



Kaleidoscope
FAMILY SOLUTIONS INC.

Message from our Executive Director:

Happy New Year to you and your families. As we venture into 2025, I would like to wish everyone good health, happiness and joy. Reflecting back to the months that passed, I am filled with gratitude for all of those we have been able to help in their homes, their workplaces and their communities. Not to mention, areas of relationships that have grown as a result of the many services provided by our Kaleidoscope team. As a service provider, it is always our goal to expand relationship opportunities, especially when growth in this area can make a difference in overall life experiences. This goal will not change in 2025. We will continue to explore ways to foster growth and development, while keeping our commitment to quality-based, person-centered planning.

Furthermore, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that many of you experienced challenges during this past year. I hope that you know we are here for you. It is my wish that whatever you may be facing, it can quickly pass or become a growth opportunity somehow. I love the saying by Albert Einstein, "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity."

Moving on to our January vision of kindness brings a true smile to my face. At times, being kind can come naturally. In other instances, we need to be cognizant of our actions in order to promote kindness. Either way, it all comes out the same. We have the ability to directly affect the world in a positive way. And, remember that being kind to yourself is just as important as being kind to others. Additionally, this might be an opportune time to look back at 2024 to see what you can leave behind. As we move forward with new intentions, it takes great courage to recognize areas that warrant change. Keeping with the Kaleidoscope theme of January, kindness is the key, both internally and externally. Have a wonderful and remarkable beginning from my family to yours.

All my best,

Dr. TaraColleen Macatee

Our annual trip to Elmwood Park Zoo was full of holiday lights, surprises (Swoop!), animals, festive music and yummy hot chocolate!





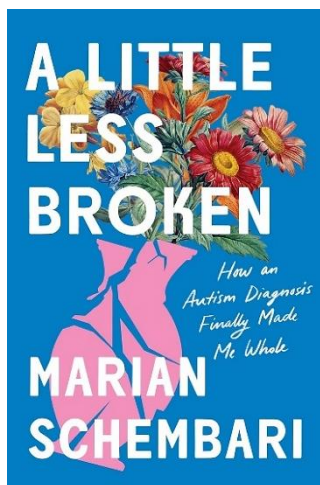
Sophia and Ali enjoy being out in the community with Melissa during the holidays!



Great Reads!

"A Little Less Broken"
by Marian Schembari

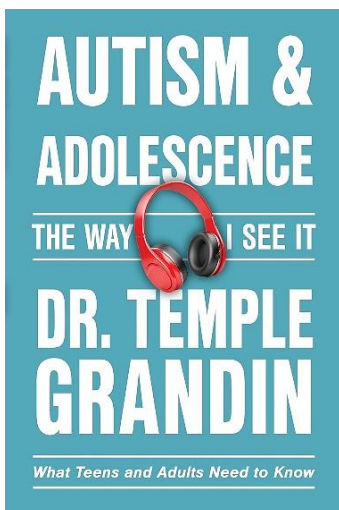
This new book explores how a new diagnosis of autism later in life can provide clarity and understanding in a world that can be confusing and misunderstood. Ms. Schembari's writing will inspire you.



Great Reads!

"Autism and Adolescence, The Way I See It" by Dr. Temple Grandin

Dr. Temple Grandin does it again! Her books never disappoint. In this new release, Dr. Grandin discusses important things to consider when interacting with, or living with an autism diagnosis.



Mission Monday

Each month the Kaleidoscope team recognizes providers who give exceptional service! Thank you for being the best!

EPA: Katrina Thorp is truly a joy to work with! She exudes enthusiasm with all her cases. In addition, she stays engaged and even extremely helpful during KFS events and activities. Katrina works with many individuals throughout the week. She recently took on a CPS case and constantly receives praise from the individual's team. Her other individuals also value their relationship with her and look forward to working on goals and objectives that enhance their lives. Thank you, Katrina for being a wonderful asset to our team.

LCPA: Melissa Karlson has been a consistent team member with Kaleidoscope for many years. Her enthusiasm is second to none. You can always find her out in the community with Sophia and Ali doing creative and interactive things; not to mention working on their goals and objectives toward greater independence and meaningful lives. We appreciate Melissa and look forward to watching her individuals grow and develop. Thank you, Melissa, for being amazing!

WPA: WPA would like to nominate Anastacia Deitz for her hard work and dedication to her individual, Chris. Anastacia goes out of her way to help Chris and his mom, set up and travel to appointments and therapy sessions. Anastacia has also helped him with his weight loss journey, ensuring her support and advice any time it is needed. She also has gone above her duty expectations by introducing new and fun ways for Chris to work on and move closer towards his goals.

NEPA: NEPA would like to nominate Charlotte Snyder for DSP of the month. Charlotte has helped us troubleshoot our new system and has done a great job communicating any challenges, as well as successes with Therap. Charlotte provides consistent, high-quality support to her individuals and family members alike. We admire her upbeat personality, dedication and enthusiasm, especially at our activities. Thank you, Charlotte!

CPA: Anna Immekus went above and beyond for her individual and family. She drove them down to West Virginia to be with her other son for the holidays. She has been with the agency for five years and helps the individuals focus while working on their goals and becoming more independent.

NEXT: Sherry O'Neill is greatly appreciated by the NEXT team! Sherry has been able to advocate for the individual she works with while bringing about greater independence and overall joy in the daily routine. She is hard-working and supportive. Thank you, Sherry, for your dedication and resilience.

The Spotlight is on Ben!

Ben lives in WPA and is very active! He recently ran a 5k and got a time of 26 minutes (see photo of him at the 5K). He's been competing in 5ks for about 2 years and his favorite thing about them is winning medals! He trains by running in parks and around his neighborhood. His advice to anyone thinking about starting 5ks is that it is a great opportunity to meet new people. When Ben is not training for 5ks, he works at a health rehabilitation center as a house keeper. He has worked there for 5 years! He also enjoys bowling in his spare time. This past October, he volunteered at a haunted trail, scaring visitors! He reported that there were a lot of people that visited the trail, and that he had a blast volunteering – and scaring them! All of the proceeds for the haunted trail got donated to the local Humane Society! He cannot wait to do it again next year. We are super proud of Ben and can't wait to hear more about his adventures.



Ben and Clinical Coordinator, Natalie enjoying a round of mini-golf together.

Prince and Julia explored the mall to get in the holiday spirit!



Even though the official riding season is over, Tommy continues to visit his favorite horses!



As tradition goes, enjoy some New Year's resolutions from Bette in Allentown:

Be nice
Be kind
Ask a buddy if you need help
Exercise
Stay healthy to others
Beloved
Stay focused
Stay positive vibes



What would a monthly newsletter be without a picture of the Lancaster group in action!

Here are some special days that we love in January:

- 1/1 - Polar Bear Plunge/Swim Day
- 1/4 - National Spaghetti Day
- 1/6 - National Thank God Its Monday Day
- 1/8 - National Snuggle a Chicken Day
- 1/9 - Golden Globe Awards
- 1/11 - Step in a Puddle and Splash Your Friend Day
- 1/14 - National Dress Up Your Pet Day
- 1/18 - Winnie the Pooh Day
- 1/19 - World Snow Day (will it snow?)
- 1/20 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 1/24 - National Compliment Day
- 1/29 - Chinese New Year





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Holiday Shaped Pizza Recipe

Yields 2 Pizzas

Ingredients:

- 2 (12 inch) precooked pizza crusts Marinara sauce
- Mozzarella cheese
- Red and yellow bell pepper
- Fresh spinach
- Pepperoni



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Using one pizza crust cut out a Christmas tree. Use the pizza crust to cut out a candy cane. You can do this either freehand or by drawing the design on a piece of parchment paper and then using that as a guide while cutting.
3. Add cut out pizzas to a cookie sheet and add a little marinara sauce to each cut out pizza. Sprinkle about 1/4 cup cheese onto each pizza and start decorating.
4. For the Christmas tree pizza add on a little fresh spinach and then top with little round pieces of red pepper and cut out a yellow pepper star for the top.
5. For the candy cane pizza make stripes using pepperoni rounds. Leaving about 2 inches between "stripes."
6. Bake for about 10-12 minutes until cheese is melted and bottom is crispy.
7. Let cool a bit and enjoy!

Congratulations Are in Order ...

- Ian had the honor of co-captaining a thrilling basketball game between La Salle University and Immaculata University, made possible by the generous support of Athletes Helping Athletes!
- Amanda has been working at AMC Painters Plaza for 18 years! She also holds two other jobs!! Stay tuned for a Spotlight on Amanda later this month.
- Prince got four strikes in a row, also known as a four badger!
- Jill was the recipient of the Jimmy Medal at the 2024 Philadelphia Charity Ball!
- Devon has worked at the University of Pittsburgh for four years! He was excited for the University's winter break this year because he has a DSP that can take him out community more!
- Russia and her DSP worked hard all of December to help make Christmas cards for her entire day program!
- William went to Greensburg with Rachel Nordby (our iconic science Zoom leader!). Rachel has been trying since June to get him in the car to go somewhere; and he finally did! Christmas miracle!
- Val has been trying new themed restaurants!
- Jessie began volunteering at the YMCA!
- Heather was a guest speaker at her sister's new job in Colorado!
- Allie got a special write-up in Vanguard's newsletter! That's her high-school alma mater.
- Randy has been to two events this past month after not participating in over a year! That's an accomplishment!

We love our weekly breakfasts in Lancaster. It gives us the time to catch-up and get creative!

Jessie is "rocking" his new volunteer position at the Y. In this photo, he is cleaning all if the equipment.

Anytime of the year is perfect for pumpkin pie!





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