

# February 2016 NEWSLETTER



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Like Southern Maine  
Parent Awareness on  
Facebook!



Southern Maine Parent Awareness is being revamped! SMPA is in the process of developing more resources, a parent support group, and information sessions! SMPA currently provides individualized telephone and email consultation and resource sharing. Contact us with any questions, or if you're in need of resources! SMPA also offers information and referral support on special education, disability and community services. Check us out at [somepa.org](http://somepa.org) or like us on Facebook to keep up with the latest news which will be posted soon!

## Our Mission:

Southern Maine Parent Awareness (SMPA) is a program at Waban Projects that is dedicated to providing information, referral support, and education to families who have children with special needs in York and Cumberland Counties.

## Parent Tool Kit

### 7 Sentence Starters to use with Teachers

1. **"I'm concerned about my child's..."**  
A less confrontational way of stating concerns. Using "I" statements instead of "you" statements makes it clear you want to work together and are on the same team and avoids the blame game.
2. **"Help me understand..."**  
A constructive way even when you disagree with the teacher to create clarity and show willingness to listen.
3. **"Have you considered..."**  
A polite way to share information the teacher may not know.
4. **"I've noticed..."**  
This respectfully allows you to share information and acknowledge different perspectives.
5. **"It seems as if \_\_\_\_\_ has a hard time doing \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_."**  
Useful words to share understanding about a children's strengths and needs are *seems* and *appears*. Ex. "She appears to not complete homework when the assignments involve multi-part directions."
6. **"The IEP provides my child with \_\_\_\_\_. How does that look in the classroom?"**  
Asking about accommodations without accusing the teacher of failing to provide them. The main goal is to work together. Key thing to remember is to avoid assumptions that can undermine your relationships.
7. **"How can I help?"**  
This question lets a teacher know you're willing to play a role in your child's education.





# Mark Your Calendars EVENTS



## Southern Maine Autism Conference

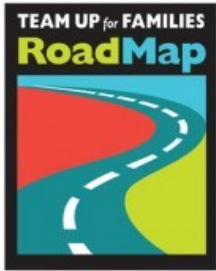
**Southern Maine Autism Conference**  
**Saturday March 12, 2016 8 am- 4 pm**  
Doubletree Hotel in South Portland, ME

8th Annual Southern Maine Autism Conference designated for parents and family members of children with autism spectrum disorders, as well as educators and providers. There are a variety of breakout sessions covering a wide range of topics. This event provides practical tools and strategies that can be used in the home, school and community and most importantly creates an atmosphere of networking and support. Register: [www.maineautismconference.org](http://www.maineautismconference.org)

**Southern Maine Camp Fair**  
**Sunday, March 20, 2016 1:00pm-4:00pm**  
East End School Gym , 195 North St. Portland, ME 04101



Looking for a summer camp in the Southern Maine area for your child? Find the best program options for your child at the Southern Maine Camp Fair! Compare all the different camps offering a variety of programs for all ages! Admission is free, and you can speak directly with camp staff and check out over 75 summer camps that will be attending! FMI: 207-518-9557 or [mainecamps.org](http://mainecamps.org)



**Team Up For Your Child**  
**Saturday, April 9, 2016 9:00am-4:00pm (free lunch)**  
Canopy Park Resource Center (CPPC Hub)  
46 Sullivan St., Suite 101, Biddeford

A free workshop provided by G.E.A.R. provides a road map to behavioral health services that families need for autism, ADHD, psychiatric and developmental issues. Register: [gearparentnetwork.org](http://gearparentnetwork.org) or call 1-800-264-9224.

**14th Annual Walk for Autism**  
**Sunday, April 24, 2016 Walk: 12 pm –2 pm, Registration: 11 am**  
**Four Locations:** University of New England in Biddeford  
University of Maine in Bangor  
Farmington Fairgrounds in Farmington  
Belfast Area High School in Belfast



The Annual walk for Autism helps spread autism awareness and bring hope and support to families affected by autism! Invite friends and neighbors to be a part of it too! Contact ASM if you have any questions at 1-800-273-5200 or [info@asmonline.org](mailto:info@asmonline.org).

## CONTACT US!



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