



## “AA Month 2024”

“PASSAGES” IS A PUBLICATION OF  
PIKE AUTISM SUPPORT SERVICES

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#### OUR MISSION

PIKE AUTISM SUPPORT SERVICES (PASS) IS A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT WITH A MISSION TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM AND RELATED INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (IDD) WITH SOCIAL, RECREATIONAL, EDUCATIONAL, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

#### OUR VISION

WE ENVISION A DAY WHEN INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM AND IDD ENJOY FULFILLING AND INDEPENDENT LIVES, EMBRACING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING, INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, SOCIAL INCLUSION, PERSONAL GROWTH, SELF-DETERMINATION, AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS.

### Opening Doors



to Independence



Every year PASS chooses a theme for Autism Acceptance Month. This is promoted in the t-shirts that we design and have for sale, the theme for the Poster Contests at DVSD, and this year we have added an Essay Contest to the list, intending to create conversations around awareness & acceptance.

This year's theme is “**Opening Doors to Independence**”. That theme can create a different vision for everyone. What can make your loved one more independent? What goals are you working on to help get them there? Is it the very basics of self-care like toileting, tying shoes, and being able to get dressed independently? Or maybe the life skills that include us in activities with our family, neighbors, and friends like functional communication, swimming, bike riding, playing baseball, or an instrument. Then, if you can look that far ahead, skills like cooking, shopping, finding and keeping a job, and living in a place of their own.

PASS is happy to provide programming and activities to our community to assist individuals with gaining independence through learning new skills and events to enrich their lives. Last month we introduced you to our Housing Project “Independence Village”, which for me, is a vision of my son living a happy, healthy, and safe life in a welcoming, inclusive community. A community that will embrace him as he lives a fulfilling and independent life with support.

My wish for you this AA Month is that we all experience success in opening doors to independence for our loved ones in the coming year. No matter how big or small.

It has been an interesting and inspiring transition from Autism Awareness Month to Autism Acceptance Month, to Autism Action Month. With the prevalence of autism always on the rise it is more likely that everyone knows someone with autism. That being said, we've all heard the line “if you've met one person with autism.. you've met one person with autism” The diagnosis of autism, sensory integration, auditory processing, anxiety, ritualistic behavior, difficulty with communication and social skills... some or all can be present across the autism spectrum. We may love someone who has been severely impacted by autism, and we have learned to understand and accept that others embrace their neurodiversity.



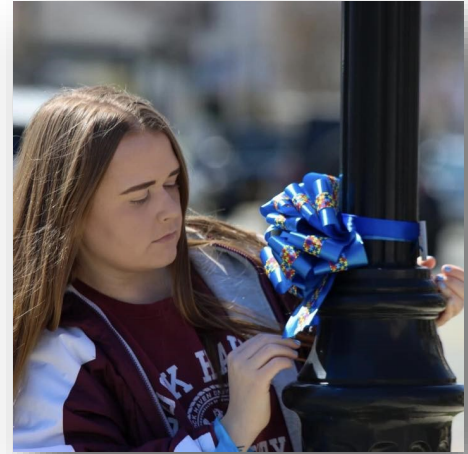
*Pike Autism Support Services*  
**Passages**

Volume 1, Issue 2

April 2024

This was something I grabbed from a Facebook post "Life with Lexi". If I can share one message this AA Month, it would be this:

**It is autism.  
Whether you wear the red or light it up blue,  
It is autism.  
Whether you rock the puzzle piece or the infinity sign,  
It is autism.  
Whether you refer to it as "on the spectrum" or "neurodiverse,"  
It is autism.  
Whether you view it as a disorder or a difference,  
It is autism.  
Whether you choose to use words like high functioning or low functioning,  
It is autism.  
Whether you support people-first language or choose not to,  
It is autism.**



Instead of arguing about the stuff that doesn't matter, take time this month to embrace awareness and acceptance, however that may be. There is no wrong way to say "I love someone with autism!" Even I love you. I will forever spread awareness on your behalf. Whether I do that with a blue shirt, an infinity ring, a puzzle piece, or a Facebook post. I love someone with autism! Let's all support one another along this journey.

### Programs & Events

**Brunch with the Bunny** - Our first Brunch with the Bunny was a big success!

**Designer handbag Bingo** - Join us on Friday May 3rd at St. Patrick's Parish Hall in Milford

**Cooking Across America** - The 7 week session is about to wrap up. We have traveled around the country, preparing pizza, biscuits & gravy, Tacos and more... It's been fun learning about and tasting different foods and making friends in the process. Thanks to Mignon, Linda, Lauren & Deanna!

**The TTRPG Virtual Gaming Group** is having fun with their "Treasure Hunt " Campaign.

**The SEALS Class at DVACE** - The S.E.A.L.S. Class has been an enriching experience. Everyone has been having a good time, learning new things, and making friends. Thanks Karen & Caylyn!

**Challenger Baseball** - Challenger Baseball is ready to start the new season on May 4th...

**Autism Awareness Day at the Side Street Bar & Grill** - Please come out and support Autism Awareness Day at the Side Street Bar & Grill at 1 pm on Sat Apr. 27th

**Parent Support Group** - Our Parent Support Group Meets the 4th Wed of the month. 7pm, Milford Community House

Warmest Regards,

*Jeannemarie Passaro*  
Executive Director