

Autism Society of Wisconsin 2009 Membership Survey Summary

This year's annual membership survey focused on the informational resource and program needs of our members. 48 surveys were returned. Results show top 10 answers per question.

Informational Resources:

- 1. We are currently reviewing the ASW (www.asw4autism.org) website content. What suggestions for new content or changes to the current content would you have?**
 - 8 *It's good, no suggestions*
 - 7 *Does not use the website*
 - 4 *Website has outdated information. Need to Update*
 - 4 *More Resources for teens and Adults on the spectrum*
 - 3 *State Resource guide needed*
 - 2 *Show videos (autism, ASW)*
 - 2 *One State calendar of all chapter events*
 - 2 *Make easier to navigate, redesign*
 - 2 *Have more links to other organizations, therapy programs*
 - 2 *Have an educator/student resource section*

- 2. What is the most common autism issue you have searched for information on in the past year?**
 - 15 *Transitioning to Adult Issues, Vocational rehab, jobs*
 - 13 *Social Skills (teens and adults)*
 - 5 *Insurance coverage and funding for autism treatment and services*
 - 5 *Alternative therapies/treatments (AIT, Biomedical, diets)*
 - 5 *Schools and education advocacy*
 - 4 *Sensory needs and support*
 - 3 *Behavior interventions*
 - 3 *Speech and communication Development*
 - 2 *Teaching strategies*
 - 2 *Brain Development/Research*

- 3. Where do you go for the most helpful information on Autism issues? (Other parents, books, physicians, websites, e-groups, etc.)**
 - 26 *Websites*
 - 20 *Books*
 - 18 *Other parents*
 - 17 *Consultant/professionals*
 - 9 *e-groups*
 - 6 *Chapters*
 - 3 *Other teachers*
 - 2 *WI FACETS*
 - 2 *Conferences*
 - 2 *No where*

Program Resources:

1. What Local Chapter programs have been the most helpful to you or your family over the past 3 years?

- 10 *Workshops and conferences*
- 7 *Recreation/Social programs*
- 4 *Saturday morning parent series*
- 4 *ASFV*
- 3 *ASSEW*
- 3 *Books/Library*
- 3 *Support group*
- 2 *ASGM*
- 2 *AUsome group*
- 2 *Info for teachers*

2. What new program opportunity would you like to see developed by your Local Chapter?

- 8 *More for teens and adults on the spectrum*
- 8 *Social groups by ages and degree of autism*
- 4 *Not sure*
- 3 *More opportunities and outings for families*
- 3 *Programs and Trainings for school personnel*
- 2 *More support groups*
- 2 *Advocacy support*
- 2 *They are great already*
- 2 *Job fair*
- 2 *More membership recruitment and outreach*

3. Besides programs offered through your Local Chapter, what programs or activities from other organizations have been helpful? (Play groups, school programs, community programs, etc.).

- 7 *Programs through School*
- 4 *Other support groups*
- 4 *Can't find much*
- 4 *Community programs/events*
- 3 *Faith based programs*
- 3 *Special Olympics/Sports*
- 2 *WI FACETS trainings*
- 2 *WEAP*
- 2 *Waisman Center*
- 2 *Play groups*

2008 ASW Membership Survey Summary

In the 2008 ASW elections, a membership survey was included to give members the opportunity to address issues relevant to current ASW planning. Two of the issues chosen this year are nurturing the formation of local autism support groups and supporting the awareness efforts of self-advocates. This report is a summary of membership input. Thank you to Chris of the ASW office for recording the original 17 pages of responses.

Local Support Groups

1. What areas of the state do you think could benefit from having more autism support groups?

Dividing Wisconsin into 9 areas, recorded are the number of times an area was mentioned as needing more autism support groups.

<i>Northwest Wisconsin</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>West Central Wisconsin</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Northern Wisconsin</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>Central Wisconsin</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Northeast Wisconsin</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>East Central Wisconsin</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Southwest Wisconsin</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Southern Wisconsin</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Southeast Wisconsin</i>	<i>14</i>		

2. What would be the maximum distance you would travel to attend a support group meeting? *(Broken down into 10 mile increments)*

1 -10 miles	9	11 -20 miles	23
21-30 miles	14	31-40 miles	4
41-50 miles	5	51 + miles	2

3. What could ASW do to help support local efforts to form support groups for area families? (top suggestions)

- Provide **awareness** support (help groups get the word/information out) **7**
- Provide **membership** support (process dues, member drives, local contacts) **7**
- Provide **technical and mentoring** support (leader training, "how to" guidance) **6**
- Provide **financial** support(start up costs, 501c3 umbrella, operating fund) **5**
- Provide support to **sub-groups** (aspergers, adults, biomedical, etc.) **5**
- Provide **acceptance** of local support efforts (both AS and non AS) **4**
- Provide **online** support (websites, groups, email, net meetings) **3**
- Provide **networking/communication** support(between ASW/Chapters/groups) **3**
- Provide **informational resource** support. **2**
- Provide **speaker/workshop/program** support. **2**

Self-Advocacy

1. What do you think are the top issues facing adults on the autism spectrum?
(*top issues*)

Meaningful vocational/employment opportunities	36
Having meaningful relationships, peer support and social networks	17
Lack of services, resources, supports, skill training	15
Options for living in community	14
Being Independent	13
Continuing education	6
Insurance	6
Transitioning from High school	6
Lack of public awareness/understanding of adult issues	5
Opportunities for recreational activities	3

2. How can ASW members work to improve outcomes on these issues?
(*top suggestions*)

Promote/provide awareness of issues (conference, website, papers)	10
More government/legislative involvement	9
Better services/supports/education while person is young	8
Work with/train employers	8
More advocacy training	5
More training for adults	4
Promote support groups for self-advocates	4
Help parents through transition process	3
Improve local outcomes for adults	3
Form work groups/taskforce to address issues	3

3. How can we help self-advocates feel supported in their effort to spread awareness and share information on autism issues? (*top suggestions*)

Provide info/links/web pages/list serve/ articles devoted to self advocates	10
Provide self-advocates tools/training	5
Advocate awareness on their behalf	5
Support their efforts in ways they deem helpful	5
Have conference sessions, topics and speakers who are self advocates	5
Help to educate providers/professionals/educators	5
Improve resources and special ed services in education facilities	4
More self advocates active in ASW, local level and committees	4
Provide one to one guidance/mentors	4
TV spots, magazine and newspaper articles, public forum	3

2007 Membership Survey *Comments*

Want workshops and conferences affordable to parents.

More outreach to Janesville. Huge population and needs more events.

Every question on survey is important and should be treated as such.

Great work at state level! Need more local chapters to connect with families. Good to see new names on ballot.

All questions on survey are important.

Want to be more in the loop regarding state advocacy issues.

Hard to pick national priorities.

*** this person rated each **group** of questions 1-5 by importance rather than each individually. Would have rated all questions a 5 if had understood better.*

Same as above. *** would have rated all 5 had they done each question individually.*

Make conference affordable to families with low paid teachers (the ones in the trenches) feels schools have budgets that won't afford paying for conferences and teachers are underpaid preventing them from attending due to high cost.

Avoid duplication of services: local/state/national. Each should choose one area of strength and focus on that.

Collaboration needs to be stronger among community and chapters.

FOX VALLEY chapter GREAT!!!! They are supportive and very active in community outreach.

All Great!!! Would like to attend conferences. Can't attend due to no family support. Can't afford childcare. Make that available so we can attend.

More emphasis on Aspergers.

- 1.) employment; staying employed; social skills training for better interviewing.
- 2.) Human Services case management funding
- 3.) Education opportunities for kids with autism.

Disability groups need to come together on common ground and form a united front regarding:

Community inclusion

Parity: disparity

Discrimination

Educational funding

Maintaining IDEA educational rights

More employment opportunities

2006 Membership Survey *Comments*

More emphasis on Aspergers.

- 1.) employment; staying employed; social skills training for better interviewing.
- 2.) Human Services case management funding.
- 3.) Education opportunities for kids with autism.

Disability groups need to come together on common ground and form a united front regarding:

- Community inclusion
- Parity; disparity
- Discrimination
- Educational funding
- Maintaining IDEA educational rights
- More employment opportunities