



ARIZONA AUTISM SPECTRUM SUPPORT,  
INFORMATION, AND STRATEGIES FOR TRANSITION

# January 2012 Newsletter

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## Stay Up-to-Date

We publish a Newsletter once a month but we receive lots of events, activities, seminars and bits of noteworthy news in our inbox throughout the month.

We would love to keep you up-to-date on what's happening in the Autism community. We'll post them on Facebook as we receive them.

Make sure to "Like" us so stay informed!

Like us on [Facebook](#) 

AZAssist, Inc.   
Non-Profit Organization

**Dear Debbie,**

Happy New Year! Looking forward to seeing everyone after our December break.

We are starting the new year with TWO meetings - January is doctor month - see below for details.

We publish events on [Facebook](#) that aren't in the monthly Newsletter--what are YOU missing out on?

*Debbie Weidinger & Cinder McDonald*

## AZ ASSIST January Meeting #1

**"There's a Doctor in the House"**



Join us on **Monday January 16th** from 7-9pm as Dr. Raun Melmed answers our questions and brings us up-to-date on what's new in the field of Autism.

Campus of EdOptions  
2150 E Southern Ave, Tempe

Teens & Young Adults are encouraged to attend in order to socialize with multiplayer video games (no games rated M or above), air hockey, outdoor games and/or arts & crafts.

We have several TVs, but game systems and extra controllers are always welcome - be sure to label them with your name!

Fee for all teens and young adults is \$5.00 - cash preferred (even if they attend the parent meeting). Snacks & drinks provided. No charge for parents, guests and professionals.

## Quick Links

[AZ ASSIST Website](#)

[SEEDs for Autism](#)

[SARRC](#)

[Autism Society to Hold  
43rd National Conference  
and Exhibition on the  
West Coast](#)

[Support the ABLE ACT  
2011](#)

[Learning Opportunities by  
Kids Reaching New  
Heights](#)

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## AZ ASSIST January Meeting #2 Understanding the Role of Biochemical Individuality in Autism

Monday January 23, 2012 from 7-8:30pm in the AZ ASSIST building - 2150 East Southern Avenue, Tempe

AZ ASSIST is pleased to present an evening with Mensah Medical for East Valley families. Don't miss this great opportunity to learn!

As new research overturns the traditional view of autism as a "hard-wired" incurable genetic psychiatric disorder, learn how the biomedical field and our understanding of metallothionein activity and oxidative stress in ASD have developed for effective treatment using prescribed, individualized nutrient therapy. Join us for an open evening discussion with physician-specialists and guest presenters from Mensah Medical (Chicago) - Albert Mensah, MD, and Judith Bowman, MD. This discussion will also cover evidenced-based research and biochemistry rationale. Interaction and questions by members of the audience are encouraged.

Answering the need for specialists with backgrounds in both traditional and natural medicine, Drs. Mensah and Bowman co-founded Mensah Medical after serving as primary physicians at the former Pfeiffer Treatment Center near Chicago. While at Pfeiffer, both family practice physicians received extensive training by William J. Walsh, PhD, founder and former director of research. Drs. Mensah and Bowman have helped hundreds of patients from all over the world, and are recognized internationally for their innovative approach to treat biochemical imbalances. They regularly consult with physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and other health care professionals, and lead annual physician training with Dr. Walsh in orthomolecular medicine in Sydney, Australia. Patients are seen at their Main Clinic in Warrenville, Illinois (25 miles west of Chicago) or at U.S. Outreach Clinics located in Scottsdale, AZ, Annapolis, MD, and near San Francisco and Los Angeles. Website: [www.mensahmedical.com](http://www.mensahmedical.com).

Teens & Young Adults are encouraged to attend in order to socialize with multiplayer video games (no games rated M or above), air hockey, outdoor games and/or arts & crafts. We have several TVs, but game systems and extra controllers are always welcome - be sure to label them with your name!

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## NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program

If your child or young adult has co-occurring mental illness, NAMI's Family-to-Family Education Program might be helpful. It is a free, 12-week course for family members, partners and friends of someone living with a mental illness. Course is taught by family members.

Class begins Mon, Jan 9th, 6:30-9:30pm. East Valley location: Mary's Mission Clinic, 736 N. Country Club Drive, Mesa AZ. West Valley location: Community of Grace Lutheran Church, 10545 W. Pinnacle Peak Road, Peoria, AZ.

Preregister with Laura Shirling 602-759-8177 or email [namimaricopaedu@gmail.com](mailto:namimaricopaedu@gmail.com).

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## High School Transition Workshop

January 12th 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Raising Special Kids  
5025 E. Washington St., Suite 204  
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Learn how the transition plan in a student's IEP in high school can prepare for higher education, employment and life in the community. Resources discussed. Please register for all workshops. To register call 602-242-4366 or 800-237-3007.

Workshops are located at the office of Raising Special Kids in the Disability Empowerment Center (DEC). Please do not wear fragrances in the DEC facilities. [Click here for additional Workshops by Raising Special Kids](#)

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## Special Olympics - Athlete Leadership Program (ALP) University

February 10th-12th at Grand Canyon University, 3300 W. Camelback Road, Phoenix.

NO COST! Want to get more involved in the disability community? Here's an opportunity for some of the best training available ... and it's free!

This program is for dedicated VOLUNTEERS interested in becoming "Trainers" in specific Special Olympics courses that comprise the ALPs program.

[Click here for more information](#)

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## 2012 Community Conference for Parents & Professionals presented by Arizona Autism United

Friday 02/17, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm & Saturday 02/18, 9:00am - 5:00pm

Join members of the autism community for the most unique, diverse and stimulating autism conference you have ever attended! This conference is all about learning practical information you can use tomorrow, while having a great time and making new connections. This year will feature renowned experts and engaging speakers from around the country, and autism-focused special activities like a GFCF cooking class, how to do kids' yoga, a live theatrical performance, and much more!

### Therapy Track

Feeding intervention strategies  
Token reinforcement systems  
iPad communication apps

### Education Track

Teaching social skills  
Positive Behavior Support in classrooms  
Promoting bully-free environments

### Parenting Track

Visual strategies for the home  
Advocating for your child  
Supporting siblings

### Services & Resources Track

Partnering with your doctor  
Going to college  
Planning for guardianship

Registration includes lunch - register at [www.AZAUnited.org](http://www.AZAUnited.org)  
Both days + reception: \$180    One day only: \$95

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## **13th Annual Autism/Asperger's Conference**

**presented by Autism Society of Greater Phoenix**

Friday 3/30, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm & Saturday 3/31, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Dr. Temple Grandin, 2010 TIME Magazine's 100 most influential people in the world and national speaker Dianne Craft MA, CNHP will be the Keynote presenters at the Autism Society of Greater Phoenix 13th Annual Autism/Asperger's conference at MADCAP Theater in Tempe, AZ on March 30th and 31st, 2012.

[Click here for more information](#)

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## **M.I.T. Game-Changer**

M.I.T. Game-Changer: Free Online Education For All!

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) announced on Monday, January 2nd that they have launched an online learning initiative called M.I.T.x, which will offer the online teaching of M.I.T. courses free of charge to anyone in the world.

[Click here for more information](#)