

# **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ahna O'Shaughnessy

Phone: 301-305-1041

[Prepforsocialsuccess@gmail.com](mailto:Prepforsocialsuccess@gmail.com)

## **Maryland Resident Writes Parents' Guide for Improving Social Skills in Their Child with Autism**

Frederick, MD, May 5, 2015. Ahna Kimmel O'Shaughnessy, M.A. and coauthor Jamie E. Carter, Ph.D. developed an easy four step program to help parents teach their children diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) how to improve social skills and emotion management. Their book, PREP for Social Success: A Guide for Parents of Children with Autism, is available exclusively through Amazon Kindle.

Parents who have a child with ASD often experience stress and pressure because their child has difficulty in social settings. These settings range from engaging in family gatherings, to fitting in at school, to getting and keeping a job. These everyday settings frequently cause the child to feel anxious and overwhelmed. If the child has inadequate communication and coping skills this may lead to uncooperative behavior, unusual behavior, or emotional distress.

PREP for Social Success outlines four easy steps (PLAN, REHEARSE, ENCOURAGE, PRAISE) that parents can use to teach their child with ASD how to more effectively handle and adapt to a variety of social settings. These settings include school, group activities, community settings, work settings, and novel situations. There is also a chapter addressing transitioning youth and how the mental and physical health of other family members can be affected by and impact the child with ASD. Parents learn a variety of techniques to use when applying PREP. These include using visual cues, telling stories, developing scripts, performing role plays, playing games, and mapping out desired behaviors.

When asked why she decided to write the book, O'Shaughnessy replied "I have been working with families of children with ASD for many years. It is clear parents put great effort into trying to improve their child's social functioning, yet sometimes these efforts are not successful. I wanted to develop an easy to remember technique that could be tailored to the specific child and situation and lead to a positive outcome. By using the PREP program, the child will feel more at ease in social situations and the parent will be less anxious about how the child is doing".

Ahna O'Shaughnessy has been working with children who have ASD for thirty years. She lives in Frederick, MD and is a Psychology Associate, providing behavior intervention services to various agencies and schools that serve adults and children with autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders in the Greater D.C. and Baltimore areas. She can be reached at [prepforsocialsucess@gmail.com](mailto:prepforsocialsucess@gmail.com). The book is available for purchase at <http://amzn.com/B00WQANRI4>

###