



Who We are

A group of proactive parents working collaboratively with family, neighbours, community, education & autism professionals, school districts, government, and private associations to create happiness and success for their children with Autism.

YEAR AT A GLANCE 2024!

We've finished another **AMAZING year supporting families** in our community affected by **Autism and other special needs** and we are excited to provide you with an **overview of what we've been doing to help so many families**. This support would not be possible without the **generous contributions from organizations like yours**, directed by **kind & purposeful people like you**.



CAREGIVER MEETINGS & EDUCATION

We provided **Monthly SASS Support Meetings** from **September to May** for parents, caregivers & community advocates with a variety of guest speakers providing valuable information making a meaningful difference in the lives of others and connecting families to the resources they need.

HOLIDAY EVENTS & SUPPORT

We provided **free Sensory Santa Photos** for **20 families** making memories for years to come! This is such a heart-warming event full of magic, smiles & a whole lot of love! We are especially thankful for our Volunteer Photographer, **Mary-Anne Bowcott** of Westcom Plumbing and Santa, **Dave McMillan** of McMillan Renovations & Repair. (Photo: Bailey & her children with Santa).



We provided **20 amazing Holiday & Craft Care Packages** to families in **November**. These were loaded with crafts and memory-making items for families to share together (photo: SASS Craft Packages).

We sponsored a tree for **SASS the Festival of Trees in December** and families came down to add their home-made decorations and enjoy a **free family swim or skate on behalf of SASS**.



SOCIAL GROUPS FOR ADULTS 18+ WITH ASD

This is a **Social Group for Adults 18+ with ASD** and other special needs designed to provide social opportunities & connect them to their community! This group meets via Zoom each month to decide on their in-person activity for the month. So far this group has enjoyed the Flying Squirrel, Qasar's Arcade, Board Games, Bowling, Pumpkin Carving, Laser Tag, Video Game Hangouts, French Beach & more! This program is possible due to a grant SASS received from the [Victoria Foundation](#).

In October, we held our **Budget & Bites Workshop for Adults** looking for support and information on managing their PWD and personal finances. We hope to have a focused Workshop annually to help with the continued support of adults with ASD in various areas.

SIBKIDS SIBSHOPS

We initiated another season of **SibKids Sibshops** to support **siblings of those with special needs** who are often overlooked when it comes to support. This is a special time for siblings to share and connect with others in a way that is fun, collaborative and positive! These sessions run from October through May and **Corrina Robb** is our amazing Sibshops Facilitator!



SPRING EVENTS

We had our second annual **Family Easter Egg Hunt** in collaboration with Swim Therapy -- Several families were delighted to attend!

In acknowledgement of **April as Autism Acceptance Month**, we provided a **Free Family Swim Pass to 20 families**. We also participated in **Sookarama** to promote awareness in our community and spoke to hundreds of people --- grandparents, parents, siblings, relatives and neighbours of those with ASD. Many signed up to be added to our monthly SASS E-Newsletter & FB page to stay connected & informed.

SCHOLARSHIPS

We awarded the **SASS Ambassador of Inclusion Scholarship** to a deserving graduate of EMCS who promoted the positive inclusion of those with special needs at school, in the community and/or at home! We also awarded the **SASS Individual Support Scholarship** to a deserving graduate of EMCS who has special needs to help them with the next chapter of their special needs journey!



For a list of recipients, check out our website. This initiative is possible due to a grant SASS received from the [Juan de Fuca Foundation](#).

FINANCIAL GRANTS

We were overwhelmed with gratitude for the support we received from the **Sooke Lions Club** which enabled us to provide 10 families with Private Swim Lesson Grants (Photo: Lion Danny Willis & SASS President, Sherri Palle).



We were delighted to award two families with **Summer Camp Grants**. This initiative was made possible due to a grant SASS received from the [Juan de Fuca Health Foundation](#).



MENTORING & RESOURCE SUPPORT

We provided **several one-on-one mentoring and support sessions** to families receiving their new ASD diagnosis. It's impossible to put into words these experiences create for us and the families we support. Knowing they are not alone on this journey – especially at the outset of the initial diagnosis is life changing.

SASS AUTISM RESOURCE HUB

We are delighted to let you know that since we donated our entire SASS Library to the [VI Regional Library Sooke](#) this Fall, there have been dozens of wonderful resources signed out and used by families in Sooke! (Photo: Sooke Library Autism Resource Hub)

We are so excited to be able to make these items readily available to families who need them and deeply grateful for our partnership with the [VI Regional Library Sooke](#) for their continued support ❤️!



OUR IMPACT ON FAMILIES CONTINUES TO GROW

We are now **providing information, support and programs for 168 families in Sooke** and working collaboratively with **50 community advocates, service providers & stakeholders**. Our SASS Community is continuing to grow!

We do this through our active **SASS Facebook** page which has **650 followers**, our website, our monthly E-newsletter and the many, many emails we receive and respond to at sooke.sass@gmail.com.

We held our **Annual Bottle Drive Fundraiser in April** and raised \$2,200 -- This is a great way to connect as a group as well as, raise awareness in the community!

A SINCERE & HEARTFELT THANK YOU

As you can see, we are **passionate about our commitment to making a difference** in the lives of those affected by Autism.

An extra heartfelt THANK YOU to the organizations and individuals who provided us with **grants and/or generous donations** which supported our SASS activities in 2024 along with the **local businesses** who supported us with donations of gift certificates.



Our 2024 Financial Contributors & Supporters:

- **Morson Carson Wealth Council of Richardson Wealth** (Susan Carson & Rick Morson)
- **Mindset Consulting** – and - **Wealthy Planning IPC** (Kristine Douglas)
- **McMillan Renovation & Repair** – and - **Westcom Plumbing**
- **Blackfern Plumbing & Gas** – and - **Keith's Mini Excavating**
- Crew of the **HMCS Regina** – and - **Accutax Sooke** (Jim & Eva)

Our Meeting Sponsors:

- **Bosley's Pet Store, Village Foods, Western Foods, Wiskers & Wags**
- **Pizzability, Route 14, Sooke 2-for-1 Pizza & Tim Horton's**
- **Sea-to-Tree Wellness**

If you have any questions about any of our SASS community initiatives or would like to continue to support the Sooke Autism Support Society (SASS), please feel free to contact us.

We appreciate you and we wish you all the very best for 2025!

The Sooke Autism Support Society (SASS) Executive

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