

## Autism Awareness Month & AHA Conference Info



Pat Schissel, LMSW  
President, AHA  
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April is autism awareness month and AHA is busy presenting at or displaying at a myriad of conferences and talks all over the tri-state area. We are asked to be part of planning committees as more universities are creating certificate programs or master level programs concentrating on the autism program.

The Long Island Parent Center along with my agency, AHA and others presented a conference on March 18th, From Resources to Results with excellent workshops and an inspirational speaker, LeDerick Horne who grew up with severe dyslexia and feelings of failure but now inspires others, is married, and is the co-chair of Project Eye to Eye. Project Eye to Eye is based on mentoring LD students and empowering them. We are gold sponsors when our advisory board member, Temple Grandin, presents at the Sid Jacobson JCC on April 25th. If you missed the HBO movie about Temple Grandin try to catch it. It was done beautifully and should be a Netflix rental soon.

On May 1 AHA will be presenting our 10th annual spring conference, Issues in Independent Living for Adolescents and Adults on the Autism Spectrum. The keynote this year is John Elder Robison, author of Look Me In The Eye. Diagnosed around the time his son was diagnosed, Mr.

Robison, author of Look Me in the Eye: My Journey with Autism, will talk about the challenges he faced growing up and venturing out on his own without family and social support. He will describe his travels through the music world, including his time working for Pink Floyd's sound company and touring with KISS, and his first forays into traditional employment as an engineer at toy maker Milton Bradley. I met John while we were judging grants at the NIH last year.

Registration for the conference can be done online at [www.ahany.org](http://www.ahany.org). Workshops and speakers are from all over. Sample topics include *Autism and the Legal System, Navigating Adult Services, Managing Your Physical and Mental Health, Treating Mood Disorders, Strategies for the Workplace, Socially Speaking and more.*

Our mission is to increase awareness of the countless challenges and difficulties individuals on the autism spectrum face as adults and to assist in their independence. The conference will focus on establishing effective systems of supports and services from transition through adulthood.

**Patricia R. Schissel, LMSW,  
President, AHA**

Asperger Syndrome and HFA Assoc.

PO Box 916

Bethpage, NY 11714

888.918.9198

[www.ahany.org](http://www.ahany.org) email: [pats@ahany.org](mailto:pats@ahany.org)