

February 2024

# Accepting the Spectrum

A monthly newsletter sharing information and support to families, caregivers, and friends of children on the Autism Spectrum

Written by: Olivia Sullivan, RBT



February is often known for being a month dedicated to and all about love! There are many ways to show someone that you care about them. This might include holding hands or hugging them. However for some children with autism, they may have sensory processing difficulties and additional affection may be overwhelming to them. Children with autism can also have an aversion to touch. The aversion to touch may be misunderstood as a lack of comfort with affection. Children with autism may simply express affection differently than others. By understanding how your child experiences affection and touch, can help to better understand how to communicate affection to them!

There are many ways to tell if physical touch is your child's love language. Some ways include if your child enjoys receiving hugs or giving hugs, enjoys back rubs, has a specific pillow or blanket that they like to be cuddled with, or enjoys being tickled. If your child enjoys any of these, then they most likely enjoy physical touch. If these ways overwhelm your child, giving a thumbs up or a fist bump can be a great alternative than giving physical touch such as a hug.



## Fun activities for you and your child to do together at home:

- Create a February themed sensory bin! If you have an extra Tupperware container, fill it up with common household items such as rice, beans, uncooked pasta, or cotton balls as a great way for your child to become familiar with different textures. Add in heart shaped items or other treasures that your child can look for in the sensory bin!



- Create sensory bottles! Turn a clear bottle into a fun activity for your child. Allow your child to fill a clear bottle halfway with water and 1/2 cup of clear glue leaving about a 1/2 inch of space at the top of the bottle. You can also add glitter or sequins into the bottle. You will need to use hot glue to keep the lid closed.



# Agency News:

Please welcome our new staff that have joined Collaborative ABA Services!



Katie is a dual-certified Speech-Language Pathologist and Board Certified Behavior Analyst. She received her Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from Northeastern University in 2020, and her Master's in Autism and Applied Behavior Analysis from the University of Saint Joseph in 2018. Katie has 4 years of experience providing speech therapy services for autistic individuals in school and clinic settings. Prior to working as a speech language pathologist, Katie worked for several years as a behavior therapist in school, clinic, and in-home settings. Katie is passionate about working collaboratively across disciplines to provide holistic care to every child who comes across her caseload. She enjoys celebrating every step of her clients' progress as they reach their full potential. In her free time, Katie enjoys reading, doing yoga, and spending time with friends, family, and her dog.



Caitlin graduated from Bay Path University in 2020 with her Master's in Occupational Therapy and is currently working on her doctorate at Bay Path. Her capstone is focused around the therapeutic relationship between caregivers of children with ASD and their therapists. She is very passionate about maximizing treatments and interventions to better generalize them for kiddos. Caitlin previously worked in birth to three for about a year. She is a new mom, so most of her time is spent exploring new parks, playgrounds, libraries, and other kid friendly activities! In her free time, she loves to read and watch anything true crime!

Additional new staff include:  
Sharon Sherpa, Behavior Technician  
Maria Damasco, Behavior Technician

