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FSU

**CENTER FOR AUTISM &
RELATED DISABILITIES**

AUTISM INSTITUTE



Director's Letter:

Dear Friends,

I hope you are enjoying your summer and find something that interests you in this summer version of our newsletter. Recently, we received some feedback from our families that said as much as they love getting our quarterly newsletter, they can often feel a bit overwhelmed with so much information presented at one time. So, we are trying out a new way of doing business and keeping this edition of our newsletter as short as possible while providing everyone with information about upcoming opportunities and events.

The Features section includes fliers and information about an upcoming book study, a training for parents who have a child with a new autism diagnosis, and a training for elementary educators. Another feature includes information about a co-sponsored Community Fun Day with the Leon County Sheriff Office (LCSO) on July 12th. There will be several first responder vehicles to explore, including a firetruck to provide fun water games to keep everyone cool. This is a great opportunity for our clients and their families and our first responders to get to know each other in a fun, relaxed environment. Finally, we included important links and information about hurricane season to help everyone be more prepared in case of emergency.

The Articles in our Consultant Corner focus on the importance of visual supports along with several examples to highlight the many reasons and environments where visual supports can make life easier. The second article recaps our 2025 Summer Training Institute on Autism held June 17-19, 2025. We had 3 full days of learning new information on autism across the lifespan from national experts and had one of the largest audiences in Institute history. The last article shares information about a podcast that helps explain what executive functioning (EF) skills are, why they are so important, and strategies

to help build better EF skills.

Finally, in our Client Corner, you will find links to key information on our website, including the Annual Update Form, which we hope you take the time to fill out to help us keep our records current. Please remember that we need YOU to reach out to us when you need our assistance. The Client Corner also includes an article on making the most of nutritional information found on the internet, and how to decide if the information is accurate or not.

In closing, I want to thank all the people who stopped by the CARD information table at the 27th Annual Family Café Conference in Orlando, Florida June 13-14th. Staff from several CARD centers were there to help share information about CARD services and direct people to their regional CARD office. We feel so fortunate to work with such an amazing network of colleagues throughout the statewide CARD system and I encourage all of you to follow each of the 7 CARD locations' social media platforms. The beauty of so many things being offered virtually is that several of the training opportunities offered by any CARD center are usually (not always) open to all. Please look at the map of all 7 CARD sites and follow them on their social media channels <https://florida-card.org/map.htm>.

Sincerely,
Cathy Zenko





Autism Navigator for Classroom Success in PreK through 2nd Grade

Autism Navigator Classroom Success for PreK to 2nd Grade Webinar Series

Register today for the 6-part series for educators starting in July! The Autism Navigator Classroom Success for PreK to 2nd Grade Webinar Series occurs once a month for 6 months on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Don't miss out on this FREE training opportunity!

Starts Wednesday, July 9, 2025!

[More Information](#)

LEON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
FSU CENTER FOR AUTISM & RELATED DISABILITIES

PRESENTS
**FIRST RESPONDERS
FUN DAY**

Join us for a fun-filled day at Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park. You and your family will have the opportunity to meet your local first responders and learn about the programs and services offered by FSU CARD and others.

**SATURDAY
JULY 12TH
11AM-2PM**

ALFRED B. MACLAY GARDENS STATE PARK
3540 THOMASVILLE ROAD
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32309

- FREE Parking
- FREE Snow Cones and Activities
- Water Games
- Dunk Tank Station
- Identity Kits for Kids

Spread Kindness

LCSO First Responders FUN Day

Join FSU CARD and LCSO for a fun-filled day at Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park on **Saturday, July 12th from 11 am–2pm.**

Admission to the park and parking are FREE.

Come meet your local first responders, explore their awesome vehicles, and learn about services offered by FSU CARD and other agencies. Don't forget your swimsuit so you can cool off in the water from the firetruck.

[More Information](#)



Hurricane Preparedness

It's Hurricane season and it's never too early to prepare for any major storms. Hurricane season is from June 1st - November 30th. Here are some great resources to assist you and your family in hurricane preparedness.

[Special Needs Shelter Information](#)

Register for Special Needs Shelter

Disaster & Emergency Planning

Florida Special Needs Registry

Hurricane Social Narrative



Visual Supports: What They Are and How to Use Them

By: Audra Burch, FSU CARD Consultant

Many autistic people are visual learners, so seeing something often works better than just hearing it. In this article, learn about what visual supports are and how they can help those with autism.

More Information



What Are Visual Supports?

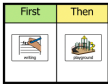
Many autistic people are visual learners, so seeing something often works better than just hearing it. Pictures, charts, or written words are some ways to make things clearer and more predictable for them. Visual supports are research based and widely used.

Things like spoken instructions, changes in routine, and being able to express wants and needs can be challenging in autism. Visual supports can help to:

- Understand what's happening
- Know what to do next / follow routines
- Make choices and communicate
- Feel calmer and in control
- Gain independence

Common Examples of Visual Supports:

- **Visual Schedules** - show what will happen and in what order.
 - Helps to feel in control and increase predictability.
 - Can be pictures and/or words in a line or calendar format.
 - Can be paper-based or in apps like "Lil Planner: Visual Schedule" & "Choiceworks".
- **First-Then Boards** - show two steps: first do this, then do that.
 - Helps with motivation and getting through less preferred tasks.
 - Can be paper-based or in apps like "First Then Visual Schedule: & "First and Then".



2025 Training Institute on Autism RECAP

By: Crystal Grey-Hewett, FSU CARD Consultant

The FSU Autism Institute hosted its 2025 Summer Training Institute on Autism, titled *Advances In Evidence-Based Practice for Autism Spectrum Disorder on June 17-19, 2025*.



[More Information](#)

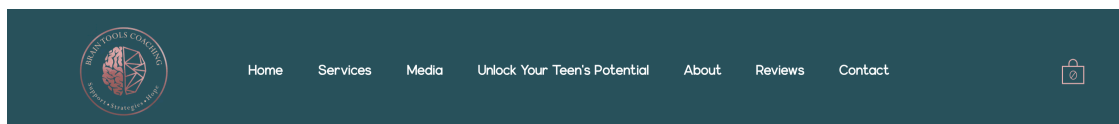
New Florida Law Creates Spectrum Alert for Missing Children with Autism

<https://www.fox13news.com/news/new-florida-law-creates-spectrum-alert-missing-children-autism>

A new Florida law that will soon take effect aims to help first responders when children with autism are reported missing.



[More Information](#)



The Executive Function Podcast

Sarah Kesty, Brain Tools School

Helpful, fun, and effective strategies to support everyone's executive function! Learn how to coach yourself, your teen, or your child to manage attention, organize, and plan. We share inspiration for families and individuals with neurodivergence, ADHD, autism, learning disabilities and more. We love what

[Read More](#)

The Executive Function Podcast Sarah Kesty

Learning and maintaining executive functioning skills is a lifelong process, and this podcast is for anyone wanting to learn more about how to help their family members or themselves improve them.

[More Information](#)



Update Your Information

Please take a moment to update your client information so we can keep our records up-to-date. Remember, if you need any assistance from FSU CARD, we need YOU to reach out to us and let us know how we can help by emailing autism@med.fsu.edu.

[Client Update Form](#)

[Become a CARD Client](#)

[Technical Assistance Request](#)

[Training Request](#)

[Public Awareness Request](#)

[Client Annual Update Form](#)





Donate to FSU CARD

If you are able please take a moment to donate to FSU CARD, every amount helps us spread autism community awareness, providing individuals with Autism or related disabilities, their families, and professionals who work with them with free consultation, resources, and educational support to build knowledge, infrastructure, sustainability, and capacity within the community.

[Donate](#)

nutrition



Hungry for (Mis)Information: Nutritional Advice Online

PsychologyToday.com

Many people use social media to learn about healthy eating and nutrition. The problem is that there is a huge amount of misinformation online, and that misinformation can lead to the development of unhealthy eating habits. This article provides tips on how to distinguish good nutritional information from bad, and develop the digital literacy needed to protect them from nutritional misinformation.

[More Information](#)



Share with CARD

FSU CARD is continuously looking for clients who would like to share their art, writing pieces, or success stories in our quarterly newsletter. If you are interested in sharing for our next issue, please send a message and image electronically to FSU CARD (autism@med.fsu.edu). All art or writing pieces should be titled. Select submissions will be chosen for each edition of the newsletter; artists and authors will be notified if their article is chosen.



| FSU CARD |

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