

LIFE SAVERS...A PART OF LIVING



When I began to put our last newsletter together about a month ago, I found this picture of a man rescuing another man from the sea. I had been thinking about how we need to help “rescue” each other from the sea of autism.

In light of Hurricane Katrina, I now see this artwork as even more appropriate (and even somewhat prophetic). At a conference last weekend, a doctor likened living with autism to a hurricane...an analogy far better than that of a “sea.”

Like the nature of this raging storm we saw in Katrina, we also have our own storm...the surging waves of grief that pummel us in cyclic rhythm, the rising waters of responsibilities, the fatigue from treading water as we feel we have made no progress, and the mighty wind that ever strives to knock us off our feet.

Although many of us in this area have been spared the devastation of the real, catastrophic storm that took many lives in parts of our country recently, we feel that in some ways, the lives of our children have been taken from us by the hurricane of autism. The task of finding and saving those children’s lives – of reclaiming them, if you will, can be daunting.

But, just as we see the communities around us, as well as ourselves, reaching out to the families affected by Katrina, we are called to the same sense of responsibility within the autism community. A very wise person once said that “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10.)

We are here to throw out a life preserver to those who are in the midst of the storm...to offer them a listening ear, to help meet tangible needs, to share what we have learned, or to just be available when needed. As we know, those who are in the “eye” of the storm have already passed through the harshness of the storm...and will pass through it again. But, when we find ourselves in the “eye” of our storm, enjoying a time of more calmness, we can use that time to reach out to others being battered by the wind and waves.

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