

## **Young Adult Transition Skills and Social Networking Group For Individuals With Autism and Related Disorders**

This is a new group that will meet monthly in Decatur. Facilitated by Dave Nelson, LPC, Director of The Community School, this group is for individuals looking for social connections and support in transitioning into the larger community. Individuals appropriate for this group will have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Age 18 or older
- Completed or nearly completed high school
- Have a job, have had a job in the past, or currently looking for a job
- Struggling to find an appropriate peer group
- Still find social relationships and negotiating the adult world a significant challenge
- May be interested in receiving additional help in the form of job coaching or transition to college

Initially, this group is intended to provide a starting point for individuals looking to expand their social, job, and career horizons as they become young adults. Over time, the group will collectively begin to develop strategies to support its members and will determine its own needs for additional resources (e.g., job coaching).

This group will begin meeting when there are enough interested individuals. The current expectation is that the group will begin meeting in October, 2008 for two hours a month. Included in this meeting time will be short informational presentations, some open discussion on topics related to transition issues, and a supported social activity. There will be a charge, yet to be determined, to attend this group.

To be considered for this group, please contact Dave Nelson at [dave@thecommunityschool.net](mailto:dave@thecommunityschool.net) or 404-295-0073.

### **About Dave Nelson, LPC**

Dave is the director of The Community School, an accredited secondary school and transition program in Decatur for adolescents with autistic spectrum disorders and related challenges. He is a licensed counselor who specializes in working with children, adolescents, adults, and their families with a focus on developing the interactive, emotional, and learning capabilities of individuals. Based on his experience using Stanley Greenspan's developmental, individual-difference, relationship-based approach (DIR, also known as "floor-time") with his own son who was diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder at age three, he changed careers to begin working with children facing developmental and learning challenges.

Dave has an M.S. in Counseling and an M.A. in English Literature from Georgia State University, as well as an M.B.A. from Duke University. He is licensed as a professional counselor in the state of Georgia. He is part of Floortime Atlanta, a professional group of clinicians in the Atlanta area who use the DIR approach. He sees a small number of individuals in private practice. He also participates in monthly meetings to educate other professionals, and has completed his national certification as a DIR practitioner. He currently serves on the Professional Advisory Committee for the Blonder Department of Developmental Disabilities at the Marcus Jewish Community Center.