

Possibilities

in Education and Training

Spring 2021



Despite COVID-19 Lockdown, West Des Moines Man Makes Successful Community Transition

By Mike Hoenig, *Project Director, Conner Training Connection*

Michael Martin, West Des Moines, is enjoying the freedom which life in the community brings. He has more time with his family and an expanded role as a community advocate and educator.

“I moved into my new home on September 30, 2020, after living for a year and a half at a Mosaic group home,” explains Michael. “Thanks to support from my family, REM Iowa, and Money Follows the Person (a program which provides one year of financial support and intense case management to eligible Medicaid recipients wishing to move from congregate to community settings), things are going smoothly.”

“While living at the group home, I learned about Money Follows the Person (MFP) from Mosaic and my aunt, an Amerigroup case manager. Mosaic staff told me that I would be moving. I then met MFP transition specialist Jo Schumacher. She and my mom were very involved with my move.”

“This move was very unique because it was all done over the Internet. Jo, Mom and I did virtual house tours. Once we decided on a place, MFP purchased furniture and home modifications such as a walk-in shower, shower chair, and grab bars to accommodate my physical disability.”



Michael Martin enjoying a box of popcorn at a movie outing.

West Des Moines Man Makes Successful Community Transition



Michael Martin pictured with Michelle Obama from 2008.

“Shortly after the move, I got a job at the University of Iowa as a community ambassador. This allows me to share my story with providers, family members, and other people who might want to leave a facility. We have some presentations coming up in May.”

Michael got his first taste of advocacy in 2019 while still receiving services from Mosaic. “Someone representing the Olmstead Consumer Task Force sent a letter to Mosaic’s executive director asking for a recommendation of someone with lived experience with a

“Living in the community is great, but you definitely want to make sure you have support.”

disability to serve. She reached out to me and I filled out an application. I began serving in July 2019. I like it because I feel like I have some control over the Medicaid system and because I can advocate for others.”

Like everyone else, Michael has felt the impact of the COVID-imposed social isolation. He is grateful, though, for being able to look forward to getting out and spending time with family.

“I’m looking forward to getting together with my brother and nephews who I haven’t seen in over a year,” Michael tells me with obvious gratitude. “I don’t know if that would have been possible if I were still living at the group home.”

Michael has some great advice for anyone considering a move to the community. “Living in the community is great, but you definitely want to make sure you have support. If you don’t have someone like Jo, it will be important to have your family behind you.”

Michael is quickly gaining recognition as a committed advocate in Iowa’s disability community. I look forward to hearing about his accomplishments in the years to come.

Autism Awareness Month

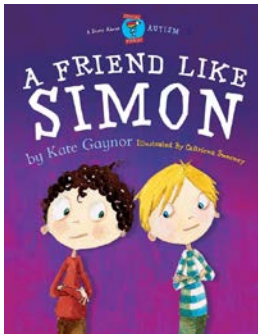
Mitch DeFauw, *Disability Resource Librarian*

The Disability Resource Library (DRL) at the Center for Disabilities and Development is happy to recognize Autism Awareness Month for the month of April. The DRL takes pride in its resource variety, providing books for both parents and children, as well as DVDs for education and entertainment. This article recognizes a selection of autism related material available for check out at the library.

If you have any questions, please contact Mitch DeFauw at mitchell-defauw@uiowa.edu. To find out more about the DRL, you can visit: <http://uichildrens.org/cdd/drl>, or search the online catalog at <http://uichildrens.org/drl-catalog>.

A Friend Like Simon

by Kate Gaynor

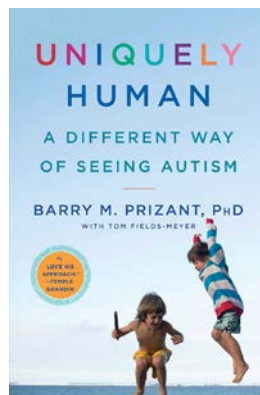


This is a special education childrens picture book that introduces autism. When an autistic

child joins a mainstream school, many children can find it difficult to understand and cope with a student that is somewhat 'different' to them. This story encourages other children to be mindful and patient of the differences that exist and to also appreciate the positive contribution that an autistic child can make to the group.

Uniquely Human, A Different Way of Seeing Autism

by Barry M. Prizant, PhD



"Autism therapy typically focuses on ridding individuals of "autistic" symptoms such as difficulties

interacting socially, problems in communicating, sensory challenges, and repetitive behavior patterns. Now Dr. Barry M. Prizant offers a new and compelling paradigm: the most successful approaches to autism don't aim at fixing a person by eliminating symptoms, but rather seeking to understand the individual's experience and what underlies the behavior."

Fifteen Things They Forgot to Tell You About Autism

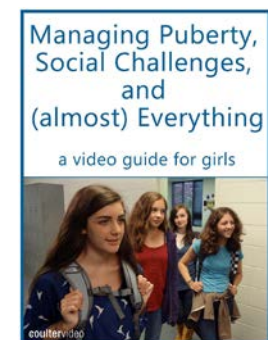
by Debby Elley



"From sharing the joy of yodelling around shops at the weekend, to finding creative ways to communicate

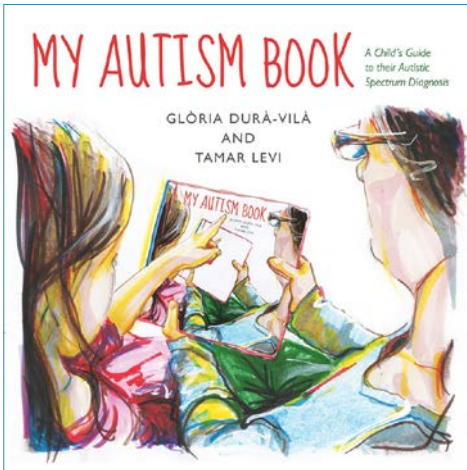
with both her verbal and her non-verbal sons, Debby Elley gives practical and fun tips for everyday living and shows that being autistic is just another way of being. Both witty and candid, the book discusses labels, meltdowns, acceptance, happiness and much more."

Managing Puberty, Social Challenges, and (Almost) Everything- a Video Guide for Girls (DVD) by CoulterWorks



"This video explains the physical and mental changes girls experience during puberty. It also

offers strategies to help girls who have social and communication challenges making friends, begin dating, and prepare for the future."



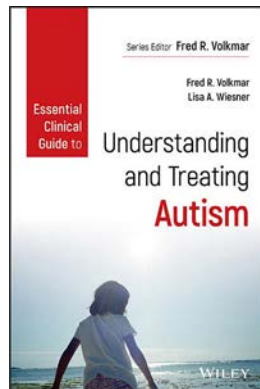
My Autism Book

by Tamar Levi

“When a child is diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), parents often feel overwhelmed and uncertain about how to communicate the diagnosis to their child. This book is designed to be read with the child as a simple introduction to their diagnosis. Written by a doctor and a children’s author, the book is tailored precisely to the needs and experiences of the child with ASD aged 5-9. It explains what an autism diagnosis means and encourages an exploration of the child’s likely strengths and differences using clear language that speaks directly to the child. The colourful pictures throughout show how the world looks from the child’s perspective and the book ends with a summary checklist to encourage the child to record and discuss how autism affects them.”

Essential Clinical Guide to Understanding and Treating Autism

Edited by Fred R. Volkmar and Lisa A. Wiesner

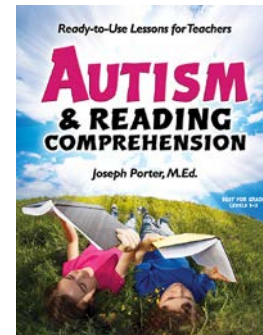


Coauthored by the premier expert on autism in the United States and an experienced academic and practicing

pediatrician, this volume provides concise and practical information based on the most up-to-date research and clinical experience for primary care givers around the world. Showing clinicians how to most effectively use evidence-based techniques, this invaluable guide offers primary-care providers access to expert, current research and practice guidelines allowing them to confidently support children who present with symptoms of autism.

Autism and Reading Comprehension: Ready-to-use Lessons for Teachers

by Joseph Porter, M.Ed.



Starting with Level 1 (The Cat) and ending with Level 9 (The Lizard), special-educator Joseph Porter

has developed an amazing 90 hours of animal-themed, whole-group instruction. There are two student worksheets for each of nine animals, totaling eighteen worksheets. Each worksheet has four variations, and there is a ready-to-go lesson plan for each one! The predictable format, repetition, and routine of these lessons will create a relaxed learning environment, while the variations in the topics will hold students’ attention and help them generalize the reading skills they need to succeed!

Possibilities in Education and Training is a quarterly publication of University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities. It is an outreach initiative of the Conner Training Connection, a program funded by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to support the transition of individuals with disabilities from congregate to community-based settings.

Once you
choose hope,
anything's possible.

- Christopher Reeve

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