

April 2023



Penguin Pages

The Gathering Place

What is Autism?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects individuals in different ways and can range from very mild to severe. Autism is a complex, lifelong developmental disability that affects essential human behaviors such as social interaction, the ability to communicate ideas and feelings, imaginations, self regulation, and the ability to establish relationships with others.

What are the stats?

- ♦ 1 in 36 children are diagnosed with autism
- ♦ 3.5M + individuals are on the autism spectrum.
- ♦ Males are 4 times more likely than females to be diagnosed with autism.

Interventions & Supports:

- ♦ Early interventions and therapies can improve learning, behavior, interactions, as well as underlying brain development.
- ♦ ABA, speech and occupational therapy.



Important Dates:

- ⇒ National Youth Violence Prevention Week (April 24-28)
- ⇒ World Autism Awareness Day (April 2nd)
- ⇒ TGP Zoo Outing (April 4th)
- ⇒ TWRC Program Visit (April 5th)
- ⇒ TGP Easter Celebration (April 7th)
- ⇒ Culinary Classes begin (April 17th)
- ⇒ Target Hunger Volunteer (April 19th)



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Volunteer opportunity at Target Hunger

My name is BJ and this is Adele. We went to volunteer together. I put spaghetti shells, cereal, oatmeal and macaroni in the box. This is an inspiration for all of the members to feel a sense of helping those that don't have food. We can't wait to go back next month. –BJ and Adele



Chad placing canned mandarins into box.



For volunteer week, Regina, volunteer manager with Target Hunger, provided us with yummy treats to express their gratitude for our time.



Left to right: Olamae, Chioma, Jerald, Felicia, Adele, Stephen, Mariah, Chad, Wardell, Juan, Melvin, Bobby BJ and Peter.



Left to right: Wardell, Stephen, Felicia, Bobby and Melvin.

The Trip to Target Hunger

We had to meet here at The Gathering Place at 8:00A.M. sharp for a full day of work at Target Hunger. Upon arriving at the warehouse, we learned how to pack the boxes. I wore pink to Target Hunger. My job on the assembly line was to pack two cans of chicken soup in each box and then pass it to fellow member, Chioma, to put 2 lemon teas in the box and passed it down to the other members. It was a fun day. We took a break and took pictures of me wearing pink. I also saw cans of pink salmon. I can't wait to accompany the members back to Target Hunger again next month.

Adele W.

I didn't think I was going to make it but I was able to go to Target Hunger and volunteer in the warehouse. We were there for about three hours. I felt safe like I was at home because it's a warehouse and I used to work at Fedex and UPS before. They deal with packaging too and I used to do it for 8 hours. It was a good time. I will never regret the caregiving I do for others. While I was at Target Hunger, my role was to put the canned macerals in the box. Two cans in each box. I worked with other members from TGP in an assembly line. When we got back to TGP we had Pizza for lunch. It was good. I used to eat pepperoni and cheese growing up and I would like to try more vegan options.

—Wardell F.

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Juan with the piranhas



Left to right: Chad, Daunte, Ranee, Peter, Ray, Stephen, Cesar, Rob, Bobby, Jimmy, Adele, Brent, Marta, Mariah, Tammy, Shalla, Brigott, BJ and Nicey.

Ray R with the lions



Cesar G.



I'm known at the clubhouse as B.J. and this is my story about a trip to the Houston Zoo. We were at the clubhouse at eight o'clock that morning and we had nice weather for the trip. On arriving at the zoo, the first thing we saw was the big animals. We saw the elephants first then the lions followed by the longhorn's. Later that day we went to a underwater exhibit and there were these huge cat fishes and piranhas.

—BJ



Jimmy V.



Derek C. with the monkeys

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Mariah (staff) playing in face paint.



Each time I go to the zoo, I stand in line with the other kids there to get my face painted. I chose the pink flowers since it reminded me of spring time. I had a blast with our members and seeing their faces light up with enjoyment! What a beautiful adventure.

-Mariah, RSPS



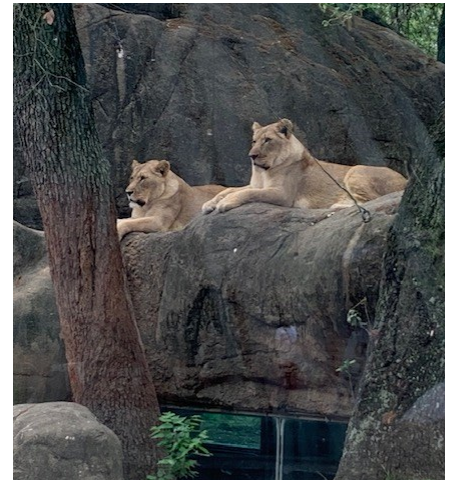
The Houston Zoo

The members of TGP, TGO staff and Ms. Marta and I went to the Houston Zoo on April 4, 2023 and I wore pink. I saw the pink flamingos. I also saw Methai, the female Asian elephant born on May 11, 1969. Her face was very pink! Asian elephant faces and ears get more pink with age. I also saw the monkeys known as primates which was the Chinese New Year in 2016. I also saw an orange tiger. I saw a black bear and cheetah. I saw a light green frog. I took a picture of pink plastic flamingos. I saw a pink flamingo message that said, "don't make me put my foot down". Ha-HA!

Adele W.



Peter B. with the Longhorn's.



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Culinary Arts Program



Adele

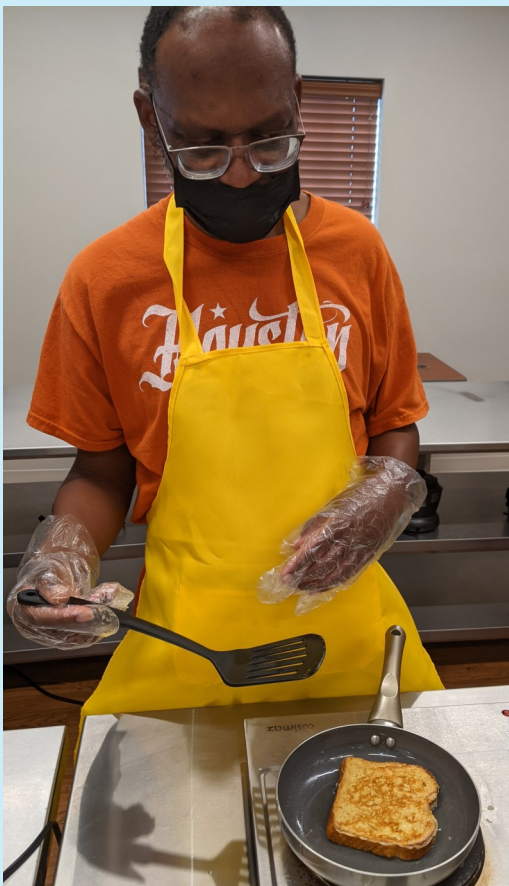


TGP offers a culinary program Tuesday-Thursday from 9a.m.-10:00a.m.

Fridays, 11a-noon for lunch orders created by the members.

We go over kitchen safety, hazards, cleanliness, organization, preparations, grocery shopping, how to use utensils and kitchen appliances correctly. We alternate with education lessons and hands on application in our Runnel's Teaching Kitchen.

Big thank you to Houston Food Bank for coming once a month to provide education and a demo meal as well. Thank you Ms. Suly & co!



Kwasi

stephen and
Jimmy
making
French toast.



April SHOWERS BRING May FLOWERS

Director of Philanthropy Operations , Mrs. Summer, donated flowers and plants for the Culinary garden.

Come out to our garden and learn a new hobby or gain a coping skill. Gardening can increase your physical and mental health. It can decrease anxiety, reduce stress and offers a sense of serenity and calmness.



Rob and Tony planting Basil



Toyosi and Willie with a cactus!

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Support Specialist Rob teaching members about gardening. #EcoTherapy



Wardell planting Eggplant



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Pictured above:

Juan, Emily (TWRC), Adele, Toyosi and Samantha (TWRC).



Pictured above

Emily, their ambassador Three toed box turtle and member of TGP, Juan.

Pictured to the right:

Ms. Samantha with another three toed box turtle and member of TGP, Stephen.



HHS TWRC VISITS TGP!

Houston Humane Society Texas Wildlife Rehabilitation Coalition has partnered together and came to educate us on rehabilitation for wildlife.

“Since 1979, Houston Humane Society TWRC Wildlife Center has been committed to providing quality emergency care and rehabilitation for injured, ill, and orphaned wildlife brought to us by the public. Through education and engaging the public in wildlife-care programs, HHS TWRC continues to make a difference for urban wildlife threatened by loss of habitat.”

BIG Thank you to Samantha and Emily for coming out to visit us at TGP! We truly enjoyed your presentation. ⁸

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TGP members Christian, Felicia and Jimmy, delivered Easter baskets to many departments at Menninger to show our gratitude and appreciation for all that they do for The Gathering Place. Below is the “Egg”-secutive team!



Juan, Adele, James, Mariah, Peter, and



Jimmy cracking eggs on each other outside!



Confetti eggs with staff and members!

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Felicia found a golden egg!



Thomas also found a golden egg!



We painted and decorated eggs



Pictured Below:

Mr. Glen on the move trying to get the most eggs!



Adele and Mr. Ray searching for more eggs.

Pictured Above:

Juan searched high and low and found a sneaky egg hidden.



At TGP we had the members create their own Easter egg bag and had ourselves an egg hunt. We ended the day with decorating our own biodegradable Easter Eggs to take home.

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WHAT TO EXPECT IN MAY!

Hello my name is Willie B. I'm a member of The Gathering Place looking & hoping for tickets to Astros game on May 3rd. Just being in the ball park in it's self is enough to take your breath away.

What to say when they Astros win you can say (Stros'!) , but if they happen to be losing, it would still turn out to be a good day by just watching them play ball.

"Take me out to the ball game, buy me some peanuts & cracker jacks and I wouldn't care if I ever get back.."

FACT CHECK:

Did you know that the time this person wrote the song, he had never been to a game?

-Willie B.

May 3rd: *Astros Game*

Experience

The Gathering Place will be providing the selected members' tickets. Please bring money if you plan on eating any snacks or wanting to buy anything in the gift shops. We will be leaving at 10:45a.m. from TGP and will be returning around 4:15p.m. Can't wait to see you all there!

-Mariah (staff)



"Go Astros go! I cant wait for the game. Its going to be a good time."

-Ms. Brigott L.



May 10th:

♦ *TGP Talent Show*

All talents are welcomed. Please sign up with Rob (staff).

♦ *Volunteer at Willow Waterhole*

Keeping our community clean.

May 20th (Saturday)

♦ *NAMI Walk*

Promoting awareness of mental health.



May 24th:

♦ *Volunteer at Target Hunger-Warehouse*

Providing direct food assistance to those in need.

May 29th

♦ *TGP CLOSED*

Memorial Day
(Holiday
Observation)