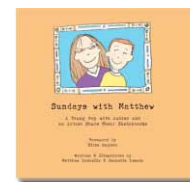




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
**MONSTERS HELP AUTISTIC BOY COMMUNICATE!**

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AUTISM, CREATIVITY, CALM, AND COMMUNICATION  
THROUGH DRAWING ARE PRESENTED IN THE NEW BOOK:

**SUNDAYS WITH MATTHEW - A Young Boy with Autism and an Artist Share Their Sketchbooks**

Join Matthew Lancelle, a twelve-year-old with autism, and his artist friend Jeanette Lesada as they overcome the traditional autistic challenges of communication and social interaction through sketches of monsters, sea creatures, trolls, grandmas, thought-bubbles and more! Allowing Matthew to express himself visually first, and verbally second, increased his confidence and communication skills.

According to Jeanette: *“Matthew went from being a child who hardly sat still for more than two minutes, to a child who can now sit at the table for long periods of time drawing. Pictures of stick figures with eyeballs taught Matthew to look at people’s eyes, and now he stares me down. Instead of reciting things to me he has memorized, Matthew asks me questions about things that are on his mind. Matthew reads full pages aloud from ‘Harry Potter’, and he feels like he can ask me deep questions and get straight answers. I have watched Matthew blossom into an incredibly chatty, inquisitive twelve-year-old, and our time together always flies by with hardly a behavioral incident.”*

Common traits of autism are difficulty with speech and socializing. It can seem as if kids with autism are in a world of their own, and they often display poor eye contact and limited verbal skills. According to the Autism Society of America, today autism affects roughly one in every 166 kids, and the numbers are rising at alarming rates: 10% - 17% a year. It would appear we are in the middle of an autism epidemic, but the good news is that great strides can be made with this disorder by using one-on-one art, speech, and behavioral therapy. Autism is treatable, yet the search for a cure continues. With the help of the media, like CNN’s recent week-long series on autism, the public is finally becoming more aware of autism spectrum disorders and treatments.

Since many children with autism have well-defined special interests, it’s valuable to determine what those interests are and find ways to use them to reinforce appropriate behavior. ***Sundays with Matthew*** is a positive and encouraging example of how individualized art therapy can break down communication barriers, permitting education to be taken to a higher level. This special relationship between two artists sharing a passion for art and life has led to a friendship that is sure to warm hearts, and inspire others to look for commonalities instead of differences in people.

Jeanette says: *“Matthew still has his difficult days, and there are still things we are working on, but Sundays with Matthew is something he is proud of, something that not even the “regular kids” get done every day. We hope our sketchbook buddy tips at the back of the book will help other little kids out there find their new voice, and we hope it puts a big smile on your face, like it does to us!”*

**Sundays with Matthew** by Matthew Lancelle & Jeanette Lesada \* Autism Asperger Publishing Co.  
ISBN: 1-931282-84-6 \* Price: \$16.95 \* Hardcover: 8 x 9”, 37 pages

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