



AUTISM ACADEMY

for Education & Development

AUTISM NEWS

August 2022 Edition

HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH STRESS

From The Door County Partnership For Children & Families

What is Stress?

Stress is your body's reaction to situations that challenge you. It's your body's way of getting prepared to deal with the pressures you are experiencing at home or school.

Signs Your Child May Need More Support

It's important for parents to be aware of a few of the common symptoms children show when stressed or when feeling anxious. These signs may indicate a child needs support to manage these feelings. Also, it's important to understand how intense and how often these symptoms are occurring. This can be helpful in evaluating how a child is coping.

Parents Should Watch for the Following:

- *Changes in sleep patterns.*
- *Changes in eating patterns.*
- *Increased aches and pains.*
- *Changes in mood and behavior.*
- *Increased clinginess/difficulty separating.*
- *Withdrawal/isolation.*
- *Difficulty concentrating.*
- *Increased worries/inability to focus*

10 Tips to Help A Child With Stress or Anxiety:

- 1.) Keep a Worry Journal
- 2.) Approach problems and fears one step at a time.
- 3.) Stress Balls
- 4.) Exercise
- 5.) Listen to Music
- 6.) Warm bath/shower
- 7.) Use a weighted vest
- 8.) Create a calm room/closet
- 9.) Create a "Worry Box"
- 10.) Encourage Positive Self-Talk



References:

<https://doorcountyparents.com/kids-stress-anxiety-how-parents-can-recognize-the-warning-signs/>

Download Coloring Book PDF:

[Coloring Book](#)



Celebrating 10 Years

Staff Spotlight - Cheryl Maltese



Cheryl Maltese has been a staff member at Autism Academy since the beginning. She started off helping on her breaks from her resource teaching job until she was here full time working with our middle and high school students. These days, Cheryl is a leader at our Gilbert campus and teacher to our High School BRIDGE students. At the start of this 10 Year Celebration, we decided to check in with her about her experiences in those first months and how AAED has changed over the years.

How Did It Begin?

Cheryl connected with the Newcomb family through their company, EAS, where she supported special education students at Valley charter school programs. She heard about the challenges they faced finding appropriate schools for many of their students, so she was not surprised to hear that they were opening a specialized school just for students with autism.

Cheryl says that, from day one, students seemed to love their new school. She says they loved the playground and the inviting space in Gilbert. For staff, Cheryl says that there was an instant feeling of connection and of being part of a special team.

How Have We Changed?

Over the years, Cheryl has been a part of our continued growth. 9 years ago, she joined the Tempe team and helped to open that campus. She supported staff and students as the campus grew from 3 classes to 7 classes in just one year. She remained with the program when they opened up a second building and helped to develop the student workshop focusing on teaching students job and self-help skills. In 2022, Cheryl moved her classroom and workshop to the new Gilbert campus. There, she is continuing to grow the BRIDGE program to include more community-based activities and more job training opportunities for our Gilbert students who are nearly ready to graduate.

Some of the exciting changes that Cheryl shared included joining the Valley Special Olympics program and partnering with the American Heart Association for the JumpRope for Heart Program. Cheryl also saw the opening of the PAES Lab at Tempe and the overall growth of our transitional programming. Most importantly, Cheryl has seen the school continue moving towards our goal of putting kids first in every decision by hiring top-notch people and bringing in more diverse programming for all students.

What Do You See For The Future?

Every year, Cheryl is excited to work with Autism Academy's students. She loves to see them going into the community and continuing to be challenged to do their best. As a teacher, Cheryl loves that she feels supported and like a valuable part of the team. She hopes to see Autism Academy continue to grow with more campuses so that more students can have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Autism News

August 2022 Edition

Parent Partnership Program

Connecting with other families is a great way to combat stress and find support. Need more information? You can email P3 for your campus. We would love to see you there!

Tucson - p3tucson@aaed.org

West Valley - p3westvalleyaaed@gmail.com

Gilbert - p3.gilbertcampus@gmail.com

Tempe - p3tempe@aaed.org

August Trivia

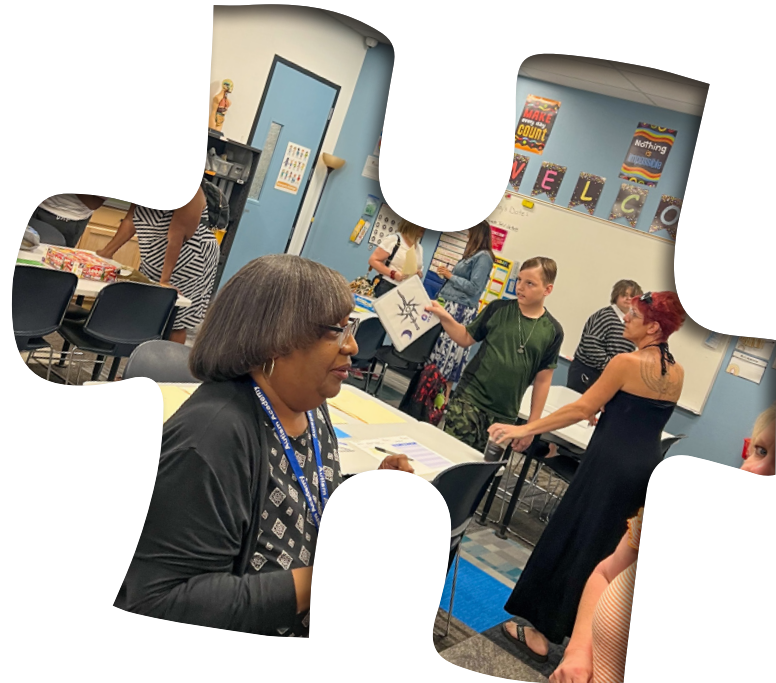
Trivia Time!

A small gift will be sent to the first 10 families to send the correct answer to autismnews@aaed.org.

August Question: 99% of Autism Academy's students are on scholarship. What is the name of the scholarship program used by most families?

Thank you to everyone who responded to the July trivia question. Congratulations to the Araiza, Bernal, Gonzales, Henry, Gonzalez/Herrera, Van Tuyle, Fajardo, and Harrell families! Congratulations to Mr. Kanta, Miss Mary, and Ms. Summers!

July Answer: Our first location opened in Gilbert, AZ!



Upcoming Events - Valley & Online

September 5 - No School - Labor Day

September 28 & 29 - Half Days for Conferences

October 3-14 - No School - Fall Break

October 17 - School Resumes

Upcoming Events - Tucson

September 5 - No School - Labor Day

October 5 & 6 - Half Days for Conferences

October 10-14 - No School - Fall Break

October 17 - School Resumes



Transition Program Corner

Students Hard at Work - Gilbert Workshop

The students at the Gilbert Workshop have been busy getting to know their classroom and the campus. One of our big jobs at the beginning of the year is to collect and organize school supplies for our supply closet. The students made several trips to all the classrooms picking up any extra supplies. We then sorted them in the classroom. Once the items were sorted, we labeled boxes or shelves and put everything away in the supply closet. It was a big undertaking, but everyone worked together as a team to get it done. The students will maintain the supply closet and deliver requested supplies to all the classrooms.



Preparing for Adult Life Tempe BRIDGE

In the Bridge room at Tempe all the students have been hard at work within the multiple elements of our program. Cozy Cafe has been working on inventorying supplies, creating a menu, and creating flyers with news for the upcoming opening of the cafe. Students that are working in the PAES Lab have been so amazing at jumping in and completing many different jobs. When in the training room, students have been working in their college classes, taking inventory for school store, and working on job related interest and preference inventory surveys. We are so proud of them and how quickly they have adapted to their new schedules.

We have many exciting things going on this school year. We will be having online quarterly parent meetings with various guest speakers. Our partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation (East/West valley) continues to thrive as we work collaboratively to support job training opportunities and provide resources while in school and for after graduation. We have started concurrent enrollment opportunities with technical schools such as West-Mec (Western Maricopa Education Center), EVIT (East Valley Institute of Technology) and local community colleges for students to begin working towards certificate and degree programs.