**Important Information for the Peer Volunteers and their Caregivers participating in the Multimedia Social Skills Project for Adolescents**

Thank you for volunteering with our Multimedia Social Skills Project for Adolescents! Below is important information for you to read prior to the first group.

Teens with Autism Spectrum Disorder or ASD will participate in a 12-week group therapy program designed to improve their social skills. The therapy takes a goal-oriented approach targeting specific problem areas of social competence. There are two parts of the treatment program: 1) group therapy and 2) peer generalization.

Volunteers will be participating in the peer generalization part of the group, which takes the form of an introductory photography class. During this class, you will be learning new and interesting photography skills and taking pictures that follow along with the skills you have learned. During this class, volunteers will be paired up with a teen to work together and help each other with photography. Group leaders will be available throughout this time to help with any questions or concerns if needed. This is also an opportunity to help the teens with ASD practice and learn social skills. At times, you will be asked to bring props and favorite objects to make your photos even more personal. In addition, you will be learning the basic of Photoshop and editing your photographs in unique ways. All materials for photography will be provided. Volunteers are encouraged to bring snacks and/or drinks if needed.

**Group runs for 12 consecutive weeks beginning Wednesday January 29th from 5:30 – 7 PM at 22 Northeast Drive Hershey PA in our Child and Adolescent ASD Clinic on side A.** **Peers are encouraged to attend each session; however, it is asked that peers are able to attend at least 8 of the sessions.** At the conclusion of the group, volunteers will receive a certificate of completion tracking hours of volunteering.

When you arrive at the clinic, please have a seat in the waiting room on “Entrance A.” The group leaders will bring the volunteers back to the group room. Fluency weeks are held on weeks 4, 8, and 12. During these weeks, participants and volunteers are paired together for a 5-minute video recorded conversation. After, the participants meet with the therapist for feedback on the conversation. Only participants and the therapist view these recorded conversations and videos are then deleted to maintain confidentiality for the participant and the peer.

Doors are locked for safety when the clinic closes. The group leader will reopen the doors when group ends at 7PM. Please remember to promptly pick up your teen then. In the event of a cancellation, we will contact you to let you know. Therefore, the group leader will need your contact information to be able to notify you of a cancellation in a timely manner. If you are unable to make it to group, please contact me at jnorthridge@pennstatehealth.psu.edu. In the event of a cancellation, group leaders will notify families as soon as possible.

We ask that volunteers maintain a friendly and welcoming attitude toward all in the group. It is asked that all peers and participants respect privacy and maintain confidentiality. That is, peers and participants are asked not to discuss names or other identifying information about those in the group with others outside of the group.

Again, thank you for volunteering to participate in this group! Many teens with ASD have been helped by this group and this could not be possible without your help! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call (717) 531-8338 or email [jnorthridge@pennstatehealth.psu.edu](mailto:jnorthridge@pennstatehealth.psu.edu)