Division of Cultural Affairs promotes arts and culture as essential to quality of life for all Floridians.

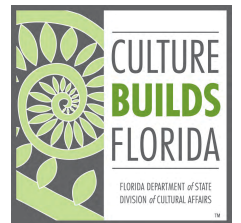
Successfully Accessible Series

1. Tim Storhoff, Information Specialist for the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs
2. Marian Winters, Executive Director for VSA
3. Maureen McKloski, Accessibility Coordinator from the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs
4. Lael Arango, Glazer Museum
5. Judy Litt, Miami Theater Center
6. Francine M. Andersen, Miami-Dade Department of Cultural Affairs
7. Question and Answer
8. Closing Remarks



Successful Accessible

- To provide you with the resources and information needed to create successful implementation and experiences for your organization and broaden the outreach to your community

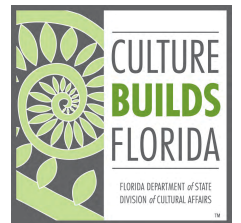




AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER



Marian Winters



What is Autism (ASD)

- Neurodevelopment disorder



Characterized by:

- Communication difficulties
- Social impairments
- Restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior
- Handle information in their brains differently

Autism Spectrum Disorder

1. Autistic Disorder – Classic Autism
2. Asperger Syndrome –milder symptoms of autistic disorder
3. Pervasive Development Disorder – meet some of the criteria for autistic disorder, but not all



Characteristics

- Sensitive to sound, sight, taste, touch or smell
- Repetitive behaviors
- Difficulty with changes to surroundings or routines
- High level of activity for long periods of time
- Uneven skill development
- Challenging behaviors - aggression, self injury or severe withdrawal



Unique Ways of Thinking

- Clear and unambiguous signage, symbols
- Visual schedule
- Concrete language
- One instruction at a time
- Facial expressions and gestures simple and clear
- Give time to respond
- Use visual clues whenever possible
- Be patient and sensitive
- Set up situation that encourages communication



Temple Grandin

One of the most profound mysteries of autism has been the remarkable ability of most people with autism to excel at visual spatial skills while performing so poorly at verbal skills



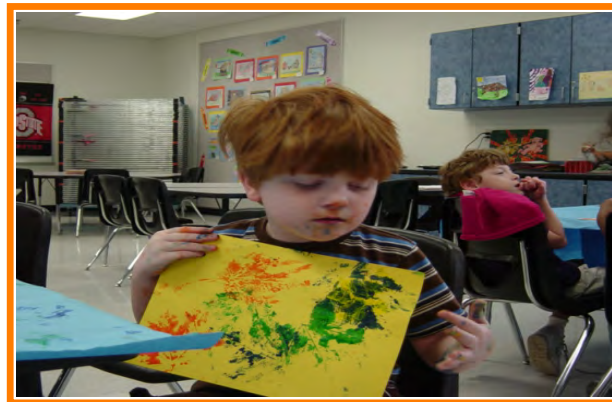
Social Interaction

- Do not expect great levels of interest and appreciation
- Individuals with ASD speak in formal language, voice sounds flat and lacks expression
- Difficulty in interpreting non verbal communication such as facial expression
- Understand in literal way and fail to understand implied meaning
- May feel threatened by physical closeness
- Go a patrons pace when trying to develop a rapport

Physical and Sensory

Arousing factors:

- Loud sudden noises
- Strong odors
- Bright lights or colors
- Light or unexpected touch
- Changes in temperatures
- Unpredictable events



Calming Factors

Confusion

- Temporary directional cones that point to destination, rest areas

Stress

- Hand held squeeze balls
- Focus stone

Visual

- Low lights
- Muted colors
- Visor- brimmed hat
- Hand held framing cutouts



Calming Factors cont.

Fear of unknown

- Pre visit material

Auditory

- White noise tapes such as fan, running water or nature sounds
- Sound muffling headphones

Smell

- Cotton balls with pleasant scent

Visual

- Communication boards
- Object based icons



Visual Schedule

Say Hello



Read a Book



See Art



Make Art



Share Work

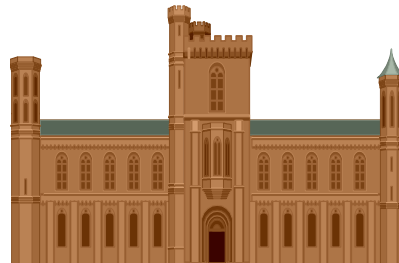


Say Good Bye



Visual Vocabulary

Museum



Sculpture



Tips:

- Be consistent
- Know needs of students in advance
- Give clear and direct instructions
- Allow for choice
- Use multi sensory approach
- Use visual clues
- Inform paraprofessional of how they can help



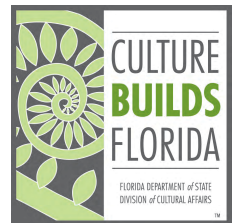
Resources

- Room To Grow: A Guide to Arts Programming in Community Spaces for Families Affected by Autism
by Michelle Lopez and Jennifer Candiano
Queens Museum of Art.
AutismInitiatives@queensmuseum.org
- C.A.R.D - Center of Autism and Related Disorders- regional offices throughout Florida



Resources

- *Out of Sync Child* - Carol Kranowitz
- *Activities for the Out of Sync Child* – Carol Kranowitz
- *More than Words* – Fern Sussman
- Hanen Foundation, Canada
- Picture Exchange Communication – Picture Board Maker



VSA Florida

University of South Florida
College of Education/ Sp. Ed/ VSAFL
4202 E. Fowler Avenue EDU 105
Tampa, Florida 33620
813-974-0721
www.vsaflorida.org





Schedule for Webinars: FEBRUARY 2013

4:00 – 5:00 P.M.

Call in:1-888-670-3525 code:379-250-3691#

2/5	Movement	Ana Miranda
2/12	Visual	Lori Emly
2/19	Drama	Patricia Gallo
2/26	Music	Paloma Duenas



Quirky
Talented
Gifted
Eccentric
Autistic
Special
Spectrum
Unique
Misunderstood
Autism

Maureen McKloski,
Accessibility Coordinator from the Florida
Division of Cultural Affairs
maureen.mckloski@dos.myflorida.com



Statistics

- 1 child in 88 diagnosed with autism
- 1 in 54 boys, 1 in 252 girls

According to current Centers for Disease Control estimate

More children than ever before are being classified as having autism spectrum disorders. The CDC estimates that up to 730,000 people between the ages of 0 and 21 have an ASD

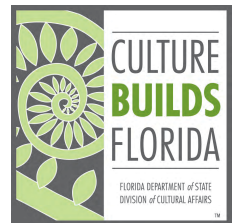


Table 1-1: IDEA Part B - Children with Autism in Florida for 1999-2000 and 2008-2009 (Child Count by Age Group)

In 2000, 4,473 or 1.22% of children ages 3-21 who received special education services in Florida have autism. In 2010-2011, 19,532 or 5.296% of children with disabilities ages 3-21 who received special education services have autism.

- | Child Count in 1999-2000 | Child Count in 2010-2011 |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Age 3-5 | 847 2,569 |
| Age 6-11 | 2,426 9,974 |
| Age 12-17 | 977 5,717 |
| Age 18-21 | 223 1,272 |
| Age 6-21 | 3,626 16,963 |
| Age 3-21 | 4,473 19,532 |

Source: Reported by the State of Florida in accordance with Section 618 of IDEA to U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs







1. Difficulty in mixing with other children



2. Inappropriate laughing or giggling



3. Little or no eye contact



4. Apparent insensitivity to pain



5. Prefers to be alone; aloof manner



6. Spin objects



7. Inappropriate attachment to objects



8. Noticeable physical overactivity or extreme underactivity



9. Unresponsive to normal teaching methods



10. Intensity or sameness; resists changes in routine



11. No real fear of dangers



12. Sustained odd play



13. Echolalia (repeating words or phrases in place of normal language)



14. May not want cuddling or act rudely



15. Not responsive to verbal cues; acts as deaf



16. Difficulty in expressing needs; uses gestures or pointing instead of words



17. Tantrums - displays extreme distress for no apparent reason



18. Uneven gross/fine motor skills (may not want to kick ball or stack blocks)

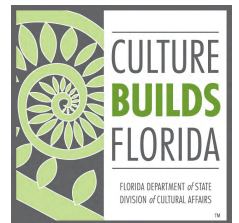
Donna Williams,
“The Outsider”
from “Drawing Autism”
by Jill Mullin



- I was deeply mesmerized with all things aesthetic and sensory from at least 6 months of age. Being meaning deaf, I saw musically. Being face blind, I was attuned to movement patterns. Being object blind and context blind, I'd tap everything to make noise, to hear its "voice," flick it to feel its movement, turn it to experience how it caught light, toss and drop and shred and snap and sprinkle grass, sand, twigs, leaves. I'd lick and run my hands and face over surfaces, wrap myself into fabrics. I'd align myself with symmetry and lines, mold myself into forms to feel their shape as them, stare at colors and lights and shapes trying to become one with them.

Why we do it.

- Primarily visually or sound oriented
 - Perception abilities generally ultrasensitive
- The arts are an avenue of self expression
 - Ability to process emotions in a healthy way
- Venue for exploration for active imaginations
- Skill Acquirement can positively effect self image
- Art/Music often used as a sensory safety blanket
 - The rest of the world disappears
- Provides motivation to make social connections and try new things



Shawn Belanger, Stone House, 2007

Shawn's mother: The intensity that Shawn draws with is amazing. There is a look of concentration on his face that is intense, one gets the feeling that for that period of time the world ceases to exist. From Drawing Autism by Jill Mullin



Before the show

- Safety protocols
- Staff training
- Programmatic modifications
- Structure/Physical modifications
- Community and Parent Outreach
- Marketing
- Ticketing Policy extra seats, trade-ins
- Assessment

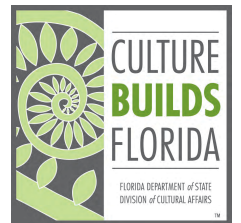


Safety and Stress

- Safety
 - staff
 - individual with autism
 - other patrons
- Minimize Stress levels
 - autistic person
 - parents and/or caregivers
 - patrons

Staff

- Protocol for handling elopement
- Protocol for behaviors
- Train all staff- volunteers, docents, artists, ushers
- Protocol for minimizing over-stimulation
- Protocol for crowd control
- Protocol for Ushers
- Protocol for communication



Are You Prepared for an Autism Emergency?

- A leading cause of concern for parents with a child with autism is children who run or wander away. In a recent online survey conducted by NAA, an incredible 92% of the parents who responded reported their children were at risk of wandering
 - **Wandering can occur anywhere at anytime**
- Too often, children with autism are often attracted to water sources such as pools, ponds, and lakes
 - **Drowning is a leading cause of death for a child or adult who has Autism**



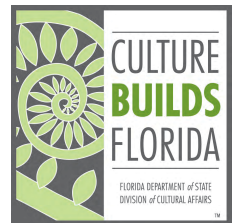
Elopement

- Limit Exits and Entrances
- Place a staff person at egresses
 - Two staff at key times
 - 15 minutes before show ends
 - Before show
 - During intermission
- Communication capabilities, cell phones/ walkie talkies
- Well marked highly visible marker for parents and child with visual image.
 - Place a staff person at or near the marker for the entire show
- Staff clothing important –can be fear inducing
- Do Not touch individual,
- Speak quietly, evenly and calmly
- Ask one or two questions- limit them to yes and no.
- Allow time for person to focus and follow directions
 - Make it a game



Finding yourself alone

- Picture of the marker in the lobby and one simple instruction. “Lost?”
- Close up of the marker “Walk to the marker”
- Picture of staff in uniform “Give them this sheet”
 - Simple easy to use downloadable and printed forms that parents can fill out pre-visit
 - Place for photograph upload
 - name and age of individual, individual’s cell phone
 - Any specific instructions or concerns
 - Parent or caregiver’s name and contact information and cell phone number
- Include relaxation instructions on back



Aggressive Behavior

- Overstimulation
- Frustration
- Inability to communicate overwhelming senses, emotions or thoughts
- Feeling out of control
- Too much attention or stimulation

The function of a child's behavior varies but often falls into one of these categories

Behavioral challenges are a common problem for children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Many children with ASD have challenges managing certain behaviors such as aggression or not following directions in addition to experiencing limitations in communication or social skills.

- Escaping or avoiding tasks or demands
- Getting attention from other people
- Seeking access to a favorite item or activity
- Doing the problem behavior makes the child feel good



Staff Behavioral Protocol

- Remove other surrounding patrons
- Remove surrounding objects
- Clear area, at least a three to five foot radius
- Let parent or caregiver handle it
- Do not stare or look individual in eye
- Do not yell, or argue
- Speak softly calmly and evenly
- Stay in control and do not show fear
- Wait – it will end



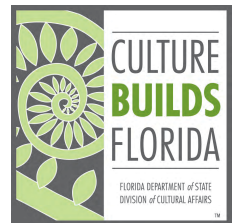
Quiet Rooms/2 Areas

Relaxation Techniques/ Stimulation Reduction

- 1. Lower amount of stimulation
 - Breathing exercise cards
 - Soft light -Muted colors
 - Soft music - Soft of enveloping seating

- 2. Switch Gears, process information
 - Activities
 - Music

Invite experienced volunteers to augment staff.



Sensory activities help to regroup:

According to one study the benefit of proprioceptive information lasts for about two hours, so your child might need a sensory break like this approximately every two hours. Some children need to get stabilized much more frequently. Of course every child is different and their needs are likely to change daily.

Depending on a person's needs and strengths, a sensory break might include:

- doing push-ups against the wall
- rubbing something with texture
- wearing a weighted vest or blanket
 - spinning
 - listening to music
 - sucking through a straw
 - rocking
- chewing something crunchy
- taking a visual break in a quiet environment
- using an assistive technology





Eleni Michael, Dancing with the Dog, 1995

This was painted in 1995, not long after I had moved into a housing project for people with special needs. I was euphoric about my new home—a self-contained flat surrounded by a huge garden in a rural setting. (This idyll did not last long.) I brought my dog Jasper with me. He was the only lively animal there and brought great pleasure to me and all of the residents in the project. They loved him too and enjoyed playing with him and petting him. Jasper was a healthy presence and completely indiscriminate with friendships. from “Drawing Autism”
by Jill Mullin

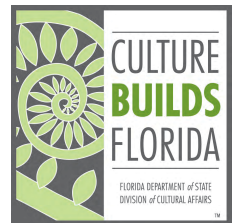
Training Staff

- Use only Literal or concrete communication
- Social cues need verbal description as well
- Do not expect eye contact
- Expect inappropriate behaviors or responses
- Allow time for processing between different ideas or events
- Augment information with visual images
- Clothing, light colored- no navy or black
- Speak in clear, calm, even and self assured tones
- No wax, life like or life size figures, or costumes
- Do not argue with someone who has been diagnosed with Aspergers
- Do not engage in specialized topic or reinforce negative behavior with attention or agreement
- Limit the number of questions you ask
- Do not expect immediate or direct answer
- Questions should have yes or no answers



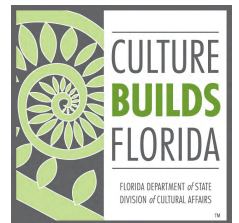
Communication

- Picture Exchange Communication Systems
- Use hard copies
- Use on iPads
- Use on Interactive White Boards
- Because technology limits focus, many students with autism embrace today's technology tools.
- They are now used widely as communication accommodations.
- Computers
- iPads, other “smart” notebooks
- Interactive white boards
- There are many apps specifically for students with autism – for communication, schedules, etc.



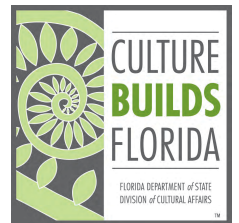
Programmatic Changes

- Exhibits, Displays
 - Children Museums
 - Gallery style exhibits
- Screen or Stage Oriented Performance
 - Film
 - Theater
 - Movies



Museum

- Sensory friendly exhibits:
 - See, Smell, Hear, and even Taste
- Map activity to promote engagement by fulfilling a task
 - Treasure Hunt
 - Counting task
 - Find an object or an individual
 - Smart Phone activity
 - Interaction with exhibits
- Close museum to public or advertise slow times
- Turn off over stimulating sound and lighting
- Turn off motion activated sound or light features
- Headset tours- where possible patrons could utilize their own headphones
- Quiet room or space
 - Computer activity with history or facts



Films, Theater, Movies

- Train actors, stage hands, lighting and sound people
 - Noise is okay
 - Entering late, leaving early is okay
 - Literal/concrete communication
 - Smooth transitions, no sudden changes in light or sound
 - Reduced volume and localize sound from back of stage-
 - No Strobe lights, or dark theaters- keep lights on, soft and steady
- Provide a pre-show show- will help transition between show start arrival
- Introduce characters, pre-plot introduction, set the mood
- Keep lights on- do not black out the theater!



Structural Modifications Preparations-

Make a checklist, Do a walk-through

- Quiet room/area set up
- Set up visually augmented signage
- Extra staff and volunteers
- Staff clothing
- Staff exits with people
- Lighting check
- Sound check
 - No major shifts in light or sound- check to make sure all motion activated exhibits are turned off.
- Crowd control protocol, use long single lines
- Water sources emptied, sectioned off or staffed
- Remove or cover life like wax or mannequins



David Barth, Vogels ("Birds" in Dutch), 2008 (at age 10)

“His drawings often represent his current obsessions. In the attachment I send you, it's not hard to guess what's keeping him busy right now. There are almost 400 birds on it and he knows the names and Latin names of most of them. From his mothers email “Drawing Autism” by Jill Mullin



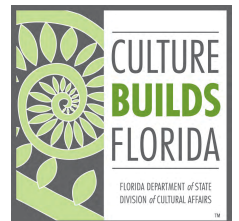
What parents/caregivers need

- Advertise Safety protocols
 - “Finding yourself Alone” one sheet
- Outline allowances and provisions specific to sensory friendly show
- Flyer outlining what to expect- in order
 - Downloadable social stories (in word format)
 - Pictures of the theatre interior and exterior, stage, highlights of show
 - Provide map of building and possibly map route through exhibit
- Invite parents to call accessibility person with any specific needs by a specific date.
- Invite parents to fully utilize usher services- they can help determine best times to come and go during performances with minimal disruption
- Ticketing policy
- Policy on identifiers for those with autism



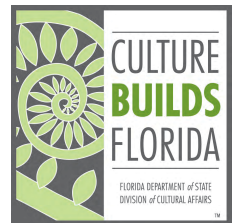
Marketing

- Community Outreach -find what patrons want and need
- Educate and enlist the aid of Artistic, Production and Front of house staff to accommodate audience needs
- Market to your board members and staff
- Website /Marketing Additions
 - What parents/caregivers need to know
- Use appropriate symbols on marketing materials
- Advertise contact information for accessibility person
- Advertise that you will try to accommodate any other specific needs by a specific date.
- Market your success, after the fact– use your assessments
- Ticketing Options



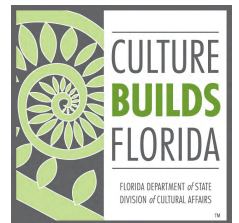
Finding your audience

- Local Centers that teach art classes
- Autism support groups
- Aspergers support groups
- Schools and Day care facilities for Autism
- Day Centers for Developmentally Disabled Adults
- Full care facilities
- Group houses
- Local Colleges and Universities



Ticketing

- Free extra seat if requested- this is a safety issue- it is a necessity not a nicety
- Day of the show allow for ticket trades on web or in person of audience members
- Close show to general public if possible
- Provide information on Quiet times for visitors





Jessica Park,

**The Mark Twain House with the
Diamond Eclipse and Venus, 1999**
from “Drawing Autism”
by Jill Mullin

Assessment

- Make questionnaire available online and in hand outs- as convenient as possible.
- It may be difficult to determine the impact and success of event without one
- It will provide feedback to all of those involved and your board members
- May provide helpful suggestions for future



AUTISM

**is NOT
a disease.**

Dont try to cure us.

**Try to
understand us.**

Questionnaire

- 1. Have you attended an art or cultural event with a person with autism?
 - If Yes, where? _____ If No, why not? _____
 - How did you hear about the event? _____

Please circle all that apply in the following programs.

- 2. Would you go to a sensory friendly show or event if it were offered in your area? Yes/ No
- 3. Would you attend a Film: Yes or No
- 4. Would you attend a Theatre: Yes or No
- 5. Would you attend a Museum: Yes or No Art / Science / History / Children
- 6. Would you attend an Educational Program: Yes or No
- 7. What time of day and day of the week would work best? Time: ___ Day: ___
- 8. 8. What are the biggest obstacles or concerns with attending a program, event or show for you or your family?
- 9. 9. What is the best advice you can give someone offering an autism friendly program, show or event?
- 10. 10. If an autism friendly event was offered in your area would you be most likely to attend if (check more than one)
 - _____ The tickets were discounted\free. _____ Quiet room available
 - _____ The time of the event fit into your schedule _____ Siblings could participate
 - _____ Pre-visit Materials were provided
 - _____ The event was at a less busy time for the organization.

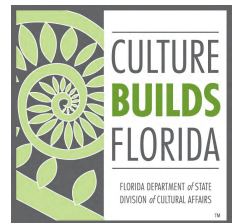




Sunshine Sundays at the Glazer Children's Museum

A quick-start program for children
with special needs and their families

Lael Arango, Glazer Museum



Contact Information

A SPECIAL DAY FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

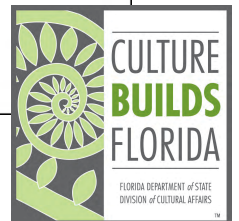
**SUNSHINE
SUNDAY**

Glazer
Children's
Museum

10AM-12:30PM \$5, MEMBERS FREE

2013 DATES: MARCH 24, MAY 26, JULY 28, SEPT 22, NOV 24

LAEL ARANGO 813 443 3810, larango@glazermuseum.org



What is Sunshine Sunday?



Glazer Children's Museum
SUNSHINE SUNDAY

10AM-12:30PM

A SPECIAL DAY FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

**ADVANCED REGISTRATION IS ENCOURAGED OR PURCHASE AT THE DOOR
LIMITED TO 300 GUESTS**

MUSEUM MEMBERS ARE FREE - NON-MEMBERS PAY ONLY \$5 PER PERSON

Come and explore the museum with lights and sounds turned down, special programming, and resources for children and families with special needs.

NOTES No adults admitted without children (12 or under). One adult required for every 10 children in a group.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA | CARD | USE | vsa | AdvanceMyBaby | DCA | EARLY AUTISM INTERVENTIONS | TGH Tampa General Hospital | Lighthouse for the Blind

Lighthouse for the Blind, Family Network of Disabilities, Shriner's Hospital for Children, Baby Bungalow

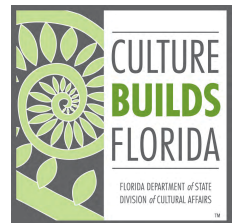
VISIT GLAZERMUSEUM.ORG OR CALL 813.443.FUN!





Why Sunshine Sundays?

- Quick-start
- Met a community need
- Took advantage of a large group of community partners who wanted to be involved
- Predictable overhead



Funding

- Grassroots effort – no funding specifically for this program
- Currently included in general education program grant applications



Community Help

- Developed a circle of “friends” through connections with the Education departments at University of Tampa and the University of South Florida
- The well-connected special needs community helps us with word of mouth – passing out flyers and including us in community calendars and mailings



What we learned...

- **Just start!** Don't get bogged down in details and planning. Take in feedback and make changes.
- **Passionate partners.** Harness the energy and ideas and remember there is room to grow. Take feedback and make changes.
- **Funding.** Try to keep costs low and include it in grants for general programming.
- **Limited engagement.** We intentionally limit the number of attendees. Redefine success.
- **Programming.** We invite community agencies to set up tables for the “cost” of bringing an appropriate activity for participants.



Taking feedback and making changes

- Easy-ish fixes:
 - Loud hand dryers
 - Automatic toilets
- Harder fixes:
 - Sunday morning conflicts
 - Every other month events hard to remember



Successes

- Heightened sense of community
- Increased and more diverse visitation
- Strengthened relationships with local agencies
- Increased presence as a resource in a well-connected special needs community
- Happy families



From a Sunshine Sunday visitor:

"I have a 3 & 1/2 year old autistic son and we visited your museum for the first time today, during the Sunshine Sunday event. He had such a wonderful time and participated in so many of the exhibits (very unlike the way he usually is when we are at crowded places, no matter how "fun" they are). Not only were all of the wonderful activities at the museum itself amazing, but being able to experience them with less crowds, surrounded by other families that are understanding of each others' challenges, the lower light & noise level, and for \$5 a person (VERY appreciated, as the amount we spend per week on therapy leaves very little for outings, some of which my son lasts a whole 10 minutes at before melting down and wanting to go - luckily not the case today though) was just truly a gift."



Contact Information

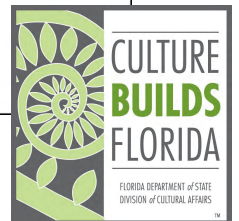
A SPECIAL DAY FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

SUNSHINE SUNDAY

Glazer Children's Museum

10AM-12:30PM \$5, MEMBERS FREE

2013 DATES: MARCH 24, MAY 26, JULY 28, SEPT 22, NOV 24
LAEL ARANGO 813 443 3810, larango@glazermuseum.org



The Sensory Friendly Theater Program (formerly the Playground Theater)



Judy Litt
Miami Theater Center
judy@mtcmiami.org

Eleanor's Secret Sensory-Friendly Screening



Saturday, March 9th @ 1pm

Sensory-Friendly Screenings provide all families an opportunity to enjoy a family-friendly film together in a warm and accepting environment. From Academy Award nominated director Dominique Monféry comes a sumptuously animated movie about a magic library where all the characters from classic children's books come alive.

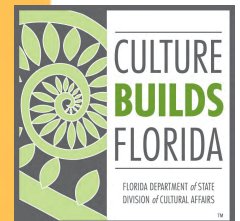
Nat has fond memories of his eccentric Aunt Eleanor reading to him from her enormous collection of storybooks but is frustrated by his inability to read the books himself. So he is less than thrilled when he learns that his aunt has left him the keys to her attic library as a gift. However, just as Nat's parents are selling the collection to a shady antiques dealer, Nat discovers that the library is magical – the books are all original first editions of history's most popular fairy tales, and the famous characters come to life! Now with the help of Alice in Wonderland, the Ogre, Peter Pan and others, he must find a way to get back the books and learn to read an ancient spell to keep the characters alive for future generations of children. *Eleanor's Secret* is a beautifully designed, rollicking adventure in which a boy's new found ability to read not only sets his imagination free, but saves the day!

This screening will offer accessible accommodations for individuals with Sensory Processing Disorders and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The auditorium will provide modifications to sound and lighting, noise canceling headsets and a quiet room. With lights a bit brighter and sound a little softer, families are welcome to dance, sing, or walk around while enjoying the movie experience together.

Children \$5 * Adults \$7

O Cinema Miami Shores
Miami Theater Center
9806 NE 2nd Ave Miami Shores, FL 33138

Tickets: www.o-cinema.org



The logo for Miami-Dade County Cultural Affairs features the words "MIAMI-DADE" in bold black uppercase letters, with "COUNTY" in white uppercase letters on a green rectangular background. To the right of this text is a large blue stylized letter "D". Below the "MIAMI-DADE COUNTY" text, the words "cultural" and "affairs" are written in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with "cultural" in green and "affairs" in blue. A thick blue horizontal bar is positioned below the "cultural affairs" text.

MIAMI-DADE

COUNTY

cultural **affairs**

Francine M. Andersen, Chief of Arts Education
Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs
fran@miamidade.gov





Sensory-Friendly Access Symbol

(MIAMI, January 16, 2013) – In coordination with the release of our new [Going to the Show](#) free online resource and printed guide to help prepare new audiences for a first-time live theater experience, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs is introducing the first ever “[Sensory-Friendly](#)” disability access symbol. The [Sensory-Friendly](#) disability access symbol features an umbrella to represent all Sensory Processing Disorders as well as inclusiveness, and integrates puzzle pieces to symbolize Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The [Sensory-Friendly](#) disability access symbol is intended to be used in marketing materials similarly to the standard wheelchair access symbol or American Sign Language (ASL) symbol.

Using the [Sensory-Friendly](#) symbol indicates that the advertised cultural event/performance will provide accessible accommodations for individuals with Sensory Processing Disorders and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), such as modifications to sound and lighting, the [Going to the Show](#) pre-show guide to preparing new audiences for a live theater experience, an accepting environment, noise cancelling headsets, and a “quiet room” where individuals can take a break. Other accommodations may include Autism specialists on hand to assist patrons and remote closed circuit viewing of the main stage performance.



Presenting a “Sensory-Friendly” Cultural Event

The following guidelines are intended to provide a general overview of best practices and accommodations to consider when presenting a Sensory-Friendly cultural event or performance. These guidelines are meant to be discussed as part of an in-depth technical assistance training for cultural organizations wishing to present a Sensory-Friendly event or performance.

For information and to learn more about how your organization can present a [Sensory-Friendly](#) cultural event or performance, call the [Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs](#) at (305) 375-4634.

Guidelines for Sensory-Friendly Accommodations

- Focus group meeting(s) / Pre-show screening(s): convene constituents to preview the show, provide feedback and discuss accommodations. At a minimum, focus groups should include target audience members and their families. Other suggested individuals to include are experts in the field of Sensory Processing Disorders and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), such as educators, clinicians, therapists, psychologists, etc.
- Going to the Show pre-show guide: include the link to the online guide in all electronic show listings <http://www.miamidadearts.org/artskidsmiami.aspx> . Printed copies and classroom posters are also available for advance distribution.
- Modifications to sound and lighting for the performance: amplified sound needs to be brought way down and house lights need to stay up enough to see around the room.



- The length of the performance should be considered (not more than 45-60 minutes max being the ideal).
- Accepting environment: house staff and performers need to be trained/briefed on how to interact appropriately with audience members and what to expect from individuals with sensory processing disorders / Autism (ASD), including possibly disruptive behavior such as individuals making loud noises and moving around.
- Noise cancelling headsets should be made available in the lobby prior to the performance (available from <http://www.envirosafetyproducts.com/peltor-kids-ear-muffs-children-ear-muffs.html>).
- Quiet room: a comfortable room where kids/families can take a break if needed. Ideally, the Quiet Room should be staffed by Autism/disability experts. The Quiet Room should include things for kids to do such as crayons and coloring books. Healthy gluten-free/casein-free/nut-free snacks and beanbag chairs are appreciated.
- Remote viewing: Ideally/best practice, the Quiet Room would include remote viewing of the main stage show.
- Sensory-Friendly access symbol: utilize the Sensory-Friendly disability access symbol in all marketing materials to indicate that the advertised show will provide Sensory-Friendly accommodations.
- Together with the Sensory-Friendly access symbol, include detailed language in all marketing materials describing the specific accommodations to be provided, for example:

This performance will offer accessible accommodations for individuals with Sensory Processing Disorders and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The theater will provide modifications to sound and lighting, noise canceling headsets, a quiet room with remote viewing of the main stage performance, and a special pre-show guide to preparing new audiences for a live theatre experience.



Sensory Friendly

Everyone's welcome under our umbrella



When you see the sensory-friendly access symbol, you know that the event or performance is specially designed and adapted for individuals with Sensory Processing and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Miami-Dade County's Department of Cultural Affairs is delighted to provide inclusive arts experiences through its **All Kids Included** programs that offer all families a chance to attend live cultural events together!

Here's what you can expect at a sensory friendly live-theater performance:

- ☒ "Going to the Show" pre-show guide
- ☒ Modifications to sound and lighting
- ☒ Accepting environment
- ☒ Noise-cancelling headphones
- ☒ "Quiet room"
- ☒ Autism specialists on hand to assist, remote closed circuit viewing and/or other accommodations may be available per venue.

For more information about sensory-friendly cultural events, visit www.miamidadearts.org or call us at 305.375.4634



Photo by Pavel Antonov, 2007

THE LOVE OF THREE ORANGES

By Carlo Gozzi

Directed by Stephanie Ansin

Sensory-friendly performance
Saturday, February 23, 2013 at 2pm

For tickets and information:

Miami Theater Center
9806 NE 2nd Avenue
Miami Shores, FL 33138
Phone: 305-751-9550
Fax: 305-751-9556
Email: info@mtcmiami.org



This performance will offer accessible accommodations for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Sensory Processing Disorders. The theatre will provide modifications to sound and lighting, noise canceling headsets, a quiet room, and a special pre-show guide to preparing new audiences for a live theatre experience.



Before the Show, Let's Get Ready to Go!

(MIAMI, January 16, 2013) – As part of its "All Kids Included" initiative, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs has introduced a free online resource and printed guide to help prepare new audiences for a live theater experience. Going to the theater for the first time can be an exciting experience for children, but for some, it can also be overwhelming. To help make theater-going a more inclusive and enjoyable experience for everyone, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs has created a very special pre-show guide called "[Going to the Show](#)." Depicted in comic book style with easy-to-understand language and accompanied by delightful illustrations of friendly animals, [Going to the Show](#) explains what to expect when attending a live theater performance. The story highlights key events that audiences are likely to encounter at the theater, such as unfamiliar people, waiting in line, a darkened theater, and unexpected or loud sounds. Parents, guardians, teachers and other caregivers are encouraged to read the guide together with the student to help familiarize them with the sequence of events and lend some predictability to this new experience.

Parents, caregivers, educators and organizations working with children are encouraged to request free printed copies or classroom posters by calling (305) 375-4634. To view [Going to the Show](#) online visit the [Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs](#) website at www.miamidadearts.org.

Cultural organizations are also encouraged to use the [Going to the Show](#) advertisement in their season program books and playbills. **Download the Going to the Show ad [here](#).**

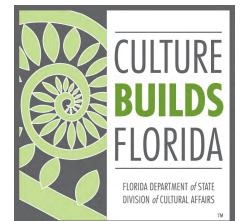


Before the Show, Let's Get Ready to Go!



A Kid-Friendly Theater Guide for New Audiences.

Going to the theater for the first time can be an exciting experience, but for some, it can be overwhelming. To help make theater-going a more inclusive and enjoyable experience for everyone, the **All Kids Included** program of Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs has created a very special pre-show guide called, "**Going to the Show.**" Written in easy-to-understand language and accompanied by delightful illustrations of friendly animals, **Going to the Show** helps parents, teachers and caregivers explain what to expect when going to a live theater performance. To view **Going to the Show** online visit www.miamidadearts.org. To request free printed copies or classroom posters, please call **305.375.4634**.



Thank you to all presenters and participants!

- Slides, transcript, and additional materials will be made available tomorrow at <http://www.florida-arts.org/news/story.cfm?id=193>
- All registered participants will receive a follow-up email with links and additional information. Please fill out our follow-up survey!
- Feel free to stick around for a short discussion about the sensory-friendly access symbol.



Moving through Crowds

Sometimes I will be one person in a crowd. A crowd is many people sharing a space together.



Often crowds of people have to stand close together to share the space that is available. When this happens, it can be hard if one person has to get through the crowd to get to another place.



The best way to move through crowds of people is to say, “Excuse me.” When you say “excuse me,” it lets people know you would like to get by them.

Excuse me, please.

A “Thank You” afterward is also nice!



Needing a Break

Sometimes, even though I am having fun, I need a break.



When I need a break, sometimes I like to color pictures.



Other times I like to listen to soft music.



Sometimes I just need a few minutes for my break, but sometimes I need a little longer.



When I am ready, I can go back and have more fun!





What is.... ASPERGER SYNDROME?

A developmental disorder which falls within the Autism Spectrum. Asperger Syndrome, referred to by many as "High Functioning Autism," is a developmental disorder that is not widely understood. Main features of this disorder become obvious during early childhood and remain constant throughout life, although the common features and degree of actual impairment can vary. Rarely recognised before the age of three, it is more common in boys than girls. Core features of the syndrome are lack of social skills, limited ability to have a two way conversation and an intense interest in a particular subject. Most of these children attend normal primary schools.

COMMUNICATION



Although these children are often highly articulate, content of speech may be abnormal, tending to be pedantic and often centering on one or two favourite topics. Sometimes a word or phrase is repeated over and over in stereotyped fashion. Usually, there is a comprehension deficit despite apparent superior verbal skills. Non verbal communication, both expressive and receptive is often impaired.

SOCIAL INTERACTION



There tends to be impairment in two way social interaction due to an inability to understand the rules governing social behaviour. A lack of empathy with others and little or no eye contact may be evident. Can appear to be stuck at the egocentric stage of social and emotional development. They tend to perceive the world exclusively from their own point of view. Although interested in social relationships often social contact is made inappropriately.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



Social behaviour is often naive and peculiar. Can tend to become intensely attached to particular possessions often engaging in repetitive activities. Resistant to change, coping best when life is predictable. They prefer structure and may concentrate exclusively on matters in which they are interested. Are often known as loners who never quite fit in because of eccentric behaviour, peculiar ways of speaking and a lack of social skills.

COMMON FEATURES:

- Excellent rote memory, absorbs facts easily.
- Generally performs well with maths, science and reading.
- May be anxious and unable to cope with criticism or imperfection.
- Often victims of teasing and bullying leading to withdrawal into isolated activities.
- Can appear clumsy and have an unusual gait or stance.
- Often seen as odd or eccentric.
- Language often appears good but may have limited content and poor social understanding.
- Self interested and lacks empathy.

ASPERGER SYNDROME SUPPORT NETWORK (VIC) INC. TELEPHONE: (03) 9845 2766

Assoc. No. A0043862N

A.B.N. 47 066 180 983

The holder of this card has autism (which includes Asperger syndrome)

This card is issued by The National Autistic Society. It tells you what to expect when you meet a person with autism.

Autism is a disability that affects social and communication skills.

People with autism may behave unpredictably because they have difficulty understanding social situations and language.

Please help by showing understanding and tolerance.

A person with autism has difficulty with social interaction, communication and imagination, and will show some of these characteristics:

Social interaction

- Seems isolated or not to care about others.
- Cannot read body language or understand the need for tact.
- Behaves inappropriately or oddly.
- Avoids eye contact when feeling worried or under pressure.
- Dislikes physical contact.

Communication

- May not understand tone of voice, gestures or expressions like frowning or grinning.
- Takes similes and metaphors literally (so thinks 'daff as a brush' and 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater' are about brushes and babies).
- Finds it difficult to hold a conversation.
- May seem argumentative, stubborn, or angry...
- ...or over-compliant, agreeing to anything even if untrue.
- May use formal, stilted or pedantic language.
- May seem inattentive or unresponsive.
- Can be honest to the extent of bluntness or rudeness.

Imagination

- Cannot foresee the consequences of their actions.
- Very worried by changes in routines or unexpected events.
- Likes set rules, and may overreact when people break them.
- Often has special interests that may become obsessions.
- Finds it difficult to see or imagine another person's point of view.

What to do if you think a person may have autism

People with autism may speak clearly and properly but can lack full understanding. Their apparent independence can disguise their isolation and social disability.

When talking to a person with autism:

- first explain what you are going to do and make sure they understand.
- use clear simple language with short sentences.
- ask specific, unambiguous questions.
- avoid irony, sarcasm or metaphors.
- allow the person extra time to think about or act on what you said.
- remember that if he or she is avoiding eye contact, this does not imply shiftness or disrespectfulness.

Important notes for legal or criminal justice professionals

A person with autism is vulnerable, whether as victim, witness, or suspect. Their difficulty with communication, interaction and imagination puts them at a disadvantage when their actions and behaviour can be misinterpreted. An Appropriate Adult should be called upon to look after their welfare.

Autism and Asperger syndrome are identified as mental and behavioural disorders in the **World Health Organization International Classification of Diseases, ICD10**. Therefore the **Mental Health Act 1983** may apply. If you think your detainee/client/defendant has autism, a report from a specialist psychiatric service dealing with autism or Asperger syndrome may be in their interest and that of justice.

The NAS **Autism Helpline**, 0845 070 4004 (open Monday-Friday 10am-4pm), has a list of specialists who are expert in this area of work. Please also see the criminal justice professionals section of The National Autistic Society website at www.autism.org.uk/cjp

For more information

Contact the **Autism Helpline** on 0845 070 4004 (open Monday-Friday 10am-4pm)
www.autism.org.uk

For more information about this card, including versions of this sheet in other languages, please see www.autism.org.uk/card



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The National Autistic Society
193 City Road, London EC1Y 1NG
Registered charity no. 269425





**SUCCESSFULLY
ACCESSIBLE**

**A LUNCH HOUR
WEBINAR SERIES**



**The Division of Cultural Affairs is pleased to announce upcoming
lunch hour webinars
in partnership with VSA Florida**

12:00 p.m. ET

Every 4th Wednesday, From January to June 2013

Join us for a series of webinars organized to help arts and cultural organizations design, create and implement successful accessible programming, events and environments for their patrons. Each session will include DCA staff and guests who can provide information and experience on the importance of accessibility in the arts. There will be time for a question and answer session.

The topics of the sessions are as follows:

March 27th, 12:00pm – How to Plan a Successful Visit for the Hearing Impaired

April 24th 12:00pm – How to Plan a Successful Visit for the Sight Impaired

May 22nd 12:00pm – Planning a Successful Visit for Wheelchair Users and Mobility Issues

June 26th 12:00pm – Training Your Staff: Dos and Don'ts

We encourage you to email the Division's Accessibility Coordinator, Maureen McKloski at Maureen.McKloski@dos.myflorida.com prior to the session if you need any additional accommodations or have any questions.





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DIVISION *of* CULTURAL AFFAIRS

TM