

Hope for every child, every family.™

# THE AUTISM BEACON



LIGHTHOUSE AUTISM CENTER QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 | SPRING 2014

## Welcome to Lighthouse Autism Center

**W**elcome to Lighthouse – the Autism treatment leader in Indiana. We're pleased to provide you with *The Autism Beacon* newsletter – a quarterly publication dedicated to keeping you up to date with relevant news on Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders and extending information on the available resources at our Mishawaka and Warsaw centers for your patients in need.



Lighthouse is 100% focused on Autism and, specifically, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) – the only therapy that has been vetted by the medical and higher education communities. ABA therapy is endorsed by the U.S. Surgeon General as an approach to teaching social, motor, and verbal behaviors as well as reasoning skills. Over 30 years of research has proven ABA to result in very positive outcomes when used as an early-intervention tool for Autism.

Lighthouse is the only center in Michiana with an award-winning management team who are also parents to a child with Autism. Gregg Maggioli, Executive Director, and wife, Sandy, founded Lighthouse because they understand the frustration and feeling of helplessness when parents are told their child has Autism.

"Lighthouse cares for children and their parents as though they are part of its extended family – this is the type of environment we experienced with our son in Carmel, Indiana. As time went on, we discovered an unmet need in this area and are now exceedingly proud and fulfilled to provide the same foundation for kids in this community," said Gregg Maggioli, Executive Director. "Our therapists love, care for, and find joy in each one of the children. No one cares about the kids and their families as much as Lighthouse. We are dedicated to providing the best therapy while addressing the needs of the family as well."



For information on many of the available resources, as well as upcoming events, please visit our website at [LighthouseAutismCenter.com](http://LighthouseAutismCenter.com) and reference the "Community Resources" page, as well as the "Resource Center."

*(ABA) is a research-based approach to teaching new, appropriate skills and reducing inappropriate behavior. Lighthouse Autism Center uses 1:1 instruction, in a variety of forms, to teach children new communication skills, life skills, and social skills. They also have social groups appropriate for each client.*

## Our Spots

### Mishawaka – Edison Center

3730 Edison Lakes Parkway  
Mishawaka, Indiana 46545

### Mishawaka – Park Place Center

525 Park Place Circle  
Mishawaka, Indiana 46545

### Warsaw Center

1535 Provident Drive  
Warsaw, Indiana 46580



Call: (574) 387-4313

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# The Heart of the Matter

## A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As stated in our mission, and evidenced by the many successes and heartfelt testimonials of our parents, it is our privilege and calling to provide quality ABA therapy where it is needed.

As the only center in Michiana for Autism with an award-winning management team, we know it is our child-focused and family-focused philosophy that helps us achieve enduring success. It is our understanding, having been in their shoes, that helps them stay strong and positive amidst daily challenges. We make every effort to help families of children with Autism through the use of Verbal Behavior ABA Therapy – and I know it works when I can see, with my own eyes, transformations like that of an 11-year-old child who used the restroom on their own for the first time, or transitioning a 5-year-old back to school after getting behaviors under control. As a father of an Autistic child, I know how marvelous and longed for these moments are for parents.

Please keep us in mind when your patients and parents are in need of our services – we can't wait to help them achieve these incredibly memorable steps in their children's lives.

Sincerely,



Gregg Maggioli  
Executive Director



## Lighthouse Opens Second Center in Mishawaka

As you know, the prevalence of Autism and need for Autism care in our community is significant and overwhelmingly underserved. Because of the growing need throughout the Michiana area, Lighthouse will open its second center, located in Mishawaka, in April – in honor of National Autism Awareness Month.

“Opening a new center in Mishawaka has allowed us to create the Early Learner Program – a program aimed at even more focused therapy for our youngest age group – the two- to six-year-old group that’s so crucial to reach,” said Gregg Maggioli, Executive Director. “This program is 100% designed to best meet the needs of our children and help facilitate transition into a school program. We see the goals of the new Mishawaka center and the ELP program as one in the same – to help children reach their full potential.”

The ELP program is completely individualized and targets the youngest age groups because of the documented studies that show a higher success rate. “The earlier we can provide therapy for this age group, the best chance we have of helping them reach their full potential,” said Maggioli. “There’s a danger in waiting. You can never get that time back. Parents and physicians should never take a wait-and-see approach. What is a limitation later on could have been an obstacle avoided if we could only have intervened with therapy.”

Say Hello!



Call to request a tour of our centers and meet our staff.

(574) 387-4313



More information about Lighthouse Autism Center and the therapy service they provide can be found online at [LighthouseAutismCenter.com](http://LighthouseAutismCenter.com).

# Staff Spotlight

GREGG MAGGIOLI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Gregg Maggioli, Executive Director, and wife, Sandy, founded Lighthouse because they understand the frustration and feeling of helplessness when you are told your child has Autism.

“Our son, Victor, was diagnosed with Autism in 2003. We understand the struggle you go through as a parent when you are told that your child has Autism, and the desire to help your child reach his/her full potential. We were fortunate enough to have access to a center in Carmel, Indiana that offered Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy. That is why we created Lighthouse Autism Center here in Mishawaka, Indiana,” said Maggioli. “Intensive center-based therapy made a huge difference in our son’s life – and in our lives.”

The Maggiolis volunteered at the center in Carmel for eight years before they discovered the overwhelming need for ABA center-based therapy in the Michiana community. Gregg served as Chairman of the Board and Sandy held a variety of positions. They were able to help grow the Center from four clients to 40 in two locations. In 2011, they earned recognition for the Center by receiving the Excellence in Direct Care Award by the Autism Society of Indiana (ASI).

The Maggiolis have brought the same excellence to Lighthouse by using a team approach to everything. Each child’s plan is managed by a full-time, on-site, Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), with constant additional input from up to five other BCBA’s, to ensure quality programming and services.

## Clinical Corner

### Is your toddler repetitive? Could be Autism. Study warns.

The *Journal of Child Psychiatry and Psychology* published a new paper that will make each parent sit up and observe their child’s behavior. The study, published by lead researcher Joseph Piven, found that children demonstrating repetitive behaviors like flapping hands, spinning, etc. by their first birthday are four times more likely to have autism than children who don’t do such repetitive actions.

The study adds weight to the theory that repetitive behaviors might be a red flag for Autism that all parents should watch out for. The study, conducted at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, sends mixed signals, as repetitive actions like babbling syllables and wiggling arms are often the first developmental milestones that children show. Distinguishing them from behaviors that point towards Autism might need sharper observation and definitely more research.

## Shining Examples

Robert and Lisa Cook know how much of a blessing and beacon of hope Lighthouse can be to parents struggling to connect with their Autistic child. Over the course of just one year, they’ve witnessed dramatic changes in their daughter, Ally.

“Before Lighthouse, we struggled to get Ally to connect with us. She would only communicate to address her most basic wants and needs. She would rarely even let us sit next to her,” said Ally’s mother, Lisa Cook. “I am falling head over heels in love with her all over again. I am in heaven playing Barbies and dress up with her! These are all things a year ago I would have never dreamed we’d be able to do together. We have everyone at Lighthouse to thank for that. This is the first environment where we have seen her thrive and where she has been really happy.”

The staff at Lighthouse recognizes that all children, regardless of Autism, learn at their own pace. Intervention goals vary person to person depending on age, level of functioning, family goals, and other factors. We all agree, however, that we’ve seen incredible results from Ally.



“Ally is an amazing little girl. Over the course of the year, she’s come out of her shell and taken all of her goals by storm,” said Gregg Maggioli, Executive Director. “She’s expected to return to public school soon. We are definitely going to miss her, but we are thrilled for her. We are positive a great many experiences and successes lie ahead – and not just for Ally, but for all of our children.”

# Brilliant Benchmarks


Our recent Parent Satisfaction Survey says it all...



- 95% of parents strongly agree that they'd recommend Lighthouse to another family
- 95% of parents strongly agree that since the start of services at Lighthouse, their child has made progress that can be observed in the home and community
- 90% of parents strongly agree that our behavior analysts demonstrate knowledge and skill surrounding ABA when developing behavior guidelines and resolving problems related to skill acquisition and behavioral concerns
- 100% of parents strongly agree that information during parent meetings is easy to understand for individuals working outside of the field of behavior analysis
- 95% of parents rated our support excellent in relation to insurance and claims
- 95% of parents rated the cleanliness of Lighthouse as excellent

Visit us online at  
[LighthouseAutismCenter.com](http://LighthouseAutismCenter.com)

Open to read  
Lighthouse Autism Center's  
First Newsletter



Learn about the new Mishawaka Center that  
we are opening!

3730 Edison Lakes Parkway  
Mishawaka, IN 46545

