



For Immediate Release:

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Local Groups Host Kite Day for Autism Awareness Month *Free Event for Families*

Framingham, Massachusetts, April 12, 2010... The Autism Alliance of MetroWest, a partner of Advocates, Inc., and the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism are pleased to announce their 10th Annual Kite Day on Bose Mountain in Framingham on Sunday, April 25 from noon to 4 p.m. (rain date May 2). The family-friendly event recognizes National Autism Awareness Month with a free day of kite flying, entertainers, a raffle and much more.

"Kite Day began nine years ago as a way to provide education and awareness about autism to families in the community. Today that continues to be a goal, but the event is also our way of thanking the community for their tremendous support over the years," says Nannette Ohman, executive director of the Autism Alliance of MetroWest.

Free Fun for the Family

Each child who attends Kite Day will receive a free kite while supplies last. KONE (Kites over New England) will be on-hand to fly their own spectacular kites and to provide instruction to novice flyers. Further entertainment will be provided by professional balloon twisters, a face painter, an interactive musician and special guests from 103.3 WODS.

Planners of the event expect over 500 people to take part in the festivities. "We always have a great turnout. It's really an amazing site to see so many kites flying," says Ohman.

Staff from the Autism Alliance of MetroWest, the Doug Flutie Jr., Foundation and Advocates, Inc. will be available to answer questions and provide resources about autism and community-based supports.

State Officials to Declare Official Kite Day

This year, Rep. David Linsky, D-Natick, and Sen. Karen Spilka, D-Ashland, are scheduled to issue a proclamation from the state officially recognizing the day as "Autism Awareness Kite Day." The proclamation recognizes the longstanding success of Kite Day and its importance to the community as a cultural and awareness-raising event.

Members of the Framingham police and fire departments are also expected to make special appearances.

Honors for Local Business Supporting Families Facing Autism

During the event, staff from the Autism Alliance of MetroWest will present a special recognition award to representatives of the Courtyard Marriot in Natick. For the past six years, the hotel has enabled the group to offer swim classes to member families by providing its pool facilities at no cost.

“For many children with autism, traditional swim classes are not an option,” according to Ohman. “Our swim classes are tailored to meet each child’s individual needs, and the classes make a profound difference in their lives by helping them develop new social and physical skills and greater confidence. We couldn’t offer them without the generous support of our friends at the Courtyard Marriott.”

The event is free and open to all families. For more information, contact Nannette Ohman at AutismAlliance@Advocatesinc.org or (508) 652-9900.

About the Autism Alliance of MetroWest

Founded in 1993 on the belief that information is the most powerful tool for living with autism, the Autism Alliance of MetroWest provides resources, education and support to over 860 area families. It maintains an education and resource center with over 800 up-to-date publications available for check-out at the Morse Institute Library in Natick. In 2010, the Autism Alliance of MetroWest became a partner of Advocates, Inc. For more information, visit www.autismalliance.org.

About the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism

Based in Framingham, the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism was established by NFL quarterback Doug Flutie and his wife, Laurie, in honor of their son, Doug, Jr., who was diagnosed with autism at the age of three. Its mission is to support families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. The Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism provides individuals with autism and their families an opportunity to improve their quality of life by funding educational, therapeutic, recreational and advocacy programs.

About Advocates, Inc.

Advocates, Inc., headquartered in Framingham, is among the 20 largest human service organizations in Massachusetts. With over 1,000 employees and 12,000 individuals served each year, Advocates is a leading provider of residential support services; outpatient mental health and substance abuse services; day habilitation services; employment supports; housing, benefits and legal services; community justice programs; and family support services. Advocates’ programs are located throughout Eastern and Central Massachusetts. To learn more, visit www.AdvocatesInc.org

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