

Conference

Learners on the Autism Spectrum Creating a Culture of Inclusion through Designing Quality Peer Play and Friendship Programs



**EARLY REGISTRATION ENDS
JUNE 30, 2009**

October 2nd & 3rd, 2009

SFU Vancouver Harbour Centre
Vancouver BC, Canada

Register on-line at:
www.friend2friendsociety.org

Conference

Demystifying Autism:

Friend 2 Friend
Facilitator's Training



**REGISTRATION BEGINS
SEPT 2009**

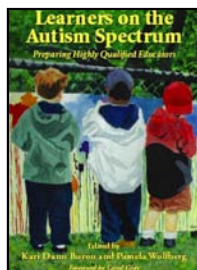
April 16th & 17th, 2010
Vancouver, BC

Dear Readers:

Friend 2 Friend Social Learning Society has experienced a very busy and exciting year. At the close of this school year, we would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your continued support of our society and mandate.

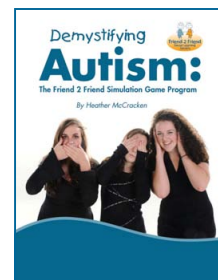
This June we find ourselves with some new and exciting things to share with you. We thought the best way to do this was with a special edition newsletter, so here goes....

On May 30th we ran our first ever "fun" raising event entitled "**Playing and Making Friends in our Community**". The event featured live music from the Adam Woodall Band (band member Jesse Tucker has a brother on the autism spectrum). All who attended enjoyed the event and helped raise funds to support the delivery of the F2F Programs.



We are thrilled to share the news that the book "**Learners on the Autism Spectrum: Preparing Highly Qualified Educators**" has been selected as recipients of the **Autism Society of America Literary Work of the Year Award** (Education Division).

On June 30, 2009 our new package program will be released "**Demystifying Autism: The Friend 2 Friend Simulation Game Program**". Read more about the program later in the newsletter.



Friend 2 Friend staff, volunteers and colleagues celebrated the upcoming nuptials of our own Joanne McCartney (Master Play Guide). She and her partner Andy Prest will tie the knot this month.

Congratulations Joanne and Andy!

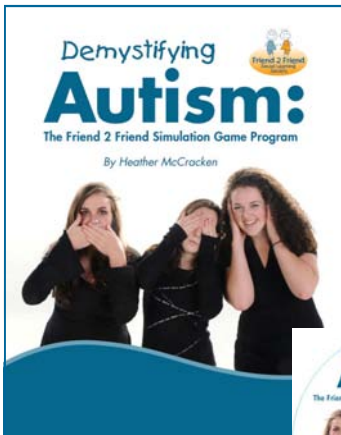
This September we will launch our new Puppet Presentation Program entitled "**Can I Play Too?**". Friend 2 Friend Social Learning Society will be delivering the program live throughout BC starting in September. This program will be available for purchase by fall 2010.



Have a wonderful summer!
Heather McCracken

Demystifying Autism: The Friend 2 Friend Simulation Game Program

by Heather McCracken



Have you ever wondered what the world is like for a person with autism? Autism spectrum disorder is a developmental disability that affects an individual's ability to process sensory, communication and social information. *Demystifying Autism: the Friend 2 Friend Simulation Game Program* is a packaged program containing a workbook, CD and props designed to foster reciprocal social interactions, play and friendships between individuals on the autism spectrum and their peers. This sensory and communication demystification and educational program is designed for children ages 10 through 18 with the goal of fostering understanding and friendship. This publication is the second offering from author Heather McCracken, founder and executive director of the not-for-profit Friend 2 Friend Social Learning Society and a parent of three children, one on the autism spectrum.

"As parents, caregivers, educators and individuals on the autism spectrum we understand all too well that sometimes the unique and unconventional characteristics of autism can be difficult for others to understand and accept. Unlike my father's blindness, autism is an invisible condition that is all too often mistaken for "choosing to act" in a manner that society often does not understand or accept.... it is my hope that through the Friend 2 Friend model and programs we have found a way to change the attitude and perceptions of society so that our children and our children's children will never again

experience "disability" through the eyes of discrimination." Heather McCracken

Demystifying Autism: The Friend 2 Friend Simulation Game Program responds to the escalating need to provide information about autism to children ages 10 through 18. The program provides educators and parents with essential knowledge and practical skills to implement the program, as well as helpful follow-up activities to support diverse learners on the autism spectrum in inclusive schools and communities. The package contains:

- ◆ Implementation Manual
- ◆ CD
- ◆ 30 F2F Simulation Glasses

What others are saying....

Brava! Once again, Heather McCracken has created an exemplary program to help children, teens and adults gain insight and embrace the autism experience. The Friend 2 Friend Simulation Game is a must for promoting genuine inclusion by building empathy, understanding and acceptance of people who relate, communicate, and think differently than those in the mainstream. This powerful program has already made a huge impact on the lives of many, and will surely transform generations to come.

---Pamela Wolfberg, Ph.D., San Francisco State University and Autism Institute on Peer Relations and Play

The Friend 2 Friend Simulation Game program changed our lives. It completely transformed my son's experience at school - from being an outcast, to having his peers accept him - and actually be interested in who he is as a person. One of the most powerful outcomes of this program has been the willingness of teachers and classmates to embrace my son for exactly who he is. I'll never forget what the Friend 2 Friend Simulation Game program has done for our family. Every school needs this program!!!

---Lynn Skotnitsky, Parent

"This program helped our students develop friendship skills, to relate to, play with, and socialize with a peer with ASD. All in all, the social interaction among our students had been enhanced through their participation in this program."

---Rosita Tam, Vice-principal, Kenneth Gordon School

***Demystifying Autism: The Friend 2 Friend Simulation Game Program
and other great titles available online at:***

www.friend2friendsociety.org/bookstore/index.php