



BUILDING

BUILDING
for belonging
community begins here



ANNUAL REPORT **2025**

ING

mission

Turning Pointe Autism Foundation creates opportunities and programs to educate individuals with autism through proven interventions to increase independence, encourage meaningful lifelong pursuits, and enrich the community at large.



Who We Are

A welcoming community inspired by family, grounded by best-practice care, **and continually evolving** to meet the needs of individuals with autism and their support community.

Children and Youth

Specialized educational environments designed specifically for autistic learners. Interdisciplinary teams provide intensive individual attention, appropriate educational accommodations, and evidence-based therapeutic interventions, including ABA, OT, PT, and speech therapy.

- Therapeutic preschool and day school
- Post-secondary transition programs
- Social engagement opportunities for all ages (open to the community)

Adults

Meaningful opportunities that support independence, connection, and purpose beyond secondary education. Programs support individuals as they build adult identities, relationships, and pathways for a fulfilling life.

- Post-secondary program
- Employment preparation and skill-building, business enterprise work opportunities
- Recreation, respite, creative programming, and social connection
- Inclusive, autism-friendly community hangouts

Community

Collaborating with the wider community to provide education, resource navigation, social engagement opportunities, and community training. Thriving individuals are supported by informed, inclusive communities.

- Consultation and training programs
- Workplace training for employers to better support autistic employees
- Autism education and training for first responders and law enforcement
- Professional learning for schools
- Sensory-friendly community events and sibling support groups

Research

Turning Pointe is proud to be a respected autism learning facility, contributing to the field through data-informed practice, research collaboration, and knowledge-sharing. We participate in behavioral research, data collection, and publish and disseminate research to advance effective autism supports.

focus areas

Letter from the Executive Director

Where do you belong? A sense of belonging is important, and for many children and adults with autism, it does not come easily.

Turning Pointe builds programs that offer a sense of belonging and support to individuals with autism and their families as they grow from preschool through adulthood and navigate the lifelong autism journey.

Belonging is also woven into the next chapter of Turning Pointe's story, as we create a new building space designed specifically to support adults with autism. A new adult building will expand access to skills and employment training, as well as fun social engagement and recreational opportunities.

This year, our vision became reality with a transformative financial gift from Mrs. Penny Wolf, a member of our founding family, toward the construction of an adult services building. Not another school, but a modern, supported space for adults leaning into their independence. We look forward to sharing more news as the new adult building plans take shape.

Momentum also continues to build for our youngest students. Offering early childhood education has long been a priority. Turning Pointe opened its first early childhood therapeutic classroom in July. The expansion aligns with our commitment to provide resources and support to families as they navigate the complexities of an autism diagnosis. We plan to expand early childhood offerings with a new autism screening program in early 2026.

Of course, Turning Pointe's strength is the dedication and expertise of our team leaders. This year, Family Specialist Mary Butler was recognized by the ARC of Illinois with its Leadership Award for her work supporting the autism community and creating spaces where adults and teens feel they belong. This recognition is well-deserved. Mary and the entire Turning Pointe team make a real impact every day with a comprehensive approach that includes special education, therapy, behavioral research, and community engagement and training to help shift mindsets around autism.

Building for the future presents new opportunities to grow with our autism community. We walk confidently knowing that our board leadership, clinical team, and family of fierce advocates and supporters are with us every step of the way.

Thank you for opening doors to lifelong opportunities for the autism community, and supporting Turning Pointe as a place where families, children, and adults with autism know they belong.



Carrie Ann Provenzale



Turning Pointe Autism Foundation's Program Highlights

year at a glance

Children/Youth

- Parent survey
 - 83% said they feel their child has made progress in communication skills.
 - 83% said they feel their child has made progress in functional living skills.
 - 91% said they feel Turning Pointe programming has increased their child's quality of life.
 - 95.9% said their child feels safe while at Turning Pointe.
- A dedicated preschool classroom opened in July.
- Social Hangouts for teens expanded to new Schaumburg Public Library location.

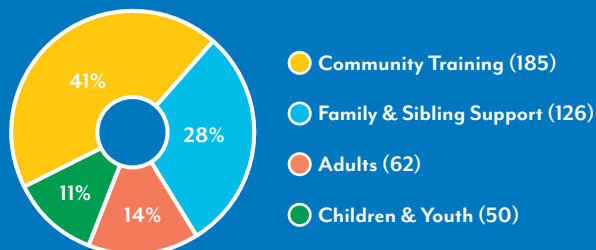
Adults

- C.R.E.W. (Community, Recreation, Engagement, and Well-being) launched in January, offering new, fun social and recreational opportunities.
- 100% of parents of adult day participants said their adult child feels safe at Turning Pointe.

Research

- Research presentation at Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) convention in Washington, D.C.
- Academic publications:
 - The effects of varying teacher-student ratios in a special education classroom. Manuscript publication in Behavior Analysis in Practice.
 - Implementing a Communication Intervention for Children with Autism and Challenging Behavior. Submitted for review to Behavior Analysis Research and Practice.

Turning Pointe Program Participation (423 total reg.)



Community Outreach

- Family resource navigation contacts totaled 152 in 2025.
- Sib Groups (sibling support groups) launched, offering spaces to share the challenges and joys of having a loved one with autism.
- New Blue Envelope Program collaboration with Naperville Police Department enhances communication for those with cognitive needs during routine traffic stops.

Community Training

- Naperville Fire and Emergency Services received first responder training in June. Participants received training in Autism 101, communication techniques, and real life scenarios.
- Kane Co. Regional Office of Education presentations provided during a teacher institute day for educator.





Major Growth in Community Trainings

Turning Pointe’s autism education and training programs expanded to new locations and professional areas in 2025. More than 250 individuals were trained by our NEMRT-certified team members.

Training Highlights

Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE) Four presentations provided during a teacher institute day for Kane County educators.

OCALICON Ohio’s premier autism and disabilities conference. Sessions offered on strengthening home to school connections, all designed to help educators connect with families they serve.

DuPage County Sheriff New monthly crisis intervention trainings for various DuPage County first responders at the sheriff’s office location.

Naperville Fire Department Multiple crisis intervention and autism education training sessions held to accommodate firefighters during work shifts.

“Autism training for first responders really helped us better equip our paramedics and firefighters to deal with people with special needs, like autism. We encounter so many different things. This training helps us communicate properly, de-escalate a situation, and even help determine why we’re really there.” *Naperville Fire Department Division, Chief Bill Croft*



Scan QR code to watch full interview.

Team Updates

Mary Butler receives ARC Leadership Award

Family Specialist Mary Butler was recognized by the ARC of Illinois with its Leadership Award for her work supporting the autism community and creating spaces where adults and teens feel they belong. The award recognizes an individual whose contributions have significantly impacted the lives of children and/or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Butler developed Turning Pointe’s newest programs, including social hangouts, C.R.E.W., and sibling support groups.

University Practicum Partnerships

In 2025, expanding relationships with universities was a strategic focus to cultivate a potential talent pipeline for future employees. Hosting students also deepens on-site best-practice research and contributes meaningfully to training the next generation of care professionals.

Turning Pointe hosted 19 students across its clinical and foundation programs, a 150% increase in student field study placements. Fourteen practicum students spanning occupational therapy, speech and language pathology, student teaching, and social work, alongside five interns supporting the foundation in events, social media, and non-profit administration. These placements reflect active partnerships with seven regional universities, including Elmhurst University, North Central College, Lewis University, Midwestern University, Western Governors University, University of Illinois, and University of Iowa.



STAFF ENGAGEMENT SURVEY RESULTS (March, 2025)

93% Would Recommend as a **AGREE** Great Place to Work

71% Satisfied **AGREE** at the Job

Expanding Adult Opportunities

The Path Ahead

Thanks to a transformational gift, Turning Pointe looks forward to expanding its building and improving the campus next year. Not another school, but a modern, supported space for adults leaning into independence. This remarkable project will create opportunities to serve more individuals, families, and the entire community.



Creating safe, welcome spaces where adults with autism thrive

Autism families have long sought scaffolding for adults after they age out of post-secondary schooling. Adults with autism deserve fulfilling lives with safe and supported structure, social engagement, continuity of skill building, and appropriate employment. A strong community of support makes all the difference.

Building Community – The Most Important Work

Social and recreational opportunities are critical to helping build adult identities, relationships, and pathways to a fulfilling life.

Social Hangouts – Where Fun Begins

In 2022, Turning Pointe launched a social hangout group for teens and young adults on the spectrum to provide opportunities for connection and social engagement. It started with small gatherings and slowly grew into a community that meets each month, with 47 adults and teens combined now participating in Naperville and Schaumburg. New locations are being added for 2026.

Happy birthday to C.R.E.W.

(Community, Recreation, Engagement, and Well-being)

Since last January, 12 people have joined C.R.E.W., a fun weekday peer recreation program. The program offers a range of recreation experiences, including movement and exercise through yoga, skill-building with cooking, and creative pursuits like art.

“It makes me feel accepted, welcome, and I’m very proud of myself.”

C.R.E.W. Member

community

This Is Community, This Is Where We Belong

Weaving connection, skills training, and workplace opportunity together for adults with autism

Learning and growing in the workplace is a big step for anyone. Those with autism need a tailored, supportive approach to training and skill building as they seek independent or supervised employment. Turning Pointe provides both skills training programs and on-site employment opportunities to adults.

Employment Training Program (ETP)

Programs teach workplace skills to new job seekers, such as interview skills, time entry, and paycheck handling. Participants work on self-advocacy, networking, and problem-solving capabilities. Key program offerings:

- Employment training
- Job support
- Customized placement services

“This program had a great impact on my son, Danny. Helping him to understand the interview process has brought him more confidence during job interviews and even in everyday conversation.”

Enterprise Ventures

In 2025, Turning Pointe provided supported employment for 10 adults with autism via enterprise programs and partnerships, demonstrating how investing in employees with autism supports business growth. *All employees are paid hourly Illinois minimum wage.

- **Pumpkin Race Kits - An Enterprise Success:** The Annual Pumpkin Race in Naperville, IL, is a major community, sensory-friendly event. Turning Pointe employs adults with autism year-round to assemble, package, and ship pumpkin race kits. In 2025, approx. 662 kits were sold and shipped nationwide.
- **Two Brothers Coffee - Every Sip Brings More Opportunity:** Office coffee just got better. A partnership with Two Brothers Coffee employs adults to package and distribute a Turning Pointe signature premium blend. Shop online at TurningPointeAutismFoundation.org
- **Turning Pointe Boutique - New Merch Makes Meaningful Work:** Behind the scenes, adults with autism work on in-house t-shirt screen printing, packaging, and distribution of Turning Pointe merchandise. Boutique includes branded t-shirts, sweatshirts, and more.

growing



research

Evidence and Impact

Dr. Maddy Nave Tortelli joins Practice Advisory Board

Turning Pointe welcomed Dr. Maddy Nave Tortelli, OTD/OTR/L, to the Practice Advisory Board. Nave Tortelli is the first occupational therapist to join the board and brings a unique academic perspective to our research initiatives. She currently serves as Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at North Central College in Naperville, IL.

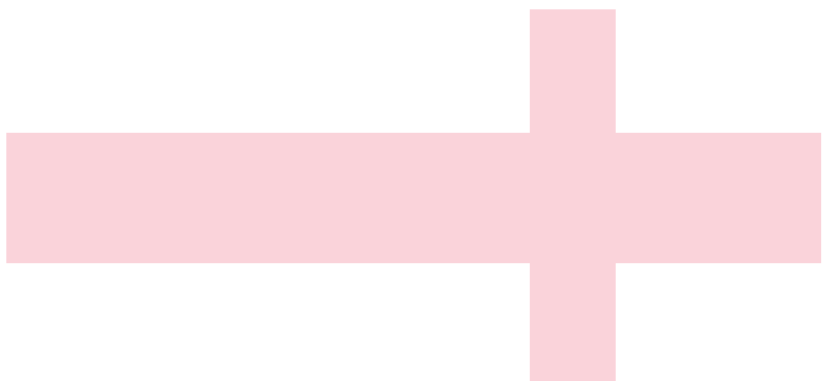
Spotlight Shines on Turning Pointe Autism Foundation Research at 2025 ABAI Conference

Turning Pointe was proud to be represented at the 2025 Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) convention in Washington, D.C., in May. Team members shared research aimed at improving outcomes for individuals with autism. Associate Director Bianca Frost presented on teacher-student ratios in special education, Program Coordinator Samantha Camacho, BCBA, shared toilet-training strategies for students with autism, and Practice Advisory Board Member Dr. Brandon Perez explored behavior during preference assessments.



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lead



Building Knowledge, Improving Practice

New Research: Paraeducator Training Approach Helps Students Initiate AAC Communication

Being able to make requests is an important communication skill for people who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems. Individuals with significant autism (Level 3) can face extra challenges. In partnership with Dr. Natalie Andzik and Northern Illinois University (NIU), Turning Pointe facilitated paraeducator training programs aimed at helping students with Level 3 autism learn to initiate communication.

The team measured how often paraeducators gave students opportunities to start interactions with their devices and tracked both prompted and independent initiations by students. Results showed paraeducators provided more opportunities with this structured communication model, which led to more AAC initiations for all students, though rates varied.

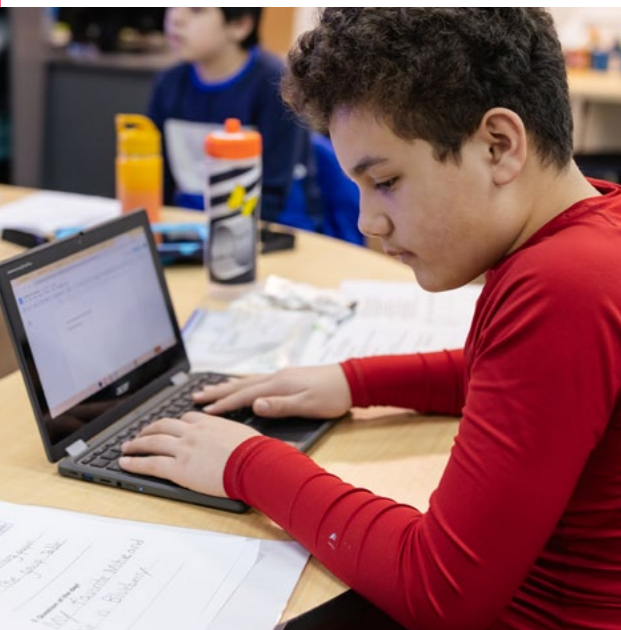
The study showed that paraeducators can help students with significant autism learn to initiate communication, but also found challenges such as staff turnover and lack of familiarity with devices. The research highlights the need for team-based approaches and improved training to make AAC interventions more consistent and effective in therapeutic school settings.

Study: Andzik, N. R., Perez, B. C., James, C. L., & Douglass, D. A., Camacho, S. A., & Frost, B. N. (in-press). Paraeducator implementation of a communication intervention for individuals with significant autism. Education and Treatment of Children.

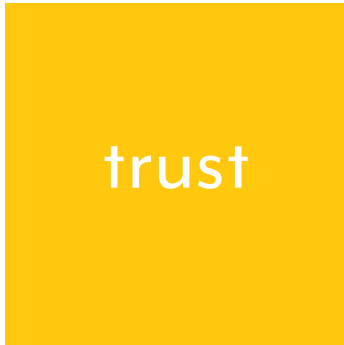
Learn more at turningpointeautismfoundation.org/research

“Turning Pointe Autism Foundation excels in highly qualified staff, communications, research-based practices.”

Response from 2025 Annual Family Questionnaire



financials



Assets

	2025	2024
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 5,381,985	\$ 2,744,261
Investments	657,457	667,090
Accounts receivable	746,194	570,505
Grants receivable and promises to give, current	64,174	62,434
Prepaid expenses and other assets	59,681	101,270
Total current assets	6,909,491	4,145,560
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET	6,725,165	6,973,470
OTHER ASSETS		
Grants receivable and promise to give, net of current maturities	50,152	-
	<u><u>\$ 13,684,808</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 11,119,030</u></u>

Liabilities and Net Assets

	2025	2024
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 340,723	\$ 568,061
Notes payable, current maturities	81,222	77,331
Total current liabilities	421,945	645,392
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES		
Note payable, net of current maturities	1,152,348	1,232,626
Total liabilities	1,574,293	1,878,018
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions	8,896,876	9,186,737
With donor restrictions	3,213,639	54,275
Total net assets	12,110,515	9,241,012
	<u><u>\$ 13,684,808</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 11,119,030</u></u>

*Full audited financials at: turningpointautismfoundation.org/financials

Celebrating with our Community

Turning Pointe events strengthen connections, educate the wider community, and offer fun opportunities for individuals with autism.

Chicago Auto Show First Look for Charity

Sparkles and smiles filled the room at the Chicago Auto Show First Look for Charity event at McCormick Place in Chicago. This incredible fundraising partnership helps Turning Pointe provide individualized, evidence-informed education and support that increase independence, encourage meaningful lifelong pursuits, and enrich the community.

Butterfield Golf Outing and Brunch & Browse

Turning Pointe was honored to host Amy Bockerstette, a competitive amateur golfer and disability advocate, as both keynote speaker and featured golf clinic pro at the Annual Golf Outing and Brunch & Browse in July.

Amy, who has Down syndrome, challenged the audience with a powerful message and question, "What's Your Superpower?" and shared the importance of positive self-talk, as well as reminding yourself, "I GOT THIS!" when faced with a challenge.



highlights

event



Morton Arboretum Family Night

Turning Pointe families came together for a private Family Night at the Morton Arboretum. Students and families loved the opportunity to get to know one another and explore the outdoors in a quiet, safe, sensory-friendly environment. The event offered a nature-based family activity that may otherwise be challenging for families to do independently.

Annual Pumpkin Race

The Annual Pumpkin Race in Naperville gathered Turning Pointe students, families, and the local community together for a fantastic, sensory-friendly fall event. Pumpkin racers, face painting, food trucks, and fun. This annual community event is where everyone truly belongs.

volunteers

Strength in Community

Executive Committee

Randy Wolf

*Board Chairman
& Founder
Owner, Dan Wolf
Automotive Group*

Howard Weiss

*Board President
Assured Partners*

Jay Ferguson

*Vice President of Board
Partner, Ferguson Hill Wealth
Management*

Russell L. Romanelli

*Board Treasurer
Retired*

Kim White

*Board Secretary
Executive Director,
Career & Networking Center*

Board Members

Rick Biagi**Steven Cataldo, MD****Allen Caviles****Joe Chura****Gene Hunziker****Andrew Ivers****Theresa McClear****Chris Maul****Roger Paveza****Heather Ryan****Matt Simpson****Patrick Rubald****Bob Van Iten****Daniel Wolf, Jr.**

Women's Board Members

Terri Dieter**Lauren Dileonardi****Andrea Karr****Erin Krishnan****Heather Ryan****Andrea Siracusano****Jenny Shepherd****Kim Wolf****Tammy Wolf**

Practice Advisory Board

Natalie R. Andzik, Ph.D., BCBA-D

*Practice Advisory Board
Northern Illinois University*

Jonathan K. Fernand, Ph.D., BCBA-D

*Practice Advisory Board
Florida Institute of Technology*

Brandon C. Perez, Ph.D, BCBA-D

*Practice Advisory Board
Northern Illinois University*

Maddy Nave Tortelli, OTD, OTR/L

*Practice Advisory Board
North Central College*

Timothy R. Vollmer, Ph.D., BCBA-D

*Practice Advisory Board
University of Florida*

Stephen Walker, Ph.D., BCBA-D

*Practice Advisory Board &
Board Member at Large
St. Cloud University*

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opportunities:



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