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Virginia Autism Foundation 2018 Holiday Update

The **Virginia Autism Foundation** team was very active the past few months and we look forward to the holiday season and the New Year!

Your contributions and generosity has allowed us to assist many and for that we are grateful!

In October we held our Tenth Annual **Tidewater Autism Summit**. We had over 1000 people in attendance. With no cost to attend or participate free toys, food, admission and door prizes for all families it was the largest gathering of autism service providers under one roof on one day in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

We participated and contributed in the 1st Annual **Virginia Beach Autism Speaks Walk** The event was attended by many families and raised money and awareness for our Autism Community..

We participated in the **Els for Autism Golf** tournament held at the Princess Anne Country Club. We donated to the Els for Autism Foundation and received a contribution from them.

We provided grants for Twenty swim lesson packages for families with children who were not water safe. Our friend and partner Kelli Maier of **Kels Kids** assisted us in determining the families in need. Kelli and her team are providing swim lesson for these families as we speak

We provided grants for Ten Lifesaver bracelets through **Project Lifesaver** to families in our community who have loved ones that wander

The City of Virginia Beach issued a proclamation naming October 20th 2018 "**Virginia Autism Foundation Tidewater Autism Awareness Day**" in recognition of our service to families with Autism in our community

Our **Legislative** efforts continue as well. We met with the Governor's office, State Senators and Delegates as we work to gain meaningful insurance coverage to all our families in Virginia with Autism.

The Legislative session starts January 9th and we are prepared to be in Richmond as long as needed until we complete this mission.

First quarter programs include participating in a **Financial planning workshop** in January and Co-sponsoring a **First responder training and Immersion day** scheduled for April 6th at Harbor Park

We are coordinating participation for April 1st **World Autism Awareness Day**. Working with **Autism Speaks**, City leadership and businesses throughout our community to "Light it up Blue" in support of World Autism Awareness Day. Please let us know if your business would like to join us!

We will **fund additional grants** for swim lessons and Project Lifesaver bracelets as funds become available.

The Foundation is working with local Autism Service providers to **set up funding and grants** to provide respite hours for our families and caregivers.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to each and every one of you for your generous contributions. We hope you have the **safest and happiest of holidays**.

