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Understanding autism is topic

Speakers, films will be part of conference at local venue

Wednesday, December 5, 2007 7:37 PM EST

CALDWELL – Creating Choices for Children of Caldwell-West Caldwell will partner with Learning by Design and the Caldwell College Psychology Department, to present "Understanding Autism: Individual, Sibling and Parental Perspectives" from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15, at the Caldwell College Alumni Theater.

The day will include guest speakers Taylor Cross and Keri Bowers.

Cross is a speaker, filmmaker and self-advocate in disabilities. At age 14, he wanted to make a movie he could sell to make money for a community project he was involved in. Diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at 6, Cross always had loved the movies, and the arts were emphasized in his social and life skill interventions. Creating a 10-minute short film at age 15 with producer and mentor, Joey Travolta, and his mother, disabilities advocate, Keri Bowers, the trio turned the short student film into a feature-length, 90-minute film about autism, "Normal People Scare Me."

Cross, now 18, has traveled with his mother in the United States and abroad for the past two years screening the film. For more information about the film, visit www.normalfilms.com.

Bowers has worked in the disabilities field with kids and adults for more than 18 years. She has parented a child with special needs, works full-time in the nonprofit sector and has been an advocate. "The Sandwich Kid," a film about siblings of people with disabilities created with Bowers' son, Jace, now 12, captures the intrinsic issues of a youngster faced with a sibling who has a disability.

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All donations will benefit Creating Choices for Children to enrich its extracurricular programs and form social skills groups. Visit www.cccparents.org for more information.

Seating is limited and registration is required. To help sponsor this event and for free tickets, call Nicole Turon-Diaz at (973) 650-7986 or e-mail learningbydesign@verizon.net Call Colette Perrothers at (973) 618-0878 for more information.

- next month
- Pirates Athletic Club to hold tryouts for travel baseball league
 - WEST ESSEX CLAIMS FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Online Poll
Not a scientific survey.

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