



# Parenting Potentials

April 2024



*The month of April brings multiple awareness campaigns that are near and dear to our hearts. National Autism Month and National Occupational Therapy Month. This is not simply a coincidence but rather a connection.*

*Shoshana Newman, PT  
Director, Pediatric Potentials*

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"Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or in the same way."

George Evans



## Importance of Therapy for Kids with ASD



Children with ASD may have trouble filtering out irrelevant information which can lead to sensory overload and potentially to meltdowns. They may also experience learning challenges and social skills deficits. Very often they have decreased motor function leading to poor balance and coordination.

Physical and occupational therapy can help kids with ASD achieve their maximum potential by providing strategies to help the child's nervous system become more organized and regulated. OT works on developing their fine motor, social and daily living skills through tools and environmental adaptations. This leads to improved performance in everyday tasks which can reduce anxiety.

PT addresses the child's physical challenges or limitations and tries to eliminate these barriers. PT focuses on promoting gross motor skills, coordination, balance, strength, and overall physical function.

Both therapies provide environments for children with ASD to learn and practice crucial skills. Interventions are individualized to address each child's specific needs, strengths, and challenges. Collaboration between, therapists and parents and other professionals is essential for success.

## Zones of Regulation

Zones of Regulation			
Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Bored Lonely Sad Tired Unwell	Calm Content Focused Happy Ready to learn	Anxious Confused Excited Frustrated Worried	Angry Aggressive Terrified I need time and space

Zones of Regulation, written and created by an OT, Leah M. Kuypers, is a curriculum designed for students to foster self regulation and emotional control.

The Zones of Regulation, categorizes states of alertness and emotions into four colored zones - blue, green, yellow and red. There are no "good or bad" zones.

The Zones promote the use of sensory supports as well as thinking strategies and calming/mindfulness tools to help students regulate between the different states.

Our OTs meet with much success by incorporating the Zones into your child's treatment plan when appropriate.

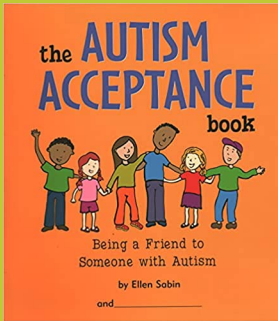
## Ethan & the Bean Cafe

Ethan & the Bean opened its newest location in Morristown at 70 Speedwell Avenue.

It's a cafe with a special mission - staffed by persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). Their coffee shops are positive, empowering environments that support neurodivergent individuals in various workforce development skills related to hospitality.



**Book Corner**  
**in Honor of Autism Acceptance Month**



*The Autism  
Acceptance  
Book*

by Ellen Sobin

This is an  
interactive,  
educational and  
character-

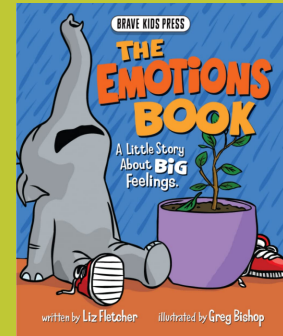
building book that introduces children to the challenges faced by people with autism while also supporting their personal journey toward appreciating and respecting people's differences. The book offers information that invites children to "walk in someone else's shoes" as they learn to treat others the same ways they would like to be treated.

*The Emotions  
Book: A Little  
Story About Big  
Feelings*

by Liz Fletcher

Throughout this vibrant story, Louie, a brave little elephant, teaches children that when they experience big feelings, their body and mind are simply telling them something; perhaps a hug is needed, or they need to take a break and breath.

Focusing on four primary emotions: anger, sadness, frustration, and happiness - children will learn to welcome their feelings and listen to them instead of impulsively reacting.



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