

# Public Policy and Autism Spectrum Disorders

## *Laying the groundwork for a Montessori–ABA approach*

Friday, September 12th, 7:00 PM at the Hampton Inn/Fort Detrick

As our understanding of autism has evolved, relevant public policy has moved from an emphasis on special education to a far broader agenda. Family advocates must work on multiple fronts in order to reform a system of care that was not designed to serve individuals with the unique configuration of strengths and challenges found in autism spectrum disorders. Ironically, when they are not the primary provider of treatment, schools can be more open to experimenting with non-traditional approaches such as Montessori education.

- By the end of the workshop, participants will:
  - Identify the major national trends shaping the future treatment and support of those affected by ASD.
- Describe necessary reforms that will improve access to home-based, intensive early intervention utilizing evidence-based techniques.
- Identify opportunities to engage schools in developing Montessori classrooms.

### **Kirsten M. Murphy**

*Ms. Murphy is a parent advocate. She is Executive Director and founder of ARCH of the Upper Valley, Inc., a non-profit that works to build regional capacity for the treatment and support of those with ASD in New Hampshire and Vermont. She is a member of the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Family Advisory Board at the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth (CHaD). She has served on numerous state-level committees in both NH and VT, including the NH Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders. She lives with her three children – a 16 year-old storyboard artist, a 14 year-old aspiring computer scientist, and an 11 year-old ballerina – in Hanover, NH. Her two oldest children have a diagnosis on the autism spectrum.*