

Autism Society Canada celebrates its 35th Anniversary in 2011 “Strides in Ontario- Leah’s Story”

Leah Miltchin has a teenage son with a diagnosis of autism, and has been actively involved as a volunteer in the ASD community for over ten years. She is also the Ontario representative on the board of Autism Society Canada, an organization that was started 35 years ago with the goal of helping parents find information and supports for their children living with an autism spectrum disorder. Leah brings with her a passion for collaborative efforts aimed at public awareness, and improved quality of life for individuals with ASD and their families.

Today, 35 years later – and with the help of board members like Leah - ASC has grown to become the largest collective voice in the Canadian autism community. Provincial and territorial autism societies and their member groups provide direct support to people with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) and their families all across Canada. As a board member, Leah sits alongside other parents who play an active role in aiding ASC to accomplish its mandate.

Leah Miltchin lends her time and voice to many organizations devoted to aiding individuals on the spectrum and their families; particularly Autism Ontario. Autism Ontario’s Realize Community Potential (RCP) Program, funded by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services (MCYS) directly supports parents of children with ASD through greater access to ASD information, direct contact between parents and Autism Ontario chapters, improved access to ASD experts in local communities, and provides a mechanism for supported community-based learning opportunities for children with ASD. In December 2010, MCYS announced that funding would be made available to expand the RCP program to make it accessible to more communities throughout the province. In addition, MCYS also announced last December that more funding would be made available for ABA-based services for children in Ontario. The initiative will help children and youth with ASD in the areas of behaviour management/emotional regulation, communication, and social/interpersonal and daily living skills. It will also educate parents/caregivers on how to apply ABA strategies to help their children generalize and maintain skills. Although these services do not address obstacles individuals on the spectrum face once they enter adulthood, Leah believes it’s a start; she supports Ontario’s initial steps to better serve the Autism community.

Autism Society Canada supports Leah and her family by advocating on a national platform on their behalf. After 35 years of experience working with the Canadian autism community, ASC knows that the time is now to develop the foundation of a Canadian Autism Strategy, so individuals across Canada can access high quality services for their Autism related needs. For more information log on to www.autismsocietycanada.ca, or contact us at **866-476-8440**.

ASC’s Provincial Member society in Ontario is Autism Ontario

<http://www.autismontario.com> or 416.246.9592