



**Final Autism Speaks Grant Report for the  
Blue Ribbon Recreation Program**

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**Submitted by:  
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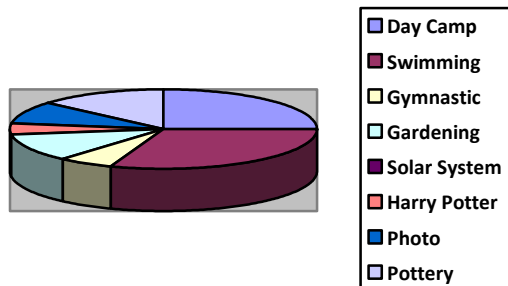
**Program Description**

Through a recreation grant provided by Autism Speaks, [Eastern Panhandle Indigo Children](#) 501c3 partnered with Jefferson County (WV) Parks and Recreation Commission to implement the Blue Ribbon Recreation Program (BRRP). The program is designed for persons of all ages and abilities on the autism spectrum. The partnership allows individuals with autism to enjoy a successful summer camp and other recreational activities in an inclusive setting with (trained) one-on-one aides. The Blue Ribbon Recreation Program accepts all applicants on the spectrum who wish to enroll in Jefferson County Parks and Recreation classes and camps throughout the 2012 summer program. The Blue Ribbon Recreation Program enables persons on the spectrum to enjoy the same opportunities that any typical person does with appropriate and effective assimilation and inclusion support. Trained one-on-one aides are the key to this support. The Blue Ribbon Recreation Program is an historic opportunity for persons in our region’s autism community.

**Preliminary Data Report**

Exit Survey Quantitative Data
<b>1. The Blue Ribbon Recreation Program enrolled 41 active participants in the summer of 2012.</b>
<b>2. The Blue Ribbon Recreation Program employed 6 expertly trained autism aides in the summer of 2012.</b>
<b>3. A formal alignment with Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission has been established to maximize recreation infrastructure and outreach to community as well as joint inclusion goals.</b>
<b>4. The Blue Ribbon Recreation Program has provided one-on-one aides so that children on the spectrum were able to take advantage of 4 different day camps and 11 separate recreation classes throughout the summer.</b>
<b>5. 98% of all Blue Ribbon Recreation Program participants completed their camps/classes.</b>
<b>6. 100% of all Blue Ribbon Recreation Program parents of participants have indicated in an exit survey that they would utilize again and would recommend to others.</b>

Figure 1. Illustrates the assortment of camps and classes Blue Ribbon Recreation Program participants were able to take advantage of with trained aides.



Some anecdotal information collected from some of our participants in the exit survey process is below for your reference:

<b>Exit Survey Qualitative Data</b>
<b>1. This program helped my 10 year old son be able to participate in camp for the first time in his life. He was happy and wanted to go back each day.</b>
<b>2. My son was afraid to leave me at first, but the trained aide assigned to him bonded quickly with him. By day 2 the separation anxiety was minimal. The aide had several strategies to keep him engaged and included.</b>
<b>3. We were grateful that at the beginning of each class/camp with a Blue Ribbon Recreation attendee, an anti-bullying lecture was provided to all staff as a preventative measure. We were even more grateful that our son was never bullied or intimidated by the other typical children. In fact he made a friend in his class.</b>
<b>4. Being able to attend camp like his typical sister, boosted our son's confidence and spirit.</b>
<b>5. Our son was able to complete swimming lessons for the first time ever, thanks to the Blue Ribbon Recreation Program aide with him while he learned. Now we can't get him out of the pool.</b>
<b>6. My son was able to attend a Harry Potter camp. It was a growth experience for him. The aide helped him share his vast HP knowledge with other campers which helped him become accepted and respected.</b>
<b>7. Our daughter took a tumbling class as part of the BRRP. The experience helped her gross motor development improve. Now she can do a summersault.</b>
<b>8. Our son enjoyed his day camp experience. I had peace of mind because he was with a trained aide. I was able to get some respite while his was a happy camper.</b>

**On the following pages, please pictures taken from various camps and activities. Each photo includes a Blue Ribbon Recreation Program participant (on the spectrum) along with typical peers.**







## Putting the Money to Work

EPIC staff has worked diligently to make every penny from the Autism Speaks grant count toward helping persons on the spectrum.

The monies have been used primarily to pay for one-on-one aides. These aides were carefully selected and most are professional autism aides from Jefferson County Public Schools.

All aides received standardized training from Ms. Bonnie Zampino, an ABA trained instructor. She specializes in autism empathy and sympathy training. Ms. Zampino designed a specific training course for the BRRP aides and Jefferson County Parks and Recreation staff.

Jefferson County Parks and Recreation covered all facilities, some administrative and all outreach costs which helped us stretch our grant dollars beyond what we originally projected. The Blue Ribbon Recreation Program was announced in the Jefferson County Spring/Summer Guide as well as in special promotional flier that went to all persons on the spectrum registered in Jefferson County Public Schools. Jefferson County Public Schools and EPIC created a special landing page on their respective websites to promote and provide details about the Blue Ribbon Recreation Program as well. Please see the attached excel spread sheet for more budget details.

<b>Budget Summary</b>	
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$17,960</b>
<b>Checks for BRRP account</b>	<b>\$17.11</b>
<b>Training supplies</b>	<b>\$89.69</b>
<b>Payroll to Aides</b>	<b>\$ 7,019.73</b>
<b>T-Shirts for BRRP Staff</b>	<b>\$170.00</b>
<b>Workman's Compensation</b>	<b>\$ 199.42</b>
<b>Remaining Balance as of July 15, 2012</b>	<b>\$ 10,464.05</b>

## Rolling Over Monies Request

Per our interim report discussion with Serena Selkin on July 25, 2012, we plan to and are grateful for the opportunity to rollover the remaining funds to support the 2013 BRRP. This will ensure that children on the spectrum in our region will be able to participate in EPIC's Blue Ribbon Recreation Program with the support of the Autism Speaks grant. We have received confirmation from Jefferson County Parks and Recreation that they will again fully support our program and will provide announcements and community outreach free of charge.

We thank you again for helping make the Blue Ribbon Recreation Program possible. You can see by the faces on the kids in the pictures above – what an impact the program has had for children on the spectrum as well as for their typical peers.



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## Points of Contact

We look forward to completing the Blue Ribbon Recreation Program and are thankful for Autism Speaks for providing our community an historic opportunity for persons on the spectrum to participate in high quality recreation opportunities. The benefits from this program are beyond what we initially imagined. Not only are our loved ones on the spectrum getting necessary exercise they need, they are gaining self-confidence and social skills development too.

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