

*We posted Jim Pierson's story of Corey's spiritual journey on our blog May 2008. Diagnosed with Asperger's autism, Corey has grasped independent living and spirituality with the nurturing of his family, church and community. Read the entire article on our blog if you have not already done so. Print it to share with someone and brighten their day.*

*Corey's mother sent Jim an email that speaks volumes about how disability ministry can enrich and strengthen individuals, families and churches as we truly minister with people with disabilities.*

## Corey's Mother's Response

Dear Jim,

I read with such joy the article that you wrote. I made a copy for Corey which he read over and over and carried around with him until he finally went to bed after midnight last night. This morning he woke up and proclaimed, "The Old Corey is in a new cover now."

Thank you. As you are more than aware, parenting a special needs child is challenging, at best. To me, this is a story of hope. There were so many dark days, especially in the very early years. If only I could have seen a little glimpse of the light and the man Corey would become, perhaps I could have shed a few less tears.

It is a story of God's grace, His grace for Corey and for our entire family.

The blessings God pours out on us are at times disguised as pain and loss. I am so glad that his plan is far greater than any I could even begin to devise!

Corey will continue to grow but not without people like you and the folks at Woodlawn [Christian Church] there to help him on his journey. And for that I will be eternally grateful.

God bless you,  
Kathi



Corey and Kathi

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## Autism and Faith, A New Book

A new resource for the religious education of learners with autism is *Autism and Faith: A Journey into Community*. The book was published in May 2008. The title suggests its focus—including people with autism in a faith community. Two articles caught Jim Pierson's attention: Dr. Mary Beth Walsh's "Communities of Faith and Individuals with Autism: Perfect Together" and Bill Gaventa's "'Of Course' –Ministry and Service by Adults with Autism."

The publication is only \$5.00 and is available by calling The Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities at 732-235-9300. On line: <http://rwjms.umdj.edu/boggscenter>.

## "Be Prepared" is More Than a Scouting Motto

The Disability Preparedness website at [www.disabilitypreparedness.gov](http://www.disabilitypreparedness.gov) offers emergency planning geared to people with disabilities. It "provides practical information on how people with and without disabilities can prepare for an emergency. It also provides information for family members of, and service providers to, people with disabilities. In addition, this site includes information for emergency planners and first responders to help them to better prepare for serving persons with disabilities."

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### The Basics of Reporting Abuse

Question: A friend of mine observed physical abuse of student with an intellectual disability. In spite of her efforts to get the situation into the legal system, nothing has been done. What can I tell her?

Jim Pierson's reply: First, I would suggest that she write down the facts of what she saw. Second, she should ask the school system if there is a parent advocacy group available to her. Third, she should check with the local ARC to see if they provide advocacy service. Finally, most states provide a legal aid service. Check to see what is available in your state. Then, have an attorney offer a plan of action.

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### Use Web Resources to Help Deal With or Prevent Incidences of Abuse

For additional guidance, view The Arc's informational paper entitled *Abuse of Children with Cognitive, Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities* By Leigh Ann Davis, M.S.S.W., M.P.A. Assistant Director of Professional & Family Services at [www.thearc.org/NetCommunity/Document.Doc?&id=144](http://www.thearc.org/NetCommunity/Document.Doc?&id=144)

Child Welfare Information Gateway (formerly the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information and the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse), provides access to information and resources to help protect children and strengthen families. It is a service of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and may be accessed at [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website presents a variety of helpful items, among them, at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/women/abuse.htm>, is an article that specifically addresses women with disabilities.

The World Institute on Disabilities ([www.wid.org](http://www.wid.org)) offers tips for *Recognizing and Interrupting Abuse of Adults with Disabilities* at <http://www.wid.org/programs/health-access-and-long-term-services/curriculum-on-abuse-prevention-and-empowerment-cape> and a variety of timely articles and advocacy tools.

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*Information in this CCFH **Connections** newsletter compiled by Sylvia Hemphill, Director of Administrative Functions and Resource Materials.*

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