



**Autism, Special Needs and Our Courts;
A Town Meeting for Lawyers, Psychotherapists and Jurists**

Save the Date: Wednesday October 25, 2017 at 4:00 – 6:00 PM

Where: Philadelphia Family Courthouse Training Room*

Alarming, 1 in 68 children between the ages of 3 – 17 are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (“ASD”) every year, and it is anticipated that the numbers will increase. There is no known cure, cause or consistent method of treatment. The characteristics of autism present serious challenges to children and their families in all area of their lives including, but not limited to, living arrangements, eating habits and social interaction. The stakes are higher when the child is caught in the middle of a high conflict custody case, and because no autistic child is the same, each case must be assessed on a case- by-case basis. How can the Court address the best interests of special needs children if the attorneys and judges are not educated on the underlying issues?

Please join us on October 25, 2017 for a unique opportunity to hear from experts and practitioners on the challenges facing families with autistic or special needs children and how the Family Court System can ensure that the best interest of these children are met.

Topics for Discussion:

- What is Autism and what does it mean to be on the spectrum?
- What are the characteristics of Autism and how do they affect a child’s comprehension and ability to participate in a court action?
- What services and resources are available to parents, attorneys and the Court?
- How does ASD affect custody issues and parenting plans?
- Should the Courts give greater weight to ASD under the Custody Factors 23 Pa.C.S. § 5328?
- How can the Courts assist parents to maintain consistencies in discipline, therapeutic services, diet and medication control in their separate households?
- What are the roles and issues for consideration for parents, lawyers and judges?

***Limited seating; Please RSVP to: Hon Kelly Wall: kwall@montcopa.org
Joel Bernbaum Esq., Joel@bernbaumfamilylaw.com***

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