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Market Guide, Local Meetings, Surf's Up

September 15, 2009 by [Jeff Stimpson](#)

Filed under [Autism Advocacy Conference](#), [Autism Lit](#), [Autism Organizations](#), [Divorce](#), [New Jersey](#), [new york](#)

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Noted business publisher John Wiley and Sons has released the new book *[A Practical Guide to Autism: What Every Parent, Family Member, and Teacher Needs to Know](#)*, by Fred Volkmar and Lisa Wiesner. Pretty exhaustive topic, and indeed this book provides comprehensive information about recent scientific developments with a guide for how they're being implemented. Issues are presented with charts, Q.-and-A., and chapters that vary from describing diagnostic issues to stating very specifically how to expand and evaluate the services one is receiving. Topics include definition and causes of autism, diagnoses and services, and overview of educational programs, teaching specific skills, working with children and adults, managing medical issues and problems, safety, seizures, regression, and others.

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Photo courtesy of place light - flying not physically (flickr.com)

If I had to make one correction to the puzzle-piece motif often used as autism's ... what? logo? ... today, it would be to disassemble the pieces and show them alongside scissors and glue, like today's offering. Not only do we all have a mess of pieces, but we're always trying to not just assemble them, but fix them in a good order to last. Worst part of that, I guess, is that we're never ever sure how much we succeed.

* * *

If you can't make the actual meeting because you don't live in the area, you can still check out a couple of relatively local events that could serve as good models for meetings to be organized in your part of the country.

The NAA NY Metro Chapter, for instance, will hold a Parent Network Exchange Meeting with the subject “How to Keep Your [Marriage](#) Strong While Raising a Child With Special Needs (a poser, often), on Thursday, Sept. 17, 6:30-9:00 p.m. at the library at 408 East 79th Street in Manhattan. The husband-and-[wife](#) presenters, both social psychologists and parents of a child with special needs, will explore why the rate of [divorce](#) is much higher among parents taking care of a child with special needs. Topics will include financial [stress](#), exhaustion, “and the sheer challenge of just getting through each day.” More is [here](#).

The West Virginia chapter of the Autism Society of America is also hosting their annual conference at the Pullman Plaza Hotel this weekend. “[Climbing Mountains to Inclusion](#)” will bring in speakers Paula Kluth, a former special education teacher and inclusion facilitator, and Stephen Shore, a professor at Adelphia University who teaches courses in [special education](#) and autism. (Shore was diagnosed with autism as a child.) Workshops run Thursday through Saturday. An awards dinner banquet will be Friday evening, featuring stand-up comedy and dancing.

And Autism Family Services of New Jersey really rode the curl last Sunday with its Fifth Annual Beach Bash in Belmar. Surfing is coming to be seen as calming on many youngsters with autism. Surfers rode in to shore accompanied by a professional surfer from the San Clemente, Calif.-based [Surfers Healing](#) organization.

For more information about the Autism Family Services of N.J., visit www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org, or call 877-AFS-4477.