

Second Annual Aspiration Summit

By Dot Lucci, MEd, CAGS,



Labor Day Weekend was spent in Jackson Hole, WY for nine Aspire interns and four staff members! This was our second trip to Jackson Hole and it is sponsored by Tony Aquila and his company, [Sclera](#). Scott McLeod, Executive Director, Brett Mulder, our Teen and Adult Manager, Leslie O'Brien, our Internship Program Manager, and I accompanied the interns for truly an experience of a lifetime. The purpose of the trip is to challenge each intern to personally grow. Some challenges included: traveling independently, meeting new people, riding a horse, and dealing with uncertainty while managing anxiety. The interns were exposed to new experiences that pushed their comfort zones and limits. [\[Read More\]](#)

Video Games: A Parent's Best Friend

By Amelia Rowley, Psy.D., Postdoctoral Fellow

Limited Fall openings for some groups!

Call for more details!

Find out more information on [our website](#)

Apply for the Internship Program!

The Aspire Internship program is accepting applications for the spring cycle!

The Internship program provides on-going job support for the 12-week spring cycle. Interns have been carefully matched with companies like:

- Liberty Mutual
- Safelite
- Insurance Auto Auctions International
- Boston Public Market
- WGBH

[For more information and to apply visit the website.](#)



Are you tired of fighting with your child about his or her intense video game use? Although it can be difficult for some kids and teens to tear their eyes away from a screen, this intense motivation to engage in electronics can also be used to parents' advantage. This is your biggest reinforcer! For example, parents can set up a reward system where their child completes homework or chores in exchange for minutes earned to play video games. [\[Read More\]](#)

Aspire Child Halloween Event!

Halloween offers a great opportunity to share experiences with school classmates, neighbors, friends, and family members. But, sometimes, the silliness and costumes can cause stress and anxiety. Have no fear, Aspire is here! We are hosting a Halloween event for our *Child Program* participants to maximize the fun and to help reduce some of the challenges that might come along. In small, matched, and supported groups, your child will have the option to decorate pumpkins, play group games, work on puzzles or attend spooky story time and take part in a cooking activity.

**Sunday, October 30, 2016
Hale Reservation, Westwood
1:00-4:00 pm**

**Families are invited to join
Trick-or-Treating 3:30-4:00 pm**

**Costumes optional, but encouraged!
\$65 per participant**

About Aspire

Aspire is dedicated to providing children, teens, and adults with a high cognitive autism spectrum disorder or a related profile with the knowledge and skills necessary to make social connections and develop independence leading to successful and fulfilling lives.

MGH Aspire
1 Maguire Road
Lexington, MA 02421
p:781-860-1900
f: 781-860-1920
mghaspire@partners.org

[Aspire Website](#)

[Aspire Internships](#)

Aspire is a program of
Massachusetts General Hospital
and Massachusetts General
Hospital for Children

Stay Connected!



These events are open to individuals ages 5-15 who have successfully completed Aspire child programming within the last three years or are currently participating. Email [Elise Wulff](mailto:Elise.Wulff) for questions of eligibility. Parents may leave their child on-site. To register your child, please email MGHAspire@partners.org.

Staff Spotlight: Ruth Palmer, *Child Assistant Program Manager*



Ruth Palmer has over 10 years of experience working with and providing support to children, teens and families. She has worked in a variety of settings such as acute inpatient care, residential, transitional living, education and in-home services. For the past four years, Ruth has worked to support individuals with ASD and their families. Ruth feels passionately that recreational programs can be a great way to make social connections and feel part of a community.

Ruth earned her undergraduate degree in psychology with a focus in therapeutic recreation from Green Mountain College in Vermont. Her master's degree in clinical mental health counseling with a focus in play therapy is from Antioch New England University. Ruth also has a certificate in therapeutic play skills from The Academy of Play and Child Psychotherapy in La Moulins, France.

Save the Date!

Monday, December 5th, 5:00pm

Aspire's Quarterly Parent Group Series:

Asperger's & Parenting: 20 Tips for Limit Setting & Problem Solving

Research Opportunities

Lurie Center for Autism

The Lurie Center for Autism at Massachusetts General Hospital for Children is looking for participants for their currently enrolling studies! For additional information about study requirements and study procedures, please contact Dr. Christopher McDougle's or Dr. Ann Neumeier's study staff at 781-860-1711 or LurieCenterResearch@partners.org.

- **Children's Autism Metabolome Project (CAMP)** - The Lurie Center is enrolling children ages 18 to 48 months who are in the process of getting evaluated for an autism spectrum disorder or developmental disorder, as well as typically

developing children. This research study is being conducted to find out if a specific blood test is effective in the early detection of autism spectrum disorder.

Participants are compensated for their time.

- **Mirtazapine Treatment of Anxiety in Autism** - The Lurie Center is conducting a study designed to evaluate the effects of mirtazapine in children with autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder or PDD not otherwise specified. Participants must be between the ages of 5 and 17 with difficulties with anxiety. Participants must have no significant medical illness and not have had a previous adequate trial of mirtazapine. Participants will receive study medication and all study related evaluations at no charge.
- **Investigation of Neuroinflammation in Autism** - Seeking men aged 18-40 years with and without autism to participate in an investigation of the structure and function of the brain of adults with and without autism using MR-PET scans. Participants are compensated for their time.

To learn more, please visit [our website](#).

The Bressler Clinical and Research Program

ASD Namenda Study Taking Place at MGH. Has your child ever been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD)? Does he or she have trouble communicating? Does he or she have problems reading social cues? Is your child 8-17 years old?

Massachusetts General Hospital is conducting a research study using Namenda (memantine) to see if the medication has any effects on symptoms. The study also includes a brain scan before and after treatment to help us understand the functional and chemical characteristics of the brain in children and adolescents with ASD. 12 weeks of treatment with study medication or placebo-2 proton magnetic resonance spectroscopy scans of your child's brain Your child will receive monetary compensation for participating. If you are interested in learning about this research study at MGH, please call the study coordinator, Kristina, at 617-724-7079.
